



COMMENTARY
ON THE
OLD TESTAMENT

PROPHETICAL BOOKS.



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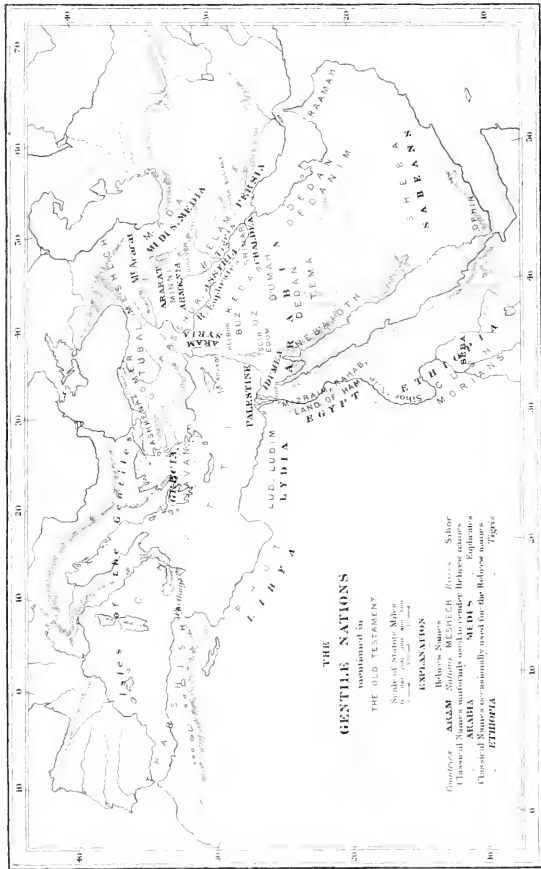
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THE GENTILE NATIONS

mentioned in
THE OLD TESTAMENT

Scale of Statute Miles
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

EXPLANATION

- Green* Hebrew Nations
- Orange* ARAM Nations MESHECH *Red* Sabor
- Yellow* Classical Nations uniformly used to render Hebrew names
- Blue* ARABIA MEDIA *Purple* Egyptian
- Black* Classical Nations occasionally used for the Hebrew names
- White* ETHIOPIA *Grey* Tigris

THE
OLD TESTAMENT

ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORISED VERSION.

WITH A BRIEF COMMENTARY

BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

PROPHETICAL BOOKS.

ISAIAH TO MALACHI.

With Maps.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE TRACT COMMITTEE.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE TEXT in this Commentary is a reprint of the last Edition with marginal references, published at the Oxford Press,—with the following differences:

1. Each new paragraph is headed with the sign ¶ and followed by a space.
2. When a verse does not end with a full stop, the succeeding verse is not begun with a capital letter. See, for example, Isaiah i. 17.

It is hoped that these features of the printing will to some extent supply the place of a "Paragraph Bible" to those who aim at an accurate study of the Holy Scriptures; while at the same time it will not interfere with the division into verses which is so familiar to readers.

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LIST OF THE COMMENTATORS.

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M A P S.

Where placed.

MAP. The Gentile Nations mentioned in the }
Old Testament } Frontispiece.

MAP. The Four Empires of Daniel Beginning of Daniel.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

ISAIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

WITH the "Vision of Isaiah" commences the grand roll of the "Later Prophets," so called by the Jews because, while giving the name a far wider meaning than is usual with us, they nevertheless recognised in the latter days of the monarchy a more spiritual development of the prophetic spirit than had existed at the time when the Prophets first became a numerous and influential order in Israel. The "Earlier Prophets" were the historians and annalists of the kingdom, but the title claims for the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, to which it is expressly given, the presence in them of a Divine authority. At first, nevertheless, what the people chiefly saw in the Prophets was an educated class, trained in the schools founded by the wise and prescient Samuel, and exercising all that influence which educated men must possess among a rude and illiterate people. But even in the days of David and Solomon on fitting occasions they stepped forward and controlled the course of events with an authority claimed by them as men who spake in the name of God. So too did these "Later Prophets," but their teaching had attained to a larger significance than the fortunes of the temporal Israel. Their special office was to prepare the Jewish Church, and through it the whole world, for the coming of Christ.

It was in the northern kingdom that prophecy in the writings of Hosea first mounted upwards to those spiritual themes which make these "Later Prophets" the teachers of mankind. As God ever suits His gifts to man's needs, it was there also that the Prophets attained to their grandest development as statesmen. The kingdom of Israel had been founded by the prophet Ahijah; it was ever the object of the most watchful prophetic care, and when in spite of all there was an open attempt to substitute the worship of Baal for that of Jehovah, Elijah and Elisha stood forth in their full greatness as the true leaders of the people and the guardians of the state. Yet this was but the lower side of their labours: though of primary importance at the time it had not the stamp upon it of eternity.

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It was in Judæa that this permanent element of prophecy attained to its full proportions, and especially in the writings of Isaiah. The Jewish state was seldom in open rebellion against God. Idolatry was often connived at. Wicked kings from time to time aided it by their example, but there was never any long sustained effort to overthrow the worship of Jehovah. Even the miserable apostasy in Manasseh's time lasted but for about twenty years (2 Chron. xxxiii. 12.). With Israel it was different; and as it fell more and more away, Judæa became more distinctly God's Church, and He gave her men admirably fitted to keep ever before her eyes her high vocation. And amid the vicissitudes of her earthly fortunes, and the growing tendency to moral decay, the promise made to her of a Messiah became the most powerful lever in the hands of the Prophets for raising the Jewish Church from the pit into which she was sinking. And we must remember that her preservation was an essential requisite for our Saviour's ministry. Judæa was to be the scene, and Jews the recipients of His teaching. We cannot say that these "Later Prophets" failed in their mission when we call to mind that fishermen of Galilee were competent to understand the doctrines of the Gospel, and convey them to all mankind.

This was the most important side of Isaiah's labours, but fully to comprehend his prophecies we must bear in mind his true position. He was no court preacher, nor a dependent upon the kings, nor upon the priesthood. Apparently he held in Judæa a position similar to that which Elisha had occupied in Israel, and was the head of the prophetic order. His high rank is proved by the nature of the deputation sent to him by Hezekiah (2 Kings xix. 22.), consisting of the chief officers of state. And whereas originally the High-priest with the Urim and Thummim had held the supreme authority in all crises of the state, this had from the time of David devolved upon the chief prophet. His influence would in the main depend upon his personal qualifications. There was no settled constitutional rule, but only a general feeling that the prophet was the rightful representative of the Theocracy. And two of them stand in the first rank of Judah's statesmen, Isaiah and Jeremiah.

As a statesman and patriot Isaiah ever puts prominently forward those principles of upright dealing between class and class, and of the maintenance of an impartial administration of the law, which are the first necessities of a civilized state. And to understand this portion of his teaching we must bear in mind the state of things existing in his days. He was called in his early youth to the prophetic office in B.C. 758, the year in which king Uzziah died. Uzziah had reigned fifty-two years, and in 2 Chron. xxvi. we have an interesting account of the wise measures he took for the safety of his realm, and its internal prosperity. He was a prudent, able, and successful administrator, and his successor

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Jotham, throughout his reign of sixteen years, followed in his father's steps.

It is in these quiet tranquil times of prosperity that a nation makes its choice for better or worse; and there is much which leads to the conviction that during this long period of nearly seventy years there had been a gradual deterioration in the moral condition of the people. Religion was losing its hold over the conscience, luxury was ever on the increase, drunkenness had grown to the dimensions of a national sin, lavish expenditure had led on to covetousness, and wealth was accumulating in few hands by open injustice, and in direct violation of the fundamental principles of the Jewish commonwealth. It is a very dark picture which Isaiah draws in ch. v. of the inward decline of men and manners which had come to pass in days when everything outwardly looked so bright and cheerful. When the weak Ahaz mounted the throne, he did but bring to light the general viciousness, and the upgrowth of irreligion which had preceded him. In both he fully shared, but he did not create them. Probably the threatening alliance of Pekah and Rezin even checked their further progress. Behind these fierce confederates there stood in the distance the more dangerous might of Assyria. For the moment Ahaz used it to crush his enemies: but it boded no good to Palestine, that it must be the battle-ground for the inevitable struggle between Nineveh and Egypt, the prize of which was to be the empire of the whole then known world. Within Judæa there was decay, without was danger. It was verily a time which needed a Reformer and a Statesman: and Isaiah stood forth as both.

At first he stood alone, but undismayed he confronted Ahaz, foretold the downfall of the confederate kings, denounced the alliance with Assyria, foretold the ruin which that state would bring upon Judæa, but also bade the people look forward to the birth of the Virgin's child, and to the fulfilment of their Messianic hopes. For only by reminding the nation of its high calling could he hope to make it worthy of it. But soon the pious Hezekiah took his place at his side and laboured with him: and the prophet, while forbidding an alliance with Egypt, encouraged the Jews to stand firm in their resistance to Sennacherib, the fiercest of Assyria's kings, and promised final victory; but again tried to awaken nobler feelings in the heart of the people, by foretelling the birth of the Child that should be the everlasting Father; and Who, though but a sucker from the stock of Jesse's fallen tree, should nevertheless found an empire of universal peace. All was in vain. In ch. i. we have a noble record of the prophet's earnest struggle to make a true reformation of manners accompany the public restoration of the Mosaic ritual, which had followed upon Sennacherib's overthrow. Crowds attended the public services: penitents were few. Even at Hezekiah's

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own court, a high official, though apparently a foreigner, did his utmost to thwart king and prophet (ch. xxii.). Among the people there was no revival of faith or of virtue; and when Manasseh, a mere child, came to the throne, the worship of Jehovah was abolished, the prophets put to death, and a grim tyranny established; and apparently all classes looked on unmoved.

There is much in Isaiah's writings which throws considerable light upon this temporary national apostasy, though much remains obscure, because Holy Scripture has drawn over it so thick a veil. Nor will space permit me to delineate fully Isaiah's conduct as the great statesman of his age, nor to follow his labours as a reformer, earnestly labouring for the re-establishment of justice, purity, self-restraint. Only in reading his prophecies we must not forget that he bore both these characters, and that at a time when they were urgently needed.

But there are two aspects of his ministry which still require a few words of notice. He was Judah's greatest orator and poet. In his works Jewish literature reaches its highest perfection. Strong, forcible, earnest, gifted with a fervid imagination, piling up metaphor upon metaphor, changing rapidly from the grandest imagery to the most tender pathos, he yet never loses the control of his mighty genius. Everywhere he keeps within the limits of beauty and chasteness. His steeds may be the rushing tempest and the devouring fire, but they are yoked firmly to his chariot and obey his reins. Never was poet so grand and majestic: never one more sweet and calm. Let any one read the vision of Jehovah in ch. vi., or the exulting song of triumph over the downfall of Babylon in ch. xiv., and he cannot fail to be struck with this blending of sublimity with gracefulness.

But still more near to our hearts is that spiritual element in Isaiah's writings, which has earned for him the title of the Evangelical Prophet. It is scarcely too much to say that the Gospels would have been impossible without Isaiah. God ever gives what is necessary, and He raised up the prophet in order that he might so describe Christ's nature and offices as that when He came men might be able to understand them. And still he remains their best interpreter. No commentary written since Christ's advent so clearly explains His work for man as Isaiah's words. And this is the true answer to those objections which were current a few years ago against the last twenty-seven chapters, and which were really grounded upon the prediction of Cyrus by name. For the relation of the whole book, and especially of these last chapters, to the Gospels is far more miraculous and præternatural than the mentioning beforehand of the name of a Persian king. And it is a miracle of a deeper nature, more vast in its influence upon the destinies of mankind, more closely bound up with that new life which sprang

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forth from the death upon the cross, more inseparably connected with that regeneration of society confessedly wrought by Jesus of Nazareth, and which saved from perishing a world that was hopelessly sinking in a bottomless pit of moral decay. If any one can believe that the relation of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah with the Gospels is fortuitous, such an one may believe in two Isaiahs, and two Shakespeares; for the aberrations of the human intellect are infinite.

These twenty-seven chapters were the final outpouring of Isaiah's spirit. Written in extreme old age, in the calm retirement of some prophetic college, in deep sadness at the death of his friend and king, and amid the overthrow in Church and State of all that he had laboured to uphold, he could yet call off his mind from things present to gaze upon the Messiah's death, and to see beyond it in the distant future a renewed Church and a regenerated world. It was the fitting sequel to the prophecy of the Almah's child, of the birth of the Son that was the Mighty God, and of the sucker that was to be the universal king. Upon these texts it is but a fuller commentary; and to prepare for Christ's kingdom Isaiah first swept away idolatry with arguments so unanswerable and full of cutting irony, that it was never afterwards able to maintain its hold over the Jewish race. And then with master hand he prepared the highway for the Advent of Judah's Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour of the world.

ISAIAH, I.

Before
CHRIST
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CHAPTER I.

1 *Isaiah complaineth of Judah for her rebellion.* 5 *He lamenteth her judgments.* 10 *He upbraideth their whole service.* 16 *He exhorteth to repentance, with promises and threatenings.* 21 *Bewailing their wickedness, he denounceth God's judgments.* 25 *He promiseth grace,* 28 *and threateneth destruction to the wicked.*

^a Num. 12. 6. **T**HE ^a vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

^b Deut. 32. 1.
^c Jer. 2. 12.
& 6. 19. &
22. 29.
^d Ezek. 36. 4.
^e Mic. 1. 2.
& 6. 1, 2.
2 ^b Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, ^c I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

^c ch. 5. 1, 2.
^d Jer. 8. 7.
^e Jer. 9. 3, 6.
^f ch. 5. 12.
3 ^d The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: *but* Israel ^e doth not know, my people ^f doth not consider.

CHAPTER I.

The first chapter of Isaiah forms a noble preface to the whole collection of his prophecies. It is an earnest summons to repentance, urged home upon the national conscience by the remembrance of the terrible judgment wherewith their sins had lately been visited. But for their repentance to be accepted it must be sincere: no mere formal service of God will avail. The nation must enter upon a new course of justice, mercy, faith; and then "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment," and will fulfil the duties of that high office to which God had appointed her.

1. The first verse is a title belonging to the whole book, which is called a "vision," not because Isaiah received his inspiration by visions only at night, but because he was called to the prophetic office by the vision in ch. vi. The number of kings mentioned points out to us the extraordinary length of Isaiah's ministrations. The united reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah form a period of sixty years, and there is reason to believe that Isaiah's life was prolonged into the reign of Manasseh. The prophet Hosea was God's minister for an equally extended period of time.

2. "Hear, O heavens." This invocation is taken from Deut. xxxii. 1, but additional emphasis is given to it by the declaration that Jehovah is the speaker. He had bestowed upon the Jews high and precious privileges, but they, "nourished and brought up as children," had despised their birthright. We too as a nation are equally favoured by God now; but the continuance of His gifts depends finally upon man's use of them (St. Matt. xxv. 28, 29.).

3. "The ox." An appeal to the perfectness of God's doings in nature. Instinct works unerringly: shall man, with the higher gift of free-will, use it only for perverse purposes?

ISAIAH, I.

4 Ah sinful nation, a people ²laden with iniquity, ³a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: ^{Before} **CHRIST** ^{cir. 760.} they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked ² *Heb. of heaviness.* the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are ³gone ^{g ch. 57. 3. 4.} away backward. ^{Mat. 3. 7.}

5 ¶ ^h Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will ⁴revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. ² *Heb. alienated, or, separated,* ^{Ps. 58. 3.} ^{h ch. 9. 13.} ^{Jer. 2. 30.} ^{& 5. 3.}

6 From the sole of the foot even unto the head *there is* no soundness in it; *but* wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: ¹they have not been closed, ¹neither bound up, ⁵neither mollified with ⁵ointment. ⁵ *Or, oil.* ¹ *Jer. 8. 22.*

7 ^k Your country *is* desolate, your cities *are* burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and *it is* desolate, ⁶as overthrown by ⁶strangers. ^k *Dent. 29. 51, 52.* ⁶ *Heb. as the overthrow of strangers.* ¹ *Job 27. 18.* ^{Lam. 2. 6.}

8 And the daughter of Zion is left ¹as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, ^mas a besieged city. ^m *Jer. 4. 17.*

4. Compare Israel's actual state with that to which God had called her, Exod. xix. 6. So the remembrance of the high privileges of his nation, contrasted with its misuse of them, filled St. Paul's heart with continual sorrow, Rom. ix. 2—5.

“**Holy One of Israel**” is a title of the Deity almost peculiar to Isaiah. He uses it about thirty times; in the rest of Holy Scripture it occurs only five times.

6. “**Putrifying sores.**” Rather, “fresh smiting.” Before Judah had recovered from the injuries caused by the sins of Ahaz, her repeated idolatries had brought upon her the fresh smiting of Sennacherib's invasion. The *closing* or, more correctly, the “pressing” of the wounds to cleanse them, followed by the application of oil and bandages, describes literally the Jewish method of surgery (St. Luke x. 34.); but sin is the real wound in man's nature, and the word refers spiritually to the chastisement whereby God first purges the sinner (St. John xv. 2.), and then pours in the balm of consolation.

8. “**A cottage.**” Really a booth formed of a few boughs, intended to protect from the sun the keeper whose business it was to guard the ripening fruit from wild beasts (Ps. lxxx. 13.).

“**A lodge.**” This was intended for the keeper's shelter by night. Dr. Tristram describes it as a very rude affair, formed of four poles stuck in the ground, across which are placed a few rafters, and the whole thatched with oleander-boughs, or scraps of matting (*Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 442.). Cucumbers, he adds, form an important item in the summer food of the people.

“**As a besieged city.**” In the famous cylinder of Sennacherib, now in the British Museum, we read, “Hezekiah, like a bird in a cage, I shut “up inside Jerusalem, his royal city: I constructed siege towers against

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ⁿ Lam. 3. 22.

^r Rom. 9. 29.

^o Gen. 19. 24.

^p Deut. 32. 32.

Ezek. 16. 46.

^q 1 Sam. 15. 22.

^r Ps. 50. 8, 9.

& 51. 16.

Prov. 15. 8.

& 21. 27.

ch. 66. 3.

Jer. 6. 20.

& 7. 21.

Amos 5.

21, 22.

Mic. 6. 7.

² Heb. *great*

he goats.

³ Heb. *to be*

seen.

^r Ex. 23. 17.

& 34. 23.

^s Matt. 15. 9.

^t Joel 1. 14.

& 2. 15.

⁴ Or. *grief.*

^u Num. 28. 11.

^x Lev. 23. 2,

&c.

Lam. 2. 6.

^y ch. 43. 24.

^z Job 27. 9.

Ps. 134. 2.

Prov. 1. 28.

ch. 59. 2.

Jer. 14. 12.

Micah 3. 4.

9 ⁿ Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as ^o Sodom, *and* we should have been like unto Gomorrah.

10 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers ^p of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

11 To what purpose *is* the multitude of your ^q 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 bullocks, or of lambs, or of ² he goats.

12 When ye come ^{3 r} to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

13 Bring no more ^s vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, ^t the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; *it is* ⁴ iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

14 Your ^u new moons and your ^x appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; ^y I am weary to bear *them*.

15 And ^z when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: ^a yea, when ye ⁵ make

^a Ps. 66. 18. 1 Tim. 2. 8. ⁵ Heb. *multiply prayer.*

“him” (*Records of the Past*, i. 38.). This terrible climax of fact, following upon the striking metaphors used just before, would come home with crushing weight upon the minds of the people, who had so lately watched in despair these menacing preparations.

10. This sudden apostrophe, characterizing the chosen people as a very Sodom and Gomorrah, is very powerful. The difference in their fate lay, not in the measure of their wickedness—the sin of Jerusalem became even the greater (St. Matt. x. 14, 15. Rev. xi. 8.)—but in the sure truth, that Judah as being the depository of God’s promises could never be totally destroyed (see ch. vi. 13. Jer. iv. 27, &c.; and comp. St. Matt. xvi. 18. Rom. xi. 5.).

11—14. Isaiah blames the people, not for frequenting God’s courts, but for doing nothing more. The public service of God is acceptable when it aids men, as it always ought to do, in leading holy lives. In ver. 12 “to tread” lit. means “to trample.” They came in a rude and boisterous manner, instead of drawing near humbly and reverently. The “vain oblation” of ver. 13 is lit. “a meat offering of falseness,” one insincere, representing no piety in the heart of the offerer. “The solemn meeting” is the proper title of the convocations held on the seventh day of the Passover (Deut. xvi. 8.), and on the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles (Num. xxix. 35.). The “appointed feasts” were the weekly sabbaths, the Passover, Pentecost, Day of Atonement, and Feast of Tabernacles.

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many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of ^b blood.

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16 ¶ ^c Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; ^d cease to do evil;

^b ch. 53, 3.
² Heb. *bloods*.
^c Jer. 4, 14.
^d Ps. 34, 14.
& 37, 27.

17 learn to do well; ^e seek judgment, ³ relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Amos 5, 15.
Rom. 12, 9.
1 Pet. 3, 11.
^e Jer. 22, 3, 16.
Mic. 6, 8.
Zech. 7, 9.
& 8, 16.

18 Come now, and ^f let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, ^g they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

³ Or, *righten*.
^f ch. 43, 26.
Mic. 6, 2.
^g Ps. 51, 7.
Rev. 7, 14.

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: ^h for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

^h Num. 23, 19.
Tit. 1, 2.

21 ¶ ⁱ How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

Jer. 2, 20, 21.

16, 17. In these verses we learn the *end* for which God has given us the *means* of grace. A similar contrast is found in Jer. vii. 5, 6, compared with v. 4.

“**Relieve the oppressed.**” No prophet keeps more constantly before his hearers the necessity of performing their social and political obligations than Isaiah. Personal religion stops very far short of its mark where it has no influence upon the manner in which men perform their public duties, or those of their trade and ordinary calling.

“**Judge the fatherless,**” &c. Orphans and widows, the weak and lone, are the most common victims of injustice. In the East the open space at the gate of the city was the place where suits were heard. Upright citizens were to frequent these courts, and see that justice was done in them.

18. “**Let us reason together.**” Such a personal conference and leave to speak freely Job had earnestly desired (Job ix. 32—35.). God now of His own accord offers it: but if man venture to search into God’s ways with the limited powers of his reason, he must do so very reverently, or his presumption will be his ruin.

“**Scarlet . . . white.**” Compare Rev. xvii. 4; xix. 8.

19, 20. “**If . . . but if.**” Every invitation of God, being addressed to man’s free-will, implies an alternative. So here. True repentance will bring about a general reformation, and this will be followed by national prosperity, but persistence in sin will end in national ruin.

21. “**Become an harlot.**” The violation of the marriage bond between God and His people usually, in the language of Holy Scripture, means idolatry: here apparently it is the separation of the reality of religion from its outward forms.

ISAIAH, I.

Before
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22 ^kThy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water :

* Jer. 6, 28, 30.
Ezek. 22, 18,
19.

23 ^lthy princes *are* rebellious, and ^mcompanions of thieves : ⁿevery one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards : they ^ojudge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

¹ Hos. 9, 15.
^m Prov. 29,
24.

ⁿ Jer. 22, 17.
Ezek. 22, 12.
Hos. 4, 18.
Mic. 3, 11.
& 7, 3.

24 Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, ^pI will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies :

^o Jer. 5, 28.
Zech. 7, 10.

^p Deut. 28, 63.
Ezek. 5, 13.

25 and I will turn my hand upon thee, and ^{2a}purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin :

² Heb.
*according
to pureness,*

^q Jer. 6, 23,
& 9, 7.
Mal. 3, 3.
^r Jer. 33, 7.

26 and I will restore thy judges ^ras at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning : afterward

22. "Silver . . . wine." These represent all that was best and noblest in Jerusalem. If the best were thus corrupt, what must be the condition of men of a meaner sort? For "mixed" the Heb. says "cut," i.e. weakened, adulterated. The Jews did not mix water with their wine for ordinary use, as was the custom of the Greeks and Romans, but drank it unmixed, and often even added spice to make it more intoxicating (Cant. viii. 2.).

23. "Thy princes are rebellious." We must not suppose that either here or in ver. 21 Isaiah was drawing an imaginary picture. One result of the Assyrian invasions had no doubt been that the great chieftains of Judaea, surrounded by their retainers and ever engaged in desultory warfare with bands of marauding invaders, had enjoyed a practical impunity for their actions. Many military adventurers also had probably gathered troops of ruined people round them, and lived by pillage and extortion. Both classes alike would set the royal authority at defiance, and it was a bold and righteous act of the prophet thus frankly to denounce men at once so powerful and so unscrupulous. From Hos. ix. 15 we learn that even the successful wars of Jeroboam II. had led to a similar result in Israel. Practically the princes there too had asserted their independence.

24. "The Lord, the LORD." The word "LORD" in capitals is in the A. V. put for the Heb. word Jehovah, God's covenant name ; while Lord in Roman type means ruler, sovereign. Here then Jehovah is appealed to as being earth's true lord ; for when human authority fails, and society is disorganized, God, as the real ruler of the world, is man's sole refuge.

25. "Tin" is put for any baser metal found combined in the ore with the silver. In the simple methods of metallurgy practised by the Jews all such metals were burnt out, i.e. oxydised.

"Purely" really means "as with lye," some alkali like borax being used as a flux to assist the metal in melting. The whole verse refers to that merciful discipline of God, which, though sharp as fire for the time, yet "afterward yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them" which are exercised thereby" (Heb. xii. 11.).

ISAIAH, II.

^athou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city. Before
CHRIST
cir. 760.

27 Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and ^aher converts with righteousness. Zech. 8. 3.
2 Or, *they that return of her.*

28 And the ^t³destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners *shall be* together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed. ^t Job 31. 3.
Ps. 1. 6. & 5. 6. & 73. 27. & 92. 9. & 104. 35.
³ Heb. *breaking.*

29 For they shall be ashamed of ^uthe oaks which ye have desired, ^xand ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen. ^u ch. 57. 5.
^x ch. 65. 3. & 66. 17.

30 For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water.

31 ^yAnd the strong shall be ^zas tow, ⁴and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench *them*. ^y Ezek. 32. 21.
^z ch. 43. 17.
⁴ Or, *and his work.*

CHAPTER II.

1 *Isaiah prophesieth the coming of Christ's kingdom.* 6 *Wickedness is the cause of God's forsaking.* 10 *He exhorteth to fear, because of the powerful effects of God's majesty.*

¶ **T**HE word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

27. "Zion shall be redeemed with," i.e. by "judgment." God's justice even in punishment has for its end the salvation of the sinner. "Her converts," lit. "her returning ones." The primary meaning would refer to the scattered inhabitants of Jerusalem returning back to their homes: but it is true in a still higher sense of those who having wandered far from God, repent and return to Him.

28. "Transgressors," lit. revolters, men who have finally thrown off their allegiance to God. Their punishment with that of all wilful and inveterate sinners is implied in the restoration of the Church; because her purification is an essential condition of God's acceptance of her (St. Matt. xiii. 41—43.).

29, 30. "Oaks." Rather, terebinths or turpentine trees, grand as English oaks, which when leafless they much resemble. They are made the more striking by being never found in forests, but always alone (*Tristram*, p. 400.). The leafless terebinth, the waterless garden (in a country where without water vegetation quickly perishes), powerfully symbolise the inability of idolatrous rites and of formal and mere ceremonial worship to maintain the spiritual life of the soul.

31. "The maker of it." More correctly, as in the margin, "his work." Separate from God the strongest becomes weak as tow, and his work, his great and mighty acts, serve but to ensure his ruin, like the spark which sets the tow suddenly in a blaze.

CHAPTER II.

1. This verse is the title to the connected prophecy formed by chs. ii. —iv. As the country was still rich and prosperous, its army numerous



and they ² please themselves in the children of strangers. Belsham
111187
179

7 ^a Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures. Their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots: P. 107
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8 ^a their land also is full of idols. They seekest 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 ^a Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty.

11 The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.

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.

"They please themselves" i. e. they strike hands with "unlike covenants and alliances with foreigners" contrary to the principles of the Theocracy, which required Israel to be a people separate unto themselves.

7. "Horses" and "chariots" were the symbols of war, the equipment used for riding, and therefore being the emblem of power. *Zech. x. 1.*

8. "Idols." The word used here means "images" and probably refers to the teraphim or household gods. Idolatry had crept even into their homes.

9. "Boweth down." The A. V. suggests the thought of men of all classes offering Divine worship to them that are no gods, and therefore finding no forgiveness for their sins; but the prophet's words really speak of the misery which is the sure result of alienation from God. Casseville translated they mean "And man, man generally, is bowed down, and the mighty man is humbled, and then forgivest them not." The conditions of true repentance are specified in *Isa. lvi. 17*. There was no forgiveness here because their repentance was insincere.

10. "Enter into the rock." The limestone ranges of Palestine are full of vast natural caverns, which served as places of shelter for the people in times of distress, *Judg. vi. 2; 1 Sam. xiii. 6; xiv. 11; xix. 3; 1 Kings xviii. 13.*

12. "The day of the Lord" is not merely that of final judgement, but refers also to all those more critical periods in the history either of a nation or of an individual, when God's chastening hand is plainly manifested. So our Lord (in *St. Matt. xxiv.*) combined the thought of His final Advent with that of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

- Before
CHRIST
cir. 760.
- 13 and upon all ^s the cedars of Lebanon, *that are* high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan,
- 14 and ^t 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,
- 16 ^u and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all ² pleasant pictures.
- 17 ^x 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 ^y in that day.
- 18 And ³ the idols he shall utterly abolish.
- 19 And they shall go into the ^z holes of the rocks, and into the caves of ⁴ the earth, ^a for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth ^b to shake terribly the earth.
- 20 ^c In that day a man shall cast ⁵ his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, ⁶ which they made *each* idols of his silver, &c. ⁶ Or, which they made for him.
- ^s ch. 14. 8.
& 37. 24
Ezek. 31. 3.
Zech. 11. 1, 2.
^t ch. 30. 25.
^u 1 Kin. 10. 22.
^v Heb.
pictures of
d-sire.
^x ver. 11.
^y ver. 11.
^z Or, *the*
idols shall
utterly pass
away.
^a ver. 10.
Hos. 10. 8.
Luke 23. 30.
Rev. 6. 16.
& 9. 6.
^b Heb. *the*
dust.
^c 2 Thess. 1. 9.
^d ch. 30. 32.
Hag. 2. 6, 21.
Heb. 12. 26.
^e ch. 30. 22.
& 31. 7.
^f Heb. *the*
idols of his silver, &c. ⁶ Or, *which they made for him.*

13. The noblest objects in nature and in the works of man now pass in review for condemnation. The oak mentioned here is not the same as that in ch. i. 29. It is the Valonea oak, common in Bashan, and growing often to a magnificent size (*Tristram, Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 370.).

16. "Ships of Tarshish." All large merchant-ships were so called, from the vessels built for the trade with Tarshish (probably Tartessus, a town and district in the south of Spain), in King Solomon's days (1 Kings x. 22.).

"All pleasant pictures." As these objects are all arranged in pairs, cedars and oaks, mountains and hills, towers and walls, the explanation of Gesenius is probably right, which explains the difficult word used here, of the costly equipments of ships. With the merchant-men of Tarshish are thus combined all vessels of war or pleasure adorned with magnificent carving and embroidered sails (Ezek. xxvii. 7.). The word does not occur elsewhere.

18. "He shall utterly abolish." Rather, as in the marg., "And the idols shall utterly pass away."

19. "Caves of the earth." Neither the natural caverns in the mountains, nor cellars and storehouses dug in the earth, can hide from God. In the punishment of Judah the glory of Jehovah's majesty was shown by His raising up the might of Assyria to be the instrument of His justice; it is equally manifested when God smites the sinner by means of his own conscience; and escape in both cases is alike impossible (Ps. cxxxix. 7.).

"When he ariseth," &c. When all things on earth are quiet, then God seems to be resting calmly upon His throne: but when judgment is abroad in the land He has arisen, and man's awakened conscience feels the presence of a power greater than his own.

ISAIAH, III.

one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats ;

Before
CHRIST
cir. 760.

21 ^a to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the ^d tops of the ragged rocks, ^e for fear of the LORD, and ^e for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

ver. 19.

ver. 10, 19.

22 ^f Cease ye from man, whose ^g breath is in his ^f nostrils : for wherein is he to be accounted of ?

Ps. 146. 3.

Jer. 17. 5.

g Job 27. 3.

CHAPTER III.

1 The great confusion which cometh by sin. 9 The impudency of the people. 12 The oppression and covetousness of the rulers. 16 The judgments which shall be for the pride of the women.

FOR, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, ^a doth ^a take away from Jerusalem and from Judah ^b the ^b stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water,

a Jer. 37. 21.
& 38. 9.

b Lev. 26. 26.

2 ^c the mighty man, and the man of war, the ^c judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ^c ancient,

c See 2 Kings
24. 14.

2 Heb. a man
eminent in
counte-
nance.

3 the captain of fifty, and ² the honourable man,

22. "Cease ye from man." There is a deep pathos in this lamentation of the prophet over the powerlessness of man in the day of God's visitations. "Cease ye from man ;" go not to man for counsel or help at such a time, "in whose nostrils is a breath." The stress lies not on nostrils, but upon the uncertainty of life. Wherein is one to be accounted of whose whole being is but a breath of air (Gen. ii. 7. Ps. civ. 29.).

CHAPTER III.

1. "The stay and the staff." The words in the Hebrew differ only in the one being masculine and the other feminine, and might be translated "the stay male and the stay female;" i. e. God will take away every human support. Bread and water, the primary necessities of life, here represent all those classes of men who are essential to the well-being of a state.

2, 3. In the enumeration of these classes we find the people "threatened with the loss of all their stays good or bad, true or false" (Alexander). For after the soldiers, magistrates and prophets, or clergy, we find "the prudent;" but the word really means *the diviner*, one who professed to have prophetic powers without being really sent by God ; yet often he was more prized by the people than the true prophet. "The ancient" means the senator or alderman, most nations giving to their counsellors titles taken from old age. Next follow military officers, fifty men forming the smallest division of a Jewish army (1 Kings i. 9.), next men of rank, then the members of the king's council, then skilled artificers—for their value see

ISAIAH, III.

Before
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and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the ²eloquent orator.

² Or, *skilful of speech.*
^d Eccles. 10. 16.

4 And I will give ^dchildren *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:

³ Heb. *lift up the hand,*
Gen. 14. 22.

7 in that day shall he ³swear, *saying*, I will not be an ⁴healer; for in my house *is* neither bread nor clothing: make me not a ruler of the people.

⁴ Heb. *binler up.*
^e Mic. 3. 12.

8 For ^eJerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings *are* against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory.

^f Gen. 13. 13. & 18. 20, 21. & 19. 5.

9 ¶ The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as ^fSodom, they hide *it* not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.

Jer. xxiv. 1; xxix. 2,—and finally, not “eloquent orators,” but “men “skilful in muttering,” i. e. soothsayers and conjurors, on a par with the diviners of ver. 2, yet so highly esteemed by the people as to be regarded as one of the stays of the state. The two verses give us a very interesting picture of Jewish society in the days of Jotham and Ahaz.

4. “Babes.” The Hebrew word signifies children not in age but in mind.

5, 6. “Oppressed every one by another.” The fear of God is the only sure foundation for national as well as for private happiness. When therefore Judah deserted God, there was no longer a supply of good and upright men to govern the state; all classes fought for their separate advantage, and became debased by so doing; and finally general anarchy was the result. In the poverty and misery which followed, the people looked around for some one to govern them and give them security. But ungodliness had brought the nation to such a pass that the only thing in which they could find any one superior to the rest was the possession of clothing. But the state of affairs is too hopeless for him to be willing to risk even this for his country’s sake.

9. “The shew,” i. e. the expression “of their countenance,” their bold, defiant look; for like the people of Sodom, they sin without sense of shame (see Rom. i. 32.).

“They have rewarded,” or rather done evil to themselves. In vv. 10, 11 this thought is worked out more fully. By God’s laws all human

10 Say ye to the righteous, ^g that *it shall be well with him*: ^h for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 760.

11 Woe unto the wicked! ⁱ *it shall be ill with him*: for the reward of his hands shall be ² given him.

^g Eccles. 8. 12.
^h Ps. 128. 2.
ⁱ Ps. 11. 6.
Eccles. 8. 13.
² Heb. *done to him.*
^k ver. 4.

12 ¶ *As for my people,* ^k children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, ^l they which lead thee cause *thee* to err, and ⁴ destroy the way of thy paths.

^l ch. 9. 16.
³ Or, *they which call thee blessed.*
⁴ Heb. *swallow up.*
^m Mic. 6. 2.

13 The LORD standeth up ^m to plead, and standeth to judge the people.

14 The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have ⁵ eaten up ⁿ the vineyard; the spoil of the poor *is* in your houses.

⁵ Or, *burnt.*
ⁿ ch. 5. 7.
Matt. 21. 33.

15 What mean ye *that* ye ^o beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

^o ch. 58. 4.
Mic. 3. 2, 3.

16 ¶ Moreover the LORD saith, Because the

conduct brings a retribution for good or for evil; and thus the wicked have the painful feeling that they have no one to thank for their unhappiness but themselves.

12. "Children." Irreligion so deprives men and nations of all moral strength that upon anarchy follows tyranny; and children and women, with no higher object than the gratification of their fancies and passions, gain the mastery over a state once governed by the law of God.

"They which lead thee." A deeper gulf is reached here; for the words signify "they which straighten thee," i. e. thy teachers and prophets. Before public morality could have so declined, religion must have first lost much of its power; for religion is the salt both of public and of private life, and if it lose its savour, all that is best in man rapidly decays.

13. "The Lord standeth up to plead," as the plaintiff in a suit, i. e. at length He sends chastisement. God does not always stop the sinner at the outset: if He did, there would be no real probation for man: but punishment is sure finally to follow upon sin, both lest wickedness should become too rampant, and also as a call to the sinner to repentance.

14. "Ancients... princes." As with men so with a nation. The time has come for its chastisement, when even its counsellors chosen for their age and wisdom, and its princes, men of inherited rank, combine to eat up the poor by the corrupt administration of justice. The margin *burnt* is wrong.

15. This verse is Jehovah's indignant remonstrance with these unrighteous rulers.

16. We have here a resumption of the main argument from ver. 12, the three intermediate verses being parenthetical. The noble women of

Before
CHRIST
cir. 760.

daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and ²wanton eyes, walking and ³mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:

² Heb. *deceiving with their eyes.*

³ Or, *tripping nicely.*

^P Deut. 28. 27.

⁴ Heb. *make naked.*

^q ch. 47. 2, 3.
Jer. 13. 22.
Nah. 3. 5.

⁵ Or, *networks.*

^r Judg. 8. 21.

⁶ Or, *sweet balls.*

⁷ Or, *spangled ornaments.*

⁸ Heb. *houses of the soul.*

17 therefore the Lord will smite with ^Pa scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will ⁴^qdiscover their secret parts.

18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of *their* tinkling ornaments *about their feet*, and *their* ⁵cauls, and *their* ^rround tires like the moon,

19 the ⁶chains, and the bracelets, and the ⁷mufflers,

20 the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the ⁸tablets, and the earrings,

21 the rings, and nose jewels,

22 the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,

Jerusalem no longer live in modest retirement, but taking advantage of the general laxity, walk haughtily in the places of public concourse, looking around with wanton eyes for admiration. The "tinkling" refers to the noise made by the metal ornaments worn by Oriental women round their ankles.

17. "Scab." The disease referred to in Lev. xiii. 2, causing the hair to fall off. The last clause of the verse describes the sad fate of these highborn ladies, when as prisoners of war they are stripped of their gay attire, and led away into slavery.

18. An enumeration of the articles which were the pride of a Jewish lady of fashion. In this verse we have her bangles of precious metal, cauls made of network of gold or silver wire to confine the hair, and crescent-shaped ornaments worn round the neck.

19. "Chains." Rather pendants or ear-drops, generally of pearls; with which are enumerated bracelets and veils. The Oriental veil was formed of two pieces hooked together below the eyes, and of which the uppermost was thrown back over the head.

20. "Bonnets" or head-tires. The leg-ornaments were really stepping-chains, so called because they reached from the bangles on one leg to those on the other, and produced the mincing gait spoken of in ver. 16. The "headbands" more probably mean girdles. "Tablets," literally, as in the margin, "houses of soul," or more exactly "of breath," i. e. scent bottles, or boxes containing perfumes. "Earrings," really amulets, charms. The earrings were mentioned in ver. 19, where the A. V. has *chains*.

21. "Nose jewels," such as Eleazar gave Rebecca (Gen. xxiv. 22.).

22. "Changeable suits of apparel," or rather suits for gala-days. By "mantles" are signified the loose upper jackets, always more richly

ISAIAH, IV.

23 the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.

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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 ^a baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty.

^a ch. 22. 12.
Mic. 1. 16.

25 Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy ² mighty in the war.

² Heb. *might*.

26 ^t And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she *being* ^{3 4} desolate ^u shall sit upon the ground.

^t Jer. 14. 2.

Lam. 1. 4.

³ Or, *emptied*.

⁴ Heb.

cleansed.

^u Lam. 2. 10.

CHAPTER IV.

In the extremity of evils, Christ's kingdom shall be a sanctuary.

AND ^a in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will ^b eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only ² let us be called by thy name, ³ to take away ^c our reproach.

^a ch. 2. 11, 17

^b 2 Thess. 3.

12.

² Heb. *let*

thy name

be called

upon us.

³ Or, *take*

them away.

^c Luke 1. 25.

ornamented than the close-fitting tunic below. The "wimples" were shawls or wrappers such as Ruth wore (Ruth iii. 15.). For "crisping pins" the Hebrew has "embroidered purses," such as were carried by women in the girdle.

23. This verse completes the catalogue. The words more correctly signify mirrors of polished metal, under-garments of Indian muslin, turbans of many-coloured cloths, and light scarves thrown over the rest of the dress.

24—26. God's visitation changes this luxury into mourning. A mouldering smell, such as is found in unventilated houses, takes the place of perfume: a rope or cord serves for a girdle: instead of hair elaborately plaited there is baldness: for the flowing mantle cast over other rich attire there is a wrapper of sackcloth: while a brandmark, burnt into them to show whose property they are as spoils of war, defaces their beauty. For the men who might have protected them have been slain in battle: and the "gates" of Zion, once thronged by busy citizens, but now solitary, "lament and mourn" for the desolate city, which, like the female figure with the legend *Judæa capta* on Vespasian's coin, sits sorrowing on the ground.

CHAPTER IV.

1. This verse belongs to the preceding chapter, and sets forth the final degradation of the proud daughters of Zion. In the utter dearth of men caused by the ravages of war the maidens, no longer given in marriage, will beseech the few survivors to bestow upon them at least the name of wife, though unaccompanied by the privileges of marriage (comp. Zech. viii. 23.). To be unmarried was a "reproach" to a Jewish woman.

Before
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d Jer. 23. 5
Zech. 3. 8
& 6. 12.

² Heb. *beauty
and glory.*

³ Heb. *for the
escaping of
Israel.*

^e ch. 60. 21.

^f Phil. 4. 3.

Rev. 3. 5.

⁴ Or, *to life.*

⁵ Mal. 3. 2, 3.

2 In that day shall ^d the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely ³ for them that are escaped of Israel.

3 And it shall come to pass, *that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem,* ^e shall be called holy, *even every one that is* ^f written ⁴ among the living in Jerusalem :

4 when ⁵ the Lord shall have 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 assemblies, ^h a cloud and smoke by day, and ⁱ the shining of a flaming fire by night: for ⁵ upon all the glory shall be ⁶ a defence.

^h Ex. 13. 21.

ⁱ Zech. 2. 5.

⁵ Or, *above.*

⁶ Heb. *a*

covering,

ch. 8. 14.

2. The threatenings of the prophets end as a rule with a bright vision of better things to come: for Israel was never to be utterly destroyed. There was always to be a remnant, called here "**the escaped of Israel,**" in whom the Church was to revive, and renew again its work of preparation for Christ's Advent. Christ is called here "**the Branch,**" not the word used in ch. xi. 1, but that found in Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15. Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12, and really signifying a branch growing from the stem, while the word in ch. xi. 1 means a sucker growing from the root. The Messiah as the Branch of David is the great representative of His line: but here He has a higher title, Branch of Jehovah, indicative of His Divine sonship.

3. "**Every one that is written among the living.**" Literally, "all written for life." But these survivors of war represent in the Church those "ordained for eternal life" (Acts xiii. 48.), for they are "**holy,**" and enjoy therefore not merely the outward privileges of the Covenant, but its spiritual realities.

4. A full stop should be put at the end of ver. 3, and this verse be taken as the condition preparatory to ver. 5. When Jehovah has purified Zion, *then* (not *and*) He shall restore to her His presence and protection, of which the pillar of fire and the cloud in the wilderness were the symbols. By "**filth**" is meant moral impurity, laid to the charge of the luxurious daughters of Zion, while the men are accused of violence and bloodshed.

"**Spirit of burning.**" Fire, the symbol of God's chastisements, while it consumes the baser metals, only purifies the silver and gold (Mal. iii. 2. St. Mark ix. 49.).

5. "**And,**" rather "then." Upon Israel's purification follows the restoration to her of God's love, and privileges such as she enjoyed in the wilderness, elsewhere described as the time when she loved Jehovah with the fond devotion of a newly-married bride (Jer. ii. 2.). Note too that God's presence is vouchsafed to "**every dwelling place,**"

6 And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and ^k for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

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^k ch. 25. 4.

CHAPTER V.

¹ Under the parable of a vineyard God excuseth his severe judgment. 8 His judgments upon covetousness, 11 upon lasciviousness, 13 upon impiety, 20 and upon injustice. 26 The executioners of God's judgments.

NOW will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching ^a his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in ² a very fruitful hill :

^a Ps. 80. 8.
Cant. 8. 12.
ch. 27. 2.
Jer. 2. 21.
Matt. 21. 33.
Mark 12. 1.
Luke 20. 9.

2 and he ³ fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also ⁴ made a winepress therein : ^b and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

² Heb. *the horn of the son of oil.*
³ Or, *made a wall about it.*
⁴ Heb. *hewed.*
^b Deut. 32. 6.
ch. 1. 2, 3.

and is accompanied by earthly prosperity, called "glory" or *splendour*, the type to us of spiritual blessings, while over all God spreads His protection as a *canopy*, the literal meaning of the word translated "defence."

6. "A tabernacle," or booth made of green boughs to protect men from the glare of a southern sun. God gives His people shelter not merely from the dangers, but even from the smaller evils and inconveniences of life.

CHAPTER V.

This magnificent chapter completes the mournful picture of Judah's fortunes. In ch. i. the prophet pleads earnestly with the people in the hope that the nominal reformation, which followed upon the overthrow of Sennacherib, might become real and true. In chs. ii—iv. he describes Judah's apostasy and punishment, but thereupon follows the bright presage of a purified and glorious Church emerging as a remnant saved from her ruin. Here in ch. v. is no promise of mercy. It is the melancholy portraiture of Judaism after it has rejected Christ, and the believing remnant has withdrawn from its midst. Comp. St. Matt. xxi. 33—44, but also Rom. xi. "Now," not an adverb of time, but an interjection of entreaty. "Come, let me sing," &c.

2. "He fenced it," or more probably, "dug it thoroughly." Sunny hill sides were the favourite sites for vineyards. And here to every natural qualification is added all possible care in the preparation of the ground, which is then planted with the choicest vine, that of Sorek, famous for its large clusters of grapes of a reddish blue colour. A tower moreover is built for its protection, and a vat hewn out of the rock (see margin) to receive the juice at vintage time. The parable therefore asserts that the Jews were a people of great natural ability; that they

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c Rom. 3. 4.

3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, °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?

d Ps. 80. 12.

5 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: ^dI will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; *and* break down the wall thereof, and it shall be ²trodden down:

² Heb. *for a treading.*

6 and I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

³ Heb.
plant of his pleasures.

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts *is* the house of Israel, and the men of Judah ³his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold ⁴oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

⁴ Heb. *a scab.*

e Mic. 2. 2.

8 ¶ Woe unto them that join °house to house,

had a long and careful training for their high office; and that no appliances internal or external, that were necessary for their good, had been omitted. And yet when Judah came to be judged by the fruits of holy living, its grapes were as sour as those of the heathen nations round.

5. "It shall be eaten up." The vineyard once so carefully protected, and fenced off from the rest of the world, shall become mere ordinary grazing land, where the cattle browse upon the vine-shoots and wander at their pleasure. Comp. ch. vii. 25. Ps. lxxx. 12, 13. Judah was God's Church, and as such had to bring forth a special product: but if God's people, instead of offering Him the fruits of faith and holiness, are no better than the heathen world, He will take from them the privileges which they have left unused.

6. "I will also command the clouds." A severer measure of punishment is indicated in this threatening. Not merely does Judah lose its spiritual privileges, but God's natural mercies are withheld. For the reason see St. Luke xii. 47. As no earthly husbandman could command the clouds, it also serves to prepare the mind for the explanation of the parable.

7. "His pleasant plant." Margin, "plant of His pleasures;" that in which God took delight, as the owner of a vineyard would in vines of a choice kind. Judah's natural qualities were high, but were rendered worthless by not being sanctified to God's service. Instead therefore of justice and righteousness a cry goes up from Jerusalem to heaven of men, oppressed and wronged, praying for deliverance.

8—10. Six woes follow, of which the first is denounced against

that lay field to field, till *there be* no place, that² they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!

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9^f 3 In mine ears *said* the LORD of hosts, 4 Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, *even* great and fair, without inhabitant.

² Heb. *ye*.

^f ch. 23. 14.

³ Or, *This is in mine ears, saith the LORD,*

⁴ Heb. *If not, &c.*

⁵ See Ezek.

45. 11.

10 Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.

11 ¶^h Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine⁵ inflame them!

^h Prov. 23.

23, 30.

Eccles. 10. 16.

ver. 22.

⁵ Or, *pur sue*

them.

ⁱ Amos 6. 5, 6.

^k Job 34. 27.

Ps. 28. 5.

12 Andⁱ the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but^k they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.

13 ¶^l Therefore my people are gone into captivity, ^m because *they have* no knowledge: and⁶ their honourable men *are* famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

^l Hos. 4. 6.

^m ch. 1. 3.

Luke 19. 44.

⁶ Heb. *their*

glory are

men of

famine.

14 Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and

covetousness. According to the constitution of the Jewish state land was strictly entailed, Num. xxxvi. 7, and might not be alienated, 1 Kings xxi. 3. The purpose of this policy no doubt was to give Israel a strong national militia capable of maintaining the independence of the kingdom. Deprived of this the prophet sees his countrymen the victims of foreign aggression, whereby houses great and fair are laid in ruins, and the land once so coveted becomes unproductive for want of men to till it. Ten acres of vineyard yield only one bath, about eight and a half gallons, and the husbandman who sows a homer, about twelve bushels, instead of thirty fold will receive back but one-tenth part.

11, 12. The second woe is against drunkenness, a sin ever condemned in the Bible in the strongest terms, and it is noteworthy how plainly the prophet points out here its debasing effects on the mind. The drunkard loses his power of "regarding God's dealings" with mankind: his faculties of thought and understanding are weakened and stupified, his conscience becomes inactive, while his animal passions grow each day more intense and violent.

13—17. A drunken nation becomes incapable of self-defence, and Isaiah sees famine and pestilence following upon the track of foreign invasion. The word translated "hell" is "sheol," i. e. the grave, which is now filled with the dead: for into it Jerusalem's glory, i. e. its nobles,

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their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

ⁿ ch. 2, 9,
11, 17.

15 And ⁿthe mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled :

² Or, *the holy God.*

³ Heb. *the God the holy.*

16 but the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and ^{2 3}God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.

^o ch. 10, 16.

17 Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of ^othe fat ones shall strangers eat.

18 ¶ Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope :

^p ch. 66, 5.
Jer. 17, 15.
Amos 5, 18.
² Pet. 3, 3, 4.

19 ^pthat 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* !

⁴ Heb. *that say concerning evil, It is good, &c.*

^q Prov. 3, 7.
Rom. 1, 22.
& 12, 16.

20 Woe unto them ⁴that call evil good, and good evil ; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness ; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter !

⁵ Heb. *before their face.*

21 Woe unto *them that are* ^qwise in their own eyes, and prudent ⁵in their own sight !

its multitude, its busy din (so the word translated “pomp” should be rendered), and its once joyous people descend together. High and low share the same fate, and God alone is exalted by the solemn lesson of chastisement. So severe is the visitation that Judæa becomes common pasture land, whither strangers, i. e. foreigners, drive their flocks, and roam at will over the whole country. This denunciation was literally fulfilled during the exile at Babylon.

18, 19. The third woe falls upon those who scoff at God’s long-suffering, and because judgment is delayed deny that sin will finally be punished (2 St. Pet. iii. 3, 4). And this unbelief begins often in mere levity ; for Isaiah’s word “vanity” is constantly used in the Bible of the absence of serious thought. Men begin with the slight cords of frivolity, which would snap asunder in horror at the thought of wilful sin : but gradually the cord thickens till it becomes a cart-rope, with which like oxen yoked to a wain they must drag wearily along a heavy load of wickedness.

20. The fourth woe strikes all those who pervert the principles of morality.

21. The fifth woe reaches to the very root of sin. Men become irreligious (woe iii.), and learn to ignore the distinction between right and wrong (woe iv.), by following their own self-will, and preferring the darkness of human reasoning to that heavenly wisdom of which the very beginning is the fear of the Lord.

22 ^r Woe unto *them that are* mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: Before CHRIST
cir. 760.

23 which ^s justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! r ver. 11.
s Prov. 17. 15.
& 24. 24.

24 Therefore ^t as ² the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so ^u their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. t Ex. 15. 7.
2 Heb. the tongue of fire.
u Job 18. 16.
Hos. 9. 16.
Amos 2. 9.

25 ^x 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 ^y the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were ^y torn in the midst of the streets. ^z For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. x 2 Kin. 22.
13, 17.
y Jer. 4. 24.
3 Or, as dung.
z Lev. 26. 14, &c.
ch. 9. 12, 17, 21. & 10. 4.
a ch. 11. 12.

26 ^a And he will lift up an ensign to the nations

22, 23. The last, like the second woe, is against drunkenness, but with especial reference to the rulers. They are sarcastically described as heroes at the revel, and men of valour in mixing drugs and spices with the wine to make it more intoxicating. Debased by such habits they sacrifice their public duties to their private greed, and by acquitting the wicked for bribes thereby rob the innocent. For no man is sure of the fruit of his labours wherever the administration of justice is corrupt.

24, 25. The first two woes were each followed by a specific denunciation of punishment: the last four are now included in one stern general sentence of utter destruction. The Divine anger is compared to a "tongue of fire" (see margin) leaping rapidly from stalk to stalk among the stubble, denoting the rapidity, as the burning of the stubble portrays the irresistible might, of God's visitation. But we also see that internal decay at the very root had preceded punishment, and that all their promises of amendment had been as blossoms so scorched by the heat as to become fine dust, blown away by the wind, and bearing no fruit. In ver. 25 there is apparently an allusion to the great earthquake in Uzziah's days (Amos i. 1. Zech. xiv. 5.): but in this visitation the loss of human life shall be so great that men's bodies shall be—not "torn," but as in the margin—as *dung* cast forth from the houses into the streets for the scavengers to remove, instead of having the decent rites of burial. The last clause, "For all this," &c., is the refrain of the prophecy against Samaria, ch. x.; its repetition here indicates that God's visitation of Judah will be not less stern than that of Israel.

26—30. Upon this general denunciation follows a more specific declaration of Judah's sure fate, should she finally reject Christ (St. Matt. xxi. 41.). It is founded upon the latter part of Deut. xxviii., a chapter which forms the standpoint of all prophetic threatenings. The land of Canaan belongs to the Jews only by right of the Levitical covenant: whenever

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^b ch. 7. 18.

^c Deut. 28. 49.

^d Ps. 72. 8.

^e Mal. 1. 11.

^f Joel 2. 7.

^g Dan. 5. 6.

^h Jer. 5. 10.

ⁱ ch. 8. 22.

^j Jer. 4. 23.

^k Lam. 3. 2.

^l Ezek. 32. 7, 8.

^m Or, *distress*.

ⁿ Or, *when it is light, it shall be dark in the destructions thereof.*

from far, and will ^b hiss unto them from ^c the end of the earth: and, behold, ^d they shall come with speed swiftly:

27 none shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither ^e shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken:

28 ^f whose arrows *are* sharp, and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind:

29 their roaring *shall be* like a lion, they shall roar like young lions: 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* ^g look unto the land, behold darkness *and* ^h sorrow, ⁱ and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.

they break its terms their title to its possession ceases, and foreign invaders—here, as Theodoret points out, the Romans—appear, not by the changes and chances of earthly politics, but as God's army. The approach of these invaders is described with the utmost pictorial power, so that we seem to behold them hastening onward in unwearied might, till at length they string their bows for the battle, and the sound of their war-chariots rushing on like a whirlwind tells of the gathering charge.

26. "Will hiss." Like the bee-master, who calls the swarm to him by a low continuous whistle (ch. vii. 18.).

28. "Their horses' hoofs." Great stress is laid upon their hardness, because horses were not shod as in modern times.

29. "Yea, they shall roar." Not the same word as that used in the preceding clause, but one signifying "to growl." It does not mean the roar with which the lion rouses himself to seek his prey, but the growl with which he seizes it. So in the next verse, "And he shall growl over him like the angry growling of the sea," the thought is not of the loud bellowing of the storm, but of that low and more terrifying moan, which accompanies the gathering tempest. In both these verses the growl implies that Judah is down, lying crushed and helpless beneath the onslaught of the enemy. See ch. xxxi. 4.

30. "And if one look." Hebrew poetry is remarkable for the rapidity with which it passes from one metaphor to another, but here the growling of the sea suggests the idea of a storm. The translation of this verse is very difficult, but according to its arrangement in the Hebrew, it should be rendered thus: "If one look to the land, behold darkness! distress and light! and it is dark in its clouds." The prophet hears the angry moaning of the sea, and feels that a storm is gathering. He turns therefore to the land, and there he sees the elements struggling. In one

ISAIAH, VI.

CHAPTER VI.

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1 *Isaiah, in a vision of the Lord in his glory, 5 being terrified, is confirmed for his message. 9 He sheweth the obstinacy of the people unto their desolation. 13 A remnant shall be saved.*

IN the year that ^aking Uzziah died I ^bsaw also ^a2 Kin. 15. 7.
the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted ^b1 Kin. 22. 19.
up, and ²his train filled the temple. John 12. 41.
Rev. 4. 2.

2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six ²Or,
wings; with twain he covered his face, and ^cwith ^cEzek. 1. 11.
twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. *the skirts thereof.*

region of the sky there is distress, in another it is still light; but rapidly all hope vanishes, and the whole cloud region is darkened over, and a black pall of anguish covers all the earth.

CHAPTER VI.

In this chapter we have Isaiah's call to the prophetic office, and his solemn inauguration therein by a vision of unparalleled magnificence. As the three reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah form a period of sixty-one years, and as Isaiah probably lived to see the beginning of Manasseh's reign, he must have been very young when thus set apart for God's special service, yet not younger than Jeremiah (Jer. i. 6.). It is an interesting question why this chapter should be placed at the end, and not at the beginning of the three previous prophecies so thoughtfully grouped together as the summary of Isaiah's teaching. The answer is to be found in ch. v. itself. It pronounces the final exclusion of the Jewish nation from its covenant relation to God, and the complete darkening of every ray of light in its horizon, consequent upon its final rejection of Christ. The prophet therefore appends this vision in proof that he does not speak without authority, but as one whose lips had been hallowed by the live coal from the altar. Read thus in connection with ch. i., what weight must it not have given to that solemn summons to the nation, exulting over Sennacherib's defeat, and rejoicing in the restoration of Jehovah's public worship, to consecrate itself to God by a real and true repentance.

1. "The year that king Uzziah died" was B.C. 758, the year, as St. Jerome remarks, of Romulus' reputed birth: so hoar is the antiquity of the Bible.

"I saw." Not the word for prophetic vision used in ch. ii. 1, but that for actual sight, though here in an ecstasy. Isaiah was delivered from that bodily dulness which can see only things earthly, in order that he might gaze on things spiritual. Comp. 2 Kings vi. 17.

"The Lord." Not Jehovah, but the ruler, or sovereign of the world (see ch. i. 24.). As nevertheless it was our Lord Jesus Christ (St. John xii. 41.), He is called Jehovah in ver. 5. He is seated in human form on a lofty throne, habited in a flowing robe, the fringes of which fill the temple.

2. "Above it." Really "above Him." The seraphs were not standing upon the ground, but, poised upon their wings, they encircled the Deity in the air. *Seraph* comes from a root signifying "to burn."

Before
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² Heb. *this cried to this.*

⁴ Rev. 4. 8.

³ Heb. *his glory is the fulness of the whole earth.*

^e Ps. 72. 19.

⁴ Heb. *thresholds.*

^f Ex. 40. 34.

1 Kin. 8. 10.

^g Ex. 4. 10.

& 6. 30.

Judg. 6. 22.

& 13. 22.

Jer. 1. 6.

⁵ Heb. *cut off.*

⁶ Heb. *and in his hand a live coal.*

^h Rev. 8. 3.

⁷ Heb. *caused it to touch.*

¹ See Jer. 1. 9. Dan. 10. 16.

3 And ²one cried unto another, and said, ^dHoly, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: ^{3e}the whole earth *is* full of his glory.

4 And the posts of the ⁴door moved at the voice of him that cried, and ^fthe house was filled with smoke.

5 ^gThen said I, Woe *is* me! for I am ⁵undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, ⁶having a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from off ^hthe altar:

7 and he ^{7¹}laid *it* upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

Apparently they were winged human figures, but bright and luminous, angels, as Kimchi calls them, of fire. The covered face and feet denote the utmost reverence: the wings for flight signify activity in God's service. So Ezekiel's cherubs covered their whole bodies while moving with the greatest rapidity, and had the appearance of transparent coals of fire (Ezek. i. 11—13.).

3. St. Jerome remarks on this verse that the seraphs show forth the mystery of the Trinity in one Deity, and testify that not the Jewish Temple only as of old, but the whole earth is full of God's glory. Comp. Rev. iv. 8, and note that holiness is the especial attribute of God.

4. "With smoke" from the altar mentioned in ver. 6, but bringing back to the mind the memory of that cloud of glory which filled the temple, when God first took possession of the Holy of Holies (2 Chron. v. 13, 14.).

5. The sight of God's majesty fills Isaiah's mind not merely with terror, because "no man shall see God and live" (Exod. xxxiii. 20.), but also with a deep sense of his own sinfulness. This moral uncleanness is connected in his case with the lips as being the organs with which as a prophet he must deliver God's message. A further but general reason is given in St. Matt. xii. 37. Compare also St. Peter's conduct (St. Luke v. 8.).

6, 7. The "live coal" is explained by Grotius as being a symbol of prophetic inspiration, while Jerome regards it as signifying generally the work of the Holy Ghost. Both these senses are instructive, but neither is the primary meaning of the seraph's act; for we are expressly told that by the touching of Isaiah's lips, his "iniquity was taken away and his sin purged." Not only is fire the universal purifier, but the burning of a sacrifice specially typified the sufferings of Christ; and the sacrificial fire applied to the prophet's lips, as that member of whose uncleanness he had complained, signifies that his sins must be purged away by the merits of that sacrifice which alone can take away sins, before he can be sanctified to God's service. In Jeremiah's case the gift of inspiration

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for ^k us? Then said I, Before CHRIST
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² Here *am* I; send me.

9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, ¹ Hear ye ^{3 4} indeed, but understand not; and see ye ⁵ indeed, but perceive not. k Gen. 1. 26.
& 3. 22.
& 11. 7.
2 Heb. Be-
hold me.
1 ch. 43. 8.
Matt. 13. 14.
Mark 4. 12.
Luke 8. 10.
John 12. 40.
Acts 28. 26.
Rom. 11. 8.

10 Make ^m the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; ⁿ lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. 3 Or, without
ceasing, &c.
4 Heb. hear
ye in hear-
ing, &c.
5 Heb. in
seeing.
m Ps. 119. 70.
ch. 63. 17.
n Jer. 5. 21.
o Mic. 3. 12.
6 Heb. deso-
late with
desolation.
p 2 Kin. 25. 21.

11 Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, ^o Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be ⁶ utterly desolate,

12 ^p and the LORD have removed men far away, and *there be* a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

13 But yet in it *shall be* a tenth, ⁷ and *it shall* 7 Or, when it
is returned,
and hath been
broused.

was conveyed by the touching of his mouth by the hand of Jehovah (Jer. i. 9.); but in every other respect the two cases are entirely dissimilar.

8. "The Lord," as in ver. 1. "For us," so Gen. i. 26. "Here am I." No sooner is Isaiah cleansed from sin, than his fear of God ceases, and he offers himself readily for God's service. Compare Jeremiah's reluctance (Jer. i. 6.), and subsequent joy at being made a prophet (Jer. xv. 16.).

9. "Understand not." This sad note of disappointment is often heard in Isaiah's prophecies, see especially ch. liii. 1. It was no expectation of immediate success which encouraged him to undertake his office, nor did his teaching save the Jews nationally. In spite of everything they rejected Christ, as the Saviour Himself subsequently foretold (St. Matt. xiii. 13—15.).

10. "Make," &c. The deliverance of God's message forces upon man the alternative of accepting or rejecting it. As the Jews rejected it, Hezekiah's reign being followed by something approaching to national apostasy in Manasseh's time, they were hardened thereby. See on this twofold aspect of God's offer of mercy 1 Cor. i. 23, 24, and, as a corrective to false inferences from it, Rom. vii. 13.

11, 12. "And there be a great forsaking," i. e. until there be much that is forsaken, vast regions left untilled and uninhabited in the midst of Judæa. In reply to Isaiah's anxious question, "Lord, how long?" the solemn answer is given, that Israel's blindness is to continue till the judgment is complete; till Assyrian and Chaldean, Greek and Roman, Arab and Turk, have reduced the land once so fertile to a waste, still covered with the ruins of a glorious past.

13. This verse is a perpetual prophecy, and describes the condition of

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² Or, *stock*,
or, *stem*.
⁴ Ezra 9. 2.
Mal. 2. 15.
Rom. 11. 5.

return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose ² substance *is* in them, when they cast *their leaves*: so ⁴ the holy seed *shall be* the substance thereof.

CHAPTER VII.

¹ Ahaz, being troubled with fear of Rezin and Pekah, is comforted by Isaiah. ¹⁰ Ahaz, having liberty to choose a sign, and refusing it, hath for a sign, Christ promised. ¹⁷ His judgment is prophesied to come by Assyria.

cir. 742.
^a 2 Kin. 16. 5.
² Chron. 28.
5, 6.

¶ AND it came to pass in the days of ^a 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 war against it, but could not prevail against it.

the Jewish nation permanently from the days of Sennacherib down to the present time. There is always to be in it a tenth, or tithe, God's share of the fruits of the earth, while other nations perish for ever. This tenth is perpetually to revive, but only to be again and again destroyed, its being "eaten" signifying its being consumed, or more literally, *burnt*. For Israel when cut down is not killed thereby. While cedars and all trees of the fir tribe are killed by being felled, Israel is like the teil, or terebinth tree, and the oak, whose substance, i. e. vital power, remains in them when they—not "cast their leaves," but—"are cut down," so that from their roots suckers spring up in which the parent tree seems to live once again. Even more marvellous is the reason given for Israel's intense vitality. There always exists in it a "holy seed," which God from time to time uses for His own Divine purposes. So unique a prophecy followed by so unique a history as that of the Jews, may well convince us that Isaiah, when inditing these words in king Uzziah's days, long before the wasting began, spake not of himself, but as he was moved by the Holy Ghost. May we not also conclude that as Israel's charmed existence continues, so there is still in it a holy seed which has a work yet to do for God in the world? (Rom. xi. 15, 25, 26.)

CHAPTERS VII—IX. 7.

This series of prophecies, extending to the end of ch. xii., is of marvellous interest. Isaiah, who during the sixteen years of Jotham's prosperous reign had been slowly ripening for his work, now stands forth in the days of the weak and wicked Ahaz, as the great statesman of Judah as well as the prophet commissioned to reveal more than any other the chief truths connected with the person and offices of Messiah. Even before Jotham's death mischief had been brewing; for the kings of Damascus and Samaria had formed a league against Judah (2 Kings xv. 37.). Of "Rezin" little is known; but the fact that he stripped Judah of the important port of Elath on the Red Sea (2 Kings xvi. 6.), proves that his military enterprises were on a large scale. As for "Pekah" he was one

2 And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria ² is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees ² of the wood are moved with the wind.

Before
CHRIST
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² Heb.
resteth on
Ephraim.

^b ch. 10. 21.

³ That is,
The rem-
nant shall
return:

See ch. 6. 13.
& 10. 21.

3 Then said the LORD unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, ^b and ³ Shear-jashub thy son, at the end of the ^c conduit of the upper pool in the ⁴ highway of the fuller's field;

^c 2 Kin. 18. 17. ch. 36. 2. ⁴ Or, causeway.

of those military adventurers who after the fall of Jehu's dynasty made the crown of Israel the prize of their daring: and as he maintained his power for twenty years, until Hoshea murdered him, he must have been a man of considerable ability and energy. Now as Jeroboam II. had reduced all Coele-Syria except Judæa into subjection to Samaria, it had probably become the settled opinion of all the fighting men of Israel, that nothing was wanted to consolidate their empire but the subjugation of the sister kingdom, and the placing some Ephraimite captain, like the son of Tabeël, upon David's throne as viceroy. Joash, the father of Jeroboam II., had actually captured Jerusalem (2 Chron. xxv. 23.), and the fear of a renewed attack had made Uzziah carefully strengthen the fortifications of his capital (2 Chron. xxvi. 9, 15.). During Jotham's reign the confederates had done little, but the feeble conduct of Ahaz quickly encouraged them to proceed to open war. According to Mr. George Smith, *Assyrian Eponym. Canon*, p. 200, this was their second attack upon Jerusalem, and took place in B.C. 734, in the eighth year of Ahaz' reign.

2. "Was moved . . . as the trees," &c. The prophet's metaphor sets beautifully before us how the very sturdiest men of Judah bent their heads in terror at the approach of the confederate army; and not without reason. Already Pekah had defeated Judah, and slain in one day a hundred and twenty thousand men (2 Chron. xxviii. 6.): and now that Rezin had added his forces, it seemed as if all hope were gone.

3. "Shear-jashub." The names both of Isaiah (the salvation of Jehovah) and of his sons are full of significance. Shear-jashub, i. e. a remnant shall return, embodied the great truth that Israel could not wholly perish (ch. iv. 2.).

"At the end of the conduit." The most probable account of the spot where Ahaz met Isaiah is as follows. South-west of Jerusalem, at the entrance of the valley of Hinnom, there gushes out of the limestone rock its sole living spring, called "the waters of Shiloah" in ch. viii. 6. These were conveyed away in two conduits, whereof the one led to the upper pool, called also the king's pool (Neh. ii. 14.), because it watered the royal garden (Neh. iii. 15.): the other to the lower pool (Isa. xxii. 9.), whence the people of the city obtained their main supply of water. Now though Jerusalem was well provided with cisterns for storing up rain, yet the command of this spring was of the utmost importance, both to the besiegers and the besieged. Most probably therefore Ahaz was visiting this western side of the city, with his captains and engineers, to take measures for its protection.

"The fuller's field." Literally, "field of the treader." The business

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² Heb. *let not thy heart be tender.*

³ Or, *waken.*

⁴ Prov. 21. 30.
ch. 8. 10.

^o 2 Sam. 8. 6.

⁴ Heb. *from a people.*

^f See 2 Chron. 20. 20.

⁵ Or, *Do ye not believe? it is because ye are not stable.*

⁶ Heb. *And the LORD added to speak.*

4 and say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, ² neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah.

5 Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying,

6 Let us go up against Judah, and ³ 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, ⁴ It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.

8 ^e For the head of Syria *is* Damascus, and the head of Damascus *is* Rezin; and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, ⁴ that it be not a people.

9 And the head of Ephraim *is* Samaria, and the head of Samaria *is* Remaliah's son. ^{f5} If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

10 ¶ ⁶ Moreover the LORD spake again unto Ahaz, saying,

of the fuller is to remove grease from cloth by dressing it with a kind of marl: here the word refers to the ordinary method of washing clothes in the East by treading them in a tank fed from the fountain, after which they were spread out on this field to dry.

4. Ahaz, while "taking heed" and using every precaution, is nevertheless to "be quiet," putting his trust in God. For the two kings just now so formidable are soon to become mere tails or ends of smoking firebrands, no longer blazing, but ready to be extinguished, as indeed they both were by the armies of Tiglath-Pileser.

6. "Vex . . . make a breach." After harassing the Jews by overrunning their territory, they hoped finally to make a breach in the walls of Jerusalem, and take it by storm. "Tabeal" (more correctly Tabeel as in Ezra iv. 7.) was some Syrian nobleman, well known at the time as a dangerous rival of Ahaz, but now forgotten. The name in Syriac means "God is good," answering to the Hebrew Tobiah.

8. "Within threescore and five years." This allotted period of years does not end with the carrying away of the Samaritans into captivity by Shalmaneser, or rather by his successor Sargon (see ch. xx. 1.), in B.C. 720, but with the peopling of their country by Cushites and other heathen nations apparently by Esarhaddon, the noble Assnapper of Ezra iv. 10. Just about sixty-five years after the siege of Jerusalem we find Esarhaddon busy in Palestine. In B.C. 673 he defeated Tirhakah at Askelon, and drove the Egyptians out of the country; in 672 he laid siege to Tyre, and in 671 released Manasseh from captivity. In these campaigns, finding so large a tract of fertile country depopulated, he settled it with colonists from other portions of his dominions (2 Kings xvii. 24.).

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11 ^ε Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ² 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; *Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?*

14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; ^h Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear ⁱ a son, and ³ shall call his name ^k Immanuel.

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^ε Judg. 6. 36,
&c.
Matt. 12. 38.

² Or, *make thy petition deep.*

^h Matt. 1. 23.
Luke 1. 31,
34.

ⁱ ch. 9. 6.

³ Or, *thou, O virgin, shall call:*

^k ch. 8. 8.

See Gen. 4. 1, 25. & 16. 11. & 29. 32. & 30. 6, 8. 1 Sam. 4. 21.

11. "A sign." The meaning of this word is rendered obscure by its place having been taken in modern theology, and even partially in our Authorised Version, especially in St. John's Gospel, by the word miracle. A sign from God will generally be something supernatural, i. e. a miracle, but not always or necessarily so. Compare Gen. ix. 12, and 1 Sam. ii. 34, with Isa. xxxviii. 7. The choice of Ahaz was unlimited. He might select any token, miraculous or natural, that would convince him that God's presence was with Isaiah.

12. "Neither will I tempt," &c. A right principle (Deut. vi. 16.) wrongly used. To tempt God usually implies a want of faith: here, when God offered to give proof, the refusal of it signified that Ahaz had made up his mind to act for himself without regard to God's will.

13. "O house of David." As there was a special covenant between the descendants of David and Jehovah, it was the more wrong in Ahaz to disobey: and well might God be weary when His covenant of continual mercies was so perpetually set at nought.

14. "Behold a virgin." The word used here is not the ordinary term, *bethulah*, said to come from a root signifying "separation," because unmarried women lived in the East in seclusion, but *almah*, from a root signifying "to be strong," and so used of a woman full grown and ripe for marriage. Thus Rebekah was an *almah*, Gen. xxiv. 43, and Miriam, Exod. ii. 8; and in Syriac it is the usual term for youths and maidens just grown up. The Jews quote Prov. xxx. 19 in proof that *almah* does not always mean a virgin, but the passage is highly allegorical; and even *bethulah* sometimes loses its proper meaning, see Deut. xxii. 19, and Joel i. 8, in which latter place it is used of a widow. While then *almah* signifies any young woman ripe for marriage, yet it suggests the idea of a virgin, and such is its ordinary use in the Old Testament. It is noteworthy that the Septuagint Version, made before any controversy arose, translates it *ἡ παρθένος*, *the virgin*, while Aquila and the versions made after the uprise of Christianity, render it *νεάνις*, *a young woman*.

As Hezekiah was at this time seventeen years of age, and Shear-jashub verging on manhood, it is absurd to suppose that Isaiah meant either his own wife or Hezekiah's mother: and the suggestion that he referred to some young woman just about to be wedded either by himself or by Ahaz is too frivolous to need refutation.

On the other hand it is probable that the term *almah* was purposely chosen as not necessarily involving a miracle to the mind of Ahaz. He had refused a sign, and it is not the method of God's dealings to force

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- 15 Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.
- ¹ See ch. 8. 4. 16 ¹For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of ^m both her kings.
- ^m 2 Kin. 15. 30. & 16. 9. ⁿ 2 Chr. 28. 19. 17 ⁿThe LORD shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that
- ^o 1 Kin. 12. 16. have not come, from the day that ^oEphraim departed from Judah; *even* the king of Assyria.

conviction upon the unwilling. To him Isaiah's words were simply "a dark saying," such as prophets loved to use, of which the general meaning was plain, namely, that in about two years all danger would have passed away. To us the words have a fuller and nobler meaning. If Jesus of Nazareth be what we believe Him to be, His birth of a pure virgin necessarily follows from His sinlessness. Had He shared with us a nature tainted by Adam's fall, He would not have been the Lamb without blemish and without spot. And this great mystery of His immaculate conception is contained in the primary and simplest rendering of the prophet's words.

"Immanuel." As proper names in Hebrew are constantly formed by compounding some one of the titles of the Deity with another word, Ahaz probably took the name Immanuel as a mere general assurance that God would be with him by His providence. But when we put together the leading points in Isaiah's declaration, that it was the Lord's, the world-ruler's, own sign, an almah's child, and one Whose name was "God with us," our minds are naturally led up to the thought of Him Who is both God and man, and in Whose one person are united two whole and perfect natures, the human and the Divine; and Who thus can be the "mediator of a better covenant," because He shares the natures of both the contracting parties, previously separated from one another by an impassable gulf. See Gal. iii. 20.

15. "Butter and honey." The Jews did not know how to make butter, and the word really means curds or clotted cream. This and honey are not the ordinary food of infants, but denote the products of a pastoral as opposed to an agricultural life. Corn can be grown only where there is security, but shepherds with their flocks and herds can get out of the track of war, and when it is over, all such as have escaped will find abundant pasturage for their cattle. So also honey, which is largely produced in Palestine by wild bees (1 Sam. xiv. 25, 26.), would be found in plenty as soon as peace was restored. The eating then of butter and honey "until the child shall know" how to distinguish between good and evil, signifies that for the next two or three years, the state of things would be too insecure to admit of agriculture. The eating of curds sweetened with honey does not suggest any idea of suffering.

16. "The land," &c. Rather, "The land whose two kings thou abhorrest shall be forsaken." This depopulation of Syria and Samaria was the result of the invasion of Tiglath-Pileser. See 2 Kings xv. 29; xvi. 9.

17. "The king of Assyria." Isaiah had promised deliverance from

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18 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD ^p shall hiss for the fly that *is* in the uttermost ^{Before CHRIST} part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that *is* ^{ch. 5. 26.} in the land of Assyria.

19 And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in ^q the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all ² bushes.

20 In the same day shall the Lord shave with a ^r razor that is hired, *namely*, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it 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;

the two firebrands, of which nothing but smoking ends would remain. With more than human prescience he now suddenly points to Assyria as the real source of danger. Ahaz looked to it for help: but Isaiah saw in those military empires growing up on the Tigris and Euphrates the threat of greater evils than any that had happened to Judah since Ephraim under Jeroboam had rent Solomon's empire in twain.

18. "Day" used, as often elsewhere, for an indefinite duration of time. Here it includes the long period during which Palestine was the battle ground between Assyria and Egypt.

"Rivers." The word is Egyptian, and signifies the canals and branches of the Nile, which enclose the Delta; at "the uttermost part" of which began the long Nile valley, reaching to Syene on the borders of Nubia.

"Fly . . . bee." The Egyptians are compared to flies, because of the abundance of these insects in the flat well-watered plains overflowed by the Nile, see Exod. viii. 21. As bees delight in woods, there may be also reference here to the natural characteristics of Assyria; but notices of bees are very rare in the cuneiform inscriptions. For "hiss," see ch. v. 26.

19. "Desolate valleys." Valleys which men never visit, but which will not escape the invaders. Even the holes in the rocks will be searched by them, so that nothing will escape (see ch. ii. 10, 19.).

20. "The head, and the hair of the feet," i. e. the whole body from head to foot, not a hair being allowed to escape. The cutting off of the beard is the greatest possible insult to an Oriental (see 2 Sam. x. 4.). There may also be in this shaving an allusion to Judah being a Nazarite or consecrated nation. By being shorn it would become unconsecrated. The passage well illustrates the nature of prophecy. Isaiah comprehends in one picture both the immediate and final effects of Ahaz's evil policy. Not Tiglath-Pileser alone, but Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar are combined in the fulfilment of these denunciations.

21. "That a man shall nourish." The Hebrew is "should a man keep alive." Population shall be so sparse, and agriculture so utterly destroyed, that should a man be fortunate enough to be left at the end of the war in possession of a heifer and a few sheep, he will have such

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² Heb. *in the
midst of the
land.*

22 and it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk *that* they shall give he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left ² in the land.

⁵ ch. 5. 6. 23 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, ^a it shall *even* be for briers and thorns.

24 With arrows and with bows shall *men* come thither; because all the land shall become briers and thorns.

25 And *on* all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle.

CHAPTER VIII.

^a ch. 30. 8.
Hab. 2. 2.

² Heb.
*In making
speed to the
spoil he
hasteneth
the prey,
or, Make
speed, &c.*

¹ *In Maher-shalal-hash-baz, he prophesieth that Syria and Israel shall be subdued by Assyria. 5 Judah likewise for their infidelity. 9 God's judgments shall be irresistible. 11 Comfort shall be to them that fear God. 19 Great afflictions to idolaters.*

MOREOVER the LORD said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and ^a write in it with a man's pen concerning ² Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

unlimited pasture ground for them that their produce will be most abundant. The milk of sheep was more prized in old time than that of cows, Deut. xxxii. 14, the latter being usually eaten only when curdled.

23. "A thousand vines at a thousand silverlings." In Cant. viii. 11 we learn that it was usual to let out vineyards at an annual rent. The rent mentioned there is 1000 shekels as here, but the number of vines is not given. Burekhardt says that the rent of the vineyards in Mount Lebanon in 1811 was a piastre, about 2*d.* a vine, while here it is a shekel or 2*s.* 3*d.* The prophet therefore completes his picture of desolation by saying that spots once so famous for their wines as to be let at an enormous rent will be utterly abandoned, and become mere coverts for wild animals.

25. "There shall not come thither the fear." This translation is incorrect. What Isaiah says is "And all the hills that were digged with the mattock, where never came the fear of briers and thorns, shall be a come grazing-ground, and a treading place for sheep." Hill-sides (see ch. v. 1.), where once were precious vineyards so carefully tilled that weed was never seen there, shall now be left to themselves, and throw up such a tangled mass of herbage, that the cattle shall choose them for their favourite resort.

CHAPTER VIII.

1. "A great roll." Heb. a great tablet, probably of metal, on which Isaiah was to "write" or engrave "with a man's pen," i.e. an ordinary

2 And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record,
^b Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jebe-
 rechiah.

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^b 2 Kin. 16. 10.

3 And I ² went unto the prophetess; and she con-
 ceived, and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me,
 Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

² Heb.
 approach-
 ed unto.

4 ^c For before the child shall have knowledge to
 cry, My father, and my mother, ^{3d} the riches of
 Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken
 away before the king of Assyria.

^c See chap.
 7. 16.

³ Or, he that
 is before the
 king of Assyria
 shall take away
 the riches,
 &c.

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5 ¶ The LORD spake also unto me again, saying,
 6 Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of
^e Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice ^f in Rezin and
 Remaliah's son;

^d 2 Kin. 15.

23. & 16. 9.
 ch. 17. 3.

^e Neh. 3. 15.
 John 9. 7.

^f ch. 7. 1, 2, 6.

7 now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up
 upon them the waters of the river, strong and
 many, *even* ^g the king of Assyria, and all his glory:
 and he shall come up over all his channels, and go
 over all his banks:

^g ch. 10. 12.

stylus, the Jews sometimes writing on parchment, Jer. xxxvi. 4, but more frequently scratching the letters on plates of metal or stone, Job xix. 24. Jer. xvii. 1. The real meaning is that the writing was to be in ordinary characters and so large as to be easily read by every one. Isaiah would then set the tablet up in some public place, and as soon as general curiosity was excited would explain its meaning orally.

2. "And I took." The tense is future, "And I will take." The speaker is still Jehovah, and it indicates the great importance of the act that the Deity should thus cite witnesses, and those men of such high rank. "Urijah" was High-priest in Uzziah's days (2 Kings xvi. 10.), and was probably now advanced in years, and "Zechariah" was perhaps the king's father-in-law (2 Kings xviii. 2.).

3. "Call." The child was to have for its name the words previously inscribed upon the mysterious tablet, and would thereby perpetuate the prophecy.

4. "For before," &c. In this verse we have in plain unenigmatical language the lower meaning of the prophecy contained in ch. vii. 14—16. But as a rule this lower and primary sense of a prophet's words is not their real import, but is the veil only of something more universally true and more Divine. So here, Isaiah quickly passes beyond the particular circumstances which had called forth the prophecy.

6. "This people." Not Judah, but the Israelites, who despised the house of David, whose small waters, like those of Siloam, flowed along gently, yet carrying a blessing with them, and preferred a soldier-king, like Pekah. In thus rejecting David's house, they also rejected the Messiah, of Whom these gentle waters were a type (St. Matt. xii. 19, 20.).

7. "The waters of the river," i. e. of the Euphrates. The Israelites,

Before
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n ch. 30. 28.

² Heb. *the fulness of the breadth of thy land shall be the stretchings out of his wings.*

i ch. 7. 14.

k Joel 3. 9, 11.

³ Or, *yet.*

l Job 5. 12.

m ch. 7. 7.

n ch. 7. 14.

Acts 5. 33, 39.

Rom. 8. 31.

⁴ Heb. *in strength of hand.*

o ch. 7. 2.

p 1 Pet. 3.

14, 15.

8 and he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, ^h he shall reach *even* to the neck; and ² the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O ⁱ Immanuel.

9 ¶ ^k Associate yourselves, O ye people, ³ and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces.

10 ^l Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, ^m and it shall not stand: ⁿ for God *is* with us.

11 For the LORD spake thus to me ⁴ 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 ^o this people shall say, A confederacy; ^p neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.

not content with rejecting Judah, had made open war upon it; but in the midst of the war the armies of Assyria appeared and overran their country like the mighty waters of the Euphrates, when, swollen by the melting snows of Armenia, it leaves its bed, and overflowing its banks, carries ruin and devastation far and wide.

8. "He shall pass through," i. e. the king of Assyria, still described as a river, will overrun Judah as well as Israel, but will not completely overwhelm it. The inundation reaches only to the neck: the head escapes.

"His wings." Properly the tributary streams of the Euphrates, but with a literal reference to the wings of an army, where the cavalry was posted.

"Thy land, O Immanuel." Isaiah here calls Immanuel the lord of the land of Judah. He could be therefore neither the prophet's son, nor a babe as yet unborn of the royal house.

9. "Associate yourselves." Encouraged by the thought of Immanuel being Judah's lord, the prophet ironically exhorts Judah's enemies to band themselves together, but only to be thrice broken in pieces.

10. "It shall not stand: for God is with us." Lit. "for Immanuel." Our language will not lend itself to the pregnant force of the original. The thought that Judah has an Immanuel, God present with mankind, makes the prophet feel a firm assurance that Judah cannot perish.

11. "With a strong hand." God spake to Isaiah with all the overpowering might of inspiration, commanding him not to follow the example of the unbelieving people of Judah, whose conduct is condemned by Jehovah in the next four verses.

12. "A confederacy." Rather a conspiracy, the word signifying, not a league like that between Pekah and Rezin, but treason against a lawful

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13 ^a Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and ^r let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. Before CHRIST
cir. 741.

14 And ^s he shall be for a sanctuary; but for ^t a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. q Num. 20. 12.
r Ps. 76. 7.
Luko 12. 5.
s Ezek. 11. 16.
t ch. 28. 16.
Luko 2. 34.
Rom. 9. 33.
1 Pet. 2. 8.

15 And many among them shall ^u stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. u Matt. 21. 44.
Luko 20. 18.
Rom. 9. 32.
& 11. 25.

16 Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. x ch. 54. 8.

17 And I will wait upon the LORD, that ^x hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I ^y will look for him. y Hab. 2. 3.
Luko 2. 25,
38.

18 ^z Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me ^a are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion. z Heb. 2. 13.
a Ps. 71. 7.
Zech. 3. 8.

ruler. The meaning probably is, that the populace rendered suspicious by ill success attributed their disasters to treachery; and when the prophet tried to dissuade the rulers from an alliance which seemed so promising as that with the Assyrians, could see in such advice only a conspiracy against their welfare.

14. "A sanctuary," i. e. an asylum.

"Both the houses of Israel," i. e. the two kingdoms of Judah and Ephraim, and in them all the seed of Israel. The prophecy was finally fulfilled in our Lord, St. Matt. xxi. 44. St. Luke ii. 34. Rom. ix. 33. 1 St. Pet. ii. 8.

16. This verse is by some regarded as God's command to the prophet, like those in Dan. xii. 4. Rev. xxii. 10; but the words "my disciples," militate against this view. Rather it is Isaiah who prays the Almighty to bind up the prophecy securely, that it may remain safely guarded until the time for its fulfilment. Instead of "among," it should be "for my disciples," the preposition being the same as in Ps. lxxviii. 18 "for men." Isaiah's testimony is to be reserved for the good of those who throughout all time shall study his words.

17. "I will wait." For himself Isaiah declares that he will wait in faith, looking for those happier days when the veil would be taken away, and Israel be once again God's favoured people.

18. This verse is quoted in Heb. ii. 13 as spoken by the Lord Jesus; for though primarily used by Isaiah of himself and his children, who all bore significative names (ch. vii. 3.), yet Christ is the true Isaiah, the name lit. meaning The Jesus, i. e. the salvation of Jehovah.

"For signs and for wonders." A sign is an indication or pledge of God's Presence, and usually is something supernatural, see on ch. vii. 11. Wonder is properly a "portent," something indicative of the immediate working of the Almighty.

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^b 1 Sam. 28. 8.
ch. 19. 3.
^c ch. 29. 4.
^d Ps. 106. 28.

^e Luke 16. 29.

^f Mic. 3. 6.

² Heb. *no morning.*

19 ¶ And when they shall say unto you, ^b Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards ^c that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living ^d to the dead?

20 ^e To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because ^f *there is* ² no light in them.

21 ¶ And they shall pass through it, hardly bestead and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and ^g curse their king and their God, and look upward.

^h ch. 5. 20.

ⁱ ch. 9. 1

22 And ^h they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, ⁱ dimness of anguish; and *they shall be* driven to darkness.

19. "And when they," &c. Isaiah notices the constantly recurring phenomenon, that those who reject God's guidance, often yield themselves up to the most childish superstitions. The word rendered "them" "that have familiar spirits" properly refers to those who profess to have the power of calling up the spirits of the dead and questioning them. In old time they were styled necromancers. "Wizards," from the old verb "to *wiss*," whence the words "wise," "wit," &c., exactly answers to the Heb., which is literally "the knowing ones." Their peeping, i. e. chirping and muttering, refers to the manner in which these impostors disguised their voices, to make people imagine that the spirits were speaking.

"For the living," i. e. on behalf of, for the sake of. The negative in the previous clause makes it necessary in English to repeat the verb, "Should they seek for the living to the dead?"

20. "To the law," &c. Instead of seeking for knowledge from the spirits of the dead, which have never yet told men anything they did not know before, Isaiah sends us to the Holy Scriptures, and declares that such as reject God's word are men "for whom there is no morning" (see margin). The believer has in revelation not full knowledge, but a growing light, a morning which shall hereafter become the perfect day (1 Cor. xiii. 12. Prov. iv. 18.).

21, 22. "And they shall pass through it," i. e. the land. In this and the next verse the prophet describes with wonderful power the miserable state of the unbelieving Jews during the Assyrian invasions, the whole picture forming a type of the lot of those who pass through life unblest by faith. They wander through the land sore distressed and hungry, but trouble brings no repentance. In the impatience of despair they blaspheme the powers both of earth and heaven: and so whichever way they look, above and below, they see only "trouble and darkness, gloom" of anguish, and in thick darkness they are driven away."

ISAIAH, IX.

CHAPTER IX.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 740.

1 *What joy shall be in the midst of afflictions, by the kingdom and birth of Christ.* 8 *The judgments upon Israel for their pride,* 13 *for their hypocrisy,* 18 *and for their impenitency.*

NEVERTHELESS ^athe dimness *shall not be such* ^ach. 8. 22.
as *was* in her vexation, when at the ^bfirst he ^b2 Kin. 15. 21.
lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of ²Chr. 16. 4.
Naphtali, and ^cafterward did more grievously afflict ^cLev. 26. 24.
her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee ² Kin. 17.
² of the nations. ^{5, 6.}
¹ Chr. 5. 26.

2 ^dThe people that walked in darkness have seen
a great light: they that dwell in the land of the
shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. ^d Matt. 4. 16.
^e Eph. 5. 8, 14.

3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, *and* ³ not in-³ Or, to him.
creased the joy: they joy before thee according to
the joy in harvest, *and as men rejoice* ^e when they ^e Judg. 5. 30.
divide the spoil.

4 ⁴ For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, ⁴ Or,
When thou
brakest.

CHAPTER IX.

1. This verse is very closely connected with the previous chapter, and is the resumption of the promise made in ch. viii. 14, of God being the sanctuary of His people. The translation should be "For there shall not be [perpetual] gloom to her (the land) that was distressed. As the former time troubled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, so the latter time shall make the sea-way glorious, the land beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations." The former time when God humbled Galilee, was when Tiglath-Pileser swept over the country, probably in this very year, B. C. 734, and carried the people into captivity (2 Kings xv. 29.). The latter is that spoken of in St. Matt. iv. 12—16. The sea-way was the region on the west of the sea of Tiberias in Zebulun; "the land beyond Jordan" was that portion of Naphtali which lay on the east of that river. Finally "Galilee of the Gentiles" was the most northerly region of Galilee, and had its name from the large admixture of foreigners and heathens who had settled there.

2. "A great light," even the light of Christ, Who is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world (St. John i. 9.). This light first began to shine in Galilee (St. John ii. 11.). The darkness in which the people dwelt before Christ came was the shadow of death, because "the wages of sin is death," Rom. vi. 23.

3. "And not increased the joy." Rather, "thou hast increased for it the joy," the Hebrew particle *not* being very similar in shape to the preposition *for it*, and entirely the same in sound. God was to multiply the exiles returning with Ezra into a nation made happy by His presence: but the words reach their full meaning only in the Church growing out of the hundred and twenty disciples who met in the upper room, Acts i. 15.

4. "The yoke of his burden." In old time men carried heavy burdens with yokes for which wheeled vehicles would now be used. Multi-

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and ^f the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of ^g Midian.

^f ch. 10. 5.
& 14. 5.
^g Judg. 7. 22.
Ps. 83. 9.
ch. 10. 26.

5 ² For every battle of the warrior *is* with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; ^h ³ but *this* shall be with burning *and* ⁴ fuel of fire.

² Or, *When the whole battle of the warrior was, &c.*

6 ¹ For unto us a child is born, unto us a ^k son is given: and ¹ the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called ^m Wonderful, Counsellor, ⁿ The mighty God, The everlasting Father, ^o The Prince of Peace.

^h ch. 66. 15, 16.

³ Or, *and it was, &c.*

⁴ Heb. *meat.*

ⁱ ch. 7. 14.

Luke 2. 11.

^k John 3. 16.

7 Of the increase of *his* government and peace

¹ Matt. 23. 18. ¹ Cor. 15. 25. ^m Judg. 13. 18. ⁿ Tit. 2. 13. ^o Eph. 2. 14.

tudes of men so laden may be seen in the Assyrian sculptures. "The staff of the shoulder" is supposed by some to be that part of the yoke which rests upon the shoulders; while "the rod of the oppressor" means the cane carried in the hand of the taskmaster, and used incessantly to quicken the overworked slaves in their labours. From this bondage, symbolical of that of mankind to Satan, the true Israel is delivered by a victory as decisive as that of Gideon over Midian (Judg. vii.), an event ever regarded as one of the most glorious in Jewish history (Ps. lxxxiii. 9, 11.), and a type of Christ's victory over death and hell, because accomplished not by human means, but by the power of God.

5. "For every battle," &c. The beautiful words of the A. V. do not even give the sense of the original, which is as follows; "For all the armour of the armed warrior in the battle-din, and the garments rolled in blood, shall be for burning, for fuel of fire." It was customary after a victory to burn the weapons of the enemy (Ezek. xxxix. 9.), but the burning of all weapons of war indicates the advent of an era of universal peace, connected with Christ's Advent also in Mic. iv. 3.

6. "For unto us a child is born," &c. In this magnificent verse we at length learn who is the almah's son, the Immanuel. He is a child, a son given unto us, of one nature with ourselves, but he is also a king, "for the government" or principality "shall be upon his shoulder." In ch. xxii. 22, we learn that the badge of office was carried upon the shoulder, and to Christ God gave all power both in heaven and in earth (St. Matt. xxviii. 18.). But the names are too high for an earthly ruler. For He is (1) "Wonderful," lit. a wonder, or miracle, a supernatural being, even "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii. 16.). He is (2) "Counsellor," it being part of the royal office to think and provide for the people's good, Mic. iv. 9. So the eyes of the Lord are ever over His people, 1 St. Pet. iii. 12; v. 7. He is (3) "the mighty God," a title taken from Deut. x. 17, where undoubtedly it means the supreme God, and used again by Isaiah in this same sense in ch. x. 21. Next He is (4) "the everlasting Father," for in His Divine nature Christ and the Father are one (St. John x. 30.). Lastly, He is (5) "Prince of Peace," the peacemaker between heaven and earth, 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.

7. "Of the increase," &c. A promise that the kingdom of Christ shall perpetually extend its boundaries, until this dispensation come to its appointed end, and God be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 28.).

ISAIAH, IX.

^p *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 ^q zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

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^p Dan. 2. 44.
Luke 1. 32,
33.

^q 2 Kin. 19. 31.
ch. 37. 32.

8 ¶ The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel. cir. 738.

9 And all the people shall know, *even* Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart,

10 The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycomores are cut down, but we will change *them into* cedars.

11 Therefore the LORD shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and ² join his enemies together; ² Heb. *mingle.*

12 the Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel ³ with open mouth. ³ Heb. *with whole mouth.*

^r For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still. ^r ch. 5. 25. & 10. 4.

13 For ^s the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the LORD of hosts. ^s Jer. 4. 8. Jer. 5. 3. Hos. 7. 10.

CHAPTERS IX. 8—X. 4.

This prophecy, forming part of the series consisting of chs. vii.—xii., is a poem more regular in its arrangement than any other in the book of Isaiah. It consists of four stanzas of equal length, ending each with the same refrain "For all this His anger," &c. Its position here is strictly chronological. The previous chapters grew out of the attack of Rezin and Pekah upon Jerusalem in B.C. 734, whereas the present prophecy was written after Tiglath-Pileser's invasion of Palestine that same year, and probably after the capture of Damascus and the slaughter of Rezin in B.C. 732.

8—12. The first stanza rebukes the pride of Samaria. "Jacob . . . **Israel**," both signify the kingdom of the ten tribes. "Shall know," i. e. punishment shall bring them to a knowledge of their weakness, and of the reality of God's anger. "Bricks" unburnt, according to Oriental custom, and the light but durable "sycomores" were cheap materials, good enough for the times of their humility. Destroyed in the Assyrian invasion (2 Kings xv. 29.), the people, still remembering the military glory of Jeroboam II.'s time, determine to replace them with hewn stones and the odoriferous cedar. In ver. 11 we have the exaltation of Rezin's enemies, i. e. the Assyrians, against him; and no sooner is Damascus captured, than "the Syrians," i. e. the Aramean races generally, "before," i. e. on the east, and "the Philistines behind," i. e. on the west, combine against Israel. It is noteworthy that Pekah was murdered three years after the fall of Rezin. Probably the growing distress of the country had raised up enemies against him.

- Before
CHRIST
cir. 738.
- 14 Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, ^t in one day.
- ^t ch. 10. 17. 15 The ancient and honourable, he *is* the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he *is* the tail.
- ^u ch. 3. 12. 16 For ^u ² the leaders of this people cause *them* to err; and ³ *they that are* led of them *are* ⁴ destroyed.
- ² Or, *they that call them blessed.*
- ³ Or, *they that are called blessed of them.*
- ⁴ Heb. *sucal-
loured up.*
- ^x Ps. 147. 10, 11. 17 Therefore the Lord ^x shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows: ^y for every one *is* an hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaketh ⁵ folly. ^z For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.
- ^y Mic. 7. 2. 18 For wickedness ^a burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briars and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up *like* the lifting up of smoke.
- ^z ver. 12, 21. ch. 5. 25, & 10. 4. 19 Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts *is* ^b the land darkened, and the people shall be as the ^c fuel of the fire: ^c no man shall spare his brother.
- ^a ch. 10. 17. Mal. 4. 1. 20 And he shall ⁷ snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, ^d and
- ^b ch. 8. 22.
- ^c Heb. *meat.*
- ^d Mic. 7. 2, 6.
- ^e Heb. *cut.*
- ^f Lev. 26. 26.

13—17. The second stanza rebukes Samaria's irreligion. "Branch," lit. the palm-branch, one of the most beautiful things in creation, as it waves in the air aloft upon its tall trunk, is here contrasted with the humble rush, growing in low, unwholesome ground.

15. "The prophet," &c. There is no office so high as that of the man who has to teach and bear witness in God's name, so long as he teaches God's truth faithfully: but when he corrupts it he becomes the very tail, the very meanest of men (St. Matt. v. 13).

16. "The leaders . . . they that are led." Isaiah is always a statesman as well as a religious teacher. He here enunciates a truth confirmed in every page of history, that when the natural leaders of the people, their rulers in Church and State, combine in debasing public morality, such wide-spread corruption is sure to be the result, that the nation sinks by internal decay into political death.

17. "Their fatherless and widows," i. e. those who under ordinary circumstances would be the especial objects of the Divine mercy.

18—21. The third stanza describes the dreadful nature of the civil war which is to punish Samaria for its pride and irreligion. It is first depicted under the metaphor of a conflagration, which beginning in quarrels among the wicked—a nation's briars and thorns—spreads to the larger masses of the people, compared to the thickets of a forest, and finally covers the whole land with a towering cloud of smoke. Then in ver. 19, the prophet leaves the metaphor, and says that the people will be the fuel of this fire, and will become so exasperated that no man will spare his own kindred. And soon so great poverty will be the result (ver. 20.) that men will plunder right and left without profiting thereby; for civil war

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they shall not be satisfied: ^e they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm: Before CHRIST
cir. 738.

21 Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: ^e and they together shall be against Judah. ^f For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. ch. 49. 26.
Jer. 19. 9.
f ver. 12, 17.
ch. 5. 25.
& 10. 4.

CHAPTER X.

¹ The woe of tyrants. ⁵ Assyria, the rod of hypocrites, for his pride shall be broken. ²⁰ A remnant of Israel shall be saved. ²⁴ Israel is comforted with promise of deliverance from Assyria.

WOE unto them that ^a decree unrighteous decrees, and ² that write grievousness which they have prescribed; cir. 713.
^a Ps. 58. 2.
& 94. 20.

² to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and *that* they may rob the fatherless! ² Or, to the writers that write grievousness.

³ And ^b what will ye do in ^c 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? ^b Job 31. 14.
^c Hos. 9. 7.
Luke 19. 44.

⁴ Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain. ^d For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. ^d ch. 5. 25. & 9. 12, 17, 21.

is like "eating the flesh of one's own arm!" It was this perpetual anarchy, diversified occasionally by Ephraim and Manasseh dropping their domestic quarrels to combine against Judah, which ruined the kingdom of Israel.

CHAPTER X.

1—4. In stanza iv. we find civil war leading to the corrupt administration of justice. Those "that decree unrighteous decrees" are Israel's rulers, and "the writers that write grievousness" (so the margin correctly) are the scribes, whose business it was to judge all causes according to the law of Moses, but whose decisions could be bought by bribes. But strong as these unrighteous rulers and judges may seem for the time, the prophet warns them of the approach of "the day of visitation," when God will manifest His presence in punishment. The word rendered "desolation" is literally a "crushing tempest," a storm which will break these soldiers of fortune, who one after another seized the crown of Israel, with sudden and devastating violence. By "leaving their glory" is meant placing it somewhere for safe keeping. See the margin in Ps. x. 14. In ver. 4 we learn their final fate, which is either to crouch down in shame among the prisoners of war captured by the armies of Assyria, or to lie among the slain.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

5 ¶ ²O ³Assyrian, ^ethe rod of mine anger, ⁴and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

² Or, *Woe to the Assyrian.*

³ Heb. *Asshur.*

^e Jer. 51. 20.

⁴ Or, *though.*

^f ch. 9. 17.

^g Jer. 34. 22.

⁵ Heb.

to lay them a treading.

6 I will send him against ^fan hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I ^ggive him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and ⁵to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

7 ^hHowbeit 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.

^h Gen. 50. 20. Mic. 4. 12.

CHAPTERS X. 5—XII. 6.

An entirely new prophecy now commences, describing Sennacherib's march upon Jerusalem, his fall, and the glory of David's house culminating in the Messiah. As the prophecy was written in Hezekiah's time, long after the preceding chapters, we may ask why it was arranged here? The answer is easy. It is because it belongs to and completes the subject begun in ch. vii. We saw Abaz then refusing God's sign, and calling the king of Assyria to his aid. For the present this worldly policy succeeded. Tiglath-Pileser captured Damascus, slew Rezin, and overran Galilee. Later on, in B. C. 720, Sargon captured Samaria. But even at the time the eye of Isaiah saw only misfortune in this ill-starred alliance (ch. vii. 17—25.), and now Jerusalem is the object of the Assyrian's attack. But everything there is changed. The king is the pious Hezekiah, and before him Sennacherib falls like a cedar of Lebanon, "cut down by a mighty one" (ch. x. 34.). But suddenly the prophecy takes a wonderful bound onwards into futurity. Side by side with the fallen dynasty of Assyria lies the fallen dynasty of Judah. The one perishes for ever; from the other springs a Sucker, and instead of an earthly realm the prophet foretells a kingdom of universal peace for the Gentiles (ch. xi. 10.), and for the remnant of the Jews (ver. 11.), who previously to His coming will have been dispersed far and wide (ver. 12.). By arranging these prophecies together Isaiah plainly means us to understand that the almah's son, the Child given unto us, and the Sucker springing from the fallen trunk of Jesse are all one and the same. The idea of the Messiah coming to establish a kingdom of peace is the leading thought throughout: the contemporaneous history gives merely the occasion of the prophecy, and at the beginning of ch. xi. entirely vanishes away.

5. "O," the word translated *Ah!* in ch. i. 4. It is an angry exclamation, "Ho! Assyrian."

"Their hand," i. e. the hand of the Assyrian, whose kings one after another are God's instruments for punishing the wicked.

6. "Hypocritical." The word really means "profane" (so also ch. ix. 17; xxxiii. 14.). Judah's fault was not hypocrisy, but profanity; for being a consecrated nation, it polluted itself by idolatry, and the sins which idolatry brought with it, and so became "profane," i. e. unconsecrated.

7. "He meaneth not so." Sennacherib did not suppose himself to be merely a scourge in God's hand, but was very proud of his career of

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8 ⁱ For he saith, *Are not my princes altogether kings?* Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

9 *Is not* ^k Calno ^l as Carchemish? *is not* Hamath ⁱ as Arpad? *is not* Samaria ^m as Damascus? 2 Kin. 18.
24, 33, &c.
& 19, 10, &c.
k Amos 6. 2.
12 Chr. 35. 20.
m 2 Kin. 16. 9.

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 ⁿ upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, ^o I will ² punish the fruit ³ of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. n 2 Kin. 19. 31.
o Jer. 50. 18.
2 Heb.
visit upon.
3 Heb. of the
greatness of
the heart.

13 ^p For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done *it*, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants ⁴ like a valiant man: p Isai. 37. 24.
Ezek. 28. 4,
&c.
Dan. 4. 30.
4 Or,
like many
people.

conquest. So men often think that their success is all their own doing instead of giving God the glory.

8. "My princes . . . kings." Oriental monarchs delighted in the proud name of King of kings, whereas the title belongs to Him "by Whom kings reign and princes decree justice" (Prov. viii. 15.), even the Lamb, Rev. xvii. 14.

9. "Calno," i. e. Ctesiphon, on the east bank of the Tigris, probably the Calneh of Gen. x. 10.

"Carchemish." Not as many suppose Circesium, but a town higher up the river in lat. 36°, commanding the ordinary ford of the Euphrates (Rawlinson, *Anc. Mon.* ii. 475.).

"Hamath," on the river Orontes, the capital of Northern Syria, and "Arpad" a town near it.

10. "Hath found." A boastful word expressive of the ease with which he conquers kingdoms. If his hand can but reach them, that is enough.

"Did excel." The words means "excel in number." Sennacherib was struck by the few idols he found in Judah, and thought the Jews irreligious.

11. "Idols." Three words are used in vv. 10, 11, for idols. In the first and third places it is the same word, and means "unrealities," "nothings," see ch. ii. 8; in the second place it is a sculptured image, costly and artistic; in the fourth a thing of earthenware, cheap and ugly.

12. "Hath performed." As soon as God has completed His purpose of chastising Judah, He will then punish Sennacherib for his pride and blasphemy.

13. "Strength . . . wisdom." The Assyrian claims, first, might in war, by which he conquers other nations: and secondly, political wisdom,

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CHRIST
cir. 713.

^a Job 31. 25.

^r Jer. 51. 20.

² Or, as if a
rod should
shake them
that lift it
up.

³ Or, that
which is
not wood.
^s ch. 5. 17.

^t ch. 9. 18.
& 27. 4.

^u 2 Kin. 19. 23.

⁴ Heb. from
the soul,
and even
to the flesh.

⁵ Heb
number.

14 and ^a 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 ^r the ax boast itself against him that heweth therewith? *or* shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? ² as if the rod should shake *itself* against them that lift it up, *or* as if the staff should lift up ³ *itself*, as if it were no wood.

16 Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his ^s 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: ^t and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day;

18 and shall consume the glory of his forest, and of ^u his fruitful field, ⁴ both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth.

19 And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be ⁵ 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

by which he removes the inhabitants of one land into another, so that they may never be able to rebel.

14. "Found," see on ver. 10; "peeped," chirped, see on ch. viii. 19.

15. "Shaketh," or moveth it to and fro. The verb implies a double motion, backwards and forwards. The literal rendering of the rest of the verse is far more forcible than the somewhat laboured translation of the A. V. "As if the rod should brandish them that lift it up! as if the staff "should lift that which is not wood" like itself, but something much better, even a man.

16. "Leanness." Lit. a wasting sickness.

"Under his glory," i.e. beneath the outward splendour of his strength there shall be rapid decay.

17—19. The destruction of Sennacherib is compared to that most sublime spectacle, the burning of a forest. The fire breaks out among the thorns and briars, but spreads to the noble timber trees, the forest's glory, and even to the vines and olives of the cultivated lands; "fruitful field" is literally "his Carmel," a word applied by the Jews especially to a region full of vineyards and oliveyards.

18. "Standardbearer." The more correct translation is, "And it shall "be as the wasting of one that wasteth with sickness." The reference here and in ver. 16 to sickness suggests to us that Sennacherib's army was cut off by an outbreak of pestilence (see ch. xxxvii. 36.).

ISAIAH, X.

house of Jacob, ^x shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

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cir. 713.

21 ^y The remnant shall return, *even* the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God.

^x See 2 Kin.
16. 7.
² Chr. 28. 20.
^y ch. 7. 3.

22 ^z For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, ^a yet a remnant ² of them shall return: ^b the consumption decreed shall overflow ³ with righteousness.

^z Rom. 9. 27.
^a ch. 6. 13.
² Heb. in,
or, among.
^b ch. 28. 22.
³ Or, in.

23 ^c For the Lord GOD of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.

^c ch. 28. 22.
Dan. 9. 27.
Rom. 9. 28.

24 ¶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, ^d be not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee with a rod, ⁴ and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of ^e Egypt.

^d ch. 37. 6.
⁴ Or, but he
shall lift up
his staff for
thee.
^e Exod. 14.
^f ch. 54. 7.

25 ^f For yet a very little while, ^g and the indig-

^g Dan. 11. 36.

20. "Stay upon him that smote them." Assyria was the power whence punishment again and again came upon Judah, and yet she often sought help from her smiter: but in the happier days, when the sucker from the stem of Jesse shall rule over the remnant (see on ch. iv. 2, 3.), the spiritual Israel will stay itself only upon Jehovah.

21. This verse is remarkable for the repetition in it of two names which serve as key-notes to this series of prophecies. "A remnant shall return," Shear-Jashub, a remnant of Jacob to the mighty God, El-Gibbor, see ch. ix. 6.

22. "Yet." This word inserted by the translators gives a wrong sense. God had multiplied Israel according to His promise (Gen. xxii. 17.), but now punishment was at hand, from which only a remnant should escape. For "the consumption decreed," the wasting and destruction irrevocably determined upon, "shall overflow with righteousness," i.e. with justice, so that it shall be a signal instance of God's righteous dealing. St. Paul, Rom. ix. 27, 28, shows how this and the next verse were fulfilled in his days, when a remnant of the Jews accepted Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah, while the mass of the nation was destroyed by the Romans.

24. "Therefore." Because, first, the punishment though severe was in righteousness; secondly, all God's people would escape, being included in the remnant; thirdly, the punishment was to be inflicted, not by Assyria, but by Rome, see vv. 16—19.

"A rod . . . staff," instruments of correction, and not of extirpation.

"After the manner of Egypt," i.e. the Jews must undergo a captivity in Assyria, like that which they suffered in Egypt.

25. "A very little while." In prophecy the immediate is constantly interchanged with the distant future. These words recall us from the captivity at Babylon to the days of Hezekiah, when "the indignation"

- Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.
- h 2 Kin. 19. 35. nation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.
- i Judg. 7. 25. ch. 9. 4. 26 And the LORD of hosts shall stir up ^h a scourge for him according to the slaughter of ⁱ Midian at the rock of Oreb: and ^k as his rod *was* upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.
- k Ex. 14. 26, 27. 27 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* ^l his burden ² shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed, because of ^m the anointing.
- l ch. 14. 25. ¹ Heb. *shall remove.*
- m Ps. 105. 15. Dan. 9. 24. 28 He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron; at Michmash he hath laid up his carriages:
- 1 John 2. 20. 29 they are gone over ⁿ the passage: they have taken up their lodging at Geba; Ramah is afraid; ^o Gibeah of Saul is fled.
- n 1 Sam. 13. 23. o 1 Sam. 11. 4. 30 ³ Lift up thy voice, O daughter ^p of Gallim: cause it to be heard unto ^q Laish, ^r O poor Anathoth.
- 3 Heb. *Cry shrill with thy voice.*
- p 1 Sam. 25. 14. q Judg. 18. 7. r Josh. 21. 18.

against Jerusalem "ceases," and God's "anger" goes forth to destroy the Assyrians.

26. Sennacherib is to be scourged as severely as Midian was smitten at the rock of Oreb, the Raven, so named after a prince of Midian slain there, Judg. vii. 25. There is a plain reference here to ch. ix. 4.

"After the manner of Egypt," i. e. the deliverance from Babylon shall be as wonderful as that from Egypt. Though no miracle like that of the cleaving of the Red Sea was wrought for the exiles when they started on their homeward journey with Ezra, yet to the eye of Isaiah it was an equally glorious manifestation of God's majesty in governing the earth. Providence is as wonderful as any miracle.

27. "Because of the anointing." Lit. "by reason of fatness." Judah is compared to an ox, which, no longer oppressed with toil, grows fat, while the yoke long unused drops to pieces. The translation of the A. V. is taken from the Jewish Targum, which saw in the word, which also means oil (ch. i. 6 margin), an allusion to Christ as our anointed Prophet, Priest, and King.

28. Though Sennacherib was not to come to Jerusalem after the embassy of Rabshakeh (2 Kings xix. 32.), yet it appears from his own memoirs that he did once besiege the city (ch. i. 8.), probably in the campaign in which he took all the fenced cities of Judah (2 Kings xviii. 13.) The towns mentioned are all in Benjamin, to the north of Jerusalem, "Aiath" being the Ai of Josh. vii. 2, three miles south of Bethel.

"Carriages," i. e. things to be carried, baggage. See 1 Sam. xvii. 22. Acts xxi. 15.

29. "Passage" or pass. The baggage was left at Michmash because of the deep ravine between it and Geba, for which see 1 Sam. xiv. 4, 5.

30. "Lift up." Lit. make shrill thy voice, i. e. Shriek, O daughter, i. e. O inhabitants of Gallim. The rest would be more correctly translated "Listen, O Laisha! O poor Anathoth!" Laisha listens in terror to the

ISAIAH, XI.

31 ^a Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee.

32 As yet shall he remain ^t at Nob that day: he shall ^u shake his hand *against* the mount of ^x the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

33 Behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror: and ^y the high ones of stature shall be hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled.

34 And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall ^z by a ² Or, *mightily*, mighty one.

CHAPTER XI.

1 *The peaceable kingdom of the Branch out of the root of Jesse.* 10 *The victorious restoration of Israel, and vocation of the Gentiles.*

AND ^a there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of ^b Jesse, and ^c a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

^s Josh. 15. 31.

^t 1 Sam. 21. 1.

& 22. 19.

Neh. 11. 32.

^u ch. 13. 2.

^v ch. 37. 22.

^y See Amos

2. 9.

^z Or, *mightily*.

^a ch. 53. 2.

Zech. 6. 12.

Rev. 5. 5.

^b Acts 13. 23.

ver. 10.

^c ch. 4. 2.

Jer. 23. 5.

alarm signals: while for Anathoth, a city of priests two miles and a half from Jerusalem, the prophet has only an exclamation of sorrow.

31. "Madmenah is removed." Lit. is in motion, the people all busy, some moving their goods, others driving their cattle inside the fortifications of Jerusalem. No traces now remain of either Madmenah or Gebim.

32. "As yet," &c. So rapid is Sennacherib's march that the same day which saw him enter the defile at Michmash sees him also at Nob, there halting for the purpose of marshalling his troops for the assault on Jerusalem. The words would be better translated "As yet to-day shall he halt at Nob." For "Nob" see 1 Sam. xxi. 1; xxii. 9, &c.

33, 34. Brought within sight of Jerusalem, and menacing it in his pride, Sennacherib is not to capture it, but is himself to fall, as the glorious cedar-forest of Lebanon falls before the axe of some mighty hewer. This took place at Libnah, and the "mighty one" was the destroying Angel of Jehovah (ch. xxxvii. 36.).

CHAPTER XI.

1. "And," &c. Most striking and instructive is the contrast between the crushing downfall of the Assyrian army, laid prostrate with mighty force, and grand in its ruin, like a majestic cedar-forest felled by the woodman's axe, but felled to rise no more—for a cedar throws up no suckers—and the stem of Jesse, prostrate too, yet retaining its vitality (ch. vi. 13.), and sending up a feeble sucker (ch. liii. 2.), destined nevertheless to attain to universal empire. It is unfortunate that much of the force of this contrast is lost by the unhappy division of the chapters, which is as fatal to the sense here as at the beginning of ch. ix.

"A rod." The word means a shoot growing, not from the stem, but from the stock, see Job xiv. 8, or stump left in the ground after a tree

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

d ch. 61. 1.
Matt. 3. 16.
John 1. 32,
33. & 3. 34.
2 Heb. *scent*,
or, *smell*.

e Ps. 72. 2. 4.
Rev. 19. 11.

3 Or, *argue*.

f Job 4. 9.
Mal. 4. 6.
2 Thess. 2. 8.
Rev. 1. 16.
& 2. 16.
& 19. 15.

g See Ephes.
6. 14.

h ch. 65. 25.
Ezek. 34. 25.
Hos. 2. 18.

2 ^d and the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD ;

3 and shall make him of ² quick understanding 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 ^e with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and ³ reprove with equity for the meek of the earth : and he shall ^f smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

5 And ^g righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

6 ^h The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and

has been cut down. To mark still more strongly the humiliation of the Messiah, it is not the lineage of the kingly David, but of Jesse, the humble citizen cultivating his lands at Bethlehem, which is thus to fall into utter decay, before the new plant springs up from its roots.

“A Branch.” Not the word used in ch. iv. 2. Jer. xxiii. 5. Zech. vi. 12, &c., but a sucker springing up from the roots of a tree (Dan. xi. 7.), and which may be transplanted (ch. lx. 21.), and grow into a new tree, which a branch cannot do. Thus Christ, though David’s son, is no mere continuation of the old order of things, but there is in Him a new beginning, and His kingdom has its own independent upgrowth and development.

2. The spirit of Jehovah rests upon Christ, not only as the Prophet Who teaches the Church (chs. xlii. 1 ; lxi. 1. St. John iii. 34.), but as its Ruler (Num. xi. 17. 1 Sam. xvi. 13, 14.). Its six gifts are arranged in pairs, of which the first relates to the reason and intellect, the second to the practical life, which requires prudence in counsel, and strength in action ; while the third pair refers to that power of religion which sanctifies both intellect and action to God’s service.

3. “And shall make him of quick understanding.” Lit. “And his scent or smelling shall be in the fear of Jehovah,” see margin. As the Jews, in common with most Oriental nations, took great delight in odours, it probably means His pleasure shall be in the fear of Jehovah, i. e. as practised by others. The Messiah shall delight in the piety of His people. See on this meaning Amos v. 21.

4. “With righteousness.” The Messiah is the upright ruler of His Church, combining justice with love. For the poor in spirit and the meek there is righteousness ; Christ will not permit them to be wronged either by earthly or by spiritual foes. For the wicked there is just punishment.

5. “The girdle.” The part of the dress essential to activity, signifies that these attributes of Christ shall be in constant exercise.

6—9. The prophet in these verses and in ch. lxxv. 17—25, describes

ISAIAH, XI.

the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

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 put his hand on the ²cockatrice' den.

² Or, *adder's*.

9 ¹They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for ^kthe earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

¹ Job 5. 23.

ch. 2. 4.

& 35. 9.

^k Hab. 2. 14.

10 ¶ ¹And in that day ^mthere shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the ⁿGentiles seek: and ^ohis rest shall be ³glorious.

¹ ch. 2. 11.

^m ver. 1.

ⁿ Rom. 15. 12.

^o Rom. 15. 10.

³ Heb. 4. 1,

&c.

³ Heb. *glory*.

^p ch. 2. 11.

11 And it shall come to pass ^pin that day, *that* the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to

Christ's kingdom as a state of paradise. St. Paul also in Rom. viii. 21 tells us of a time when the inferior creation is to share the liberty of the children of God. Whether there shall be a literal fulfilment is a question for future time, but of the metaphorical meaning of the prophet's words there can be no doubt. In Christ's kingdom the strong and the weak, the oppressor and the oppressed, are to dwell together in mutual love. Not that the wolf will continue to be a wolf, any more than in nature, a lion, if it continue to have the teeth and stomach of a lion, could eat straw like the ox. The wolf will become a lamb, having its nature changed by the power of grace.

8. "Cockatrice." Probably the large yellow viper common in Palestine.

9. "My holy mountain." Christ's Church, the "holy hill" of Ps. xv. 1, and God's true Zion.

"As the waters cover the sea." As deep and broad and irresistible as are the waters of the ocean, so mighty shall be the spread of true religion and knowledge.

10. The "root of Jesse" means the same as the sucker, ver. 1, because the sucker is the result of the root being alive. This sucker is to be the centre unto which all mankind shall gather (St. John xii. 32.); for to the people, i. e. the Jews, it is to be an ensign, i. e. a standard and rallying point, while to the Gentiles it will be an object of desire.

"His rest" means His resting-place, the Church, which is His dwelling, made glorious by His Presence.

11. "The second time." The first was the deliverance from Egypt, the second, described in terms too grand to be merely the return from Babylon, awaits for its fulfilment the time when "all Israel shall be saved," Rom. xi. 26.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, ¹from Assyria, 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 nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together ²the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

13 ³The 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 the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil ³them of the east together: ⁴they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; ⁵and the children of Ammon ^ushall obey them.

15 And the LORD ^xshall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty

“**Recover.**” Lit. purchase, and so redeem.

“**Pathros**” was Upper Egypt, beyond which lay “**Cush**,” i. e. Nubia and Abyssinia.

“**Elam**” was Persia, “**Shinar**” Babylonia, “**Hamath**” Northern Syria, and “**the islands of the sea**” the coastlands of the Mediterranean, and virtually all Europe.

12. “**Outcasts**” is masc., Israel’s sons; “**dispersed**” is fem., Judah’s daughters. In this way the universality of the restoration is signified.

13. Ephraim had long been the leading tribe, and for 400 years had possession of the ark. When then Judah was chosen in its stead (Ps. lxxviii. 67—69.), it was discontented, and under Jeroboam rebelled. Now its “**envy**” or jealousy passes away because Messiah is a spiritual King, Who reigns only over those whose hearts God makes willing in the day of His power (Ps. cx. 3.).

“**The adversaries of Judah**,” i. e. all everywhere who resist Christ, Judah’s king. Upon their destruction follows an era of universal peace, typified by the healing of the long feud between the rival members of Solomon’s kingdom.

14. In this verse the victories of the Cross are described under the metaphor of a glorious war, but in vv. 6—9 we are taught that Christ’s kingdom is one of peace. The countries conquered for the Lord must be won by patience and gentleness and love.

“**Shoulders**” is sing., and means the border-land of the Philistines. It is translated “**side**” in Josh. xv. 8, 10, 11, &c.

“**Them of the east**” are the Bedouins, always a great annoyance to the Israelites (Judg. vi. 3. 2 Chron. xxi. 16, &c.).

15. “**Egyptian sea . . . river**” (Euphrates). All obstacles of every

ISAIAH, XII.

wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, ¹ and make *men* go over ² dryshod.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

¹ Rev. 16. 12.

² Heb.

in shoes.

³ ch. 19. 23.

16 And ² there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; ^a like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

^a Ex. 14. 29.

ch. 51. 10.

& 63. 12, 13.

CHAPTER XII.

A joyful thanksgiving of the faithful for the mercies of God.

AND ^a 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.

^a ch. 2. 11.

2 Behold, God *is* my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD ^b JEHOVAH *is* my ^c strength and *my* song; he also is become my salvation.

^b Ps. 83. 18.

^c Ex. 15. 2.

Ps. 118. 14.

^d John 4. 10,

14. & 7. 37, 38.

^e 1 Chr. 16. 8.

Ps. 105. 1.

3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw ^d water out of the wells of salvation.

^e Or,

proclaim

his name.

Ps. 145. 4,

5, 6,

Ps. 34. 3.

4 And in that day shall ye say, ^e Praise the LORD, ^f call upon his name, ^f declare his doings among the people, make mention that his ^g name is exalted.

^h Ex. 15. 1, 21.

Ps. 68. 32.

& 98. 1.

5 ^h Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this *is* known in all the earth.

kind are to be removed out of the way of God's redeemed people, so that their path shall be like a royal road expressly made for their use.

"The tongue of the Egyptian sea" is the gulf of Suez. Instead of "in the," it should be "into seven streams," so broad and shallow that it will be easy to ford them.

CHAPTER XII.

1. This hymn of praise corresponds to that sung by Israel after crossing the Red Sea, Exod. xv. Compare especially ver. 2 with Exod. xv. 2.

2. "The Lord Jehovah." Heb. Jah Jehovah. In Exod. xv. 2 this repetition of the name is not found, but only "Jah is my strength and song."

3. "Draw water." According to the Talmud this is an allusion to the ceremony of drawing water on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, see St. John vii. 37. But the drawing and pouring out of water had always a deeply religious significance among the Jews (1 Sam. vii. 6. 2 Sam. xxiii. 16.); see also Christ's discourse with the woman of Samaria at the well, especially St. John iv. 10, 14.

5. "He hath done excellent things." The very words rendered "he hath triumphed gloriously," in Exod. xv. 1.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

6ⁱ Cry out and shout, thou² inhabitant of Zion :
for great is^k the Holy One of Israel in the midst of
thee.

ⁱ ch. 54. 1.
Zeph. 3. 14.

² Heb. in-
habitantess.

^k Ps. 71. 22.
& 89. 18.
ch. 41. 14, 16.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 *God mustereth the armies of his wrath. 6 He threateneth to destroy
Babylon by the Medes. 19 The desolation of Babylon.*

cir. 712.

^a ch. 21. 1.
& 47. 1.

Jer. 50, & 51.

^b ch. 5. 26.
& 18. 3.

Jer. 50. 2.

^c Jer. 51. 25.

^d ch. 10. 32.

THE^a burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of
Amoz did see.

2^b Lift ye up a banner^c upon the high mountain,
exalt the voice unto them, ^d shake the hand, that they
may go into the gates of the nobles.

^e Joel 3. 11.

^f Ps. 149. 2,
5, 6.

² Heb. the
likeness of.

3 I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have
also called^e my mighty ones for mine anger, *even*
them that ^f rejoice in my highness.

4 The noise of a multitude in the mountains, ²like
as of a great people ; a tumultuous noise of the king-
doms of nations gathered together : the LORD of
hosts mustereth the host of the battle.

CHAPTERS XIII—XXIII.

The next eleven chapters form a distinct (the third) collection of Isaiah's prophecies, and refer to the heathen nations with which Judæa was brought into contact. The first, chs. xiii.—xiv. 27, is against Babylon, and the imagery of ch. xiv. is so sublime and magnificent as to surpass even the noblest productions of the writers of Greece.

CHAPTER XIII.

1. "The burden." This word, from a root signifying to "lift up," means first a "burden," but secondly a "sentence" or "decree," because spoken with the voice lifted up, in clear distinct tones. Here it is the solemn sentence pronounced against Babylon.

"Did see." Comp. ch. i. 1; ii. 1, where the same verb occurs.

2. "Lift," &c. This verse is a command bidding them summon the Medes and Persians to the siege of Babylon. "A high mountain" is literally *a bare mountain*, where there is nothing to prevent the signal from being seen. "The gates of the nobles" are those of Babylon, through which its princes enter. Comp. ch. x. 8.

3. "My sanctified ones," i. e. the armies consecrated and set apart for God's work. "Them that rejoice in my highness" should be translated "my proud rejoicers." Gesenius quotes many passages in proof that the ancient Persians were regarded as a boastful and insolent people.

4. "The noise," &c. Immediately upon the summons follows the mustering of the host "upon the mountains," those namely on the north-east of Babylonia, which separate the dominions of the Chaldees from Media.

ISAIAH, XIII.

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.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

6 Howl ye; ⁸for the day of the LORD is at hand; ^hit shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

⁸ Zeph. 1. 7.
Rev. 6. 17.
^h Job 31. 23.
Joel 1. 15.

7 Therefore shall all hands ²be faint, and every man's heart shall melt:

² Or,
fall down.

8 and they shall be afraid: ⁱpangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall ³be amazed ⁴one at another; their faces *shall be as* ⁵flames.

ⁱ Ps. 48. 6.
ch. 21. 3.

³ Heb.
wonder.

⁴ Heb. *every man at his neighbour.*

⁵ Heb.
faces of the flames.

9 Behold, ^kthe day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy ¹the sinners thereof out of it.

^k Mal. 4. 1.
¹ Ps. 104. 35.
Prov. 2. 22.

10 For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be ^mdarkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

^m ch. 24. 21, 23.
Ezek. 32. 7.
Joel 2. 31.
& 3. 15.

11 And I will punish the world for *their* evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; ⁿand I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

Matt. 24. 27.
Mark 13. 24.
Luke 21. 25,
ⁿ ch. 2. 17.

12 I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

5. "From the end of heaven," i. e. from a land as distant as the extreme bounds of the horizon.

6. "Howl ye," &c. Here and in vv. 7, 8, we have the alarm and terror caused at Babylon by the news of the enemy's approach.

"The day of the Lord." The day of the Divine judgment, a phrase first used by Joel, ch. i. 15. See also ch. ii. 12.

8. "Their faces," &c. Literally, as in margin, "their faces are faces of flames," i. e. are flushed with terror and excitement.

9—16. The visitation or judgment of Babylon is now, in the fourth place, described.

10. "Constellations." The Hebrew word is taken from the name of the constellation Orion (Job ix. 9.), and so means the most brilliant star-clusters in the sky.

11. "The world." Literally, the inhabited world, used here of the Babylonian empire, as the corresponding word in St. Luke ii. 1 means that of Rome.

12. "The golden wedge" or ore "of Ophir," see 1 Kings ix. 28. Primarily it means that the slaughter should be so great that every man left alive would be precious as the rarest produce of the mines: but it also reminds us that the redeemed soul has been bought with that which is even more costly (1 St. Pet. i. 18, 19.).

B. fore
CHRIST
cir. 712.

o Hag. 2. 6.
P Ps. 110. 5.
Lam. 1. 12.
q Jer. 50. 16.
& 51. 9.

13 °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 ^pthe day of his fierce anger.

14 And it shall be as the chasel roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up: ^qthey shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land.

15 Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is joined *unto them* shall fall by the sword.

r Ps. 137. 9.
Nah. 3. 10.
Zech. 14. 2.

16 Their children also shall be ^rdashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished.

s ch. 21. 2.
Jer. 51. 11,
23.
Dan. 5. 28, 31.

17 ^sBehold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and *as for* gold; they shall not delight in it.

t ch. 14. 4, 22.
2 Heb. *as the over-throwing.*

18 *Their* bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children.

u Gen. 19. 24,
25.
Deut. 29. 23.
Jer. 41. 18.
& 50. 40.

19 ^tAnd Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be ²as when God overthrew ^uSodom and Gomorrah.

13. "I will shake," &c. Though political convulsions were here chiefly in the prophet's mind, yet they were all intended to prepare the way for that still greater change in all human things wrought by the coming of Him Who is the desire of all nations (Hag. ii. 6, 7.).

14. Babylon had been peopled by families torn away from their homes in many conquered lands. This verse describes these forced settlers as dispersing, immediately that the conqueror's power was broken, to their various homes, with no more order or method than a hunted roe, eager only to escape, or as sheep with no shepherd to look after them.

15. The previous verse gives us the picture of the flight of a panic-stricken multitude. Here we see the reason. When Babylon is captured, there will be a reckless slaughter of the inhabitants. Every one found there will be put to the sword, even though he be only "joined" with the rest by this forced method of colonisation.

16. "Their children." Really, "their infants." For this brutal custom of war, see Hos. x. 14; xiii. 16. Nah. iii. 10.

17. The Medes were the leading race among the Aryan tribes who inhabited the country between the Tigris and the Indus. In the cuneiform inscriptions they are constantly mentioned, and we find them at war with Assyria a hundred years before the times of Hezekiah.

"Silver . . . gold," i. e. their object shall be revenge, not plunder, and so the war will be more terrible.

18. "Bows." The Medo-Persians were famous for archery, as were their descendants, the Parthians.

19. "As when God overthrew Sodom," i. e. the destruction of

ISAIAH, XIV.

20 ^xIt shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation : neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there ; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

^x Jer. 50, 3, 39,
& 51, 29, 62.

21 ^yBut ^zwild beasts of the desert shall lie there ; and their houses shall be full of ³doleful creatures ; and ⁴⁵owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

^y chap. 24,
11,—15.

Rev. 18. 2.

² Heb. *Ziim*.

³ Heb. *Ochim*.

⁴ Or,
ostriches.

⁵ Heb.

*daughters
of the owl*.

⁶ Heb. *Im*.

⁷ Or, *palaces*.

^z Jer. 51. 33.

22 And ⁶the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their ⁷desolate houses, and dragons in *their* pleasant palaces : ^zand her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.

CHAPTER XIV.

¹ God's merciful restoration of Israel. ⁴ Their triumphant insultation over Babel. ²⁴ God's purpose against Assyria. ²⁹ Palestina is threatened.

FOR the LORD ^awill have mercy on Jacob, and ^bwill yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land : ^cand the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.

^a Ps. 102. 13.

^b Zech. 1. 17.

& 2. 12.

^c ch. 60. 4,

5, 10.

Eph. 2. 12,

13, &c.

Babylon is to be final. Like Sodom it is never to rise again, while Jerusalem is always to revive, ch. vi. 13.

20. "Shepherds." Judæa, even when depopulated, was still to be a favourite place of pasture for flocks (chs. v. 17; vii. 21, 22.), but Babylonia would be avoided by shepherds, partly because its ruins are barren, partly because of a superstitious dislike of the country. Mr. George Smith, speaking of the district not far from Babylon, says, "Leaving Tel Ibrahim I crossed a trackless desert, covered with numerous ruins, and intersected by the dry beds of ancient canals: it is now a waterless waste, with a few dry plants, and flocks of locusts," *Assyrian Discoveries*, p. 63.

21. "Doleful creatures." Literally, howlers, probably owls; for "owls" the Hebrew has "ostriches:" and the "satyrs" are really "wild-goats," an animal famous for its gambols.

22. "Wild beasts of the islands." Literally, wailers, probably jackals, so called from the noise they make at night. The "dragons" are certainly jackals. The "pleasant palaces" of Babylon, now become "desolate houses," literally, widowhoods, i. e. places left solitary and lone, are to be the abodes of these dismal animals.

CHAPTER XIV.

1, 2. Observe how in these two verses we have the text of chs. xl—lxvi. Babylon falls in order that Judah may return to "her own land;" and she returns because it is also "the land of Jehovah," that on which He will accomplish His purposes of mercy and grace for all mankind.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

^d ch. 49. 22.
& 60. 9. &
66. 20.

² Heb. *that
had taken
them cap-
tives.*

^e ch. 60. 14.

^f ch. 13. 19.

Hab. 2. 6.

³ Or, *taunt-
ing speech.*

⁴ Or,

*exactress
of gold.*

^g Rev. 18. 16.

^h Ps. 125. 3.

⁵ Heb.
*a stroke
without
removing.*

ⁱ ch. 55. 12.

Ezek. 31. 16.

^k Ezek. 32. 21.

⁶ Or, *The
grave.*

2 And the people shall take them, ^d 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, ² whose captives they were; ^e and they shall rule over their oppressors.

3 And it shall come to pass in the 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 ^f shalt take up this ³ proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the ^{4g} golden city ceased!

5 The LORD hath broken ^h the staff of the wicked, *and* the sceptre of the rulers.

6 He who smote the people in wrath with ⁵ a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, *and* none hindereth.

7 The whole earth is at rest, *and* is quiet: they break forth into singing.

8 ⁱ 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 ^{k 6} Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet

2. "The people," lit. "peoples," i. e. Gentile nations, who will reverently conduct the exiles home, and in due time be brought unto obedience to the Jewish church, when it has been so enlarged by the preaching of the Messiah, as to be ready to embrace all nations.

4. "Proverb." Better rendered "parable" in Hab. ii. 6. The margin gives the right sense "a taunting speech" or song.

5. "Staff . . . sceptre." Better translated in ch. ix. 4 "staff and rod," being not the insignia of authority, but instruments of cruelty.

6. "People." Really, *peoples*, the heathen nations generally, as in ver. 2.

7. "They," i. e. the inhabitants of the world "break forth into singing," or into a shout of joy. The phrase is found only in Isaiah (in ch. xlv. 23; xlix. 13; liv. 1; lv. 12.).

8. "The fir trees," i. e. nature herself rejoices at the fall of the military empire of Babylon: and justly, for nothing is so destructive to her beauty as the ravages of an army.

9. "Hell." Hebrew Sheol, i. e. the grave, ch. v. 14. Isaiah's sublime imagery is taken from the rock-hewn chambers used in the East as burying places. Round the sides of some vast subterranean cavern the embalmed bodies of the mighty dead repose on thrones or couches, each one with his sword at his head, his shield and spear at his side, and ranged around them are the bodies of the chief officers of their earthly grandeur.

ISAIAH, XIV.

thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, Before CHRIST cir. 712. **CHRIST** 2 Heb. leaders. *even* all the ²³ chief 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? 3 Or, great goats.

11 Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, *and* the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.

12 ¹How art thou fallen from heaven, ⁴O Lucifer, 1 ch. 34. 4. son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 4 Or, O day star.

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, ^mI will m Matt. 11. 23. ascend into heaven, ⁿI will exalt my throne above n Dan. 8. 10. the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, ^oin the sides of the north: o Ps. 48. 2.

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; ^pI will be like the most High. p ch. 47. 8.

15 Yet thou ^qshalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. 2 Thess. 2. 4. q Matt. 11. 23.

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* ⁵opened not the house of his prisoners? 5 Or, did not let his prisoners loose home-wards?

And usually in the grave there is peace; but when the king of Babylon enters, the dead all rouse themselves from their long slumbers, and gather round him to mock him in his humiliation.

“**The dead.**” Hebrew *Rephaim*, signifying here and in ch. xxvi. 14, the shades of the dead, the spectres of earth’s departed heroes.

12. “**O Lucifer,**” i. e. the light-bringer, the “day star.” It is a remarkable fact that the use here of the Latin name of the morning star, coupled with St. Luke x. 18, has led to this title being given to Satan, who is no bringer of light, but a lover of darkness. Really the prophet compares the monarch’s fall to the loss from heaven of the most beautiful object in the dawning of an eastern day; and then by the sudden change of metaphor, common in Hebrew poetry, to the felling of a mighty tree, that once by its dense shadow weakened and crushed the nations.

13. “**The mount of the congregation.**” Explained by the ancient commentators as being Mount Zion, said in Ps. xlviii. 2 to be “on the sides of the north.” The king of Babylon in his pride claims Divine honours, and especially exalts himself over the God of the Jews, whose sacred vessels he had carried away to adorn with them the temples of his idols.

15. “**Sides,**” as in ver. 13, means the deepest recesses.

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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 carcase trodden under feet.

20 Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, *and* slain thy people: ^rthe seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.

^r Job 18. 19.
Ps. 21. 10.
& 37. 28.
& 103. 13.
^s Ex. 20. 5.
Matt. 23. 35.

21 Prepare slaughter for his children ^afor the iniquity of their fathers; that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities.

^t Prov. 10. 7.
Jer. 51. 62.
^u 1 Kin. 14. 10.
^v Job 18. 19.

22 For I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and cut off from Babylon ^tthe name, and ^uremnant, ^xand son, and nephew, saith the LORD.

^y ch. 34. 11.
Zeph. 2. 14.

23 ^yI will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts.

24 ¶ The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:

19. "An abominable branch." While other kings lie in state each in his own mausoleum, this godless tyrant meets only with insult. His corpse is compared, first, to a blighted branch pruned from the tree, and left to decay upon the ground. Next he is likened to the blood-stained raiment of those slain in battle, and gathered into heaps to be burned (see on ch. ix. 5.); and finally to a carcase trodden under foot. The second comparison is heightened by the contrast with the usual fate of chiefs slain in battle, whose bodies were honourably buried in sarcophagi of stone, here poetically termed "the stones of the pit."

20. "The seed," &c. Note that Evil-merodach, son of Nebuchadnezzar, was murdered by Nergal-Sharezer, after an inglorious reign of two years: and Belshazzar, the grandson, was slain by the Persians. See the next two verses.

22. "Nephew," really grandchild.

23. "Pools of water." As Babylonia was an alluvial land, made fertile by a vast network of canals, as soon as these got out of order, the whole country became a vast morass (see on ch. xiii. 20.). Diodorus (ii. 7.) says that this was the actual result of the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus.

24—27. These four verses belong to Nineveh and not to Babylon,

25 that I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot : then shall ^{Before CHRIST} his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. ch. 10. 27.

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.

27 For the LORD of hosts hath ^a purposed, and who shall disannul *it*? and his hand *is* stretched out, and who shall turn it back? a 2 Chr. 20. 6. Job 9. 12. & 23. 13. Ps. 33. 11. Prov. 19. 21. & 21. 30. ch. 43. 13. Dan. 4. 31, 35. b 2 Kin. 16. 20. 726.

28 ¶ In the year that ^b king Ahaz died was this burden. c 2 Chr. 26. 6.

29 Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, ^c because the rod of him that smote thee is broken : for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a ² cockatrice, ^d and his fruit *shall be* a fiery flying serpent. d 2 Or, *adder.* d 2 Kin. 18. 8.

30 And the firstborn of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety : and I will kill thy root with famine, and he shall slay thy remnant.

but were probably added here by Isaiah as a pledge of the certainty of Babylon's overthrow. When the exiles there read this prophecy of the downfall of Sennacherib they would gather from it the assurance that all the rest would prove equally true.

26. "The whole earth . . . all the nations." Notice how the fortunes of all mankind are bound up with those of God's covenant people.

28—32. Unlike most of the burdens this has a date, namely, B.C. 726. The Philistines are commanded not to rejoice because the rod (see on ch. xiv. 5.) of him that smote them was broken, for more dangerous enemies would arise. The "serpent," or common snake, was Ahaz. Though distressed by the Philistines in the early part of his reign (2 Chron. xxviii. 18.), he had apparently made head against them after the fall of Pekah and Rezin. They were now rejoicing at his death, but the son of Ahaz proved as much more dangerous than his father as the viper (see ch. xi. 8.) is more deadly than the snake. The conquest of the Philistines by Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii. 8.) is fully confirmed by the Assyrian inscriptions. He was to be followed by a fiery flying serpent, Manasseh, whose long reign of fifty-five years is passed over in silence in the Bible because of his wickedness. But his subjugation of the Philistines is made probable by their name not being found among the marauders who plundered Judah, when left defenceless by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxiv. 2.).

29. "Palestina." Better Philistia, because by modern usage Palestine includes the land of Israel.

30. "The firstborn of the poor," i. e. the very poorest.

"He shall slay." Put in the Hebrew impersonally, equivalent to "thy remnant shall be slain." The first two clauses of the verse describe Israel's security: the last two Philistia's ruin.

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² Or, he shall not be alone.

³ Or, assemblies.

^e Ps. 87. 1, 5. & 102. 16.

^f Zeph. 3. 12. Zech. 11. 11.

⁴ Or, betake themselves unto it.

31 Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole Palestina, art dissolved: for there shall come from the north a smoke, and ² none shall be alone in his ³ appointed times.

32 What shall *one* then answer the messengers of the nation? That ^e the LORD hath founded Zion, and ^f the poor of his people shall ⁴ trust in it.

CHAPTER XV.

The lamentable state of Moab.

cir. 726.

^a Jer. 48. 1, &c. Ezek. 25. 8.—11.

Amos 2. 1.

^b Num. 21. 28.

² Or, cut off.

^c ch. 16. 12.

^d See Lev.

21. 5.

ch. 3. 24.

& 22. 12.

Jer. 47. 5, &

48. 1, 37, 38.

Ezek. 7. 18.

THE ^a burden of Moab. Because in the night ^b Ar of Moab is laid waste, and ² brought to silence; because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence;

² ^c he is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba: ^d on all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off.

31. "Gate." The place where the citizens met for public business, and so put for the citizens themselves.

"From the north," the quarter symbolical of trouble (Jer. i. 14.), comes a smoke, indicative of the wrath of the Almighty, see ch. xxx. 17.

"None shall be alone," &c. The probable meaning is that "no soldier shall be missing at the places appointed for their rendezvous." Others translate, "There shall be no straggler in his hosts."

32. "Messengers," i. e. ambassadors, assemble at Jerusalem to inquire why God's blessing thus rests upon it. The answer is that Jehovah hath founded Zion that the poor of His people may find a refuge there (St. Matt. xi. 28—30.), and necessarily He watches over His work.

CHAPTERS XV, XVI.

These two chapters, forming the burden of Moab, ought not to be divided. From the words of ch. xvi. 13, 14, coupled with the use made of the prophecy in Jer. xlvi. 1, it is a not improbable opinion that the two prophets had as the foundation of their prophecies an ancient poem against Moab, which both however republished with such changes as suited the living power of inspiration, which dwelt within them.

1. "Ar," the capital of Moab, see Num. xxi. 15. "Kir," the Kir-hareseth of ch. xvi. 7, and Kir-heres of Jer. xlvi. 31, was Moab's chief fortress, occupying a rocky hill about twenty miles south of Ar.

2. "Bajith." Really the house, i. e. the temple of Chemosh.

"Dibon" has become famous in modern times by the discovery there of the Moabite stone. Probably the temple of Chemosh was at Dibon, and we should translate, "He is gone up to the temple, even to Dibon, to the high places there, to weep."

"Baldness." A place with the hair shorn off on the front of the head as a sign of grief (Jer. xvi. 6.).

ISAIAH, XVI.

3 In their streets they shall gird themselves with sackcloth : ^e on the tops of their houses, and in their streets, every one shall howl, ² weeping abundantly.

4 And Heshbon shall cry, ^f 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.

5 ^g My heart shall cry out for Moab ; ³ his fugitives shall flee unto Zoar, an ^h heifer of three years old : for ⁱ 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 ⁴ destruction.

6 For the waters ^k of Nimrim shall be ⁵ 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 ⁶ brook of the willows.

8 For the cry is gone round about the borders of Moab ; the howling thereof unto Eglaim, and the howling thereof unto Beer-elim.

9 For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood : for I will bring ⁷ more upon Dimon, ¹ lions upon him that escapeth of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land.

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CHRIST
cir. 726.

^e Jer. 48. 38.

² Heb. descending into weeping, or, coming down with weeping.

^f ch. 16. 9.

^g ch. 16. 11.

Jer. 48. 31.

³ Or, to the borders thereof, even to Zoar, as an heifer.

^h ch. 16. 14.

Jer. 48. 34.

ⁱ Jer. 48. 5.

⁴ Heb. breaking.

^k Num. 32. 36.

⁵ Heb. desolations.

⁶ Or, valley of the

Arabians.

⁷ Heb. additions.

¹ 2 Kin. 17. 25.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 Moab is exhorted to yield obedience to Christ's kingdom. 6 Moab is

3. "And in their streets." Not the same word rendered streets just before, but one signifying the "broad places," where people could congregate.

4. "Shall cry," i.e. cry out with terror. For "his life," &c., the Hebrew has "his soul is grieved in him."

5. "A heifer," &c. Why Zoar is called a heifer is difficult to imagine. Kimchi says because a heifer three years old is big and strong. But Zoar was a little place near Sodom, Gen. xix. 20, 22.

7. "Brook of the willows." The southern boundary between Moab and Edom.

9. "Lions." Heb. "a lion," in the sing. It is the usual metaphor for a conqueror (Jer. iv. 7.), and was fulfilled in Nebuchadnezzar.

CHAPTER XVI.

1. With this verse the second stanza of the poem begins. In the first we had Moab's trouble ; here an entreaty to her to submit herself to Judah, where her outcasts would find an asylum, and enjoy the happiness

Before
CHRIST
cir. 726.

threatened for her pride. 9 The prophet bewaileth her. 12 The judgment of Moab.

^a 2 Kin. 3. 4.
^b 2 Kin. 14. 7.

² Or, *Petra*;
Heb. *A rock*.

³ Or, *a nest forsaken*.

^c Num. 21. 13.

⁴ Heb. *Bring*.

⁵ Heb.
wringer.

⁶ Heb. *the treaders down*.

^d Dan. 7. 14. 27.
Mic. 4. 7.
Luke 1. 33.

⁷ Or,
prepared.

^e Ps. 72. 2.
& 96. 13.
& 98. 9.

^f Jer. 48. 23.
Zeph. 2. 10.

SEND ye the lamb to the ruler of the land ^b from ^a ² Sela to the wilderness, unto the mount of the daughter of Zion.

2 For it shall be, *that*, as a wandering bird ³ cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of ^c Arnon.

3 ⁴ Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; 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 ⁵ extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, ⁶ the oppressors are consumed out of the land.

5 And in mercy ^d shall the throne be ⁷ established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, ^e judging, and seeking judgment, and hastening righteousness.

6 ¶ We have heard of the ^f pride of Moab; *he is*

of being the subjects of that kingly son of David, Whose throne is to be established in righteousness.

“**The lamb.**” The annual tribute of lambs which used to be sent to Israel (2 Kings iii. 4.), but is now to be sent to Judah, because the invitation is to be spiritually understood of submission to the Son of David, even Christ.

“**Sela,**” the rock-hewn town, better known to us by its Greek name, Petra, which also signifies a rock.

“**To the wilderness.**” The country round Petra is almost entirely desert, but especially on the side towards Jerusalem. Into this desert the tribute of lambs must be driven when starting for Judæa.

2. “**A wandering bird.**” The unhappy women of Moab will sit in terror at the fords of the Arnon, too timorous to cross, and as unfit to provide for their own safety as a young bird driven out of the nest before it has learned to fly.

3. “**Take.**” Rather, give “**counsel.**” This and the next two verses are the cry of the Moabite women to Judah for shelter and protection.

4. “**Let mine outcasts,**” &c. Rather, “**Let mine outcasts dwell with thee:** as for Moab be thou a covert to him,” &c. But the ancient versions translate, “**Let the outcasts of Moab dwell with thee: be thou,**” &c.

5. In this verse and the latter half of ver. 4, the fugitives express their confidence that the mercy shown to them will be followed by an era of peace under a king of David’s line. It is remarkable that Gentiles should be thus described as looking forward to the Advent of the Messiah.

6. The last stanza now begins in which the prophet sets forth the sins which had brought punishment upon Moab.

ISAIAH, XVI.

very proud: *even* of his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath: ^gbut his lies shall not be so.

7 Therefore shall Moab ^hhowl for Moab, every one shall howl: for the foundations ⁱof Kir-hareseth shall ye ²mourn; surely *they are* stricken.

8 For ^kthe fields of Heshbon languish, and ¹the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof, they are come *even* unto Jazer, they wandered *through* the wilderness: her branches are ³stretched out, they are gone over the sea.

9 Therefore ^mI will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, ⁿO Heshbon, and Elealeh: for ⁴the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen.

10 And ^ogladness 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 treaders shall tread out no wine in *their* presses; I have made *their vintage* shouting to cease.

11 Wherefore ^pmy bowels shall sound like an harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kir-harsh.

12 And it shall come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary on ^qthe 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.

7. "Moab... for Moab," i.e. Moab shall mourn over itself, the survivors over the dead.

8. "Principal plants." Moab is here described as a beautiful vine (see Ps. lxxx. 8—11.), whose principal plants, i. e. its branches (and not "the lords of the heathen" as the A.V.) reached unto Jazer, and in the luxuriance of their growth, wandered on into the wilderness, and extended as far as the Dead Sea. By their breaking down the "lords of the heathen" is meant that Moab had established its supremacy over the neighbouring states.

9. "Shouting." No joyful harvest-home for Moab, but the shout of battle.

12. "He shall not prevail." When Moab, wearied with sacrifices on the high places, goes into the sanctuary to pray for aid, his idol gods can do nothing for him.

13. "Since that time." Heb. of old. The original prophecy was spoken at some remote period.

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^r ch. 28. 15.
^h Jer. 48. 20.
ⁱ 2 Kin. 3. 25.

² Or, mutter.
^k ch. 24. 7.
¹ ver. 9.

³ Or,
plucked up.

^m Jer. 48. 32.

ⁿ ch. 15. 4.

⁴ Or,
the alarm
is fallen
upon, &c.

^o ch. 24. 8.
Jer. 48. 33.

^p ch. 15. 5.
& 63. 15.
Jer. 48. 33.

^q ch. 15. 2.

ISAIAH, XVII.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 726.
r ch. 21. 16.

14 But now the LORD hath spoken, saying, Within three years, ^ras the years of an hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be contemned, with all that great multitude; and the remnant *shall be* very small *and* ² feeble.

² Or,
not many.

CHAPTER XVII.

¹ Syria and Israel are threatened. 6. A remnant shall forsake idolatry. ⁹ The rest shall be plagued for their iniquity. 12 The woe of Israel's enemies.

cir. 741.
^a Jer. 49. 23.
Amos 1. 3.
Zech. 9. 1.
fulfilled
740.
² Kin. 16. 9.
^b Jer. 7. 33.

¶ **T**HE ^a burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from *being* a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap.

2 The cities of Aroer *are* forsaken: they shall be for flocks, which shall lie down, and ^b none shall make *them* afraid.

^c ch. 7. 16.
& 8. 4.

3 ^c 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.

^d ch. 10. 16.

4 And in that day it shall come to pass, *that* the glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and ^d the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean.

^e Jer. 51. 33.

5 ^e And it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his

14. "As the years of an hireling," i.e. years calculated exactly. A hiring will not work one day beyond the fixed time.

CHAPTER XVII.

1. "The burden," sentence "of Damascus." As Ephraim is throughout coupled with Syria, the date of this prophecy is probably B.C. 734, the year of the combined attack of Pekah and Rezin on Jerusalem, followed in B.C. 732 by the capture of Damascus by Tiglath-Pileser.

2. "Cities of Aroer," in the tribe of Gad beyond Jordan.

3. Ephraim is to be stripped of its fortresses, and Damascus is to lose the rank of a kingdom. The rest of Syria, deprived of the support of its leading state, Damascus (see on ch. vii. 1), is to become like the waning glory of Israel after Tiglath-Pileser had captured her fortified towns.

4—6. "The glory of Jacob." This sinking glory of Jacob is compared, first, to a pining sickness; next, to the reaped harvest in the fertile plain of Replhaim, south-west of Jerusalem; and, finally, to an olive-tree, from which the fruit has been shaken, yet so as to leave a remnant.

ISAIAH, XVII.

arm; and it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 741.

6 † Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two *or* three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four *or* five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the LORD God of Israel.

ch. 24. 13.

7 At that day shall a man ‡ look to his Maker, § and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel.

§ Mic. 7. 7.

8 And he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect *that* which his fingers have made, either the groves, or the ¶ images.

¶ Or, sun
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 ^h the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips:

h Ps. 68. 19.

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* ¶ a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow.

¶ Or, removed
in the day
of inherit-
ance, and
there shall
be deadly
sorrow.

12 ¶ Woe to the ¶ multitude of many people, *which* make a noise ⁱ like the noise of the seas; and to the

¶ Or, noise.
i Jer. 6. 23.

7, 8. The result of Israel's chastisement is a national repentance, followed by the abolition of idolatry. The "groves," Hebrew Asherahs, were wooden pillars, square at the lower extremity, but with a female head and bust. They were set up in honour of the goddess Asherah, the Semitic Venus, and Babylonian Ishtar. For the "images," Hebrew sun-images, see Lev. xxvi. 30.

9. This verse should be translated, "In that day shall his fortified cities be as the forsaken places in the forest, and on the mountain top, which men forsook before the children of Israel: and it (the land) shall be a desolation."

10, 11. The "pleasant plants" and "strange slips," which Israel had planted in the forsaken territories abandoned to it by the Canaanites, had been the wanton pleasure-loving idolatries of the heathen: and as it had deserted for them the rock of its strength, the result would be "a heap" of ruin "in the day of grief and sorrow." So is it with all who place their happiness anywhere except in God.

12—14. In this last stanza we have the fall of the great empire which had been God's instrument for the chastisement, first of Damascus, and

Before
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cir. 714.

rushing of nations, *that* make a rushing like the rushing of ² mighty waters!

² Or, *many*.

13 The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but *God* shall ^k rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and ^l shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like ³ a rolling thing before the whirlwind.

^k Ps. 9. 5.

^l Ps. 83. 13.
Hos. 13. 3.

³ Or, *thistle-down*.

14 And behold at eveningtide 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.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *God in care of his people will destroy the Ethiopians. 7 An access thereby shall grow unto the church.*

cir. 714.

^a ch. 20. 4, 5.

Ezek. 30. 4,

5, 9. Zeph.

2. 12. & 3. 10.

^b ver. 7.

² Or, *out-spread and polished*.

WOE ^a to the land shadowing with wings, which *is* beyond the rivers of Ethiopia:

2 that sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters, *saying*, Go, ye swift messengers, to ^b a nation ² scattered and peeled,

then of Ephraim. It is noteworthy that Assyria is described in it as a power formed by the aggregation of numerous nations. Such was the fact.

14. "And behold," &c. The imagery especially suits the circumstances of Sennacherib's destruction: but the final clause extends the application of the verse to all those who misuse their might to the injury of God's people.

CHAPTER XVIII.

This chapter, if not actually part of the "sentence upon Damascus," is closely connected with it. As we have seen, the previous prophecy passed on from Damascus to Ephraim, and thence to Sennacherib. Isaiah now proclaims the Assyrian's fall to his great enemy Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, and in a passage of great beauty (ver. 5.) compares Sennacherib to a vine which has blossomed and formed its grapes, but which, just as they are ripening, is cut down.

1. "Woe to." Really, "Ho! land of overshadowing wings!" See chs. i. 4; x. 5. Overshadowing wings would properly symbolise a nation whose power extended over the neighbouring states.

"The land beyond the rivers of Ethiopia" is the Nubian highland, wherein numerous tributaries of the Nile rise. The Nile receives no addition to its waters after it has once entered the long valley of Egypt.

2. "Vessels of bulrushes," i. e. of papyrus, are still used on the Nile. The sea is probably the Red Sea, and the ambassadors sent in all directions denote the activity of Tirhakah in inciting the nations to form a league against Assyria.

By the "nation scattered and peeled," Aben-Ezra understands the Israelites, whose skin was, as it were, flayed by the violence with which

ISAIAH, XVIII.

to a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; ²³ a nation meted out and trodden down, ⁴ whose land the rivers have spoiled!

3 All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, ^c when he lifteth 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 ⁵ consider in my dwelling place like a clear heat ⁶ 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 pruning hooks, and take away and cut down the branches.

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 ^d shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people ⁷ scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under

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² Or, a nation that meteth out, and treadeth down.

³ Heb. a nation of live, live, and treading under foot.

⁴ Or, whose land the rivers despise.

^c ch. 5. 26.

⁵ Or, regard my set dwelling.

⁶ Or, after rain.

^d See Ps. 68. 31. & 72. 10. ch. 16. 1. Zeph. 3. 10. Mal. 1. 11.

⁷ Or, out-spread and polished: See ver. 2.

they were dragged from their homes: while the "terrible people" are, he says, the Ethiopians; but it may also be understood of the Israelites, whose history is full of brave deeds in war, the fame of which would be revived by Sennacherib's fall. Yet now their land was parcelled out among the conquerors, and hostile armies had spoiled their country. See ch. xvii. 13, where the Assyrian invasion is compared to the rushing of many waters.

3. This is Isaiah's answer to the Ethiopian ambassadors. When Sennacherib raises his ensign on the mountains (see ch. xiii. 2.) for the invasion of Judæa, and blows the trumpet as the signal for the attack, all the inhabitants of the world are commanded to be upon the watch and see how God will deliver His people.

4, 5. During Sennacherib's preparations God sits as a calm spectator, and permits him for a time to prosper as a vine thrives in the "clear heat" by day, and the "cloud of dew" by night. But this repose is not that of indifference, but of settled purpose. When the vine is just about to ripen its fruit, it is cut down. It is entirely in accordance with the method of Hebrew poetry that God should be spoken of in ver. 4 in the first person, and in ver. 5 in the third.

6. The metaphor is here dropped, and the cut-down vine becomes a slaughtered army.

7. Israel is now to offer itself as a "present" to Jchovah, and worship Him in His temple at Jerusalem.

Before
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foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion.

CHAPTER XIX.

1 *The confusion of Egypt.* 11 *The foolishness of their princes.* 18 *The calling of Egypt to the church.* 23 *The covenant of Egypt, Assyria, and Israel.*

^a Jer. 46. 13.
Ezek. 23, &
59.
^b Ps. 18. 10.
& 104. 3.
^c Ex. 12. 12.
Jer. 43. 12.

THE ^aburden of Egypt. Behold, the LORD ^brideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and ^cthe idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.

² *Heb. mingle.*
^d Judg. 7. 22.
1 Sam. 14.
16. 20.
² Chr. 20. 23.

2 And I will ^{2d}set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom.

³ *Heb. shall be emptied.*
^e Heb.
swallow up.
^e ch. 8. 19.
& 47. 12.

3 And the spirit of Egypt ³shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will ⁴destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall ^eseek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards.

^b Or, *shut up.*
^f ch. 20. 4.
Jer. 46. 26.
Ezek. 29. 19.

4 And the Egyptians will I ⁵give over ^finto the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the LORD, the LORD of hosts.

CHAPTERS XIX, XX.

The "sentence upon Egypt" follows naturally upon that on Ethiopia. It first describes the calamities about to fall upon that country, vv. 1—17, and then her conversion to God, vv. 18—25. To this is attached a more specific prophecy, ch. xx., spoken during the reign of Sargon, the predecessor of Sennacherib.

2. This prediction of anarchy was fulfilled during the reigns of Esarhaddon and his successor, Assurbanipal, when Egypt was divided into twelve petty states, whose perpetual feuds made the country fall an easy prey to the Assyrians. It was not till towards the end of the reign of Manasseh that Psammetichus, chiefly by the aid of Greek mercenaries, established his rule over all Egypt, and made it once again a powerful monarchy.

3. "Spirit." Not its courage, but its wisdom, and the culture for which it had long been famous.

4. "A cruel lord." Of the many tyrants in whom this prediction has been successively fulfilled, no one deserves the epithet "cruel" so thoroughly as Cambyses, to whom the prophecy more especially belongs, as he destroyed the last remains of the independence of Egypt by making it into a province of the Persian empire.

ISAIAH, XIX.

5 ^g 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 ^h of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither.

7 The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, ² 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 ⁱ fine flax, and they that weave ³ networks, shall be confounded.

10 And they shall be broken in the ⁴ purposes thereof, all that make sluices and ponds ⁵ for fish.

11 Surely the princes of ^k Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?

12 ¹ Where are they? where are thy wise men? ¹ I Cor. 1. 20. 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, ^m the ^m Jer. 2. 16.

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^g Jer. 51. 36.
Ezek. 30. 12.
^h 2 Kin. 19. 24.

² Heb. and
shall not be.

ⁱ 1 Kin. 10. 28.
Prov. 7. 16.

³ Or, white
works.

⁴ Heb. founda-
tions.

⁵ Heb. of liv-
ing things.

^k Num. 13. 22.

5. "The sea," i. e. the Nile, comp. Nah. iii. 8. The Egyptians still call the Nile *bahr*, which means *sea*.

6. The ruin of Egypt is described under metaphors drawn from what would be her physical condition if the Nile ceased to overflow. The first clause should be translated, "And the rivers, i. e. arms of the Nile, shall become loathsome." The "brooks of defence" are the canals which served to protect Lower Egypt as well as to water it.

9. "Networks." Rather, "fine white linen." The beautiful cloths found among the mummies of Egypt attest the perfection to which the Egyptians brought the weaving of linen, both warp and woof being of equal fineness and of the utmost delicacy.

10. By looking at the margin it will be seen that "purposes" is in the Hebrew "foundations," and "fish" is "living things," but really "soul." The right translation is, "And her foundations shall be broken; all that work for hire are grieved in soul;" i. e. ruin shall crush the upper classes, who are the foundations upon which the fabric of society rests, and shall also distress the poor.

11. "I am the son," &c. These boasts are those of Pharaoh's counsellors, each claiming for himself descent from families initiated into the famous Egyptian mysteries, and from dynasties which had borne rule in one of the many districts into which Egypt was divided.

13. "Zoan" was the capital of the Pharaohs. Its ruins by their

Before
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² Or,
governors.

³ Heb,
corners.

⁴ Heb,
a spirit of
perverse-
ness.

ⁿ¹ 1 Kin. 22. 22.
ch. 23. 10.

^o ch. 9. 14.

^p Jer. 51. 30.
Nah. 3. 13.

^q ch. 11. 15.

¹ Zeph. 3. 9.

² Heb. *the lip*.

⁶ Or, of
Heres, or,
of the sun.

⁸ Gen. 28. 18.

Ex. 24. 4.

Josh. 22. 10,
26, 27.

princes of Noph are deceived; they have also seduced Egypt, *even* ²³ *they that are* the stay of the tribes thereof.

14 The LORD hath mingled ⁴ⁿ a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.

15 Neither shall there be *any* work for Egypt, which ^o the head or tail, branch or rush, may do.

16 In that day shall Egypt ^p be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the LORD of hosts, ^q 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.

18 In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt ^r speak ⁵ the language of Canaan, and swear to the LORD of hosts; one shall be called, The city ⁶ of destruction.

19 In that day ^s shall there be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD.

grandeur attest its former magnificence. "Noph" is Napata, a town in Lower Egypt.

14. "Mingled," i. e. as men mingle spices with wine to make it more intoxicating, see ch. v. 22.

15. "A branch," i. e. palm-branch, as in ch. ix. 14.

17. "A terror." When Egypt is aroused to the conviction that Jehovah is the true God, and that it is His hand which is stretched out in punishment, then shall it regard Judæa with the deepest awe, as being the land where Jehovah dwells in His temple.

18. This verse foretells that wonderful influx of Jews into Egypt, which made it a second Palestine; and in five cities they were to have so great a preponderance, that Hebrew would be there the current language.

"The city of destruction." Heb. *Ir-ha-heres*, the city of the destruction of heathenism. There is however in the name a covert allusion to Beth-Shemesh (Jer. xliii. 13.), i. e. *Ir-ha-Cheres*, the City of the Sun, called by the Greeks Heliopolis, and by the natives On. At this town the High-priest Onias persuaded Ptolemy Philopator to allow him to build a temple and establish the Mosaic ritual, which continued to exist there till the time of the Emperor Vespasian.

19. "A pillar," i. e. an obelisk. So firmly was Judaism to be esta-

ISAIAH, XIX.

20 And ^tit shall be for a sign and 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. Before
CHRIST
cir. 714.
^t See Josh.
4, 20,
& 22, 27.

21 And the LORD shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day, and ^ushall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the LORD, and perform *it*. ^u Mal. 1. 11.

22 And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal *it*: and they shall return *even* to the LORD, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.

23 In that day ^xshall 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. ^x ch. 11. 16.

24 In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, *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 ^ythe work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance. ^y Ps. 109. 3.
ch. 20, 23.
Hos. 2. 23.
Eph. 2. 10.

lished in Egypt that from the border to its centre proofs would constantly meet the eye of the prevalence of the worship of Jehovah there.

20. "A saviour." It is remarkable that Ptolemy, the first Greek sovereign of Egypt, was called Ptolemy Soter, i. e. Ptolemy the Saviour; and that he commenced that policy of befriending the Jews which caused such myriads of them to settle in Egypt, to escape from the persecutions of the kings of Syria, whose favourite name was Antiochus.

23—25. In these three verses Judæa is described as the means of bringing both Egypt and Assyria to the knowledge of the true God, and there can be no doubt that the presence of Jews in both countries in large numbers did greatly aid in winning them so quickly for Christ: but their settlement in Egypt was of even more vital consequence to Christ's kingdom. For it was through the influence of the Ptolemies that the Septuagint version was made, i. e. the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, the language spoken throughout the Roman empire when Christ came by all the educated and the commercial classes. Wherever Jews settled they carried this Greek Bible with them, and thus the general nature of its teaching, and its prophecies concerning Christ were known to the devout Greeks in every city, and prepared them for the preaching of the Apostles.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 714.

CHAPTER XX.

A type prefiguring the shameful captivity of Egypt and Ethiopia.

^a2 Kin. 18. 17. **I**N the year that ^aTartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it ;

² Heb. *by the hand of Isaiah.*
^b Zech. 13. 4. **2** at the same time spake the LORD ² by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose ^b the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, ^c walking naked and barefoot.

^c 1 Sam. 19. 24.
Mic. 1. 8, 11. **3** And the LORD said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years ^d for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia ;

³ Heb. *the captivity of Egypt.*
^e 2 Sam. 10. 4.
ch. 3. 17.
Jer. 13. 22,
26.
Mic. 1. 11. **4** so shall the king of Assyria lead away ³ the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, ^e even with *their* buttocks uncovered, to the ⁴ shame of Egypt.

⁴ Heb. *nakedness.*
^f 2 Kin. 18. 21.
ch. 30. 3, 5,
7, & 36. 6. **5** ^f And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.

⁵ Or, *country.*
Jer. 47. 4. **6** And the inhabitant of this ⁵ 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 ?

CHAPTER XX.

1. The mention of an Assyrian king named Sargon used to be a favourite objection against the inspiration of Scripture, it being supposed that there was no such person, and that Isaiah had made a mistake. Now his palace has been found at Khorsabad, full of inscriptions, which give us all the main particulars of his history. He was a successful general, who usurped the throne after the death of Shalmaneser (which happened soon after the beginning of the siege of Samaria) in B.C. 722, captured Samaria in B.C. 720, attacked Ashdod in B.C. 711, died in B.C. 705, and was succeeded by his son Sennacherib.

“Tartan” is not the name of a man, but of an office. It means commander-in-chief. So 2 Kings xviii. 17.

2. “Sackcloth.” Instead of the coarse mantle of camel’s hair, which was the regular dress of the prophets, Zech. xiii. 4. St. Matt. iii. 4. Isaiah seems habitually to have worn one of sackcloth, as a symbol of his deeper mourning for the sins of Judah.

“Naked” does not mean absolutely nude, but clad only in the under tunic.

6. “This isle.” Rather, coastland. It means the coastland of Palestine, and so Palestine itself. The Jews ask how they can escape, if the

ISAIAH, XXI.

CHAPTER XXI.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 714.

1 *The prophet, bewailing the captivity of his people, seeth in a vision the fall of Babylon by the Medes and Persians. 11 Edom, scorning the prophet, is moved to repentance. 13 The set time of Arabia's calamity.*

THE burden of the desert of the sea. As ^a whirl- ^a Zech. 9. 14.
winds in the south pass through; so it cometh
from the desert, from a terrible land.

2 A ² grievous vision is declared unto me; ^b the ² Heb. *hard*.
treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the ^b ch. 33. 1.
spoiler spoileth. ^c Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; ^c ch. 13. 17.
all the sighing thereof have I made to cease. ^c Jer. 49. 34.

3 Therefore ^d are my loins filled with pain: ^e pangs ^d ch. 15. 5.
have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman ^e & 16. 11.
that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of ^e ch. 13. 8.
it; I was dismayed at the seeing of *it*.

4 ³ My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: ³ Or,
^f the night of my pleasure hath he ⁴ turned into ^f *My mind*
fear unto me. ^f *wandered.*
^f Deut. 28. 67.

5 ⁵ Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower,
eat, drink: arise, ye princes, *and* anoint the shield. ⁴ Heb. *put*.
⁵ Dan. 5. 5.

6 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a
watchman, let him declare what he seeth.

Assyrians thus utterly vanquish Egypt and Ethiopia, the lands wherein they had expected to find deliverance? They might have learnt the answer from their own sacred books, see Ps. xx. 7, 8.

CHAPTER XXI.

1. "The desert of the sea" is probably Babylonia, the southern part of which was a vast sterile plain. The sea is the Euphrates, the term being applicable in Hebrew to any large river (see chs. xix. 5; xxvii. 1).

2. "A grievous," i. e. stern, harsh vision.

"The treacherous dealer" is the Assyrian monarchy, as unscrupulous as it was destructive. For "Elam," see ch. xi. 11. The "sighing thereof" means the sighing and anguish caused by Assyria.

3, 4. In these verses the prophet personifies Babylon, and describes her anguish on the night of her capture by Cyrus. For "the night of my pleasure," see Dan. v. 1, 30.

5. "Prepare," &c. The verbs are really infinitives, describing most graphically the doings of the Babylonians on that fatal night. "A preparing of the table, a keeping of the watch, an eating, a drinking." Suddenly the news come of the entrance of the Persians into the city, and the command is given "Rise up, ye princes: anoint the shield." This was always done just before a battle, that the weapons of the enemy might glide off more easily, see 2 Sam. i. 21.

6—10. Instead of simply foretelling the capture of Babylon, the

Before
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h ver. 9.

2 Or, *cried
as a lion.*

i Hab. 2. 1.

3 Or, *every
night.*

k Jer. 51. 8.
Rev. 14. 8.
& 18. 2.

l ch. 46. 1.
Jer. 50. 2.
& 51. 41.

m Jer. 51. 33.

4 Heb. *son.*

n 1 Chr. 1. 30.
Jer. 49. 7, 8.
Ezek. 35. 2.
Obad. 1.

7 ^h 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 ² he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand con-
tinually upon the ¹ watchtower in the daytime, and I
am set in my ward ³ whole nights:

9 and, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, *with*
a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said,
^k Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and ¹ all the graven
images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.

10 ^m O my threshing, and the ⁴ corn of my floor:
that which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the
God of Israel, have I declared unto you.

11 ¶ ⁿ The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me
out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watch-
man, what of the night?

12 The watchman said, The morning cometh, and
also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye:
return, come.

prophet is commanded in his vision to station a sentinel on the watch-
tower, there to await the appearance of the army of Cyrus on its march.

7. The word rendered "chariot" rather means "mounted men;"
and "a couple of horsemen" means "horsemen advancing in double
"file." When then the watchman saw troops of mounted men advancing
in pairs with long trains of asses and camels for the baggage, he listened
eagerly for the news.

8. The margin is right, "*He cried as a lion,*" i. e. with a loud voice.
The rest of the verse suggests that a long time was to elapse between the
command to place a sentinel, i. e. the uttering of the prediction, and the
capture of Babylon. During this time the watchman must use the
utmost diligence, lest he should be surprised at last.

9. "A chariot," &c. Rather, "Behold there come mounted men,
"horsemen in pairs." The watchman sees at length the army of Cyrus
on the march, and proclaims the news of the capture of Babylon.

10. "The corn." Better, as in the margin, "the son of my threshing-
"floor." The prophet addresses these words to the Jews, who had long
been trampled under foot and beaten down at Babylon, like the corn on
the threshing-floor.

11. "Dumah." Lit. "silence," is an enigmatical name for Edom,
called in Latin Idumæa.

"He calleth." Heb. "one calleth." As Isaiah stands on the watch
in Jerusalem, he hears a voice from distant Edom, anxiously inquiring
what will be the result of the Medo-Persian invasion of Chaldea.

12. "Return, come," i. e. come again. Isaiah refuses to allay the
anxieties of Edom, which is left to the vicissitudes of human fortune,
bright at one time like the morning, then dark as night. But they have

ISAIAH, XXII.

13 ¶ ° The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies ^p of Dedanim.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 714.

14 The inhabitants of the land of Tema ² brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled.

^o Jer. 49, 28,
^p 1 Chr. 1. 9,
32.

² Or,
bring ye.

15 For they fled ^{3 4} from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.

³ Or, *for fear.*
⁴ Heb. *from the face.*

16 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, ^q according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of ^r Kedar shall fail :

^q ch. 16, 14.

^r Ps. 120, 5,
ch. 60, 7.

17 and the residue of the number of ⁵ archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished : for the LORD God of Israel hath spoken *it*.

⁵ Heb. *bows.*

CHAPTER XXII.

1 The prophet lamenteth the invasion of Jewry by the Persians. 8 He reproveh their human wisdom and worldly joy. 15 He prophesieth Shebna's deprivation, 20 and Eliakim, prefiguring the kingdom of Christ, his substitution.

THE burden of the valley of vision. What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops ?

cir. 712.

permission to enquire again, and as the word *return* also means "repent," it suggests the truth, that repentance is the condition indispensable for their obtaining acceptance with God.

13. The "travelling companies of Dedanim" mean the caravans of the Dedanites, who carried on a large trade between the Persian gulf and Damascus, and also with Tyre, see Ezek. xxvii. 15. They are now to leave the open country, and seek protection in the woodland districts, where they would more easily be able to hide themselves from the invaders. Compare Jer. xlix. 8.

14, 15. The people of "Tema," a district of Arabia out of the track of war, are represented as hospitably entertaining the fugitives, driven from their homes by "the grievousness of war."

16. "Kedar," a son of Ishmael (Gen. xxv. 13.), is put for the Arabians in general, his descendants forming one of their most powerful tribes. For "the years of an hireling," see ch. xvi. 14. This prophecy was probably fulfilled by Sargon, who in his seventh year, four years before the attack upon Ashdod, invaded Arabia, and inflicted great misfortunes upon the inhabitants.

CHAPTER XXII.

1. "The valley of vision." Most commentators apply this term to Jerusalem, to which it is especially appropriate as the home of prophecy, the usual term for which in Isaiah's days was *vision*, see chs. i. 1; ii. 1,

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cir. 712.

^a ch. 32. 13.

² Heb. of
the bow.

^b Jer. 4. 19.
& 9. 1.

³ Heb. I will
be bitter in
weeping.

^c ch. 37. 3.

^d Lam. 1. 5.
& 2. 2.

^e Jer. 49. 35.

^f ch. 15. 1.

⁴ Heb. made
naked.

⁵ Heb. the
choice of thy
valleys.

⁶ Or, toward.

2 Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city,
^a 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
² by the archers: all that are found in thee are
bound together, *which* have fled from far.

4 Therefore said I, Look away from me; ^b ³ I will
weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of
the spoiling of the daughter of my people.

5 ^c For *it is* a day of trouble, and of treading down,
and of perplexity ^d by the Lord GOD of hosts in the
valley of vision, breaking down the walls, and of
crying to the mountains.

6 ^e And Elam bare the quiver with chariots of
men *and* horsemen, and ^f Kir ⁴ uncovered the shield.

7 And it shall come to pass, *that* ⁵ thy choicest
valleys shall be full of chariots, and the horsemen
shall set themselves in array ⁶ at the gate.

8 And he discovered the covering of Judah, and

&c. Mr. Birks and Dr. Kay both adduce forcible arguments in favour of its application to Samaria, in which case the siege described would be that begun by Shalmaneser. But vv. 8—11 seem to refer so plainly to Jerusalem, that the old opinion is probably the true one, and the siege that by Sennacherib, but looking onward, as is the manner of prophecy, to the further siege and capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

“The housetops.” The flat roofs of Oriental houses are used by the natives both for recreation and rest (2 Sam. xi. 2. Neh. viii. 16.). They mount them here to gaze upon the siege-works of the enemy.

2, 3. “Not slain with the sword.” The most horrible portion of an ancient siege was its close, when, cooped up within the walls, the besieged slowly perished by hunger and disease. Upon the capture of the town the few survivors, including both the rulers who had attempted in vain to escape, and the mass of the people, of whom many had fled from distant places to Jerusalem for refuge, were thrown into chains, some to be put to death, see Jer. liii. 10, others to be sold as slaves.

4, 5. The words of Isaiah lamenting the misfortunes of his people. By “crying to the mountains” is meant that the shrieks and lamentations of the people reach to the mountains, which stand about Jerusalem, and are re-echoed back.

6. “Elam,” though an inveterate enemy of Assyria, was often partially conquered, and the men of the subjected district compelled to fight in the Assyrian armies. “Kir” is a region of the Caucasus, and marks the extreme limit of the Assyrian empire on the north-east. By “uncovering the shield” is meant the last preparation for battle, the shield being kept in a case till wanted, when it was taken out and oiled (ch. xxi. 5.).

8. “And he discovered,” &c. God withdraws His protection from

thou didst look in that day to the armour ^g of the house of the forest.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

9 ^h Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many : and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool.

^g 1 Kin. 7. 2. & 10. 17.
^h 2 Kin. 20. 20.
2 Chr. 32. 4, 5, 30.

10 And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall.

11 ⁱ Ye made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool : but ye have not looked unto ^k the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.

ⁱ Neh. 3. 16.

^k See ch. 37. 26.

12 And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts ^l call to weeping, and to mourning, and ^m to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth :

^l Joel 1. 13.
^m See Ezra 9. 3.

13 and behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine : ⁿ let us eat and drink ; for to morrow we shall die.

ch. 15. 2.
Mic. 1. 16.
ⁿ ch. 56. 12.
1 Cor. 15. 32.

14 ^o And it was revealed in mine ears by the LORD of hosts, Surely this iniquity ^p shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

^o ch. 5. 9.

^p 1 Sam. 3. 14.
Ez. k. 24. 13.

His people, and immediately Sennacherib conquers the fortified cities (2 Kings xviii. 13.), which had hitherto covered, i. e. protected Jerusalem. In this strait the people, instead of looking to God for help, arm themselves for battle. "The house of the forest" of Lebanon was so called because built of cedar (1 Kings vii. 2—7.), but was situate on the eastern slope of Mount Zion, and from the time of Solomon had been used for an arsenal.

9. "Ye have seen," i. e. inspected the breaches or gaps in the walls of Jerusalem caused by neglect. For "the lower pool," see on ch. vii. 3.

11. "The two walls" built by Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 5. It was right and wise thus to prepare for a siege, but rulers and people alike forgot God, Who had made and fashioned the city for higher purposes than to be the capital of a mere earthly kingdom.

12—14. "Baldness," see ch. xv. 2, and "girding with sackcloth" were signs of sorrow, such as the coming danger demanded : for when a terrible enemy was approaching the walls God by its presence summoned the people to a national repentance. Instead whereof they gave themselves up to reckless enjoyment, using as an argument the shortness of the time still allowed them. But as St. Paul shows, 1 Cor. xv. 34, such an argument can be used only by those who believe in no hereafter. For men who thus pervert God's calls to repentance into arguments for sinning without shame, there can be, as the prophet affirms, no possibility of forgiveness (ver. 14.).

Before
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^q 2 Kin. 18. 37.
ch. 36. 3.
^r 1 Kin. 4. 6.

² Or, *O he.*
^s See 2 Sam.
18. 18.
Matt. 27. 60.

³ Or, *the
LORD who
covered thee
with an ex-
cellent co-
vering, and
clothed thee
gorgeously,
shall surely,
etc. ver. 18.*

⁴ Heb. *the
captivity of
a man.*

^t Esth. 7. 8.

⁵ Heb. *large
of spaces.*

^u 2 Kin. 18.
18.

15 ¶ Thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Go, get thee unto this treasurer, *even* unto ^q Shebna, ^r which *is* over the house, *and say,*

16 What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, ² as he ^s that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, *and* that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock?

17 Behold, ³ the LORD will carry thee away with ⁴ a mighty captivity, ^t and will surely cover thee.

18 He will surely violently turn and toss thee *like* a ball into a ⁵ 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.

20 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant ^u Eliakim the son of Hilkiah:

15—25. It is certain that during Hezekiah's reign there were strong influences at work hostile to true religion. They were inherited from the days of Abaz, and in spite of the steady resistance made to them by both king and prophet, they triumphed as soon as Manasseh came to the throne. Hezekiah's reign, as Dr. Kay observes, was but "a short, bright "twilight," between the dark times of Abaz and the total sunset of all that was good in the days of Manasseh. In this section we find no less a person than the king's most confidential minister on the side of wrong. In 2 Kings xviii. 37; xix. 2, Eliakim, in accordance with ver. 22, is described as over the king's household; but Shebna is still the scribe, or, as we should say, the principal secretary of state, so that he was still powerful. When his complete degradation happened we do not know; but besides the literal meaning there is also an allegorical interpretation, according to which Shebna represents the Mosaic and Eliakim the Christian dispensation, and thus ver. 22 finds its complete fulfilment in our Lord (Rev. iii. 7.).

15. "Treasurer." Gesenius shows that the word really means the king's friend and companion.

16. "What hast thou here?" i. e. What business hast thou here? Shebna apparently was a foreigner, for (1) his father's name is nowhere mentioned; and (2) his own name is foreign. Thus, his cutting out for himself in the rock a splendid mausoleum was looked upon as an act of presumption.

17. "Will surely cover thee." As Haman's face was covered, when he was about to be led to execution (Esth. vii. 8.).

18. "Like a ball into a large country," i. e. like one tossed to a great distance. Shebna after his disgrace probably had some distant spot assigned him for a residence, to prevent him from plotting and intriguing at court. He seems, however, to have retained there much of the pomp—"the chariots of his glory"—which had made him unpopular at Jerusalem.

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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.

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22 And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall ^xopen, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.

^x Job 12. 14.
Rev. 3. 7.

23 And I will fasten him *as* ^ya nail in a sure ^yplace; 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 ²vessels of flagons.

² Or,
instrument
of viols.

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*.

CHAPTER XXIII.

¹ *The miserable overthrow of Tyre.* ¹⁷ *Their unhappy return.*

THE ^aburden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no

cir. 715.
^a Jer. 25. 22.
& 47. 4.
Ezek. 26, &
27, & 28.
Amos 1. 9.
Zech. 9. 2, 4.

22. "The key," as denoting the power of opening and shutting, is the symbol of supreme authority, "and the key of David" belongs therefore to our Lord, Rev. iii. 7. Comp. St. Matt. xvi. 19. Rev. i. 18. It was carried upon the shoulder probably on state occasions. See ch. ix. 6. Ancient keys were of cumbrous size.

23. "As a nail." Really "as a tent-peg," upon which the whole safety of the tent depended. A "sure peg" is an ordinary metaphor with the Orientals for firmness and security.

"A glorious throne," i. e. he shall raise all his relations to positions of eminence.

25. The suddenness of this reverse has made many apply the prediction to Shebna; but this is forced. Others think that Eliakim's excessive nepotism, as described in ver. 24, ended in his ruin, "vessels of small quantity" having been placed by him in positions which required something of larger capacity. Others see in Eliakim a type of the Messiah, in Whom the extremes of glory and degradation meet, and with Whom the first shall be last, and the last first. The last two opinions are not inconsistent.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The sentence upon Tyre consists of two parts, of which the first, vv. 1—16, describes her capture by the Chaldeans; and the second, vv. 17, 18, her restoration after seventy years of oblivion.

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^b ver. 12.

² Heb. *silent*.

house, no entering in : ^b from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them.

2 Be ² still, ye inhabitants of the isle ; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished.

^c Ezek. 27. 3.

3 And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the harvest of the river, *is* her revenue ; and ^c 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.

^d ch. 19. 16.

5 ^d 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.

^e ch. 22. 2.

³ Heb. *from afar off*.

7 *Is* this your ^e joyous city, whose antiquity *is* of ancient days ? her own feet shall carry her ³ afar off to sojourn.

^f See Ezek. 23. 2, 12.

8 Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, ^f the

1. "The land of Chittim" is Cyprus. The Tyrian merchant-vessels returning from long voyages, such as that to Tartessus in Spain, on touching at Cyprus on their way home, have the unhappy news "revealed to them," that their city has been captured, its houses destroyed, and that there is "no entering in," i. e. into the harbour now occupied by the Chaldeans.

2. "Isle," as in chs. xi. 11 : xx. 6, means coastland, here Phœnicia, which was a narrow strip of shore. With the fall of Tyre the trade of Zidon, which used to "replenish," i. e. enrich, all Phœnicia, has come to an end.

3. "Sihor," i. e. the Black river, is the Hebrew name for the Nile, derived from the dark deposit which it brings with it ; while Yeor, the word rendered "river," is its Egyptian name. The harvest of the Nile formed the wealth of Tyre, because the Egyptians left the exportation of their produce to the Tyrians, whose goods they took in payment for it.

4. "Zidon," the mother-city of Tyre, is "to be ashamed," because "the strength of the sea," i. e. the strong fortress of Tyre built upon a seagirt rock, laments that she is now childless and barren.

5. "As at the report . . ." The general consternation at the fall of Tyre is to be as great as at the news of Pharaoh's overthrow in the Red Sea.

6. "Pass ye over," i. e. escape to the most distant lands visited by you in your trading voyages. "Isle," see ver. 2.

7. "Her own feet . . ." Unlike most conquered nations, compelled by the Chaldeans to people Babylon, the Tyrians escaped in their ships to their various colonies on the shores of the Mediterranean.

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crowning *city*, whose merchants *are* princes, whose traffickers *are* the honourable of the earth?

Before
CHRIST
cir. 715.

9 The LORD of hosts hath purposed it, ² to stain the pride of all glory, *and* to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.

² Heb. *to pollute.*

10 Pass through thy land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish: *there is* no more ³ strength.

³ Heb. *girdle.*

11 He stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms: the LORD hath given a commandment ⁴ against ⁵ the merchant *city*, to destroy the ⁶ strong holds thereof.

⁴ Or, concerning a merchant-man.

12 And he said, ⁵ Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon: arise, ⁶ pass over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest.

⁵ Heb. Canaan.

⁶ Or, strengths.

⁵ Rev. 18. 22.
^h ver. 1.

13 Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people

8. "The crowning city." The city which gives crowns, and disposes of kingdoms, Tyre being in many of its colonies the paramount power, like Great Britain in India.

10. "As a river." Like the Nile (as in ver. 3.). The people of Tarshish, once forced to labour in the mines of Spain, and load the ships of their masters in the harbour, may now spread themselves at their own will over all the land, as the Nile does in Egypt; for "there is no more strength" in Tyre to restrain them. The Hebrew word means "girdle" (see margin), so that literally it means there is no band round them, nothing to keep them from going wherever they please.

11. "He," i. e. Jehovah, Whose name is not given till the third clause. This awakens attention in Hebrew, and gives emphasis to the name when revealed; but is contrary to the usages of our language. By "the sea" is meant the commerce of Tyre (comp. ver. 4.), and by "the kingdoms," the principalities subject to her empire.

"The merchant city." Heb. Canaan. Sidon was son of Canaan (Gen. x. 15.), and the whole race were such famous traders that "traffickers," in ver. 8, is literally Canaanites. So Chaldee became synonymous with astrologer, and Greek with heathen (see St. Mark vii. 26.).

12. "Daughter of Zidon," i. e. Zidon's inhabitants (see ver. 10.), not Tyre, which, as founded by Zidon, would be called its daughter in modern phrase. By her being called an "oppressed" or violated "virgin" is meant that her territory, hitherto unconquered, was now to be subdued. The people are to flee to Chittim, i. e. Cyprus, but are there to "have no rest," by which is not meant that Nebuchadnezzar would pursue them thither, but that intestine troubles would follow upon the colonies being set free from the domination of Tyre (see on ver. 10.).

13. "Behold the land of the Chaldeans. . ." Isaiah seems to hear some one ask; Who is strong enough to overthrow an empire so mighty as that of Tyre? In answer he points, not to Nineveh and Assyria, but to Babylon, which, though far older than Nineveh, had long been subject

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ⁱ Ps. 72. 9. was not, *till* the Assyrian founded it for ⁱ them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof; *and* he brought it to ruin.

^k ver. 1.
Ezek. 27. 25,
30. 14 ^k 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 ² shall Tyre sing as an harlot.

² Heb.
*it shall be
unto Tyre
as the song
of an harlot.* 16 Take an harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered.

¹ Rev. 17. 2. 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 ¹ shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.

^m Zech. 14.
20, 21. 18 And her merchandise and her hire ^m shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor

to it, and "was not." Though the standard of revolt was raised again and again by Merodach-Baladan (ch. xxxix. 1.), yet he never succeeded in throwing off the yoke of Nineveh. It even attempted to destroy Babylon utterly; for the next clause should be translated "Asshur had appointed it for the beasts of the desert." Yet now "they—the Chal-deans—have set up their siege-towers; they have destroyed her ("Tyre's) palaces; they (lit. *he*) have made her a ruin." The Hebrew language permits very sudden changes in genders and numbers, and here in the last clause "he" means "the people of Chaldea," just before spoken of as "they;" but such changes are contrary to the idiom of our language.

14. "Your strength," i. e. Tyre (see on ver. 4.).

15. "Seventy years." The allotted duration of the empire of Babylon (Jer. xxv. 9, 11.).

"According to the days of one king," may signify years, not exactly calculated like the days of an hireling (ch. xvi. 14.), but loosely. Tyro shall rise again, not in the very year in which Babylon falls, but as the result of it, being regarded no longer with jealousy, but with favour by the Persians.

16. Tyre is here compared to the gaily-dressed singing girls, or bayaderes, who, in the East, attend banquets to amuse the guests with music and dancing.

17. "Shall commit fornication . . ." i. e. shall carry on a large trade with many nations. Foreign trade was discountenanced by the Mosaic law, as involving lax intercourse with profane races.

18. "Shall be holiness," &c. We are not to understand by this merely that Tyre should be converted to Christianity, though such was

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laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for ² durable clothing.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 715.

² Heb. *old*.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 The doleful judgments of God upon the land. 13 A remnant shall joyfully praise him. 16 God in his judgments shall advance his kingdom.

BEHOLD, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and ² turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.

cir. 712.

² Heb.
*perverteth
the face
thereof.*

² And it shall be, as with the people, so with the ^{3a} priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; ^b as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.

³ Or, *prince*.

^a Hos. 4. 9.

^b Ezek. 7.
12, 13.

³ The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word.

⁴ The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, ⁴ the haughty people of the earth do languish.

⁴ Heb. *the
height of
the people.*

⁵ ^c The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants

^c Gen. 3. 17.
Num. 35. 33.

the case, and Tyre became the seat of a bishop, but something far larger. Its commerce was to be one of the appointed means for the propagation of Christianity.

CHAPTERS XXIV—XXVII.

Appended to the burdens are four chapters, in which the various judgments, which successively came upon the Holy land from Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Romans, are combined in one general view, but relieved by the bright prospect of the Messiah's Advent. Mr. Birks has well pointed out how this prophecy holds an intermediate place between the burdens and the last twenty-seven chapters, (chs. xl.—lxvi.), in which Isaiah seems almost wholly transported into the distant future.

1. "The earth." Rather, "the land" of Judah. The Heb. language has no means of distinguishing these two senses. The prophecy refers to the scattering of the Jews, foretold in Deut. iv. 27, etc. The same word is rendered "land" in ver. 3, but "earth" again in vv. 4 and 5.

4. "The world," the inhabited region, means primarily only Judæa (see on ch. xiii. 11.), as also does "the earth" here and in vv. 1 and 5. But the Jews were the type of the whole Christian Church, and thus the prophecy looks onward to us and to God's covenant people at all times whenever God's arm is made bare for chastisement.

5. "The earth is defiled," i. e. God's consecrated land of Judæa, given by Him to His Church, is profaned, rendered ordinary ground, by

Before
CHRIST
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thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

d Mal. 4. 6.

6 Therefore hath ^d the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.

e ch. 16. 8, 9.
Joel 1. 10, 12.

7 ^e The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh.

f Jer. 7. 34.
& 16. 9.
& 25. 10.
Ezek. 26. 13.
Hos. 2. 11.
Rev. 18. 22.

8 The mirth ^f 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.

10 The city of confusion is broken 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.

the transgression of His laws, especially of the ten Commandments. The "ordinance and covenant" refer to the institutions of the Mosaic law, and especially to such great matters as the Passover, the Temple service, and, above all, the Sabbath.

6. "Burned." Not literally, but consumed by the heat of the Divine anger. In this and the following verses the prophet dwells with great force upon the particulars of the chastisement inflicted upon the covenant people, because of their violation of all God's laws, positive and moral (see ver. 5.).

7. "New wine." Strictly the fresh unfermented juice of the grape, but put here for the grapes themselves, hanging ungathered upon the vines.

10. "The city of confusion," Hebrew *Tohu*, a word taken from Gen. i. 2. where we read that the earth was *tohu* and *bohu*, i. e. waste and empty. It means here that instead of the busy joyous crowd which once thronged its streets, Jerusalem shall be a "city of wasteness" and emptiness. The idea of confusion or of a chaos preceding creation belongs to the heathens, who believed in the eternity of matter: in Gen. i. 2 we are told that the world was at first emptiness and a void, and that God both created matter, and afterwards arranged it in order.

"Shut up," i. e. blocked up by masses of ruin, so that no ingress is possible to any houses left standing in the desolated city.

11. "A crying for wine." In modern days wine is a luxury, drunk chiefly for pleasure: in Palestine, as in many parts of the continent now, it was the ordinary drink of the people. This crying is that of people perishing with thirst (see Lam. ii. 12.).

12. "The gate smitten" and destroyed leaves the city defenceless, and exposed to the attacks of all marauders.

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13 ¶ When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, ² *there shall be* as the shaking of an olive tree, *and* as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.
ch. 17. 5, 6.

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 ² fires, ² Or, *valleys*. *even* ^h the name of the LORD God of Israel in the ^h Mal. 1. 11. isles of the sea.

16 ¶ From the ³ uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, *even* glory to the righteous. But I said, ⁴ My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! ¹ the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously. ³ Heb. *wing*.
⁴ Heb. *Leanness to me, or, My secret to me.*
¹ Jer. 5. 11.

17 ^k Fear, and the pit, and the snare, *are* upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. ^k See 1 Kin. 19. 17.
Jer. 43. 43, 44.
Amos 5. 19.

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 ¹ the windows from on high are open, and ^m the foundations of the earth do shake. ¹ Gen. 7. 11.
^m Ps. 18. 7.

13. Neither the Jews nor God's Church can ever entirely perish (see chs. iv. 2, 3; vi. 13; vii. 3, &c.).

14. "For the majesty," &c. These words belong to the last clause. From the shores of the Mediterranean sea, where the remnant of the Jews shall settle, and be the first to hear the preaching of St. Paul, they shall raise hymns of praise in honour of Jehovah's majesty.

15. "Fires." Often understood of fiery persecutions; but the word rather signifies "lights," as in chs. xxxi. 9; xlv. 16; xlvii. 14; l. 11. It primarily refers to the east, the region of sunshine, where the Gospel is to spread as well as towards the west, round the Mediterranean. But it may also signify the light of revelation, the Hebrew word being *Urim*, and revelation having taken the place of the Urim and Thummim of old. The margin, *valleys*, is a mistake.

16. "My leanness," &c. From the thought of the praises of God thus resounding throughout all the earth, Isaiah suddenly reverts to the reality of the present, and contrasts Israel's leanness in spiritual graces and the unrighteousness of the people, with the rich feast of Gospel blessings in store for future times.

17. "Fear, and the pit, and the snare," are apparently hunters' words, the first being some means of frightening the game (comp. "the noise of the fear," ver. 18.), which was thus driven into pitfalls and nets previously placed in suitable positions. From the use of the phrase in Jer. xlviii. 43, it seems to have become a proverb.

18. "Windows . . . foundations." Isaiah now passes on to the

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ⁿ Jer. 4. 23.
^o ch. 13. 14.

² Heb. *visit upon.*

^p Ps. 76. 12.

³ Heb. *with the gathering of prisoners.*

⁴ Or, *dungeon.*

⁵ Or, *found wanting.*

^q ch. 13. 10.
& 60. 19.

Ezek. 32. 7.

Joel 2. 31.

& 3. 15.

^r Rev. 19. 4. 6.

^s Heb. 12. 22.

⁶ Or, *there shall be glory before his ancients.*

cir. 712.

^a Ex. 15. 2.

^b Ps. 118. 28.

^c Ps. 98. 1.

19 ⁿ The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.

20 The earth shall ^o 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.

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD shall ² punish the host of the high ones *that are* on high, ^p and the kings of the earth upon the earth.

22 And they shall be gathered together, ³ *as* prisoners are gathered in the ⁴ pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be ⁵ visited.

23 Then the ^q moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall ^r reign in ^s mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and ⁶ before his ancients gloriously.

CHAPTER XXV.

¹ *The prophet praiseth God, for his judgments, 6 for his saving benefits, 9 and for his victorious salvation.*

O LORD, thou *art* my God; ^a I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; ^b for thou hast done

metaphors of a deluge and an earthquake. Upon this latter idea he dwells with much force in vv. 19, 20.

20. "Shall be removed." The Heb. verb signifies that rocking to and fro, described by those who have felt an earthquake as most alarming.

21. "The host of the high ones on high." Understood by some of the Levitical priesthood and the Davidic kingdom, both overthrown for a time: by others, less probably, of the punishment of the fallen angels at the final judgment. Evidently something higher is meant than "the kings of the earth."

22. "Pit." Not the word used in ver. 17, but one signifying a cistern. Into such a cistern Jeremiah was cast, Jer. xxxviii. 6, where it is translated "dungeon," as in the margin here. The cisterns at Jerusalem were of great size, and were often used as prisons.

"Shall they be visited," i. e. with mercy. This is in favour of the "high ones" in ver. 21 being the Jewish hierarchy and kingdom, which, after being shut up as it were in prison, are to be set free, and attain to their full meaning and influence in Christianity.

23. "The moon . . . the sun." All lesser powers, all earthly hierarchies and kingdoms are to pass away when Jehovah reigns in person. No light of sun or moon will be needed then (ch. lx. 19. Rev. xxi. 23.). For "the ancients," or elders, see Rev. iv. 4.

CHAPTER XXV.

1. "O Lord," &c. With the opening words of this hymn of praise comp. Exod. xv. 2.

ISAIAH, XXV.

wonderful *things*; ^c *thy* counsels of old *are* faithfulness and truth.

2 For thou hast made ^d of a city an 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 ^e 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, ^f 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 ^g this mountain shall ^h the LORD of hosts make unto ⁱ all people a feast of fat things, a

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

^c Num. 23. 19.

^d ch. 21. 9.

& 23. 13.

Jer. 51. 37.

^e Rev. 11. 13.

^f ch. 2. 2, 3.

^g Prov. 9. 2.

Matt. 22. 4.

ⁱ Dan. 7. 14.

Matt. 8. 11.

2. "Of a city an heap." The city is Babylon, whose actual fall typifies that of the mystical Babylon. The word "heap" exactly describes the huge unshapely mounds formed by the unburnt bricks, of which the monster cities of Assyria were chiefly built. These bricks, however, are hard enough to be still worth digging out; and Mr. G. Smith says that a regular trade is maintained in them even at the present day, *Ass. Discoveries*, p. 62.

"Palace of strangers," i. e. of enemies and aliens from the covenant of promise. The word shows that Jerusalem cannot be meant.

3. "Strong people . . . terrible nations." This must not be limited to the Medes and Persians as conquerors of Babylon. God's "counsels" (ver. 1.) ever looked onward to the ingathering of the whole heathen world.

4. When Cyrus conquered Babylon, God did thus protect the feeble Jews dwelling in exile there: but as the punishment of that city was a type of God's judgments upon all evil-doers, so His watchful care of the remnant of His people was but an example of the merciful way in which He ever delivers the faithful in times of adversity.

5. Zion had become "a dry" parched "place" because of the heat and oppression of the Chaldees: but just as a cloud tempers heat, so God's mercy put an end to the tyranny under which His people groaned. The word rendered "branch" really signifies "song," i. e. the song of triumph, while "noise" suggests the tumult and fierce onslaught of an attack. For "strangers" see ver. 2.

6. From Babylon the hymn of praise now moves onward to the marriage supper of the Lamb. For "people" the Hebrew has "peoples" (ch. xiv. 2.); Gentiles as well as Jews are to be brought in (St. Luke xiv. 23.). For the "mountain" see ch. xi. 9.

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CHRIST
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² Heb.
swallow up.

³ Heb.
covered.

^k 2 Cor. 3. 15.
Eph. 4. 18.

^l Hos. 13. 14.
1 Cor. 15. 54.

Rev. 20. 14.
& 21. 4.

^m Rev. 7. 17.
& 21. 4.

ⁿ Gen. 49. 18.
Titus 2. 13.

^o Ps. 20. 5.

⁴ Or,
threshed.

⁵ Or,
threshed in
Madmenah.

^p ch. 26. 5.

feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

7 And he will ² destroy in this mountain the face of the covering ³ cast over all people, and ^k the veil that is spread over all nations.

8 He will ^l swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will ^m 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; ⁿ we have waited for him, and he will save us: this *is* the LORD; we have waited for him, ^o we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

10 For in this mountain shall the hand of the LORD rest, and Moab shall be ⁴ trodden down under him, even as straw is ⁵ 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 ^p fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, *and* bring to the ground, *even* to the dust.

“Wines on the lees.” Wines so kept were supposed to gain strength, but had to be carefully strained to make them clear and bright before using.

7. “Covering . . . veil.” In Christ, not only the covering of ignorance, which now conceals the truth from men, is taken away, but the darker veil of sin, with its constant companions sorrow and shame (comp. 2 Cor. iii. 14—18.).

8. Again Isaiah’s vision moves onward to the consummation of all things when death shall be no more (1 Cor. xv. 54.). Then shall the rebuke, i. e. the reproach of Christ’s suffering saints, be exchanged for everlasting glory.

9. A cry of welcome to Christ, as spoken by Simeon and Anna at His first coming, and by the whole Church at the last day.

10. “Moab,” an enemy peculiarly obnoxious to Judah, as being a neighbour whose hostility it had often felt, is but a type of the enemies of God’s people generally. They are to suffer extreme degradation.

11. “He shall spread forth.” Jehovah smites Moab with both His outstretched hands. For “spoils” the translation should be “artifices,” plots and devices for Judah’s ruin.

12. “The fortress . . .” The prophet here reverts to Babylon, thus plainly shewing that he uses these nations only as types of the continual struggle which ever goes on upon earth between God’s people and the powers of evil.

ISAIAH, XXVI.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

1 *A song inciting to confidence in God, 5 for his judgments, 12 and for his favour to his people.* 20 *An exhortation to wait on God.*

IN ^a that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; ^b salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

2 ^c Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the ² truth may enter in.

3 Thou wilt keep *him* in ³ perfect peace, *whose* ⁴ mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

4 Trust ye in the LORD for ever: ^d for in the LORD JEHOVAH is ⁵ everlasting strength:

5 for he bringeth down them that dwell on high; ^e 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: ^f thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.

8 Yea, ^g 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.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1. "In that day." Primarily the day of the return of Ezra and the exiles from Babylon. But that return was Judah's restoration to her place as God's covenant people, and "the strong city" of Jerusalem was the type of the Church; and thus this is the Church's hymn of praise whenever God visits her in mercy.

2. "The righteous nation. . . ." Literally, Judah, which, at Babylon, put away idolatry for ever; spiritually the true Israel, honouring God both by a true faith and a holy life.

3. A beautiful and comforting verse, leading on to the prophet's invitation "Trust ye in Jehovah for ever."

4. "Everlasting strength." Literally, as in the margin, "Rock of ages." Hence the name of Christ made so familiar to us by Toplady's hymn.

5, 6. "The lofty city." A literal reference again to proud Babylon, which God will humble, and which "the feet of the poor and the steps of the needy," i.e. of the oppressed and ruined exiles, will, on its conquest by Cyrus, trample down.

7. "Uprightness." Rather, "straightness." "The path of the just is very straight," not so much because he endeavours to act uprightly, as because God watches over and weighs his path, making his way plain before his face (Prov. xv. 19.).

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

^h Ps. 63. 6.
Cant. 3. 1.

ⁱ Eccles. 8. 12.
Rom. 2. 4.

^k Ps. 143. 10.

^l Job 34. 27.
Ps. 28. 5.
ch. 5. 12.

² Or, *toward*
thy *people*.

³ Or, *for us*.

^m 2 Chr. 12. 8.

9 ^h 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.

10 ⁱ Let favour be shewed to the wicked, *yet* will he not learn righteousness : in ^k 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, ^l they will not see : *but* they shall see, and be ashamed for *their* envy ² at the people ; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.

12 ¶ LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us : for thou also hast wrought all our works ³ in us.

13 O LORD our God, ^m *other* lords beside 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 are* deceased, they shall not rise : therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.

15 Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou

8, 9. Just as the exiles at Babylon had waited in faith for the execution of the judgment predicted against that city, so do God's people ever wait for Him. But the prophet teaches us that this most earnest longing, which he describes so powerfully, was no thirst for vengeance, though they were looking for the manifestation of God in the way of His justice, but a loving desire that all mankind might learn from God's chastisement of Babylon the lesson of righteousness. The moral necessity of such manifestations is enforced in vv. 10, 11.

12. "All our works in us." Hebrew as in margin, "for us." It is most true that God works all that is good in His people (Phil. ii. 13.), but that is not the sense here. Turning from those who can be taught only by punishment to those who are the objects of God's love, Isaiah says in their name that all their success and prosperity is wrought by God for them.

13. "Other lords . . ." In past time before the exile, we worshipped idols ; but now "by thee," by Thy aid and Thy teaching, we worship Thee only. Happy the nation or the man, who thus by God's judgments has learned righteousness, ver. 9.

14. "Deceased." Heb. *Rephaim* (see ch. xiv. 9.). The idol-gods are as powerless as the spectres of the dead ; and God has "visited *them*," has manifested Himself in judgment upon their worshippers, that all men may thereby understand that they are absolutely "nothing" (1 Cor. viii. 4.).

hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed *it* far unto all the ends of the earth.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

16 LORD, ⁿ in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a ² prayer *when* thy chastening was upon them.

ⁿ Hos. 5. 15.
² Heb. secret speech.

17 Like as ^o a woman with child, *that* draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, *and* crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD.

^o ch. 13. 8.
John 16. 21.

18 We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have ^p the inhabitants of the world fallen.

^p Ps. 17. 14.

19 ^q Thy dead *men* shall live, *together with* my dead body shall they arise. ^r 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.

^q Ezek. 37. 1, &c.
^r Dan. 12. 2.

15. The exiles returning scant and few from Babylon shall rapidly multiply into a great nation, foreshowing the wide extension of that spiritual Israel of which they were the antitype, the Church of Christ.

16. "Have they visited thee," i. e. sought thee, come back to thee in "prayer," literally a whisper, i. e. the low tones of real deep sorrow. In the last clause the inserted "when" gives a wrong sense. What Isaiah says is that God's chastening reached them: it had its work upon their hearts, and so they prayed.

17. "In thy sight." Rather, "at thy presence." The verse expresses the intense excitement of spirit with which the exiles noted the signs of God's drawing near unto them, to punish the oppressor and deliver them.

18. "We have not wrought any deliverance." The prophet in these words gives a new turn to the metaphor. The pangs of delivery are followed by the joy of a birth; but Judah's pangs have been followed only by disappointment, and so, feeling their own powerlessness, they learn to rely upon God only.

19. "Thy dead," &c. In sudden and abrupt contrast with the ineffectual efforts of Judah to work out its own deliverance, God proclaims—not a mere resurrection of the nation from its death at Babylon, but—the general resurrection of the dead. It is one of the many instances which so constantly occur of Holy Scripture bursting through all the bonds of temporary meaning and local allusion, to give men the eternal truths which concern our salvation. The first clause should be translated "Thy dead shall live: my dead bodies shall arise," for the Church's dead belong to God. Next, those who sleep in the dust are commanded to awake with joy, and their return to life is compared to the revival of the parched herbage when the copious dew of evening descends upon it. In the last clause "the dead" are the Rephaim of ver. 14. There the Rephaim of the idol-gods are non-entities, and are not to rise again;

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^s Ex. 12. 22,

23.

^t Ps. 30. 5.

ch. 54. 7, 8.

² Cor. 4. 17.

^u Mic. 1. 3.

Jude 14.

² Heb. *bloods*.

20 Come, my people, ^s enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee : hide thyself as it were ^t for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

21 For, behold, the LORD ^u cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity : the earth also shall disclose her ² blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 *The care of God over his vineyard.* 7 *His chastisements differ from judgments.* 12 *The church of Jews and Gentiles.*

² Or, *crossing like a bar.*

^a Ps. 74. 13, 14.

^b ch. 51. 9.

Ezek. 23. 3.

& 32. 2.

^c ch. 5. 1.

^d Ps. 80. 8.

Jer. 2. 21.

^e Ps. 121. 4, 5.

IN that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the ² piercing serpent, ^a even leviathan that crooked serpent ; and he shall slay ^b the dragon that *is* in the sea.

2 In that day ^c sing ye unto her, ^d A vineyard of red wine.

3 ^e I the LORD do keep it ; I will water it every moment : lest *any* hurt it, I will keep it night and day.

but earth will have to render back the Rephaim of God's saints. Note how clearly it is taught that the body shall rise as well as the soul.

20. Comforted by the joyful hope of the resurrection, the saints will bear tribulation patiently, knowing that it is but a light affliction and only "for a little moment" (see Rom. viii. 18.).

21. The manifestation of God's justice involves His people also in earthly suffering, though only to chasten them, and make them more fit for the Master's service.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1. "Leviathan," from a root signifying to *bend* or *twist*, means, sometimes, the crocodile (Job xli. 1.), but more frequently, as here, the serpent.

"Leviathan the piercing," really the swift "serpent," is Assyria, whose capital, Nineveh, was situated upon the rapid Tigris. The "crooked serpent" is Chaldea, whose capital, Babylon, was situated upon the Euphrates, a river celebrated for its windings. "The dragon," Heb. the crocodile, is, of course, Egypt. God smites the great empires of the earth that He may deliver His Church.

2. "In that day." The day when God smites the kingdoms of the world. The last clause should be transposed, "A vineyard of wine, sing 'ye unto her.'" The song is in many respects a reversal of the vineyard prophecy of ch. v. (comp. vv. 3, 4, with ch. v. 6.). The vineyard is feminine, because it is Zion, God's Church.

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4 *Fury is* not in me: who would set ^fthe briars *and* thorns against me in battle? I would ²go through them, I would burn them together.

5 Or let him take hold ³of my strength, *that* he may ^hmake peace with me; *and* he shall make peace with me.

6 He shall cause them that come of Jacob ⁱto take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

7 Hath he smitten him, ³as he smote those that smote him? *or* is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him?

8 ^kIn measure, ⁴when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: ⁵he 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 chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and ⁶images shall not stand up.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

† 2 Sam. 23. 6.
ch. 9. 18.

‡ Or, *march*
against.
§ ch. 25. 4.

h Job 22. 21.

i ch. 37. 31.
Hos. 14. 5, 6.

‡ Heb. *ac-*
ording to
the stroke
of those.

k Job 23. 6.

Ps. 6. 1.

Jer. 10. 24.

& 30. 11.

& 46. 28.

l Cor. 10. 13.

‡ Or, *when*
thou sendest
it forth.

§ Or, *when he*
removeth it.

l Ps. 78. 38.

‡ Or, *sun*
images.

4. "Fury," &c. God's anger against His vineyard (see ch. v.) is gone, and now He is described as a warrior eager to do battle with the enemies of His repentant people; who, were they to set themselves in array against Him, would be but as mere briars and thorns, which He would break through and burn.

5, 6. "Or let him . . ." Yet even for the enemy there is peace and pardon, provided only that he takes hold of God's strength. How much more then for Jacob and Israel, whose very punishment was a loving discipline in order that when the fullness of time was come they might fill the face of the world with that fruit of righteousness which is sown in peace (St. James iii. 18.).

7. God has never smitten Israel as He has smitten its enemies, for of Israel a remnant always survives, which again takes root; whereas Assyrians, Babylonians, Romans, have perished entirely (see ch. xxiv. 13.).

8. The exact translation of this verse is very difficult, but the sense is plain, namely, that God ever deals leniently with His own people. "The east wind" is the simoom, which is violent and painful while it lasts, but which never blows for more than from thirty-six to forty hours. So God's chastisement is severe, but not so prolonged as to destroy.

9. "All the fruit," i. e. all the effect and purpose of the chastisement is to take away Jacob's sin. The special sin, which was punished by the exile in Babylon, is next explained as having been idolatry, which Israel now puts away. In the last clause, "when he" means when Jacob beats the stones of his idolatrous altars into small pieces the renunciation of false gods shall be so complete that the Asheras and sun-images (see on both these ch. xvii. 8.) shall rise up no more. An

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^m See chap.
17, 2,
& 32, 14.

10 Yet the defenced city *shall be* desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: ^m there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof.

ⁿ Deut. 32, 28.
ch. 1, 3.
Jer. 8, 7.

^o Deut. 32, 18.
ch. 43, 1, 7.
& 44, 2, 21,
24.

11 When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, *and* set them on fire: for ⁿ it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and ^o he that formed them will shew them no favour.

^p ch. 2, 11.
^q Matt. 24, 31.
Rev. 11, 15.

12 And it shall come to pass in 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 ^p And it shall come to pass in that day, ^q *that* the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which 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.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1 The prophet threateneth Ephraim for their pride and drunkenness. 5 The residue shall be advanced in the kingdom of Christ. 7 He rebuketh their error. 9 Their untowardness to learn, 14 and their security. 16

equally clear prediction that idolatry would never again be Israel's sin after the exile may be found in Hos. iii. 4.

10. "Yet . . ." Though Jacob's sin is thus to be purged away, yet for the allotted time Judea must lie desolate. With the latter part of the verse comp. chs. v. 17 ; xvii. 2.

"The branches thereof" are those of Israel's vine, there being throughout the chapter a constant reference to ch. v.

11. "The women," &c. In the East it is the business of the women and children (Jer. vii. 18.) to gather fuel, and during the exile Judah is but as a withered vine, whose branches are broken off by the wood-gatherers for the fire. In the last clause Isaiah condemns the folly which had made God's people so misuse their privileges.

12. "Shall beat off." The verb used here refers to the beating of olives from the trees. As carefully as the husbandman at the time of the ingathering of fruit beats every olive from the trees, so carefully shall God gather in all the Israelites "from the channel," i.e. the river-bed of the Euphrates to the border of Egypt (see Num. xxxiv. 5.).

13. The same truth is taught here under the metaphor of the sounding of the jubile-trumpet, bidding every man return to the possessions he had lost.

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Christ the sure foundation is promised. 18 Their security shall be tried.
23 They are incited to the consideration of God's discreet providence.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 725.

WOE to ^athe crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose ^bglorious beauty *is* a fading flower, which *are* on the head of the fat valleys of them that are ²overcome with wine!

^a ver. 3.
^b ver. 4.

2 Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, ^cwhich 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.

² Heb.
broken.

^c ch. 30, 30
Ezek. 13. 11.

3 ^dThe crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden ³under feet:

^d ver. 1.

4 and ^ethe 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 ⁴eateth it up.

³ Heb. *with feet.*

^e ver. 1.

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,

⁴ Heb.
swalloweth.

CHAPTERS XXVIII—XXXV.

We have in these eight chapters five woes, grouped together, pronounced upon Samaria, Judea, and Assyria. Ch. xxviii. contains a woe upon Samaria, spoken at an early period of Hezekiah's reign, and fulfilled in the capture of the city by Sargon, the successor of Shalmaneser (2 Kings xvii. 6.).

1. "The crown of pride" is Samaria, built by Omri on an insulated hill situated in an oval-shaped valley of great fertility (improperly translated "fat valleys," as the Hebrew is sing.). This beautiful city, the nation's pride, was now but as a chaplet of fading flowers, doomed soon to be the spoil of war. For Israel's national sin, drunkenness, see Amos vi. 6.

2. "A mighty and strong one," i. e. the king of Assyria, who, irresistible as a hailstorm or a flood of rushing waters, will cast Samaria down to the ground.

4. "The hasty fruit . . ." By this is meant an early fig, ripening in June before the summer has come. In Palestine the fig-tree puts forth three crops, of which the first two become ripe respectively in August and November. The third seldom comes to maturity; but after a mild winter a few ripen in the following June. Being small and delicate in flavour they are eagerly eaten by whoever finds one. So shall Assyria devour Samaria as a pleasant morsel in its lust of universal empire.

5. "The residue of His people," i. e. Hezekiah and the Jews, who, when the Assyrian, flushed with the conquest of Samaria, attacks them, will make Jehovah their crown, and not an earthly city however beautiful.

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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.

^f Prov. 20. 1.
Hos. 4. 11.
^g ch. 56. 10, 12.

7 But they also ^f have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; ^g 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.*

^h Jer. 6. 10.

² Heb. *the hearing*

9 ¶ ^h Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand ² doctrine? *them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.*

³ Or,
hath been.

⁴ Heb.
stammerings of lips.

ⁱ 1 Cor. 14. 21.

⁵ Or, *he hath spoken.*

10 For precept ³ *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little:

11 for with ⁴ *stammering lips* and another tongue ⁵ will he speak to this people.

6. "A spirit of judgment." God saves His people by giving their rulers a spirit of justice in the management of affairs, a point always earnestly urged by Isaiah; and secondly, by endowing the citizens with strength, i. e. martial vigour for the battle. Courage and respect for justice usually go together.

7. "But they also . . ." Drunkenness had ruined Samaria, and Isaiah now commands Judah to take warning by Israel's fate.

"The priest and the prophet . . ." Priests were forbidden to take wine when on duty (Lev. x. 9.); when they and the prophets—an ascetic class—"are out of the way," wanderers from the right path because of strong drink, what hope can there be for the rest of the nation?

8. "Tables," i. e. places where men eat and drink. Whatever spiritual interpretation may be put upon this passage, its first and most obvious sense is the rebuke of a sin, which God even in this world punishes most severely.

9, 10. These two verses are the taunting words of the drunken priests and false prophets, asking Isaiah whom he wants to teach? None but babes, they say, can need his instruction, for it is ever of the most elementary kind, with the same simple truths repeated unto wearisomeness. In ver. 10 the A. V. inserts the words "must be" without authority. Translate "For it is precept upon precept," &c.

11. "For with . . ." Rather, "Nay, but with foreign lips and another tongue will He speak to this people." It is Isaiah's reply to their taunts. As they will not listen to the gentle lessons of the prophets, God will next teach them by the barbarous lips of the Assyrians.

ISAIAH, XXVIII.

12 To whom he said, *This is the rest wherewith* ye may cause the weary to rest; and *this is the refreshing*: yet they would not hear.

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13 But the word of the LORD was unto them 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: ^k for we have made lies our ^k refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

^k Amos 2. 4.
¹ Gen. 49. 24.
Ps. 118. 22.
Matt. 21. 42.
Acts 4. 11.
Rom. 9. 33.
& 10. 11.
Eph. 2. 20.
1 Pet. 2. 6,
7, 8.

16 therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation ¹a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

12. "To whom he said, This," &c. God had given to Judah that which would not only have been "rest" and "refreshing" to themselves, but the means wherewith they were intended to make "the weary" everywhere "to rest" (St. Matt. xi. 28—30.). But they had neither valued the gift themselves, nor laboured to carry it to others. It was this failure of duty which now justified their punishment.

13. "Precept upon precept," &c. The drunken priests and prophets had rightly described God's method of teaching. There is in the Bible a gentle urgency, ever pressing upon men the same great truths. So too the progress of true science is gradual, step by step; and in religion it is even more necessary to keep certain great fundamental principles ever in view. But the scornful rulers of Jerusalem wanted novelty. Their object was, not spiritual advancement, but the excitement and mental pleasure given by oratory. But in rejecting God's method of teaching they ensured their own ruin.

15. "Hell," i.e. the grave, Hades (see on ch. xiv. 9.). There is great irony in the prophet's supposition that these rulers had made a private arrangement with the grim tyrant death. Nothing short of this could explain their conduct.

"Overflowing scourge" is a double metaphor, combining the idea of the irresistible might of a flood with the sudden incisiveness of a blow.

16. "Therefore . . ." Just as in ver. 5 we have the recital of Judah's spiritual privileges preceding the reproof of her sins, so inversely here the prophet prefaces his answer to the scoffers by the promise of Christ (Rom. ix. 33; x. 11. 1 St. Pet. ii. 6.).

"Shall not make haste," i.e. will not be in haste, but will wait

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^m ver. 15.

17 Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away ^m 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 ² trodden down by it.

² Heb.
*a treading
down to it.*

19 From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only ³ to understand the report.

³ Or, when
*he shall
make you to
understand
doctrine.*

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 ⁿ Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of ^o Gibeon, that he may do his work, ^p his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.

ⁿ 2 Sam. 5. 20.
¹ Chr. 14. 11.
^o Josh. 10.
10, 12.
² Sam. 5. 25.
¹ Chr. 14. 16.
^p Lam. 3. 33.

22 Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts ^a a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.

^q ch. 10. 22, 23.
Dan. 9. 27.

23 ¶ Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech.

calmly for the fulfilment of God's promises. The clause served also as a warning that the coming of the Messiah would not be immediate.

17, 18. "To the line . . . to the plummet." Rather, "for a line," "for a plummet," i. e. judgment and righteousness will be the rule of God's dealings with them. As a necessary consequence all those earthly defences in which they had put their trust would be swept away.

19, 20. The overflowing scourge was primarily the army of the Assyrians, and ver. 19 powerfully describes the anxiety of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as messenger after messenger brings them perpetual tidings of the movements of the invaders. Verse 20 is probably a proverbial description of a perplexed and comfortless condition.

21. As severely as David chastised the Philistines by a double defeat, first at Perazim (1 Chron. xiv. 11.), and again at Gibeon (ib. 16.), so will God punish Judah: and it is called a "strange work" and "strange act," because it is His own people with whom God deals thus severely.

22. "Bands," i. e. afflictions, troubles, a metaphor taken from the fetters put upon prisoners. On the "consumption determined upon the whole earth," or rather "land" of Judah, see ch. x. 23.

23—29. "Strange" as God's punishment of His own people may

ISAIAH, XXVIII.

24 Doth the plowman plow 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 ²the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the ³rie in their ⁴place?

26 ⁵For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him.

27 For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing 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 not ever be threshing it, nor break *it with* the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it *with* his horsemen.

29 This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, ^r*which* is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.

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² Or, *the wheat in the principal place, and barley in the appointed place.*

³ Or, *spelt.*

⁴ Heb. *border?*

⁵ Or, *And he bindeth it in such sort as his God doth teach him.*

^r Ps. 92. 5.
Jer. 32. 19.

seem, yet, as the prophet now shows by a beautiful parable drawn from agriculture, the sole object was Judah's good. The husbandman at one time violently tears up the ground with the plough, and crushes the clods; at another he smooths the surface and sows his seed, choosing for each kind of grain an appropriate place. When, too, the corn is reaped he uses discrimination in the threshing, so adjusting his means as never to bruise the seed, and applying to each kind of grain the method most suitable for it. So it is with God's dealings with men, which, however diverse in appearance, are all wisely ordered for man's good.

24. "All day." Rather, every day. This is also to be supplied in the next clause. The husbandman does not plough every day, nor is he always harrowing and crushing clods.

25. This verse should be translated "When he has levelled the surface of the ground, does he not sow dill (the *nigella sativa* of botanists) "broadcast, and scatter cummin (*cuminum cyminum*), and plant wheat "in rows, and barley in the proper place, and spelt (*triticum spelta*) in "his border," i.e. in the outermost part of his, the husbandman's, field.

27. Tender seeds like those of dill and cummin would be crushed and spoiled if thrashed with the ordinary sledge, or with the drag-wheel; they are carefully beaten out with a stick.

28. Though bread-corn will endure rougher methods, yet even here there is a limit. The husbandman does not drive his sledge over it for ever, nor does God chastise men more than is fit for their good.

1 *God's heavy judgment upon Jerusalem.* 7 *The unsatiableness of her enemies.* 9 *The senselessness.* 13 *and deep hypocrisy of the Jews.* 18 *A promise of sanctification to the godly.*

² Or, *O Ariel,*
that is, *the*
lion of God.

^a Ezek. 43.
15, 16.

³ Or, *of*
the city.

^b 2 Sam. 5. 9.

⁴ Heb. *cut off*
the heads.

WOE ^{2a} to Ariel, to Ariel, ³ the city ^b where David dwelt! add ye year to year; let them ⁴ kill sacrifices.

2 Yet I will distress Ariel, and there 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, ^c out of the ground, and thy speech shall ⁵ whisper out of the dust.

5 Moreover the multitude of thy ^d strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be ^e as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be ^f at an instant suddenly.

^c ch. 8. 19.

⁵ Heb. *peep,*
or, chirp.

^d ch. 25. 5.

^e Job 21. 18.

ch. 17. 13.

^f ch. 30. 13.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Second Woe.

1. "Ariel," i. e. the lion of God, is Jerusalem. Comp. 2 Sam. xxiii. 20, and Isa. xxxiii. 7, where the word is translated "valiant ones." For "dwelt" the Hebrew has "encamped." David encamped against Zion, and took it (2 Sam. v. 6, 7).

"Add ye," &c. i. e. let the seasons, each bringing its appointed sacrifice and festival, run through their annual courses; but though all things thus seem to go on as usual (2 St. Pet. iii. 4.), yet God's visitation shall surely come.

2. "It," Jerusalem, shall be unto me as an Ariel, i. e. as a valiant warrior, whom I shall attack with the utmost fury.

3. Compare with this verse the boast of Sennacherib quoted in the note on ch. i. 8.

"A mount" was a bank of earth cast up against the walls of a city to enable the besiegers to climb up to them. Men making such mounts may be seen in the Assyrian sculptures.

4. So great shall be Ariel's terror, that its voice shall be thin and feeble, like the sound which the necromancer or spiritualist pretends to evoke out of the ground.

5. "Strangers," i. e. foreigners, and so enemies. Their number is to be vast as that of the atoms in a dust-storm, or of the chaff driven past by the wind; but equally powerless, and so "it shall be at an instant suddenly," i. e. their ruin, the fall of Sennacherib and his army, as

ISAIAH, XXIX.

6 ^gThou 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. Before
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7 ^hAnd the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be ⁱas a dream of a night vision. g ch. 28. 2.
& 30. 30.
h ch. 37. 26.
i Job 20. 8.

8 ^kIt shall even be as when an 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. k Ps. 73. 20.

9 ¶ Stay yourselves, and wonder; ²cry ye out, and cry: ¹they are drunken, ^mbut not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. 2 Or,
take your
pleasure,
and riot.
1 See chap.
28. 7, 8.
m ch. 51. 21.

10 For ⁿthe LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath ^oclosed your eyes: the prophets and your ³rulers, ^pthe seers hath he covered. n Rom. 11. 8.
o Ps. 69. 23.
ch. 6. 10.
3 Heb. heads:
See ch. 3. 2.
Jer. 26. 8.
P I Sam. 9. 9.

described in vv. 6—8. Note how rapidly the prophet passes from Jerusalem's terror to her deliverance, yet not more rapidly than the event itself took place.

6. "Thou shalt be visited." Rather, "it," the Assyrian host. From this verse many suppose that the destruction of Sennacherib's army was accompanied by a thunder-storm, but more probably it is a poetical description of the rapidity and thoroughness of his downfall.

7. "Her munition," i. e. fortress. In the rest of the verse the Assyrian army is compared to a dream, which, for the time, has all the vividness of fact, but has no reality. In ver. 8 this thought is enlarged upon with great power and beauty.

9. Here a new section begins in which Isaiah sets before the people the sins which were the true cause of the Assyrian invasion. Even in this life sins are usually visited by earthly trouble, and the lesson we are to gather is that all sin is sure to bring upon the guilty a just requital. The verse describes the Jews as taking their pleasure (see margin), and not noticing that the hour of their visitation was drawing nigh: and so when it came they were astonished, and became as men drunken with terror and staggering with fright.

10. The insensibility of the nation to its true state before God was as complete as if God had cast it into a deep sleep. Even the prophets and seers shared this infatuation, and could see no more than men whose faces are covered with a veil (comp. 2 Cor. iii. 13—15.).

ISAIAH, XXIX.

¹ Before
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² Or, letter.

³ ch. 8. 16.

⁴ Dan. 12. 4, 9.

⁵ Rev. 5. 1, —5,
9, & 6. 1.

⁶ Ezek. 33. 31.

⁷ Matt. 15. 8, 9.

⁸ Mark 7. 6, 7.

⁹ Col. 2. 22.

¹⁰ Hab. 1. 5.

¹¹ Heb. *I will wild.*

¹² Jer. 49. 7.

¹³ Obad. 8.

¹⁴ 1 Cor. 1. 19.

¹⁵ ch. 30. 1.

¹⁶ Ps. 94. 7.

¹⁷ ch. 45. 9.

¹⁸ Rom. 9. 20.

11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a ²book ³that is sealed, which *men* deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: ⁴and 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.

13 Wherefore the Lord said, ⁵Forasmuch 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 ⁶the precept of men:

14 ⁷therefore, behold, ⁸I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, *even* a marvellous work and a wonder: ⁹for the wisdom of their wise *men* shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent *men* shall be hid.

15 ¹⁰Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and ¹¹they 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 ¹²work 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?

11, 12. "The vision of all," i. e. throughout. Prophecy has become like a sealed writing which no man reads: for the learned refuse to break the seal, and the rest could not read it if they tried. The one class is too negligent, the rest too ignorant, to study God's will, though urged upon their attention.

13. "Their fear is taught," &c. i. e. it is not a matter of the heart but of forms and ceremonies and precepts, resting on merely human authority. For an authoritative exposition of this verse read St. Matt. xv. 7—9.

14. "The wisdom of their wise." What Jewish wisdom had become in the hands of the Rabbins we learn from passages like St. Matt. xii. 2; xv. 4—6.

15, 16. "That seek deep to hide," i. e. that seek to hide their counsels far away from God. There were men of earthly wisdom at Jerusalem who wanted to act independently of God, ignoring Him, and behaving as though He did not see them because they forgot Him. Such conduct was as great an inversion of the real nature of things as for the clay to assume superiority over the potter. Verse 16 should be translated "Oh your turning of things upside down! shall the potter be

ISAIAH, XXIX.

17 *Is* it not yet a very little while, and ^b Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? Before
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cir. 712.

^b ch. 32. 15.

18 And ^c in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. ^c ch. 35. 5.

19 ^d The meek also ² shall increase *their* joy in the LORD, and ^e the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. ^d ch. 61. 1.
² Heb.
shall add.
^e Jan. 2. 5.

20 For the terrible one is brought to nought, and ^f the scorner is consumed, and all that ^g watch for iniquity are cut off: ^f ch. 28. 14, 22.
^g Mic. 2. 1.

21 that make a man an offender for a word, and ^h lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just ⁱ for a thing of nought. ^h Amos 5.
10, 12.
ⁱ Prov. 28. 21.

22 Therefore thus saith the LORD, ^k who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall ^k Josh. 24. 3.

“reckoned as clay; that the thing made should say of its maker, He “made me not! or that the thing framed should say of him that framed “it, He hath no understanding?”

17. Man's inversion of things is followed by the warning that God will do the same. Lebanon, the wooded mountain, shall become a cultivated Carmel, with no forest trees but only vines and olives, and Carmel shall become a Lebanon. The words are allegorical. Such a change was made when the uncultivated Gentile world became the Church, while the Jews so long God's vineyard (ch. v.) had their hedge taken away, and were cultivated no more.

18. In ver. 11 the Jews had been described as men who refused to read the writing which God had sent them. Now in this inverted order of things “the deaf hear” God's words, “and the eyes of the blind “out of;” i. e. delivered from their previous “obscurity and darkness, “shall see” them. The natural hindrances, which hitherto had prevented the Gentile world from knowing the truth, are removed at the coming of Christ.

19, 20. In Christianity these predictions have been fulfilled. To the poor the Gospel has been preached, and Christian men have laboured to improve the law till it has become a sure protection for those unable to protect themselves.

The “terrible one” is the man of violent disposition. The words rendered “is brought to nought . . . is consumed,” are better translated “is at an end . . . ceaseth,” in ch. xvi. 4.

21. “For a word,” i. e. for some captious reason without just cause. “Reproveth” really means “pleadeth,” and “for a thing of nought” is in the Heb. “by falsehood,” i. e. by false evidence. Isaiah has in his thoughts corrupt rulers, who wished to silence and remove all those who at the assemblies of the people at the gate pleaded for right and justice.

ISAIAH, XXX.

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¹ ch. 19. 25.
& 45. 11.
& 60. 21.
Eph. 2. 10.

^m ch. 28. 7.

² Heb. shall
know under-
standing.

not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.

23 But when he seeth his children, ¹the work of mine 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 also ^mthat erred in spirit ²shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

CHAPTER XXX.

¹ The prophet threateneth the people for their confidence in Egypt. ⁸ and contempt of God's word. ¹⁸ God's mercies towards his church. ²⁷ God's wrath, and the people's joy, in the destruction of Assyria.

cir. 713.

^a ch. 23. 15.

^b Deut. 29. 19.

^c ch. 31. 1.

^d Num. 27. 21.

Josh. 9. 14.

¹ Kin. 22. 7.

Jer. 21. 2.

& 42. 2, 20.

WOE to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, ^athat take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, ^bthat they may add sin to sin:

2 ^cthat walk to go down into Egypt, and ^dhave not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!

23. When Jacob sees his children, who are not so by nature but by grace, and therefore the work of God's hands, in the midst of him, i. e. true members of the Church, then shall they, i. e. Jacob and these his Gentile children, sanctify God's Name.

24. In ver. 18 the Gentiles are described as being hindered by natural causes from coming to Christ. Here the obstacles are moral and mental, and point plainly to the Jews, by whose conversion to the Church the work of God's grace is rendered complete.

CHAPTER XXX.

The Third Woe.

This woe belongs to the period immediately preceding the invasion of Sennacherib, whose destruction is predicted in ver. 31. The prophet reproaches in it the nation for putting its trust in Egypt, foretells the punishment that will follow, but encourages God's people with the promise of the Divine favour, and of the overthrow of the Assyrian power.

1. "Rebellious." Because to enter into foreign alliances was treason and faithlessness to the principles of the Theocracy.

"That cover with a covering." This may mean, as Ewald renders it, "who weave a web," i. e. a web of human diplomacy, and not of God's Spirit. But while the translation of the passage is difficult, the sense is certainly that given in the Septuagint, "who make a treaty" contrary to the Divine will.

3 °Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt *your* confusion.

Before
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cir. 713.

° ch. 20. 5.
Jer. 37. 5, 7.
† ch. 19. 11.

4 For his princes were at † Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes.

5 §They were all ashamed of a people *that* could not profit them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.

§ Jer. 2. 36.

6 ¢The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence *come* the young and old lion, † 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*.

¢ ch. 57. 9.
Hos. 8. 9.
& 12. 1.

† Deut. 8. 15.

7 ¢For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried † concerning this, † Their strength *is* to sit still.

¢ Jer. 37. 7.

† Or, *to her*.

† ver. 15.
ch. 7. 4.

8 ¶ Now go, ¢ write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for † the time to come for ever and ever:

¢ Hab. 2. 2.

† Heb. *the latter day*.

9 that ¢ this *is* a rebellious people, lying children, children *that* will not hear the law of the LORD:

¢ Dent. 32. 20.
ch. 1. 4.
ver. 1.

4. "His princes" must be Judah's; for it was not Egypt which sought an alliance with Judah, but Judah with Egypt.

For "Zoan" see ch. xix. 11. "Hanes" may either be Tahapanes (Jer. ii. 16.), or a town, Ehnes, on an island in the Nile in middle Egypt. While then Judah's nobles wait at Zoan, they send envoys far into the south to learn whether the king will receive them.

6. "The burden." This short message may have been spoken by Isaiah at the first setting out of the embassy for Egypt, but is now included in the larger prophecy in obedience to the command given in ver. 8.

"The south" or Negeb is the barren tract between Palestine and Egypt, and it should have a full stop after it, as thus far is the title only. Then follows the prophecy in which men are described as carrying rich treasures on the backs of asses and camels, with which to purchase the Egyptian alliance.

7. "Therefore have I cried," &c. Rather, "Therefore have I called her Rahab that sitteth still." Rahab never means "strength," but "pride," "arrogancy," and became a poetical name for Egypt (see Ps. lxxxvii. 4; lxxxix. 10.). The meaning therefore is that Egypt makes haughty professions, but does nothing.

8, 9. "In a table," i.e. on a tablet (see ch. viii. 1.). The tablet would be for exhibition in some public place; the "book," or parch-

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o Jer. 11. 21.
Amos 2. 12.
& 7. 13.
Mic. 2. 6.
p 1 Kings
22. 13.
Mic. 2. 11.

10 ^o which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, ^p 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.

² Or, *fraud*.

12 Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in ² oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon:

⁹ Ps. 62. 3.

13 therefore this iniquity shall be to you ⁹ as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking ^r cometh suddenly at an instant.

^r ch. 23. 5.

⁶ Ps. 2. 9.
Jer. 19. 11.
³ Heb. *the bottle of potters*.

14 And ^s he shall break it as the breaking of ³ the potters' 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.

^t ver. 7.
ch. 7. 4.

15 For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; ^t In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength:

^u Matt. 23. 37. ^u 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

ment roll for preservation among Isaiah's writings. That which was to be thus carefully recorded was the burden in vv. 6, 7, and not, as in the A. V. ver. 9, &c., which is really the reason for giving such publicity to the warning; the Hebrew being "For this is a rebellious people," one that in spite of all that can be said and done will look to Egypt for help.

10, 11. "Prophets." The Jews have three names for prophets, we have but two, and the word used here is neither "seer" nor "prophet," but "one who has visions." The latter part of the verse may therefore be translated "and to those who have visions, See not for us right 'visions'; speak unto us smooth things, see delusive visions." If they speak unto them unwelcome truths, the people bid them get out of their way, and not annoy them with appeals to a holy God.

13. "This iniquity," i. e. their determination to look for safety to an alliance with Egypt. As Oriental walls were built of unburnt bricks (see Job xxiv. 16.), they were liable in damp weather to bulge out, and fall to pieces.

14. "And he shall break it . . ." Fulfilled when God destroyed the national existence of Judah by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

"In the bursting of it." Translate "among the pieces thereof."

15. Man's strength ever is to rest in calm confidence on God: and so if Judah had remained quiet, and had abandoned its earthly scheming God would have protected it. It was the attempt to form an alliance against Assyria which brought upon Judah the indignation of that great power.

swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.

17 ^x One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as ²a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an 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: ^y blessed are all they that wait for him.

19 For the people ^z shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.

20 And though the Lord give you ^a the bread of adversity, and the water of ³affliction, yet shall not ^b 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 thee,

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^x Lev. 26. 8.
Deut. 28. 25.
& 32. 30.
Josh. 23. 10.

² Or, a tree
bereft of
branches,
or, boughs:
or, a mast.

^y Ps. 2. 12.
& 34. 8.
Prov. 16. 20.
Jer. 17. 7.
^z ch. 65. 9.

^a 1 Kin. 22. 27.
Ps. 127. 2.
³ Or,
oppression.
^b Ps. 74. 9.
Amos 8. 11.

17. A reversal of the promises made in Lev. xxvi. 8, Deut. xxxii. 30. The word rendered "beacon" is properly a "mast," or "tree stripped of its boughs," see margin, set up as fir-trees are to this day in Germany as memorials.

18. "And therefore . . ." The connection with what precedes lies in the thought that God never punishes to gratify His own anger, but solely for the good of the person punished. When, therefore, Judah has been thus severely chastised, Jehovah "will wait," i. e. be ready to notice any signs of repentance, whereupon, according to the rule of His dealings, the punishment will cease.

In the next clause, instead of "therefore will he be exalted," the primary meaning of the verb is better, "therefore will he rise up."

19. A promise of the blessedness to be enjoyed upon the return from exile, but belonging spiritually to those who return from sin unto God. In the first clause the Hebrew order is preferable, "for a people in Zion shall dwell in Jerusalem;" the two last words being added to show that it should not be a mere remnant, like a mast on a mountain top, but a numerous community that should reoccupy not Zion only, but the whole city.

20. Earthly affliction might again be Judah's lot, but never more "a famine of hearing the words of Jehovah" (Amos viii. 11.). The Jews have ever been and are a learned people; and the words of the greatest of their teachers, Jesus of Nazareth, are published throughout the whole world.

21. "Behind thee." The teacher goes before the taught, just as in the East the shepherd precedes the sheep (St. John x. 4.). Whenever then

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

c Josh. 1. 7.

d 2 Chr. 31. 1.
ch. 2. 20.
& 31. 7.

² Heb.
the graven
images of
thy silver.

³ Heb.
scatter.

e Hos. 14. 8.

f Matt. 6. 33.
1 Tim. 4. 8.

saying, This *is* the way, walk ye in it, when ye
° turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to
the left.

22 ^d Ye shall defile also the covering of ² thy
graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy
molten images of gold: thou shalt ³ cast them away
as a menstruous cloth; ° thou shalt say unto it, Get
thee hence.

23 ^f Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that
thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the
increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plen-
teous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large
pastures.

24 The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear
the ground shall eat ⁴ ⁵ clean provender, which hath
been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan.

25 And there shall be ^e upon every high moun-
tain, and upon every ⁶ high hill, rivers *and* streams
of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when
the towers fall.

⁴ Or,
savoury.

⁵ Heb.
leavened.

^e ch. 2. 14, 15.
& 44. 3.

⁶ Heb.
lifted up.

the Jews go astray, and turn their backs on the teacher, he does not walk on without noticing it, but turns round and admonishes them, and by special care and earnestness recalls them to the right way.

22. "Covering . . . ornament." Both these words mean the over-
laying or plating of precious metal, with which the body of the idol,
itself valueless, was covered. The Jews shall now cast away with disgust
even gold and silver that had been put to an idolatrous use.

23. "Rain of thy seed," i. e. the rain necessary to make thy seed
grow. The true seed is that of the Word, and these temporal mercies
looked onward to that nobler seed-time, when Jewish missionaries should
carry the truths taught by Christ their master to the larger field of the
Gentile world.

24. "That ear the ground." "Ear" is an old word for plough, but
the Hebrew is "that work," i. e. till "the ground."

"Clean" is literally *fermented*, or *leavened*, and "provender" means
a mixture of various kinds of grain. "Savoury provender" would give
the right sense, as the Hebrew word means mixed food, seasoned with
salt or acid herbs to give it a relish. So must the Christian teacher
carefully prepare the food wherewith he instructs his people, winnowing
from it all light and useless matter, and seasoning it with the salt of
grace (St. Mark ix. 49.).

25. "The great slaughter, when the towers fall." We have here
the other side of God's great day of visitation. By the hand of the
Assyrian, the Babylonian, the Roman, vast masses of the Jews fell in
war, and every tower and bulwark of self-confidence, self-help, and pride
was thrown down: yet on each dark evening follows a morning of

ISAIAH, XXX.

26 Moreover ^h the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, 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.

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CHRIST
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^h chap. 60.
19, 20.

27 ¶ Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far, burning *with* his anger, ² and the burden *thereof* ² Or, and the grievousness of flame.
³ Heb. heaviness.
ⁱ ch. 11, 4.
² Thess. 2, 8.
^k ch. 8, 8.

³ heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire:
28 and ⁱ his breath, as an overflowing stream, ^k shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and *there shall be* ^l a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing *them* ^l ch. 37, 27. to err.

29 Ye shall have a song, as in the night ^m when a ^m Ps. 42, 4. holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as

blessings so abundant as to be comparable to such an outpouring of rain as turns the very hilltops into watercourses.

26. The words for "sun" and "moon" are poetical, being "the hot one" and "the white one."

"The breach," i. e. breaking "of his people," is that described in ver. 14. By concluding his description of Judah's happiness with this magnificent metaphor, Isaiah suggests to us that his words have a larger meaning than can be satisfied by earthly prosperity.

27—33. In this final section we have a noble description of God coming to judge His people, His instrument being Sennacherib and the Assyrian army. But when punishment has wrought its purpose, God casts His instrument away, as He would cast away plague or famine, and does not let it waste and destroy for ever.

27. "The name of the Lord," i. e. Jehovah manifesting Himself in majesty, the Name of the Deity being constantly used for His glory (see ch. xlviii. 9.).

28. This and the preceding verse form a remarkable instance of the manner in which Isaiah piles metaphors one upon another. Jehovah coming in judgment is first compared to a thunder-storm breaking upon them from the far horizon: next the storm changes into an angry man, whose tongue scatters lightnings, while his rushing breath suggests the third metaphor of a flood reaching to the very neck. Next this flood becomes a sieve, in which the nations are tossed to and fro, till they become vanity, i. e. nothingness. Finally, the peoples (see ch. xiv. 2.), i. e. heathen nations, are compared to horses and mules, in whose jaws is a bridle, leading them not to truth and safety, but to error and ruin. This richness of metaphor is greatly admired by Oriental nations.

29. While the Assyrian host is sweeping over the continent of Asia on its destructive mission, there is to be joy in Judah, as on the night when the Passover is celebrated, or such as the bands of pilgrims feel

B. fore
CHRIST
cir. 713.

ⁿ ch. 2. 3.
² Heb. *Rock*,
Deut. 32. 4.
^o ch. 23. 6.
³ Heb. *the
glory of his
voice*.
^p ch. 28. 2.
& 32. 19.
^q ch. 37. 36.
^r ch. 10. 5, 24.
⁴ Heb. *every
passing of
the rod
founded*.
⁵ Heb. *cause
to rest upon
him*.
^s ch. 11. 15.
& 19. 16.
⁶ Or, *against
them*.
^t Jer. 7. 31.
& 19. 6, &c.
⁷ Heb. *from
yesterday*.

when one goeth with a pipe to come into ⁿ the mountain of the LORD, to the ² mighty One of Israel.

30 ^o And the LORD shall cause ³ his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of *his* anger, and *with* the flame of a devouring fire, *with* scattering, and tempest, ^p and hailstones.

31 For ^q through the voice of the LORD shall the Assyrian be beaten down, ^r *which* smote with a rod.

32 And ⁴ *in* every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the LORD shall ⁵ lay upon him, *it* shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of ^s shaking will he fight ⁶ with it.

33 ^t For Tophet *is* ordained ⁷ 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.

when travelling towards Zion to the sound of music to keep the festival there.

Instead of "mighty one," translate lit., as in the margin, "to the Rock of Israel."

30. "Scattering," or more lit. the bursting of the clouds, which produces the "tempest," i. e. the downpour of rain, following with hail upon the thunder and lightning so majestically described in the previous part of the verse.

32. "The grounded staff." Lit. the staff of foundation, the appointed staff, the staff of settled purpose, well translated by Alexander, "the staff of doom." Wherever this staff passes on its way to punish Assyria, the Jews rejoice with tabrets and harps.

"Shaking" means the waving of the Divine arm, wherewith God fights against it, lit. her, i. e. Assyria.

33. Translate "For Tophet is prepared of old: for the king it is made ready, both deep and broad: its funeral pile is fire," &c. The Jews regarded the burning of the dead with abhorrence; and Tophet seems to have been the name of that part of the valley of Hinnom where the bodies of infants had been burnt in the days of Moloch-worship under Ahaz. Equally wretched was to be the end of the Assyrian king.

CHAPTERS XXXI, XXXII.

The Fourth Woe.

In this woe Judah is again warned against trusting in Egypt; after which the reign of the Messiah is set forth as the nation's true hope, followed by the announcement that long years of trial must intervene before His Advent.

ISAIAH, XXXI.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

¹ *The prophet sheweth the cursed folly in trusting to Egypt, and forsaking of God. 6 He exhorteth to conversion. 8 He sheweth the fall of Assyria.*

WOE to them ^a that go down to Egypt for help; ^a ch. 30, 2. & 36, 6. ^b and ^b 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, ^c neither seek the LORD! ^c Dan. 9, 13. Hos. 7, 7.

2 Yet he also *is* wise, and will bring evil, and ^d will not ² call back his words: but will arise ^d Num. 23, 19. ² Heb. *remove.* against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity.

3 Now the Egyptians *are* ^e men, and not God; ^e Ps. 146, 3, 5. and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.

4 For thus hath the LORD spoken unto me, ^f Like ^f Hos. 11, 10. Amos 3, 8. 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 ³ noise of them: ³ so shall the LORD ³ Or. *multitude.* of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for ³ ch. 42, 13. the hill thereof.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1. The "horses" and "chariots" are those of Egypt. Judca, a mountain-land, was unfit for the use of chariots, and the Jews looked with wonder and admiration at this imposing portion of Pharaoh's army, drawn from the level plains on the banks of the Nile.

2. God, Who forbade these foreign alliances, is as wise as the wisest of those who were urging Judca to seek for safety from Egypt, nor will He recall His commands, but will bring evil upon and punish those who disobey.

The "evil-doers" and those "that work iniquity" are the Jews; the "help," i. e. helpers, are the Egyptians.

3. The ironical contrast is continued, but ends with the stern denunciation of common ruin.

4. We learn from Jer. xxvi. 19, that the words of Isaiah and Micah were listened to by king and people, and as soon as the negotiations with Egypt were broken off, Jehovah once again became Judah's defender. Instead of "roaring on" the Hebrew has "growling over." As Bochart remarks, the lion roars when going in quest of prey, and growls after he has seized it; and no noise or force can make him then easily quit his hold. Comp. ch. v. 29.

ISAIAH, XXXII.

Before
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5^b As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem; ¹defending also he will deliver *it*; and passing over he will preserve *it*.

^b Deut. 32. 11.

^c Ps. 91. 4.

ⁱ Ps. 37. 40.

^k Hos. 9. 9.

^l ch. 2. 20.

& 30. 22.

² Heb. *the*

idols of his

gold.

^m 1Kin. 12. 30.

ⁿ See 2 Kin.

19. 35. 36.

ch. 37. 36.

² Or, *for*

fear of the

sword.

⁴ Or,

tributary.

⁵ Heb. *for*

melting, or,

tribute.

^o ch. 37. 37.

⁶ Heb. *his*

rock shall

pass away

for fear.

⁷ Or, *his*

strength.

6 Turn ye unto *him* from whom the children of Israel have ^kdeeply revolted.

7 For in that day every man shall ¹cast away his idols of silver, and ²his idols of gold, which your own hands have made unto you *for* ^ma sin.

8 Then shall the Assyrian ^afall with the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean man, shall devour him: but he shall flee ³from the sword, and his young men shall be ^{4 5}discomfited.

9 And ^{o 6}he shall pass over to ⁷his 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.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1 The blessings of Christ's kingdom. 9 Desolation is foreshewn. 15 Restoration is promised to succeed.

^a Ps. 45. 1, &c.
Jer. 23. 5.
Hos. 3. 5.
Zech. 9. 9.

BEHOOLD, ^aa king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.

5. "As birds flying." Rather, hovering over, fluttering with the wings as birds do when defending their young.

"Passing over" is the word used in Exod. xii. 13, 23, and implies the sparing of the object passed over.

6. This invitation follows upon the thought that, first, Jehovah is as mighty to save as the lion; and, secondly, as loving as the bird which is ready at the risk of its life to protect its nest.

8. The point of this verse is that Assyria was not to fall by the sword of man at all, but by the sword of God. Instead of "discomfited," the margin rightly gives "tributary," i. e. liable to compulsory service to their captors.

9. Translate "And his rock," i. e. Assyria's rock, its king, "shall pass away for fear, and his princes shall be dismayed at the sight of an ensign;" i. e. at the slightest indication of the presence of any hostile troop, "saith Jehovah, whose light is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem." The word rendered in the A. V. "fire" is really the light proceeding from fire, and symbolizes the Divine Presence: but that Presence is also a furnace, trying men's hearts. See on ch. xxiv. 15.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1. "Behold, a king." Just as in ch. ix. 6 the birth of the Prince of Peace followed immediately upon the prediction of Judah's victory in battle, so here the Messiah's Advent is promised as the sequel of Sennacherib's overthrow. Judah's preservation was not for mere national

ISAIAH, XXXII.

2 And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and ^ba covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a ²great rock in a weary land.

^a Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

^b ch. 4. 6.
& 25. 4.

² Heb. *heavy*

^c ch. 29. 18.
& 35. 5, 6.

3 And ^cthe eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.

³ Heb. *hasty*.

4 The heart also of the ³rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak ⁴plainly.

⁴ Or,
elegantly.

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 ⁵when the needy speaketh right.

⁵ Or, *when he speaketh against the poor in judgment.*

8 But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he ⁶stand.

⁶ Or, *be established.*

purposes; but that in her spiritual king all the nations of the earth might be blessed.

2. "A man." The Messiah is to be man, but yet one able to protect His people from all violence, and give them also comfort and refreshment. Comp. Heb. vii. 25.

3, 4. All hindrances to the acquisition of Divine knowledge are to be removed, whether natural, like dimness of vision, or moral, as of men too hasty to rest in quiet confidence on God (ch. xxx. 15.). There is also to be progress, so that those who at first could only stammer half-truths, will be able under the teaching of the Spirit at length to speak the full truth clearly.

5. Men thus taught of the Spirit will no longer gloss over bad qualities by specious names. The vile person (or fool, 1 Sam. xxv. 25. Ps. xiv. 1.) will no longer have the reputation of being generous, the contrast being, not between stinginess and liberality, but between one who leads a softish, sensual life and one who is really large-hearted. The word translated "churl" means a long-headed, worldly-wise man, who spends for selfish purposes, while he who is truly bountiful practises habitual self-denial.

6. "For the fool will speak folly," see ver. 5, and ch. ix. 17, where the same word occurs. The folly condemned in the Bible is moral, not mental folly, just as wisdom is never separated from religion. Folly manifests itself here by profanity towards God and injustice towards man. For that folly which is selfishness see St. Luke xii. 20.

7. "Churl," really cunning, crafty man. The word only occurs here and in ver. 5, but there is no doubt that its meaning is as given above.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

d Amos 6. 1.

² Heb. *Days*
above a year.

³ Heb. *the*
fields of
desire.

^e ch. 34. 13.
Hos. 9. 6.

⁴ Or, *burning*
upon, &c.

^f ch. 22. 2.
^g ch. 27. 10.

⁵ Or, *cliffs*
and watch-
towers.

^h Ps. 104. 30.
Joel 2. 28.

ⁱ ch. 29. 17.
& 35. 2.

^k Jam. 3. 18.

9 ¶ Rise up, ye women ^d that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech.

10 ² 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.

12 They shall lament for the teats, for ³ the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine.

13 ^e Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns *and* briars; ⁴ yea, upon all the houses of joy *in* ^f the joyous city:

14 ^g because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; the ⁵ forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks;

15 until ^h the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and ⁱ the wilderness 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 ^k And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

9—20. Besides the general warning that many troubles will have to be endured before the Messiah's Advent, there is, as in ch. iii. 16—23, a special condemnation of the luxurious habits of the women of Jerusalem.

9. "Careless," i. e. free from care and anxiety, Heb. "confident."

12. "Teats." Rather, "breasts." The men lament (the verb is masc.) because the women are barren (comp. Gen. xlix. 25.), the fields sterile, the vineyards unproductive.

13. "Houses of joy." As Jerusalem was not captured by the Assyrians, some understand this of the pleasure-houses built by the rich citizens in the country round Jerusalem. But probably Isaiah looked onward to the Babylonian captivity, and "houses of joy" mean houses now inhabited by happy families.

14, 15. "For ever." Yet this sentence of perpetual desolation is modified by ver. 15. Whenever the Spirit shall be poured out upon the Jews, enabling them to recognize Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah, their land will once again become luxuriant with plenty.

16. "Remain." Rather, abide. Where once had been a wilderness barren of good works, there shall be a fruitful field inhabited by righteous men.

17. "Assurance," i. e. confidence, security. A nation which practises

ISAIAH, XXXIII.

18 And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;

19 ¹when it shall hail, coming down ^m on the forest; ² 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 ⁿ the ox and the ass.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

¹ ch. 30. 30.
^m Zech. 11. 2.
² Or, and
the city shall
be utterly
abased.
ⁿ ch. 30. 24.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1 God's judgments against the enemies of the church. 13 The privileges of the godly.

WOE to thee ^a that spoilest, and thou *wast* not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! ^b 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.

cir. 713.
^a ch. 21. 2.
Hab. 2. 8.
^b Rev. 13. 10.

righteousness will be at peace with its neighbours, and live in security; and the man, whose peace is made with God by Christ's righteousness, and in whom the sanctifying Spirit is perfecting its work by producing personal holiness, will have a well-grounded confidence in his acceptance with his Maker.

19. "When it shall . . ." Rather, "And it shall hail amid the downfall of the forest, and the city shall be laid very low." There is, as has often been remarked, no perspective in prophecy, and thus the intermediate troubles and the Advent of the Messiah are brought into close contact without any note of the exact time of either. The downfall of the forest is generally understood of the destruction of the Assyrian army (comp. ch. x. 19, 34.); at its fall there is also to be a smiting as of hail for Judah; and finally Jerusalem is to be laid very low. Twice was this fulfilled, 2 Kings xxv. 9. St. Matt. xxiv. 2.

20. Contemporaneous with the fall of Jerusalem is the wide-spread propagation of the Gospel, when the Jews, long trained by God to be teachers and to travel in all lands, immediately after Pentecost began to sow beside all waters, on the banks of the Orontes and the Tiber as well as by the Jordan. And blessed are those who now send forth, not the implements of destruction, but men to labour patiently for peace, tilling the soil of men's hearts, and sowing there the seed that springs up unto life eternal.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The Fifth Woe.

The same train of thought is continued in the fifth woe, but the date is somewhat later, as the Assyrian invasion seems actually to have begun when Isaiah wrote this chapter.

1. The spoiler is Sennacherib, who is accused of combining treachery with violence. Up to this time, as we learn from the cuneiform in-

^{B before}
CHRIST
cir. 713.
c ch. 25. 9.

2 O LORD, be gracious unto us; ^c we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in 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 ^b spoil shall be gathered like the gathering of the caterpillar: as the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them.

d Ps. 97. 9.

5 ^d The LORD is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.

² Heb.
salvations.

6 And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, *and* strength of ² salvation: the fear of the LORD *is* his treasure.

³ Or,
messengers.

^e 2 Kin. 18.
18, 37.
^f Judg. 5. 6.

7 Behold, their ³ valiant ones shall cry without: ^e the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.

8 ^f The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man

scriptions, his career had been one of unmixed success, but the day of his downfall was approaching, and he was then himself to be the victim of the same perfidy and cruelty which he had practised upon others.

2. The thought of the near presence of this fierce spoiler leads Isaiah to earnest prayer that God would be "their arm," i. e. the strength of the Jewish people, for whom the prophet was praying: and then, uniting himself in mind with them, he implores Him to be "our salvation."

3. "People." Heb. peoples, i. e. the heathen races, who formed Sennacherib's empire. On hearing of the conqueror's fall, they flee away in terror in all directions. Comp. ch. xxx. 30, 31.

4. "Your spoil," addressed to the Assyrians. By the "caterpillar" is meant the locust in its wingless state, when it is exceedingly voracious. The verse describes the rush of people to spoil the Assyrian camp, and should be translated "And your plunder shall be gathered as the caterpillar gathereth: and as locusts leap, so shall men leap upon it."

5, 6. After magnifying Jehovah the prophet turns to Hezekiah and says, "And He, Jehovah, shall be the stability of thy times, abundance of "salvation, wisdom, and knowledge; the fear of Jehovah that is his, i. e. "Hezekiah's treasure." God is to be Hezekiah's salvation, wisdom, and knowledge, as well as the stability of his times, and not as the A. V. transposes it. Some think that in the last clause there is an allusion to the treasures sent by the king to Sennacherib to purchase peace, but sent in vain (2 Kings xviii. 14—16.).

7. "Behold their valiant ones." Rather, "their Ariel," which, as in ch. xxix. 1, stands for Jerusalem generally. The next clause is "they cry without," i. e. the inhabitants, having gone forth to meet the ambassadors returning from Lachish, unite with them in bitter lamentations on hearing that Hezekiah's rich presents had not appeased the king's anger.

8. A description of the condition to which Judea was reduced by the Assyrian invasion (2 Kings xviii. 13.), ending with a reproach against

ISAIAH, XXXIII.

ceaseth: ^g he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man.

^{Before}
CHRIST
cir. 713.

9 ^h The earth mourneth *and* languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed *and* ² hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off *their* ² fruits.

^g 2 Kin. 18.
14, 15, 16, 17.
^h ch. 24. 4.
² Or, *withered away.*

10 ¹ Now will I rise, saith the LORD; now will I ¹ be exalted; now will I lift up myself.

¹ Ps. 12. 5.

11 ^k Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath, as fire, shall devour you.

^k Ps. 7. 14.
ch. 53. 4.

12 And the people shall be as the burnings of lime: ¹ as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire.

¹ ch. 9. 13.

13 ¶ Hear, ^m ye *that are* far off, what I have done; ^m and, ye *that are* near, acknowledge my might.

^m ch. 49. 1.

14 The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

ⁿ Ps. 15. 2.
& 24. 4.

15 He that ⁿ walketh ³ righteously, and speaketh ⁴ uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of ⁵ oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of ⁶ blood, and ⁷ shutteth his eyes from seeing evil;

³ Heb. *in rightnesses.*
⁴ Heb. *uprightnesses.*
⁵ Or, *deceits.*
⁶ Heb. *bloods.*
⁷ Ps. 119. 37.

Sennacherib for having broken the treaty he had made with Hezekiah. For at first Sennacherib had consented to accept a tribute, but no sooner had he extracted from Hezekiah all his silver and gold than he sent an army to capture Jerusalem (ib. 14, 16, 17.). In ver. 9 the anguish of Jerusalem is described by metaphors taken from the most beautiful scenes in Judea. The margin *withered away* is more correct than "hewn down."

11. The two first metaphors of this verse imply the entire frustration of Sennacherib's plans; the last clause suggests that his boastfulness had contributed to his overthrow.

12. "People." Heb. "peoples," heathen nations forming the Assyrian army. See ver. 3.

14. "Hypocrites." Really "the profane," as in ch. x. 6. Zion's sinners had long mocked at God, but now, on seeing His wrath executed upon the Assyrians, they ask in terror: Who can endure God's eternal anger, if His temporal judgments are so severe?

15. Isaiah answers their question, saying, that the righteous only can endure the day of wrath. The character here given of the righteous man should be compared with that in Pss. xv. and xxiv. By "oppressions" are meant unjust exactions, and acts of extortion; and by "hearing of blood" the listening to schemes which would lead on to bloodshed.

B: fore
C H R I S T
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16 he shall dwell on ²high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.

² Heb.
heights, or,
high places.

17 Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold ³the land that is very far off.

³ Heb. the
land of far
distances.

18 Thine heart shall meditate terror. ^P Where is the scribe? where is the ⁴receiver? where is he that counted the towers?

^P 1 Cor. 1. 20.

⁴ Heb.
weigher?

² Kin. 19. 32.

19 ^aThou shalt not see a fierce people, ^ra people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a ⁵stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand.

^r Deut. 28.
41, 50.

Jer. 5. 15.

⁵ Or,
ridiculous.

^s Ps. 48. 12.

20 ^sLook upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see ^tJerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; ^unot one of ^xthe stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.

^t Ps. 46. 5.
& 125. 1, 2.

^u ch. 37. 13.

^x ch. 51. 2.

21 But there the glorious LORD will be unto us a

16. "He shall dwell on high," i. e. in safety, fortresses being generally placed on lofty inaccessible rocks.

17. The thought of the righteous man leads naturally to that of the pious Hezekiah. Instead of seeing him carried to a prison in Nineveh, the Jews shall behold him reigning in royal state at Jerusalem, while they themselves, honoured and respected, shall be able to travel in safety for trade or pleasure to far-off lands. But the words have also a higher meaning. Hezekiah was a type of Christ, and the distant lands are those traversed by the Apostles and Christian missionaries.

18. "Shall meditate terror." Rather, "shall muse upon the terror" which had oppressed them during the time of Sennacherib's invasion. Now in a joyful revulsion of feeling they ask, "Where is the scribe?" the man who recorded the number of those made prisoners of war, and the sum they were to pay for their ransom.

"Where" too "is the receiver?" Lit. weigher, who weighed the gold and silver of the tribute money.

"Where," finally, "is he that counted the towers?" the engineer who reconnoitred the fortifications and superintended the siege works.

19. "Thou shalt see" no more—not "a" but "that fierce people," the Assyrians, who, though they spoke a Semitic tongue, were yet unintelligible to the Jews.

"Stammering" rather means "barbarous," and "deep speech" suggests the idea of a guttural pronunciation.

20. Now turning to Zion, the city of religious rite and festival, the prophet bids them contemplate its peace and tranquillity. No longer is it to be moved like a shepherd's tent from place to place, but God will keep it in calm security.

21. As shepherds' tents were struck from time to time in order to seek fresh pasturage, Isaiah naturally passes onward to the thought that in

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place ² of broad rivers *and* streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.

22 For the LORD *is* our judge, the LORD *is* our ^y ³ lawgiver, ^z the LORD *is* our king; he will save us.

23 ⁴ Thy tacklings are loosed; they 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.

24 And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: ^a the people that dwell therein *shall be* forgiven *their* iniquity.

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² Heb. *broad of spaces, or, hands.*

^y Jam. 4. 12.

³ Heb. *statemaker.*

^z Ps. 89. 18.

⁴ Or, *They have forsaken thy tacklings.*

^a Jer. 50. 10.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

¹ *The judgments wherewith God revengeth his church.* ¹¹ *The desolation of her enemies.* ¹⁶ *The certainty of the prophecy.*

^a COME near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: ^b let the earth hear, and ² all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it.

^a Ps. 49. 1.

^b Deut. 32. 1.

² Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

Jehovah Zion will find settled and assured peace; for He will be to her as a fertile region wherein she will always dwell in the enjoyment of every blessing. What the Tigris was to Nineveh, the Euphrates to Babylon, the Nile to Egypt, that will God be to Jerusalem; only, whereas rivers exposed the people on their banks to attacks from pirates and ships of war, no such danger can happen to God's people.

23. By a metaphor suggested by ver. 21, Assyria is now set before us as a wrecked ship, her ropes loose and broken, and her crew trying in vain to repair the socket of the mast. The word means the place in which the foot of the mast was fixed, but our translators, following the conjecture of a great Jewish authority, have rendered it as an adverb, "well." The right version is "they could not strengthen the foot of their mast." The vessel being therefore stranded, the wreckers plunder it, and so powerless are the crew, that even the lame join in the spoil.

24. True to his office as the evangelical prophet, Isaiah again points onward to Him Whose mission brought healing to the bodies and pardon to the souls of men, St. Matt. iv. 23; ix. 5, 6.

CHAPTERS XXXIV, XXXV.

The primary subject of ch. xxxiv. is the judgment upon Edom, which, though a kindred nation, and its near neighbour, became the inveterate enemy of Judah. It is a standing rule with the Rabbins to interpret Edom of Rome, whence many Christian expositors explain this chapter of the downfall of Antichrist. But probably Edom is the type generally of the Church's enemies; and upon their punishment follows an era of blessedness described in ch. xxxv.

1. With this appeal compare ch. i. 2. A prophecy so ushered in can be of no ordinary importance.

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2 For the indignation of the LORD *is* upon all nations, and *his* fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter.

c Joel 2. 20.

3 Their slain also shall be cast out, and ^ctheir stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.

d Ps. 102. 26.
Ezek. 32. 7, 8.
Joel 2. 31.
& 3. 15.

4 And ^dall the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be ^erolled together as a scroll:

Matt. 24. 29.
2 Pet. 3. 10.

^fand all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a ^gfalling *fig* from the fig tree.

e Rev. 6. 14.
f ch. 14. 12.
g Rev. 6. 13.

h Jer. 46. 10.

5 For ^hmy sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it ⁱshall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment.

i Jer. 47. 7, &c.
Mal. 1. 4.

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 ^kthe LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.

k ch. 63. 1.
Jer. 49. 13.
Zeph. 1. 7.

7 And the ²unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be ²soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness.

2 Or, *rhinoceros*.

3 Or, *drunken*.

l ch. 63. 4.

8 For *it is* the day of the LORD's ¹vengeance, *and* the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.

2. "He hath utterly destroyed them." More literally, "he hath doomed them," laid them under ban.

3. "Melted," i. e. dissolved, washed away.

4. "Shall be dissolved." The verb rather means to give a pale and sickly light. Instead of the sun, moon, and stars shining brightly, they are to be feeble and dim. So at the end, the Heb. is "as a fading or "withered leaf from the fig-tree."

5. "Idumea." Heb. Edom, the people, not the country. They are called "the people of my curse," lit. the people whom I have doomed, see ver. 2.

7. "Unicorns." Really, "wild oxen." See Num. xxiii. 22. Deut. xxxiii. 17. Job xxxix. 9. There is no authority for the margin "rhinoceros."

"Shall come down," i. e. for slaughter.

8. "For the controversy of . . ." Really, "to plead for Zion." These grand and terrible metaphors, taken from earthly battle, symbolize the irresistible might of the Spirit's warfare in behalf of those who wrestle, not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness, Eph. vi. 12.

9 ^m And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch.

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10 It shall not be quenched night nor day; ⁿ the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: ^o from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.

^m See Deut. 29, 23.
ⁿ Rev. 14, 11. & 18, 18. & 19, 3.
^o Mat. 1. 4. p ch. 14, 23. Zeph. 2. 14. Rev. 18, 2.
² Or, *pelican*.

11 ^p But the ² cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and ^q he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.

^{q2} Kin. 21. 13. Lam. 2. 8.

12 They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none *shall be* there, and all her princes shall be nothing.

13 And ^r thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and ^s it shall be an habitation of dragons, *and* a court for ^{3 4} owls.

^r ch. 32, 13. Hos. 9. 6.

14 ⁵ The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with ⁶ the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the ⁷ screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.

^s ch. 13, 21, &c.

³ Or, *ostriches*.

⁴ Heb. *daughters of the owl*.

⁵ Heb. *Ziim*.

⁶ Heb. *I'im*.

⁷ Or, *night monster*.

15 There shall the great owl make her nest, and

9, 10. In these two verses we have a new metaphor taken from a volcanic eruption, with torrents of burning pitch instead of lava streams. Similarly in Jer. xlix. 18 the destruction of Edom is compared to the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrhah. St. John refers to this passage in Rev. xiv. 10, 11.

11. "Cormorant." Really, "the pelican."

"Owl." Probably "the crane."

"Confusion—emptiness." Heb. *tohu . . . bohu*, words taken from Gen. i. 2, see on ch. xxiv. 10. The "line" is a measuring line; the "stones" those used for plummets; the meaning is that God would bring everything back to such a state of wasteness and emptiness as existed before the creation.

12. The meaning rather is "her nobles proclaim there a king no longer." Edom was an elective monarchy; the hereditary nobility proclaimed the new king. That happens now no more. The prince-electors of Edom have become nothing.

13. "Dragons." Really, "jackals."

"Owls." Not the word in ver. 11, but one meaning "ostriches." See ch. xiii. 21, 22.

14. "Wild beasts of the island," wailers, jackals, see ch. xiii. 22.

"The satyr," wild goat, see ch. xiii. 21.

15. "The great owl." Most commentators agree that this is the arrow-snake, so called from the suddenness of its spring upon its victim.

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lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.

^t Mal. 3. 16.

16 Seek ye out of ^tthe 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.

CHAPTER XXXV.

¹ *The joyful flourishing of Christ's kingdom.* ³ *The weak are encouraged by the virtues and privileges of the gospel.*

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^a ch. 55. 12.

THE ^awilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

^b ch. 32. 15.

2 ^bIt shall blossom abundantly, and 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.

The eggs of serpents are hatched by the sun, but the young are carefully fostered by the parents.

16. "The book of the Lord," i. e. men are to search the Scriptures, and learn what has been foretold concerning Edom, and then compare the event with the prediction.

"My mouth . . . his spirit." Rather, "By my mouth he hath commanded, and by his spirit he hath gathered them," i. e. hath brought together these wild beasts to be the possessors of Edom.

CHAPTER XXXV.

While thus the enemies of Jehovah's people perish, and their lands become the home of those animals which shun the presence of man, a glorious change takes place elsewhere, and what was before a wilderness becomes clothed with beauty and verdure. Heathen lands hear the glad tidings of salvation, and streams of grace are poured forth on realms where its sanctifying influences were previously unknown.

1. "For them," These words should be omitted. The single letter they are supposed to translate can be better explained in another way.

"Solitary place" is rather "parched ground," and "the rose" is really the autumnal crocus, but rose gives the right idea to us. This flower abounds in fertile and well-watered meadows, and thus naturally contrasts with the parched deserts.

2. "They shall see," i. e. the inhabitants of the wilderness, now transformed into a blooming garden-land.

3 ^c Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

4 Say to them *that are* of a ² fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompence; he will come and save you.

5 Then the ^d eyes of the blind shall be opened, and ^e the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

6 Then shall the ^f lame *man* leap as an hart, and the ^g tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall ^h 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 ⁱ the habitation of dragons, where each lay, *shall be* ³ grass with reeds and rushes.

8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; ^k the unclean shall not pass over it; ⁴ but it *shall be* for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err *therein*.

9 ¹ 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*:

10 and the ^m ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and ⁿ sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

^m ch. 51. 11. ⁿ ch. 25, 8. & 65, 19. Rev. 7. 17. & 21. 4.

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^c Job 4. 3, 4.
Heb. 12. 12.

² Heb. *hasty*.

^d ch. 29, 18.

& 32, 3, 4.

& 42, 7.

Matt. 9. 27.

& 11. 5.

& 12, 22, &

20, 30, &c.

& 21, 14.

John 9. 6, 7.

^e Matt. 11. 5.

Mark 7. 32,

&c.

^f Matt. 11. 5.

& 15, 30.

& 21, 14.

John 5. 8, 9.

Acts 3. 2, &c.

& 8, 7, &

14, 8, &c.

^g ch. 32, 4.

Matt. 9. 32,

33, & 12, 22,

& 15, 30.

^h ch. 41, 18.

& 43, 19.

John 7. 38,

39.

ⁱ ch. 34, 13.

⁵ Or, *a court*

for reeds, &c.

^k ch. 52, 1.

Joel 3. 17.

Rev. 21. 27.

⁴ Or, *for he*

shall be with

them.

¹ Lev. 26, 6.

ch. 11, 9.

Ezek. 24, 25.

3. Having the promise before them of this glorious revolution the people are to encourage one another to trust in God. So the passage is explained in Heb. xiii. 12.

4. "Fearful." The word rendered "rash" in ch. xxxii. 4. In both places the meaning is the same, and refers to men too hasty to wait for God's own time.

7. Literally, "the mirage shall become a real pool." Instead of an illusory happiness, resembling the false appearance of water which mocks the thirsting traveller in the desert, there shall be true and abiding peace and joy.

"Dragons." See ch. xxxiv. 13.

8. "A highway." In the desert no road is possible because the sands are always shifting, and man's schemes for saving himself are equally without result. But in Christ God gives man a way (St. John xiv. 6.) by which the pure in heart can approach unto Him, and it is so plainly marked that the most simple-minded need not go astray.

"It shall be for those," i. e. for such as are not unclean, the holy, called in ver. 9 "the redeemed."

10. This verse occurs again in ch. li. 11. Here it explains the pur-

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

1 *Sennacherib invadeth Judah.* 4 *Rabshakeh, sent by Sennacherib, by blasphemous persuasions soliciteth the people to revolt.* 22 *His words are told to Hezekiah.*

713.
2 Kings
18. 13, 17.
2 Chr. 32. 1.

NOW ^a it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, *that* Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them.

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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.

² Or,
secretary.
^b 2 Kin. 18.
19, &c.

3 Then came forth unto him Eliakim, Hilkiah's son, which was over the house, and Shebna the ² scribe, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder.

4 ^b 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?

³ Heb. a
word of lips.
⁴ Or, but
counsel and strength are for the war.
^c Ezek. 21.
6, 7.

5 I say, *sayest thou*, (but *they are but* ³ vain words) ⁴ *I have counsel and strength for war: now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?*

6 Lo, thou trustest in the ^c staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if 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?

⁵ Or,
hostages.

8 Now therefore give ⁵ pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two

pose for which the road was cast up, namely, that God's people might draw near unto Him. It also gave the Jews a promise for the time being of a triumphant return from the Babylonian exile.

CHAPTERS XXXVI, XXXVII.

These two chapters are nearly identical with 2 Kings xviii. 13—37; xix., where see notes.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

5. Translate, "I—Rabshakeh—say, They are but vain words, thy counsel and strength for the war." In 2 Kings xviii. 20 there is a different phrase.

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 servants, 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.

14 Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you.

15 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver 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, ^{2,3} Make *an agreement* with me by ² Or, *Seek my favour by a present.* a present, and come out to me: ^d 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. ³ Heb. *Make with me a blessing.* ^d Zech. 3. 10.

18 *Beware* lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, 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 Hilkiah, that *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hezekiah with *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1 Hezekiah mourning sendeth to Isaiah to pray for them. 6 Isaiah comforteth them. 8 Sennacherib, going to encounter Tirhakah, sendeth a blasphemous letter to Hezekiah. 14 Hezekiah's prayer. 21 Isaiah's prophecy of the pride and destruction of Sennacherib, and the good of Zion. 36 An angel slayeth the Assyrians. 37 Sennacherib is slain at Ninereh by his own sons.

* 2 Kin. 19. 1,
&c.

AND ^a 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.

² Or, pro-
vocation.

3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day *is* a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of ² 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 ³ left.

³ Heb. *found*.

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.

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7 Behold, I will ²send 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.

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² Or, put
a spirit
into him.

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 is 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?

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 Telassar?

13 Where *is* the king of ^bHamath, and the king ^bJer. 49. 23. 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 cherubims, thou *art* the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.

17 ^cIncline thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open ^cDan. 9. 18. 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 ³nations, and their countries,

³ Heb. lands.

19 and have ⁴cast their gods into the fire: for ⁴Heb. given.

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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.

² Heb. *By the hand of thy servants.*

³ Heb. *the tallness of the cedars thereof, and the choice of the fir trees thereof.*

⁴ Or, *the forest and his fruitful field.*

⁵ Or, *fenced and closed.*

⁶ 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 Kin. 19. 25.

⁷ Heb. *short of hand.*

⁸ Or, *sitting.*

24 ²By thy servants hast thou reproached 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 ³the tall cedars thereof, *and* the choice fir trees thereof : and I will enter into the height of his border, *and* ⁴the 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 ⁵besieged places.

26 ⁶Hast 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 shouldst be to lay waste defended cities *into* ruinous heaps.

27 Therefore their inhabitants *were* ⁷of 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 housetops, and *as* corn blasted before it be grown up.

28 But I know thy ⁸abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

25. The latter half of this verse should probably be translated "with the sole of my feet I will dry up all the rivers of Egypt."

ISAIAH, XXXVIII.

29 Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore ^d 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.

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^d ch. 30. 28.
Ezek. 38. 4.

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 reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof.

31 And ² the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward:

² Heb. *the escaping of the house of Judah that remaineth.*

32 For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and ³ they that escape out of mount Zion: the ^e zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.

³ Heb. *the escaping.*
^e 2 Kin. 19. 31.
ch. 9. 7.

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 ⁴ shields, nor cast a bank against it.

⁴ Heb. *shield.*

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 ^f defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

^f 2 Kin. 20. 6.
ch. 38. 6.

36 Then the ^g 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.

^g 2 Kin. 19. 35.

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 ⁵ Armenia: and Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

⁵ Heb.
Araiat.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

¹ Hezekiah, having received a message of death, by prayer hath his life lengthened. ⁸ The sun goeth ten degrees backward, for a sign of that promise. ⁹ His song of thanksgiving.

IN ^a those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And ^a Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto

713.
^a 2 Kin. 20. 1,
&c.
² Chr. 32. 24.

ISAIAH, XXXVIII.

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^{b 2} Sam. 17. 23.

² Heb.
*Give charge
concerning
thy house.*

^c Neh. 13. 14.

³ Heb.
*with great
weeping.*

^d ch. 37. 35.

^{e 2} Kin. 20. 8,
&c.
ch. 7. 11.

⁴ Heb.
*degrees by,
or, with the
sun.*

^f Ps. 27. 13.
& 116. 9.

him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, ^{b 2} Set thine 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, ^c 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 ³ 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 city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and ^d I will defend this city.

7 And this *shall be* ^e 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 ⁴ 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 LORD, ^f in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

For the first eight verses of this chapter see 2 Kings xx. 1—11.

10. "I said in the cutting off." Rather, in the noontide, or meridian "of my days." The phrase is highly poetical, and refers to the apparent pause in the sun's motion after it has reached the zenith at noon, before it begins to go down.

11. "The world." The word occurs only here, and lit. signifies "cessation." Some therefore explain it as meaning this transitory world, this

ISAIAH, XXXVIII.

12 ^g 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 ² with pining sickness: from day *even* to night wilt thou make an end of me.

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^g Job 7. 6.
² Or, *from the thrum.*

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.

14 Like a crane *or* a swallow, so did I chatter: ^h I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail *with* ^h ch. 59. 11. *looking upward*: O LORD, I am oppressed; ³ undertake for me. ³ Or, *ease me.*

15 What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done *it*: I shall go softly all my years ⁱ in the bitterness of my soul. ⁱ Job 7. 11. & 10. 1.

world which will soon cease to be; others as the place where man ceases to labour, the grave. This seems preferable. In the first clause Hezekiah laments that he shall no longer in this earth, among the living, see the glory of Jah, a very solemn form of the name Jehovah (see Ps. lxxviii. 4.): in the second, that soon in the place where man rests from his labours he shall not even see man. All like himself will lie there still and motionless.

12. "Mine age." Rather, "my habitation." The word means the small round tent used by nomads, and "departed" signifies the plucking up of the pegs to which the cords of the tent were fastened. Life is but as the pitching of a tent for a night: in the morning the place is bare and deserted.

"With pining sickness." The margin is better, and the whole should be translated "I have rolled up like a weaver my life: from the thrum "he will cut me off." As his work advances the weaver rolls it up, but God cuts off Hezekiah's life from the thrum when it is but half woven.

"From day to night" (omit "even" which is not in the Heb.) means "in one day," i. e. within a space as brief as from morning to evening.

13. "I reckoned," thought about my sickness, which meanwhile was attacking me like some ferocious wild beast.

14. "Crane." Really, the swift, whose shrill twittering as it flies may be heard in our climate in the summer evenings. The word translated "swallow" is really the crane, see Jer. viii. 7.

"Undertake for me." Lit. "Be my surety or bail, to deliver me from my adversary."

15. In this second half of the poem Hezekiah expresses his thankfulness to God for his recovery; for the promise "spoken unto him" had been performed.

"I shall go softly." Rather, slowly and solemnly, like one going to the Temple to return public thanks, not "in," but after (lit. upon) the "bitterness of my soul," i. e. the recollection of the anguish then suffered will make the rest of the journey of life like a solemn pilgrimage.

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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.

² Or, on my peace came great bitterness.
³ Heb. thou hast loved my soul from the pit.

17 Behold, ² for peace I had great bitterness: but ³ thou hast in love to my soul *delivered it* from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

^k Ps. 6, 5, & 30, 9, & 88, 11, & 115, 17, Eccles. 9, 10.

18 For ^k the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

^l Deut. 4, 9, & 6, 7, Ps. 78, 3, 4.

19 The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: ¹ the father to the children shall make known thy truth.

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.

^m 2 Kin. 20, 7.

21 For ^m Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay *it* for a plaister upon the boil, and he shall recover.

ⁿ 2 Kin. 20, 8.

22 ⁿ Hezekiah also had said, What *is* the sign that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?

16. "By these things," i. e. by what God says and does, see ver. 15. The next clause should be translated "and wholly therein is the life of 'my spirit.'"

17. "For peace," i. e. as that which led on to and was the means of my present peace. The mental anguish he had suffered in his sickness had been followed by such mercy and goodness that it was now changed into a holy calm.

18. "Thy truth," i. e. the fulfilment of God's promises. The promise to which Hezekiah referred was that made to him in ch. xxxvii. 33, that Sennacherib should not conquer Jerusalem; and the verse implies no want of belief in a future state of existence, but expresses the sorrow which had agitated the king's mind on his death-bed at the thought that he should not be spared himself to see those hopes of deliverance fulfilled, which Isaiah had encouraged him to hold. Verse 6 shows that Hezekiah's sickness and recovery happened early in the war, before the attack upon Jerusalem.

20. "My songs." This hymn, and probably others written by Hezekiah, were to be used in the Temple service. It is also found in many collections of canticles sung in Christian churches.

21. "A lump of figs." Lit. "a cake of figs," and therefore not the fresh fruit, but the dry. There is no reason for supposing that this boil was a symptom of the plague, nor that it was the boil which preceded the leprosy (Lev. xiii. 7, 8). Hezekiah's rapid recovery, as he was able on the third day to go up to the house of the Lord (2 Kings xx. 5), militates against either of these suppositions.

¹ *Merodach-baladan, sending to visit Hezekiah because of the wonder, hath notice of his treasures. 3 Isaiah, understanding thereof, foretelleth the Babylonian captivity.*

AT ^a that time Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, ^{cir. 712.}
king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to ^{a 2 Kin. 20.}
Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, ^{12, &c.}
and was recovered.

2 ^b And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed ^{b 2 Chr. 32.31.}
them the house of his ² precious things, the silver, ^{2 Or, spicery.}
and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment,
and all the house of his ^{3 4} armour, and all ^{3 Or, jewels.}
that was found in his treasures: there was nothing ^{4 Heb. res-}
in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah ^{sels, or, in-}
shewed them not. ^{struments.}

3 Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, ^{712.}
even from Babylon.

4 Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that *is* in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

For this chapter see the notes on 2 Kings xx. 12—19. Lenormant in his "*Premières Civilisations*," vol. ii. pp. 203—309, has given a detailed history of Merodach-Baladan, under the title of "A Babylonian Patriot of the eighth century." It is chiefly gathered from the inscriptions found in Sargon's palace at Khorsabad: and in it he speaks of him as one of the grandest and most noble figures in the history of Asia in the eighth century; and as personifying with extraordinary splendour the struggles of Babylon to regain its liberty, and shake off the yoke of the Ninevite kings. In these inscriptions Sargon accuses Merodach-Baladan of having sent repeated embassies, during a period of twelve years, to various countries, with a view of forming a general alliance against Nineveh. Now the policy of Isaiah, who was a great statesman as well as a prophet, had been to keep Judah out of the troubled whirlpool of Oriental politics. As long as this little kingdom, perched among its mountains, held aloof from all parties, so long it was safe. Isaiah therefore prevented Hezekiah from entering into an alliance with Egypt, ch. xxxi. 1, and so when Sargon defeated Sabacho, king of Egypt, Judah remained unmolested. But when this embassy came from one who for many years had waged a not unequal conflict with Sargon, Hezekiah's

Before
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712.

^c Jer. 20. 5.

5 Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD of hosts :

6 Behold, the days come, ^c that all that *is* in thine house, and *that* which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon : nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.

² Fulfilled,
Dan. 1. 2,
3, 7.

7 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away ; and ² they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

^d 1 Sam. 3. 18.

8 Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, ^d Good *is* the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days.

vanity was flattered, and he showed the envoys all the treasures he had gathered in fourteen years of peace. By so doing he put an end to that wise policy of an armed neutrality, which had hitherto been his security. The news of his wealth would make the enemies of Nineveh eagerly covet his alliance, while the Assyrians would regard him as a dangerous person, and would try to crush him. Yet with more than human prescience the prophet warns him that his punishment would come not from Nineveh but from Babylon, where his posterity would serve as eunuchs at the conqueror's court.

These chapters are not in chronological order, as we may see by looking at ch. xxxviii. 6. By comparing the account of Hezekiah's treasures in ver. 2 with his utter impoverishment of himself in the vain endeavour to buy off the king of Assyria (2 Kings xviii. 15, 16.), we have proof that the embassy was prior to the attack of Sennacherib. It is probably placed here as a link connecting the first part of Isaiah with the last twenty-seven chapters, in which the deliverance from Babylon holds a foremost place.

CHAPTERS XL—LXVI.

Following immediately upon the denunciation of captivity at Babylon comes Isaiah's last and principal composition, forming, and distinctly intended to be, a Divine commentary upon the previous collection of prophecies. Upon the question whether Isaiah be or be not the author, I need say nothing more than that at present in Germany critics, even of the negative school, treat both portions of Isaiah in the same way, dividing them into minute sections, and granting or denying the authenticity of each several fragment as suits their argument. To any one reading attentively, the second part seems constantly to imply the existence of the first, and their close union and intimate relationship form an insoluble problem except upon the supposition of their genuineness.

In the first thirty-nine chapters the latest date is that of the murder of Sennacherib, which took place after Hezekiah's death, in the reign of

ISAIAH, XL.

CHAPTER XL.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

1 *The promulgation of the gospel.* 3 *The preaching of John Baptist.* 9
The preaching of the apostles. 12 *The prophet by the omnipotency of*
God, 18 and his incomparableness, 25 comforteth the people.

COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. cir. 712.

2 Speak ye ²comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her ³warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: ^afor she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins.

² Heb. to the heart.

³ Or, appointed time.

^a See Job 42. 10. ch. 61. 7.

Manassch. Withdrawn then from the cares of state, looked upon with animosity by the young and vicious monarch, in the retirement of some prophetic college, Isaiah seems to have gathered together his various prophecies, to have arranged them in groups, inserted the last touches (e. g. ch. ii. 2—4.), and then, as he mused upon the whole, the Spirit moved him to complete his task by unfolding the nature of Christ's work in and for His Church. There was much in his earlier prophecies of a very remarkable nature respecting the Messiah. There was the prophecy of the Immanuel; of the Child Whose name was the Everlasting God; of the Sucker that was to spring from the cut-down trunk of Jesse; of the king that should reign in righteousness; finally, there was the painful prediction that Hezekiah's royal seed should serve ignominiously at the Babylonian court. Taking this as his starting-point, the prophet, now at the extreme verge of human life, bears a message of comfort to his people, of which the topics are given in the first eleven verses, which form a preface to the whole. They are (1) the restoration from Babylon, ver. 2; (2) The ministry of John the Baptist, as the last stage in the long-continued preparation for Christ, vv. 3—8; (3) The coming of Christ, vv. 9—11.

CHAPTER XL.

1. "Comfort ye." Not "ye priests," as the Septuagint, nor "ye prophets," as the Targum; but all mankind, for whose blessedness the Jews were God's appointed instrument, is to unite in their consolation.

2. "Her warfare is accomplished." Israel's warfare had been to resist idolatry, and uphold the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead. Upon this subject Isaiah treats in chs. xl.—xlviii.

"Her iniquity is pardoned." This is the subject of chs. xlix.—lviii., wherein the prophet sets forth Christ as the true sacrifice, whereby atonement is made for sin.

"For . . ." Rather "that she hath received," &c. The particle in the Hebrew is exactly the same as in the two preceding clauses, and, as Professor Birks points out, this clause is the subject of chs. lix.—lxvi., wherein, especially in ch. lxvi., we have promises of a state of glorious happiness for Christ's people.

"Double for all her sins" means a happiness twice as great as her punishment had been.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

^b Matt. 3. 3.
Mark 1. 3.
Luke 3. 4.
John 1. 23.
^c Mal. 3. 1.
^d Ps. 68. 4.
ch. 49. 11.
^e ch. 45. 2.
² Or, a
straight
place.
³ Or, a
plain place.
^f Job 14. 2.
Ps. 90. 5.
& 102. 11.
& 103. 15.
Jam. 1. 10.
1 Pet. 1. 24.
^g Ps. 103. 16.

^h John 12. 34.
1 Pet. 1. 25.
⁴ Or, O thou
that tellest
good tidings
to Zion,
ch. 41. 27.
& 52. 7.
⁵ Or,
O thou that
tellest good
tidings to
Jerusalem.

3 ¶ ^b The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,
^c Prepare ye the way of the LORD, ^d make straight in
the desert a highway for our God.

4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every moun-
tain and hill shall be made low: ^e and the crooked
shall be made ² straight, and the rough places ³ plain:

5 and the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see *it* together: for the mouth of
the LORD hath spoken *it*.

6 The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall
I cry? ^f All flesh *is* grass, and all the goodness
thereof *is* as the flower of the field:

7 the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because
^g the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the
people *is* grass.

8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but
^h the word of our God shall stand for ever.

9 ¶ ⁴ O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee
up into the high mountain; ⁵ 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!

3. Following immediately upon this threefold promise of comfort there is heard the voice of a herald bidding them prepare a highway. Naturally we expect that it is for the return of the exiles from Babylon; but no; the prophet is inspired with a higher theme. This road is for the coming of "Jehovah"—"our God."

4. "Exalted," i. e. raised, lifted up, while the mountains are lowered, in order that there may be everywhere a level plain. But the spiritual meaning is brought out more clearly by the present version.

5. "All flesh." All mankind (see Rom. iii. 20.), and therefore not so much the Jews as the Gentiles. Note that when the highway is ready, it is not the exiles returning from Babylon who appear upon it, but the glory of Jehovah. As this glory was manifested in the Incarnate Word (St. John i. 14.), St. Luke (iii. 6.) adopting the paraphrase of the Septuagint, says "All flesh shall see the salvation of God."

6—8. In this brief dialogue we have the purport of the Baptist's message, and of every message brought from God to man. It is the solemn warning that the world and all things therein pass away, but that the Word of God does not pass away.

Instead of "the spirit of the Lord" translate "the breath of Jehovah," the word in Hebrew for "spirit" and "breath" being the same.

"The people" are the people of the earth, mankind.

9. "Zion" and "Jerusalem" are now to discharge their office of proclaiming the Gospel to mankind (see ch. ii. 3.). They were to begin

10 Behold, the Lord GOD will come ²with strong *hand*, and ¹his arm shall rule for him: behold, ^khis reward *is* with him, and ³his work before him.

11 He shall ¹feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, *and* shall gently lead those ⁴that are with young.

12 ¶ ^mWho hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in ⁵a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

13 ⁿWho hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or ⁶being ^ohis counsellor hath taught him?

14 With whom took he counsel, and *who* ⁷instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of ⁸understanding?

15 Behold, the nations *are* as a drop of a bucket,

⁷ Heb. made him understand.

⁸ Heb. understandings?

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

² Or, against the strong.

¹ ch. 59. 16.

^k ch. 62. 11.

Rev. 22. 12.

³ Or, recompence for his work, ch. 49. 4.

¹ ch. 49. 10.

Ezek. 34. 23.

& 37. 24.

John 10. 11.

Heb. 13. 20.

¹ Pet. 2. 25.

& 5. 4.

Rev. 7. 17.

⁴ Or, that give suck.

^m Prov. 30. 4.

⁵ Heb.

a tierce.

ⁿ Job 21. 22.

& 36. 22, 23.

Rom. 11. 34.

¹ Cor. 2. 16.

⁶ Heb.

man of his counsel.

with the cities of Judah (St. Matt. x. 6. Acts i. 8.), but God would soon lead them on to more distant enterprises.

10. "His work." Better, as in the marg., "his recompence." The Heb. word means the hire paid for work, and is rendered "wages" in Lev. xix. 13.

In the first clause the Heb. has, not the "Lord God" but "the Lord Jehovah," i. e. Christ, and His wages are the redeemed of Israel preceding Him, as a flock goes before the shepherd. In this thought lies the connection with ver. 11.

11. This verse gives us a delightful picture of Christ's love to His Church. Like a good shepherd He carries in His bosom those newly born, till the Spirit has strengthened them, and leads onward with the utmost gentleness such as most need His care.

12. "Who hath measured . . ." The preface is over, and the prophet now commences the first part of his subject, namely, the proof of the unity of God, with a noble appeal to the greatness and infinite wisdom of the Deity in creation. Vast as are God's works in nature, they are all as exactly arranged and measured out as are the minutest works of man.

13, 14. "Who hath directed." Lit. "measured out," same word as in ver. 12. What power is there beyond and above God, by whom God has His being, as all other things have their being in Him? See Acts xvii. 28. St. Paul twice appeals to this passage of Isaiah (Rom. xi. 34. ¹ Cor. ii. 16.). To suppose the existence of such a power is an absurdity.

15, 16. "The nations," i. e. the inhabitants of the whole heathen world are to the Creator but as one of the drops which fall unnoticed from the bucket as it is raised from the well; or as the light dust upon the scales, which counts nothing in the weighing.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

and are counted as the small 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.

o Dan. 4. 35.

17 All nations before him *are* as ^onothing; and ^pthey are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

f Ps. 62. 9.

q ver. 25.
ch. 46. 5.
Acts 17. 29.

18 To whom then will ye ^qliken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

r ch. 41. 6, 7.
& 44. 12, &c.
Jer. 10. 3,
&c.

19 ^rThe workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains.

2 Heb.
is poor of oblation.

20 He that ²*is* so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree *that* will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman ^sto prepare a graven image, *that* shall not be moved.

s ch. 41. 7.
Jer. 10. 4.

t Ps. 19. 1.
Acts 14. 17.
Rom. 1. 19,
20.

21 ^tHave 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?

3 Or,
Him that sitteth, &c.
u Job 9. 8.
Ps. 104. 2.
ch. 42. 5.
& 44. 24.
& 51. 13.
Jer. 10. 12.
x Job 12. 21.
Ps. 107. 40.

22 ³*It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; that ^ustretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

23 that bringeth the ^xprinces to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.

“The isles.” The maritime lands round the Mediterranean (ch. xi. 11.), which seemed so vast to the inhabitants of the tiny region of Judea, to God are but “an atom.” And Lebanon with its cedar-forests and countless herds of cattle would form a sacrifice unworthy of His majesty.

18. If thus the whole world be as nothing compared with God’s greatness, what folly is it for man to put in His stead an image which he himself has made!

19, 20. First we have the rich man’s god. It is a graven image beautifully chased and sculptured, but the inside is a mould of some base, cheap metal; and even after the goldsmith has lavished his art upon it, it must be chained up in its place. The poor man’s god is of wood, but it must be carved a little and made shapely before he can quite believe in it.

21. In these indignant apostrophes the prophet demands whether really they can so entirely close their eyes to the proof, both from revelation and creation, that there can be but One God.

22. “It is He . . .” Note the contrast between the image that has to be chained up (ver. 19.), or the wooden log that requires care that “it be not moved” (ver. 20.), and the majestic throne of Deity.

23. “As vanity.” Heb. *Tohu* (see ch. xxxiv. 11.).

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.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

25 ^y To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. ^y ver. 18.
Deut. 4. 15,
&c.

26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these *things*, that bringeth out their host by number: ^z he calleth them all by names ^z Ps. 147. 4. 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 heard, *that* the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? ^a *there is* no searching of his understanding.

^a Ps. 147. 5.
Rom. 11. 33.

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:

24. "Yea . . ." In verses 22—24 we have a second argument drawn from the manner in which the Providence of God casts down from their thrones the mightiest dynasties of earth. Kings and emperors are to us the embodiments of power, yet high above all there is One mightier than they. The literal translation of ver. 24 brings out this argument with great force. It is: "Scarcely are they planted, scarcely are they sown, scarcely hath their stock taken root in the ground, when He (God) bloweth upon them and they wither, and the whirlwind taketh them away as stubble." The proof of God's unity and power from history is as clear as that drawn from His works in creation.

26. An appeal to the magnificence of an Oriental sky (Ps. xix. 1.): Who with such a spectacle before his eyes could entertain mean thoughts of God? But now that the telescope has penetrated those vast realms of space, and science has taught us something of the nature of the stars, the appeal is no longer to the eyes, but to the mind, and with increased knowledge it comes home to us with tenfold force.

27, 28. "Why sayest thou . . ." The prophet now applies the whole force of his argument to the Jews, addressed affectionately as Jacob and Israel, names ever dear to Jehovah. If God's power and care never fail in the starry heaven, why should they fail upon earth?

29—31. God is the source of strength, whereby human weakness is changed into power. But God does not give power indiscriminately to all. Young men confident in their own strength may fail utterly. It is

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^b Ps. 103. 5.
² Heb.
change.

31 but they that wait upon the LORD ^b shall
² 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.

CHAPTER XLI.

¹ God *expostulateth* with his people, about his mercies to the church,
10 about his promises, 21 *and* about the vanity of idols.

^a Zech. 2. 13.

^a **K**EEP silence before me, O islands; and let the
people renew *their* strength: let them come
near; then let them speak: let us come near to-
gether to judgment.

² Heb. *right-
eousness.*
^b ch. 46. 11.
^c See Gen.
14. 14, &c.
ver. 25.
ch. 45. 1.

² Who raised up ² the righteous *man* ^b from the
east, called him to his foot, ^c gave the nations be-
fore him, and made *him* rule over kings? he gave
them as the dust to his sword, *and* as driven stubble
to his bow.

³ Heb.
in peace.
^d ver. 26.
ch. 44. 7.
& 46. 10.

³ He pursued them, *and* passed ³ safely; *even* by
the way *that* he had not gone with his feet.

⁴ ^d Who hath wrought and done *it*, calling the

those who wait upon Jehovah that find their strength renewed in Him, so that like eagles they can soar ever upward, and mount nearer and nearer to the throne of Deity.

CHAPTER XLI.

In ch. xl. the arguments were general, the first drawn from creation, vv. 12—17; the second from Providence, vv. 23, 24. Yet Israel complained that God had forgotten him, ver. 27. Isaiah therefore now summons the whole world to hear one special argument drawn from the interposition of God for the deliverance of Israel from Babylon.

1. "Islands." See isles, ch. xl. 15.

"People," pl. "peoples," nations (ch. xiv. 2.). All mankind is summoned to come as silent but attentive witnesses to God's controversy, and then is to give its verdict.

2. Many understand this verse of Abraham, but the argument that Cyrus must be intended, because these chapters are all connected by their contents, and Cyrus is mentioned by name in chs. xlv. 28; xlv. 1, seems unanswerable. Note that in prophecy the perfect tense constantly expresses the certainty of the future by representing it as already accomplished. Comp. the tenses in ch. xl. 2.

3. "He had not gone with his feet," i. e. the movements of Cyrus are so rapid that no feet seem needed for his progress. Comp. Dan. viii. 5. Historians have often called attention to the speed with which Cyrus effected the conquest of most of western Asia.

4. In this verse Jehovah declares that the calling of Cyrus is no new

generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the 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 ^f They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother, ² Be of good courage.

7 ^g So the carpenter encouraged the ³ goldsmith, and he that smootheth *with* the hammer ⁴ him that smote the anvil, ⁵ saying, It is ready for the sodering: and he fastened it with nails, ^h that it should not be moved.

8 But thou, Israel, *art* my servant, Jacob whom I have ⁱ chosen, the seed of Abraham my ^k 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.

10 ^l Fear thou not; ^m for I *am* with thee: be not

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^e ch. 43. 10.

& 44. 6.

& 48. 12.

Rev. 1. 17.

& 22. 13.

^f ch. 40. 19.

& 44. 12.

² Heb. *Be*

strong.

^g ch. 40. 13.

³ Or,

founder.

⁴ Or, *the*

smiting.

⁵ Or, *saying*

of the soder,

It is good.

^h ch. 40. 20.

¹ Deut. 7. 6.

& 10. 15.

& 14. 2.

Ps. 135. 4.

ch. 43. 1.

& 44. 1.

^k 2 Chr. 20. 7.

Jam. 2. 23.

^l ver. 13, 14.

ch. 43. 5. ^m Deut. 31. 6, 8.

thing with Him, but a purpose long foreordained. For God is ever working (St. John v. 17.), and calls generation after generation into being, each with its appointed task.

5. "The isles saw and feared" (omit "it"). It is remarkable that Herodotus describes the fear caused by the rapid conquests of Cyrus as producing upon the mind of Croesus just the effect predicted here by Isaiah. In a fit of religious fervour he sent round to all the oracles of Greece, was deceived by them, and following their advice, was ruined.

7. By the "sodering," or soldering, is meant the union of the thin plates of precious metal, with which the image was covered over (see ch. xl. 19.). The prophet draws an animated picture of the activity of the workmen, but the poor object of all their zeal has to be nailed in its place! It cannot even stand up, much less move.

8. "My servant." The title "servant of Jehovah" is a very high one, and is especially given to Moses (Deut. xxxiv. 5. Josh. i. 1. Heb. iii. 5.), and sparingly to others. Its force is that of prime minister and vicerent, as one who wields the sovereign's whole force, yet not by inherent right, but as a delegated authority. Its use in this portion of Isaiah is remarkable, being found nineteen times in chs. xli.—liii., after which it entirely disappears. In these chapters it is used, first, of Israel, as God's special representative upon earth, and then of Christ, Whose office it was to perfect and complete Israel's mission. (See St. John i. 17, 18.)

9. "The chief men thereof." A Rabbinical interpretation taken from Exod. xxiv. 11. The Hebrew word means *joints, elbows*, and the sense is that God called Israel from the corners of the earth, i. e. its most distant regions. It was not his nearness to God which caused his selection for his high office, but God's unmerited love.

Before
CHRIST
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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.

¹ Ex. 23. 22.
ch. 45. 21.
& 60. 12.
Zech. 12. 3.

11 Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ¹ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and ²they that strive with thee shall perish.

² Heb.
the men of thy strife.

³ Heb. *the men of thy contention.*

⁴ Heb.
the men of thy war.

12 Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, *even* ³them that contended with thee: ⁴they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.

^o ver. 10.

13 For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, ^oFear not; I will help thee.

^b Or,
few men.

14 Fear not, thou worm Jacob, *and* ye ^bmen of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

^p Mic. 4. 13.
² Cor. 10.
4, 5.

15 Behold, ^pI will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having ⁶teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat *them* small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.

⁶ Heb.
mouths.

^q Jer. 51. 2.

16 Thou shalt ^qfan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the LORD, *and* ^rshalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.

^r ch. 45. 25.

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.

10—13. Primarily these words were spoken to encourage Israel at Babylon, but they ever look onward to each triumph of Christ's cause.

14. "Thou worm Jacob." See Job xxv. 6. Though Jacob be God's representative on earth, yet in himself he is but mean and defiled, and the Israelites but "men." The word signifies *mortal men*, or, as read with different vowels by the Vulgate, *dead men*.

15. "I will make thee," i. e. will make thee to be, will change thee into a "new threshing sledge, sharp and double-edged." Jacob, in himself a mere worm, shall become in Christ a mighty instrument for the reformation of mankind, crushing before him obstacles mighty as mountains, and changing the parched heathen world into a garden fruitful of holiness and all good works, vv. 18, 19.

17—20. By an ordinary metaphor Isaiah foreshews that eager longing for more light and knowledge which pervaded the heathen world just before Christ came, and made their better nature cry unto God for help just when He was sending them Apostles and preachers, to give them a knowledge of His true nature, and of the healing provided for man's

ISAIAH, XLI.

18 I will open ^a rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the ^b wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs ^c of water.

Before
CHRIST
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^d ch. 35. 6. 7.
& 43. 19.
& 44. 3.

^e Ps. 107. 35.

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:

20 ^u that they may see, and know, and consider, ^v and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

^u Job 12. 9.

21 ¶ ² Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring ² forth your strong *reasons*, saith the King of Jacob.

² Heb.
Cause to
come near.

22 ² Let them bring *them* forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they *be*, that we may ³ consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come.

² ch. 45. 21.

³ Heb. set
our heart
upon them.

23 ² Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye *are* gods: yea, ² do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold *it* together.

² Heb. set
our heart
upon them.
² ch. 42. 9.
& 44. 7. 8.
& 45. 3.
John 13. 19.
² Jer. 10. 5.

wounds. The philosophy of Greece and of the heathen world was, as Clement of Alexandria says, their preparation for Christ.

19. The trees chosen are mostly evergreens with durable and odoriferous wood to express the choicest gifts of the Holy Ghost.

The "*shittah*" is the acacia (Exod. xxv. 5.); the "*oil tree*" the wild olive, or oleaster.

21—24. Starting in ver. 2 with the special proof of God's providence given by the call of Cyrus, the prophet had gone on to speak of the final triumph of Christianity over idols, and the consequent regeneration of mankind. He now resumes his original argument, and challenges the oracles of the heathen-world to give similar proof of their reality by some equally plain act of foreknowledge.

22. By "*former things*" are meant predictions made in old time. The prophet in his challenge does not tie them down to a prediction now to be made: proof by testimony may be as convincing as that given by one's own senses. Search then the past as well as the present, and the conviction will only be the stronger that real prophecy is to be found in the Bible alone.

23. "*That we may be dismayed . . .*" Nothing would really be so alarming as for an idol, a wooden thing that has to be nailed up to keep it from falling, to do anything at all. Hence the prophet's taunt, bidding them do something, good or evil, to prove that they are realities, followed by the acknowledgment that any act of theirs would be so contrary to universal experience as to be positively terrifying.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

a Ps. 115. 8.
ch. 44. 9.
1 Cor. 8. 4.

² Or,
worse than
nothing.

³ Or, worse
than of a
viper.

b Ezra 1. 2.

c ver. 2.

d ch. 43. 9.

e ver. 4.

f ch. 40. 9.

g ch. 63. 5.

⁴ Heb.
return.

h ver. 24.

24 Behold, ^a ye are ² of nothing, and your work ³ of nought: 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 ^b shall he call upon my name: ^c and he shall come upon princes as *upon* mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay.

26 ^d Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, *He is* righteous? yea, *there is* none that sheweth, yea, *there is* none that declareth, yea, *there is* none that heareth your words.

27 ^e The first ^f shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings.

28 ^g For I beheld, and *there was* no man; even among them, and *there was* no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could ⁴ answer a word.

29 ^h Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing: their molten images are wind and confusion.

24. Isaiah waits for an answer, but in vain: he dismisses them therefore with scorn, as things of nought, which no one would choose as objects of worship, were he not himself an abomination, i. e. a hateful creature.

25—xlii. 4. In the last section, vv. 21—24, we had the amplification of ver. 1; there now follows a similar amplification of ver. 2, but the unfortunate separation of the first four verses of ch. xlii. from the rest of the section, hides from the English reader a most instructive exemplification of the nature of prophecy. Isaiah begins with Cyrus, but as he proceeds the vista of prophecy opens onwards, till the servant of Jehovah is the Messiah, for Whose work that of Cyrus was but preparatory.

25. "The north . . . the rising of the sun." Persia is to the east, Media to the north of Babylon; in Cyrus both countries were united.

"Princes." Heb. "sagans," a Babylonian word, and so indicating that Babylon would be the object of attack.

26. "Who," &c. This uprising of the Medo-Persian power under Cyrus was the most remarkable event in the history of Asia. Yet no heathen god had foretold it, but Jehovah only.

27. "The first . . ." Rather, "I am the first to say unto Zion, "Behold, behold them," &c.

28. "There was no man." Man is used in Hebrew indefinitely for "any one." God gave a last look at the gods of the heathen, and looked in vain. They were all devoid of life and motion, and no one capable of counsel or thought, so as to give an answer to Jehovah's question. Hence the contemptuous dismissal of them in ver. 29.

ISAIAH, XLII.

CHAPTER XLII.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

1 *The office of Christ, graced with meekness and constancy. 5 God's promise unto him. 10 An exhortation to praise God for his gospel. 17 He reproacheth the people of incredulity.*

BEHOLD ^a my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul ^b delighteth; ^c I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

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 ² smoking flax shall he not ³ quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

4 He shall not fail nor be ⁴ discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: ^d and the isles shall wait for his law.

cir. 712.
^a ch. 43, 10.
& 49, 3, 6.
& 52, 13.
& 53, 11.
Matt. 12, 18, 19, 20.
Phil. 2, 7.
^b Matt. 3, 17.
& 17, 5.
Eph. 1, 6.
^c ch. 11, 2.
John 3, 34.
² Or, *dimly burning.*
³ Heb. *quench it.*
⁴ Heb. *broken.*
^d Gen. 49, 10.

CHAPTER XLII.

1. "**Behold my servant.**" No sooner is the controversy with idols concluded than the antitype of Cyrus appears, described in such large grand terms that the Jewish interpreters generally acknowledge that Messiah must be meant; and one even declares that a man who could explain the verse of any one besides must have been struck with blindness.

"**Elect.**" Heb. "chosen one," selected and set apart for some special office.

"**Judgment.**" The word in Hebrew has a far wider sense than with us. Here it signifies the Christian dispensation as being the full development of the Jewish Law, and the source of law and right henceforth for all mankind.

2. "**He shall not cry ...**" See St. Matt. xii. 19. The religion of Christ is to be propagated by moral means, by persuasion and gentleness, and not by noise or force or war.

3. "**Smoking flax,**" i. e. the dimly burning wick of a lamp. The preachers of Christianity go forth, first, as healers, to bind up the broken reed; and next, as those who will trim and brighten the dim lamp of human knowledge.

"**He shall bring forth judgment unto truth.**" A religion established by force cannot seek truth, but suppresses all enquiry and honest doubt. Christ's dispensation discards force, and depends solely upon the evidence it offers us. The version of the Septuagint given in St. Matt. xii. 18—20 gives a subsidiary meaning of the passage.

4. "**Fail ... be discouraged.**" The verbs are the same as those used in ver. 3. "He shall not burn dimly" (like the smoking wick), nor "be bruised" (like the reed). His light shall not be faint, but clear and brilliant; and his strength unconquerable, though joined with infinite tenderness. Hence the final conquest of the earth is sure.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

e ch. 44. 24.
Zech. 12. 1.
f Ps. 136. 6.
g Acts 17. 25.

h ch. 43. 1.

i ch. 49. 8.

k ch. 49. 6.
Luke 2. 32.
Acts 13. 47.

l ch. 35. 5.

m ch. 61. 1.
Luke 4. 18.
n 2 Tim. 2. 26.
Heb. 2. 14, 15.

o ch. 9. 2.

o ch. 43. 11.

p Ps. 33. 3.
& 40. 3.
& 98. 1.
q Ps. 107. 23.
r Heb.
the fulness
thereof.

5 ¶ Thus saith God the LORD, ^ehe that created the heavens, and stretched them out; ^fhe that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; ^ghe that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein :

6 ^hI the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, ⁱand give thee for a covenant of the people, for ^ka light of the Gentiles ;

7 ^lto open the blind eyes, to ^mbring out the prisoners from the prison, *and* them that sit in ⁿdarkness out of the prison house.

8 I *am* the LORD : that *is* my name : and my ^oglory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

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 ^pSing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise from the end of the earth, ^qye that go down to the sea, and ^rall 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.

5—9. In these verses God speaks to His chosen one, and gives Him His commission, gradually turning however in vv. 8, 9 to the heathen, and appealing to fulfilled prophecy in proof of His Deity.

6. "For a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles." The "people" are the Jews. God's covenant with them is fulfilled, and realised in Christ : but whereas the Gentiles had been previously left in darkness, they now equally with the Jews are to enjoy the light of revelation. See Simeon's paraphrase, St. Luke ii. 32.

9. "Former things," see ch. xli. 22. Jehovah appeals not merely to the fulfilment of former predictions, but to the fact that prophecy was an ever recurring phenomenon in the Jewish Church.

10—13. A hymn of praise arranged according to the rules of Hebrew poetry in equal parallel clauses. It is the Church's song of thanksgiving to God for having called the Messiah to His office.

11. "The villages that Kedar . . ." Kedar is put for Arabia generally, and the word rendered *villages* strictly means encampments such as are put up by wandering tribes. With these transitory dwellings Isaiah forcibly contrasts "the rock," i. e. Selah, or Petra, the rock-hewn city of Idumea, ch. xvi. 1. But though thus special places are mentioned, they represent the whole world rejoicing in Christ its Saviour.

ISAIAH, XLII.

12 Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

13 The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, ¹yea, roar; he shall ²prevail against his enemies.

¹ ch. 31. 4.
² Or, *behave himself mightily.*

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 ³devour at once.

³ Heb. *swallow, or, sup up.*

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.

16 And I will bring the blind by a way *that* they knew not; I will lead them in paths *that* they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things ⁴straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

⁴ Heb. *into straightness.*

17 They shall be ⁵turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, *Ye are our gods.*

⁵ Ps. 97. 7. ch. 1. 23. & 44. 11. & 45. 16.

18 Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see.

13. "Jealousy." Translated "zeal" in ch. ix. 7, and "envy" in ch. xxvi. 11. Jealousy is the more specific sense of the word, and it signifies that Jehovah watches over the honour of His people as sensitively as a husband does over that of his wife.

14—17. In answer to this hymn of praise Jehovah declares that His eagerness for Israel's redemption is as great as that of a travailing woman to be delivered.

14. "Long time." God's purposes unfold themselves slowly, so that to man, whose allotted time is so short, it often seems as if the Deity were resting in inactivity. Then, when the fulness of time is come, they hasten onward with impetuous urgency (2 St. Pet. iii. 8.).

"I will destroy and devour at once." This translation has considerable authority in its favour, but most modern scholars render the words, "I will breathe forth and pant together," i.e. leaving the metaphor of the travailing woman Isaiah reverts to that of the warrior gasping for breath in his eagerness for the battle.

15, 16. The varied metaphors in these verses imply that, first, Israel's redemption from Babylon, and then the redemption of the world, shall be after no ordinary manner, but by the special intervention of God.

17. The deliverance of Israel is also the overthrow of God's enemies. Note the shame of the Babylonians at the powerlessness of the idols which they had so lavishly worshipped.

18. "Hear, ye deaf." Turning now abruptly to Israel, God rebukes His people for the little use they had made of their privileges, comp.

ISAIAH, XLII.

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^t ch. 43. 8.
Ezek. 12. 2.
See John 9.
39, 41.

^u Rom. 2. 21.

² Or, him.

³ Or, in snar-
ing all the
young men
of them.

⁴ Heb. a
treading.

⁵ Heb. for the
after time?

19 ^tWho 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?

20 Seeing many things, ^ubut thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not.

21 The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make ²it honourable.

22 But this *is* a people robbed and spoiled; ³they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for ⁴a spoil, and none saith, Restore.

23 Who among you will give ear to this? *who* will hearken and hear ⁵for the time to come?

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

ch. vi. 9, 10. The opening rebuke extends to the end of this chapter, and the address itself to the end of ch. xlv.

19. "My servant," i. e. Israel, see ch. xli. 8. As the "messenger whom God sends" (the tense is present, "that I send," not sent). Israel was the bearer of God's revealed will to man (Rom. iii. 2.). The next clause is very difficult, but the word translated "perfect" rather means "one at peace with God," one bound to Him by treaty and covenant to bear testimony to the great doctrine of His unity. But though Israel was thus the representative of God to mankind, yet he was as blind and deaf as the heathen.

20. "Many things." Israel's past history was full of instruction: again and again God had taught him: but though he had learnt some things under this long discipline, yet he had never really roused himself to understand the true nature of his office.

21, 22. The sense of these two verses is obscured by their not being taken in close connection. They should be translated, "It pleased the Lord for his righteousness' sake to magnify the law, and make it 'honourable: but this is a people,' &c. God gave Israel a great and glorious Law, the Pentateuch. Had they used the Law rightly, they would have become a great and glorious people. Instead of this they are languishing in misery at Babylon. It follows therefore that they have not observed their Law, but as was laid to their charge in ver. 20, though God opened their ears yet they would not use them.

24. "Did not the Lord?" There must be some reason for this contrast between Israel's lot at Babylon, and his high vocation as the teacher of mankind. What can it be, but that virtually he has put from him his holy calling, and is therefore punished by God for deserting his post.

ISAIAH, XLIII.

of his anger, and the strength of battle: ^x and it hath set him on fire round about, ^y yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid *it* not to heart.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

^x 2 Kin. 25. 9.
^y Hos. 7. 9.

CHAPTER XLIII.

¹ *The Lord comforteth the church with his promises. 8 He appealeth to the people for witness of his omnipotency. 14 He foretelleth them the destruction of Babylon, 18 and his wonderful deliverance of his people. 22 He reproveth the people as inexcusable.*

BUT now thus saith the LORD ^a that created thee, O Jacob, ^b and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: ^c for I have redeemed thee, ^d I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine.

² ^e When thou passest through the waters, ^f *I will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou ^g walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

³ For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: ^h 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 ⁱ life.

⁵ ^j Fear not: for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;

CHAPTER XLIII.

Yet Israel is God's people, and the exile at Babylon is intended to recall them to a sense of their duty. This is now set before them, forcibly yet lovingly; for as soon as they repent they will return to their former relation to God, and become once again His messengers, ver. 19.

1. "Redeemed." As the firstborn, Exod. xiii. 13, and made thereby God's special property, to be to all mankind what the Levites were to the Jewish nation, Num. iii. 12, 45.

3. "Ethiopia," Heb. Cush, i. e. Nubia, "Seba," i. e. Meroë, a fruitful part of Nubia, almost surrounded by the Nile, and Egypt are to be given to Cyrus and the Persian empire in compensation for setting Israel free.

4. "People." Heb. peoples, i. e. these three nations. The word translated "since" is ambiguous, and may mean "from the time that" or "because." The latter sense seems preferable. God gives these nations as Israel's ransom because Israel was precious in His sight.

5—7. The deliverance from Babylon does not exhaust God's purposes of mercy. The dispersed Jews are to be gathered in from all lands as being a people called by God's name, and created for His glory.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

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 ^k called by my name: for ^l I have created him for my glory, ^m I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

8 ¶ ⁿ Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.

9 Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: ^o who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, *It is truth.*

10 ^p *Ye are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, ^q and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he: ^r before me there was ² no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

11 I, *even* I, ^s *am* the LORD; and beside me *there is* no saviour.

12 I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when *there was* no ^t strange god among you:

^u therefore ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I *am* God.

13 ^x 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 ^y let it?

^k ch. 63. 19.
Jan. 2. 7.
^l Ps. 100. 3.
ch. 23. 23.
John 3. 3. 5.
² Cor. 5. 17.
Eph. 2. 10.
^m ver. 1.
ⁿ ch. 6. 9.
& 42. 19.
Ezek. 12. 2.

^o ch. 41. 21,
22, 26.

^p ch. 44. 8.
^q ch. 42. 1.
& 55. 4.

^r ch. 41. 4.
& 44. 6.
² Or, *nothing formed of God.*

^s ch. 45. 21.
Hos. 13. 4.

^t Deut. 32. 16.
Ps. 81. 9.

^u ch. 44. 8.
ver. 10.

^x Ps. 90. 2.
John 8. 58.

^y Heb. *turn it back?*
Job 9. 12.
ch. 14. 27.

8. "Bring forth," i. e. into court to bear witness. The restoration of Israel to his office has for its purpose the renewal of God's controversy with the heathen world. But Israel is now changed. Once blind, his eyes are at last open to see the truths of the Gospel, and his ears are deaf no longer to the teachings of prophets and Apostles. For the fulfilment see Rom. xi. 7.

9. "People." Heb. peoples, heathen nations, of whom none can bring forward anything that so comes home to the heart and conscience of mankind as Jehovah's relation to His people.

10. "Ye are my witnesses and (ye are) my servant," &c. The Jews were of old witnesses for God and His representatives by means of their Scriptures and the providential circumstances of their history. And still they are God's witnesses by the unique position which they hold upon earth, as a standing proof of fulfilled prophecy and of special providence. But they are no longer God's servant. As we saw on ch. xli. 8. Christ is the true Israel, the true Prince with God, and as soon as He was manifested Israel's preparatory work ceased.

11—13. These verses enumerate the truths to which Israel was ap-

ISAIAH, XLIII.

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 ² nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry *is* in the ships.

Before
CHRIST
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² Heb. bars.

15 I *am* the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King.

16 Thus saith the LORD, which ^z maketh a way in the sea, and a ^a path in the mighty waters;

^z Ex. 14. 16, 22.
Ps. 77. 19.
ch. 51. 10.

17 which ^b 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.

^a Josh. 3. 13, 16.

^b Exod. 14. 4,—J, 25.

18 ^c Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.

^c Jer. 16. 14. & 23. 7.

19 Behold, I will do a ^d new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? ^e I will even make a way in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert.

^d 2 Cor. 5. 17.
Rev. 21. 5.

^e Ex. 17. 6.

Num. 20. 11.
Deut. 8. 15.
Ps. 78. 16.
ch. 35. 6.
& 41. 18.

pointed to bear witness. They are, first, that Jehovah alone can save. Secondly, His omniscience as demonstrated by His having not only saved the Jews (as Hezekiah for instance from Sennacherib), but by His having foretold that deliverance, at a time when no God but Himself was worshipped among them, and when therefore the prediction could come from no one but Himself. Lastly, His infinite power.

14, 15. All Jewish history demonstrates these three points; and this demonstration is, as Isaiah teaches, one great purpose of the historical books of the Old Testament. But now for fuller confirmation God will give special and extraordinary proof in the overthrow of Babylon.

14. "Whose cry is in the ships." The Chaldeans had a large trade not merely on the Euphrates, but with the Persian gulf.

16—20. But great as is this deliverance of Israel from exile, and comparable to their previous deliverance from Egypt, yet Jehovah has in store for them something so much more wonderful that all former acts of grace shall be no longer remembered. In ver. 16 there is a reference to Exod. xiv. 22. Josh. iii. 17.

17. The allusion is still to the Red Sea and the destruction of Pharaoh's army.

18. Jehovah's speech begins with this verse, and there should be therefore only a semicolon at the end of ver. 17.

19. "A new thing." Comp. Jer. xxxi. 22, and on the change of the wilderness into a paradise, ch. xxxv. Note that the creation of a way in the wilderness answers to the way made in the sea in ver. 16, and rivers flowing in the desert is the converse of the Jordan becoming dry land for Joshua to pass over. The purpose for which the way is made is that God's messengers may travel upon it, carrying the Gospel to all nations.

"It shall spring forth." This new thing, even Christ's Incarnation,

Before
CHRIST
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2 Or,
ostriches.
3 Heb.
daughters
of the owl.
f ch. 48. 21.
e Ps. 102. 18.
ver. 1. 7.
Luke 1. 74,
75.
Eph. 1. 5, 6.
h Mal. 1. 13.
i Amos 5. 25.
4 Heb. lambs,
or, kids.
5 Heb.
made me
drunk, or,
abundantly
moistened.
k ch. 1. 14.
Mal. 2. 17.
l ch. 44. 22.
& 48. 9.
Jer. 50. 20.
Acts 3. 13.
m Ezek. 36.
22, &c.
n ch. 1. 18.
Jer. 31. 34.

20 The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the ²³owls: because ^fI give waters in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.

21 ^gThis people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.

22 But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou ^hhast been weary of me, O Israel.

23 ⁱThou hast not brought me the ⁴small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. 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 ⁵filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast ^kwearied me with thine iniquities.

25 I, *even* I, *am* he that ¹blotteth out thy transgressions ^mfor mine own sake, ⁿand will not remember thy sins.

lies at present concealed in God's foreknowledge like a plant in the seed, but in due time it shall grow and develop itself, and become an accomplished fact.

20. "Dragons and owls." Really, "jackals and ostriches," as in ch. xxxiv. 13. These inhabitants of the desert represent unrenewed man. When the Spirit is poured out from on high upon the heathen world the nations will one and all give God honour.

21—28. Yet in spite of these mercies, past, present, and to come, Israel remains unthankful. In ver. 21 it is affirmed that God in calling the Jews had a special work for them to accomplish: in what follows it is shown that they have never heartily set themselves to fulfil their mission.

23. Isaiah enumerates here the principal sacrifices of the Mosaic ritual, first the *olah* or whole burnt-offering: next animal sacrifices in general; then the *minchah* or unbloody sacrifice: and finally frankincense. As all these had been regularly offered (with rare exceptions as under Abaz), we must conclude that what Isaiah means is that they had not been offered with such piety of heart as to be acceptable (ch. i. 13.).

24, 25. "Sweet cane." Calamus aromaticus, used in preparing the holy anointing oil, Exod. xxx. 23.

"Thou hast made me to serve . . ." Israel ought to have honoured God by ready and grateful service: instead of that God must serve them by bearing their many sins (Phil. ii. 7.). In ver. 25 Jehovah says that He does thus labour for them, blotting out their transgressions, but not for their sake; they did not deserve it; it was because of His own unmerited love.

ISAIAH, XLIV.

26 Put me in remembrance : let us plead together : declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

27 Thy first father hath sinned, and thy ² teachers have transgressed against me.

² Heb. *interpreters*,
Mal. 2. 7, 8.

28 Therefore ^o I have profaned the ³ princes of the sanctuary, ^p and have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.

^o ch. 47. 6.
Lam. 2. 2,
6, 7.

³ Or, *holy princes*.

^p Ps. 79. 4.

Jer. 24. 9.

Dan. 9. 11.

Zech. 8. 13.

CHAPTER XLIV.

¹ God comforteth the church with his promises. ⁷ The vanity of idols, ⁹ and jolly of idol makers. ²¹ He exhorteth to praise God for his redemption and omnipotency.

YET now hear, ^a O Jacob my servant ; and Israel, whom I have chosen :

cir. 712.

^a ver. 21.

ch. 41. 8.

& 43. 1.

Jer. 30. 10.

& 46. 27, 28.

^b ch. 43. 1, 7.

^c Deut. 32. 15.

² thus saith the LORD that made thee, ^b and formed thee from the womb, *which* will help thee ; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant ; and thou, ^c Jesurun, whom I have chosen.

³ For I will ^d pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground : I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring :

^d ch. 35. 7.

Joel 2. 28.

John 7. 38.

Acts 2. 18.

26. This verse is a challenge to Israel to disprove, if it can, the foregoing accusation. "Declare thou," i. e. state thy cause, for God is ready to listen.

27. "Thy first father." Probably Abraham, who twice sinned in denying Sarah to be his wife (Gen. xii. 18; xx. 9.). If even he was not perfect, how much less so his posterity. It may however be the king, as the chief father of the state.

"Teachers." Heb. interpreters, i. e. the priests and prophets, who under the Theocracy were especially the interpreters of the Divine will to the people.

28. "Therefore . . ." Because Israel is thus utterly corrupt it must be purified by captivity at Babylon, must see the "princes of the sanctuary," i. e. the High-priests "profaned," that is, treated as unconsecrated men (Jer. lii. 24—27.), must itself be trampled down as accursed, and be made a mockery and reviling. There is in this no opposition to ver. 25, for the exile was decreed in mercy for Israel's regeneration : and therefore in ch. xliv. 1—5 Isaiah reverts to ver. 25 again, and starting from it goes on to foretell a revival of religion following upon a large outpouring of the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER XLIV.

2. "Jesurun." See note on Deut. xxxii. 15.

3. "My spirit." We have here an authoritative exposition showing that, in this and all similar metaphors, by the outpouring of water upon the thirsty ground is meant the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

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 another 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, ^eand his redeemer the LORD of hosts; ^fI *am* the first, and I *am* the last; and beside me *there is* no God.

7 And ^gwho, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them.

8 Fear ye not, neither be afraid: ^hhave not I told thee from that time, and have declared *it*? ⁱye *are* even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, ^k*there is* no ²God; I know not *any*.

9 ¶ ¹They that make a graven image *are* all of them vanity; and their ³delectable things shall not

^e ver. 21.
ch. 43. 1, 14.
^f ch. 41. 4.
& 48. 12.
Rev. 1. 8, 17.
& 22. 13.
^g ch. 41. 4, 22.
& 45. 21.

^h ch. 41. 22.
ⁱ ch. 43. 10, 12.
^k Deut. 4. 35,
39. & 32. 39.
1 Sam. 2. 2.
² Sam. 22. 32.
ch. 45. 5.
² Heb. rock.
Deut. 32. 4.
¹ ch. 41. 24, 29.
³ Heb.
desirable.

4. "They shall spring up as." The "as" is wrongly inserted in the A.V., the Hebrew being "they—Jacob's offspring—shall spring up as willows among the grass by the watercourses."

5. The effect of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost (ver. 3.), described metaphorically in ver. 4, is here directly declared to be the dedication of themselves by large multitudes of men to God's work, and the addition of numerous proselytes to the Church.

6—20. With growing force Isaiah appeals once more to the argument drawn from the Divine foreknowledge; and then contrasts with the God, to Whom the future lies as open as the past, and Who can bestow the life-giving Spirit, the powerless idols of the heathen, whose fashioning he describes with inimitable irony.

6. "Beside me there is no God." Isaiah takes as his text the old truth of the unity of the Godhead (Deut. vi. 4.), which was the foundation of the whole Mosaic dispensation.

7. "Who as I," &c. Comp. ch. xli. 4, 22.

"The ancient people," i. e. the Jews. More than a thousand years had passed since the call of Abraham; but besides this the necessity of the existence of the Jewish nation was involved in the first promise made to mankind, Gen. iii. 15, and their origin therefore might be counted from the time of the Fall.

8. "Yea, there is no God." Heb. "no Rock." So in ch. xxvi. 4 the beautiful title of the Deity, "Rock of ages," is banished into the margin. Yet it is this title which gives their full force to passages like St. Matt. vii. 25, where the Greek is "founded upon the Rock."

9. "Vanity." Heb. *Tohu*. See on this word ch. xxiv. 10, and

profit; and they *are* their own witnesses; ^m they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

10 Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image ⁿ that is profitable for nothing?

^m Ps. 115. 4.
&c.
ⁿ Jer. 10. 5.
Hab. 2. 18.
^o 1's. 97. 7.
ch. 1. 29.
& 42. 17.
& 45. 16.

11 Behold, all his fellows shall be ^o 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.

12 ^p The smith ² with the tongs both 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.

^p ch. 40. 19.
& 41. 6.
Jer. 10. 3, &c.
² Or, with
an ax.

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 compass,

note the contrast between God's people resting securely on the solid Rock, and the heathen whose trust is in an empty and hollow unreality.

"Their delectable things," i. e. the idols they so love and take pleasure in.

"And they are their own witnesses; they . . ." Rather, "and their witnesses themselves neither see nor know that they may be ashamed." God's witnesses are Holy Scripture, and to the Jews their own history, see ch. xliii. 10: on their side idolaters can produce only images so destitute of sense and knowledge, that they cannot even be ashamed at their own powerlessness, ch. xli. 23.

10. "Who hath formed a god . . . ?" i. e. let us inquire into the origin of these idols, and see what they are. But what kind of god can that be who is of human shaping?

11. "His fellows," i. e. the idol's partners, all who have any share in it, either as its makers or worshippers.

"The workmen, they are of men," i. e. are human, and therefore the idol cannot be as good even as a man, because the maker is always better and more powerful than that which is made, comp. Rom. ix. 20. Omit in the rest of the verse the inserted "yet," the meaning being that if the idol and its makers were all gathered together, the absurdity of men making God would be so evident that they would be terrified at their impiety and blush for shame.

12. "The tongs." Really, "the axe," as in Jer. x. 3. The whole passage refers to a wooden idol, and Isaiah begins with the tools. God must be self-existent, but an idol owes to human skill the very tools by which it is produced. Translate, "The smith prepared the axe, and wrought it in the coals, and fashioned it," &c., the tenses being all perfects. In making it he had to keep up his strength with food, proving himself thereby to be a mortal, dependent upon God's works in nature for his own existence.

13. Armed with the cutting tools which the smith has formed, the carpenter now sets about his work, which is most graphically described

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and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house.

² Or, *take*
courage.

14 He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he ²strengtheneth 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, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth *himself*, and saith, Aha, I am warm, 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.

¹ ch. 45. 20.
² 2 Thes. 2. 11.
³ Heb.
daubed.

18 ¹They have not known nor understood: for ²he hath ³shut their eyes, that they cannot see; *and* their hearts, that they cannot understand.

⁴ Heb. *setteth
to his heart.*
⁵ ch. 46. 8.

19 And none ⁴⁵considereth 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

from the first rough sketch till the carving is complete, and the idol becomes handsome enough to “remain,” i. e. be permanently placed in the house.

14. “He strengtheneth,” i. e. watches over its growth till it is large enough. This and the planting of the ash have the same meaning as the smith forging the axe, namely, that from first to last the idol can do nothing, but is the result of human forethought and skill. So powerless is the idol that it is entirely the carpenter’s doing that it did not go into the oven as firewood.

18. “They have not known . . .” Men capable of such conduct are altogether without understanding. Instead of “he hath shut,” it is literally he hath daubed “their eyes,” implying that this infatuation is not because they cannot, but because they will not see; just as men whose eyes are smeared over need only to wash and their sight would be restored to them. Error is more frequently the result of moral than of intellectual causes.

an abomination? shall I fall down to ² the stock of a tree?

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

20 He feedeth on ashes: ^t a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, *Is there* not a lie in my right hand?

² Heb. *that which comes of a tree?*

21 Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for ^u thou *art* my servant: I have formed thee; thou *art* my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.

^t Hos. 4. 12.
^u Rom. 1. 21.
² Thes. 2. 11.

22 ^x I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for ^y I have redeemed thee.

^u ver. 1, 2.

^x ch. 43. 25.

23 ¶ ^z 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.

^y ch. 43. 1.
& 48. 20.

¹ Cor. 6. 20.
¹ Pet. 1. 18, 19.

^z Ps. 69. 34.
& 96. 11, 12.
ch. 42. 10.
& 49. 13.
Jer. 51. 48.
Rev. 18. 20.

24 Thus saith the LORD, ^a thy redeemer, and ^b he that formed thee from the womb, I *am* the LORD that maketh all *things*; ^c that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;

^a ch. 43. 14.
ver. 6.

^b ch. 43. 1.

^c Job 9. 8.
Ps. 104. 2.
ch. 40. 22.
& 42. 5. & 45. 12. & 51. 13.

25 that ^d frustrateth the tokens ^e of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise *men* backward, ^f and maketh their knowledge foolish;

^d ch. 47. 13.

^e Jer. 50. 36.

^f 1 Cor. 1. 20.

20. "He feedeth on ashes." Instead of reflecting with himself, and considering in his heart (ver. 19.), the idolater yields up his fancy to vain delusions equally unreal and unsatisfying for the wants of the soul as ashes would be as food for the body.

21—28. From this demonstration of the folly of idolatry Isaiah returns to the promise of a deliverer from their present distress, so often repeated in these chapters (see especially chs. xli. 2, 25; xlii. 6; xliii. 14.), and magnified as the final proof to the exiles at Babylon of Jehovah's Godhead.

22. "As a cloud," i. e. as easily and completely as a cloud is swept away by the wind, so thoroughly will I remove thy sins. Add also that these sins shut out God's favour as a cloud does the bright sunshine.

23. On nature's joy in man's redemption, see Rom. viii. 19—22.

25. "Tokens." Heb. signs, answering to the modern word "miracles," see chs. vii. 11; viii. 18. The miracles promised by heathen priests and prophets did not come true.

"Liars." Rather, "babblers," the reference being to the folly and silliness of these heathen conjurers. So the word translated "mad" means "fools;" God convicts them of folly.

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^e Zech. 1. 6.

² Heb. *wastes*.

^b See Jer.
50. 38. &
51. 32, 36.

ⁱ 2 Chron 36.
22, 23.
Ezra 1. 1,
&c.
ch. 45. 13.

26 ^s 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 ² decayed places thereof:

27 ^h that saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers:

28 that saith of Cyrus, *He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, ⁱThou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

CHAPTER XLV.

¹ God calleth Cyrus for his church's sake. ⁵ By his omnipotency he challengeth obedience. ²⁰ He convinceth the idols of vanity by his saving power.

cir. 712.

^a ch. 41. 13.

² Or,
strengthened.

^b ch. 41. 2.
Dan. 5. 30.

THUS saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose ^a right hand I ² have holden, ^b to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

26. "His servant." Here probably Isaiah, while Jehovah's "messengers" are the prophets generally. Their predictions are called "counsel" because God gave them as a guide to human conduct.

27. With this verse compare Jer. 1. 38. When Cyrus captured Babylon he effected his entrance by marching down the dry bed of the Euphrates. Probably there is also a reference to ch. xliii. 16. Israel's deliverance from Babylon was to be as marvellous as that from Egypt.

28. "That saith of Cyrus." So Josiah was foretold by name (1 Kings xiii. 2.). Cyrus is said to signify in ancient Persian "the Sun." This would give new force to ch. xli. 2.

"Shepherd" in Hebrew refers to the kingly, and not as with us to the pastoral, office. Josephus in his *Antiquities* xi. 1. mentions that Cyrus' edict for the restoration of Jerusalem (Ezra i. 2—4.) was the result of his having been shown this prophecy.

CHAPTER XLV.

1—7. The same subject is still continued, and Cyrus receives his commission from Jehovah to deliver Israel, and proclaim the unity of God (vv. 5—7.).

1. "His anointed." Calvin remarks that Cyrus discharged for a time the office of Redeemer, both avenging the Church of God, and delivering it from the Assyrians. His character is one of the most noble among ancient heroes.

By "loosing," i. e. ungirding the loins of kings, is meant weakening and enfeebling them (see Dan. v. 6.).

"The two leaved gates" were those closing the passage from the

ISAIAH, XLV.

2 I will go before thee, ^c and make the crooked places straight: ^d 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, ^e that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which ^f call *thee* by thy name, *am* the God of Israel.

4 For ^g Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast ^h not known me.

5 I ⁱ *am* the LORD, and ^k *there is* none else, *there is* no God beside me: ^l I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

6 ^m that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none beside me. I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else.

7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and ⁿ create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*.

8 ^o Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

^c ch. 40. 4.

^d Ps. 107. 16.

^e ch. 41. 23.

^f Ex. 33. 12.
17. ch. 43. 1.
& 49. 1.

^g ch. 44. 1.

^h 1 Thes. 4. 5.

ⁱ Deut. 4. 35,
39. & 32. 39.
ch. 44. 8.
& 46. 9.

^k ver. 14, 18,
21, 22.

^l Ps. 18. 32,
39.

^m Ps. 102. 15.
ch. 37. 29.
Mal. 1. 11.

ⁿ Amos 3. 6.

^o Ps. 72. 3.
& 55. 11.

bed of the river into the city. These and the gates into the palace had been left carelessly open on the night of revelry in which Babylon was taken.

2. "I will break . . ." Probably quoted in Ps. cvii. 16.

3. "Treasures." Besides the vast wealth of Babylon, it has been calculated that the riches captured by Cyrus from Croesus amounted to 126 millions sterling.

4. "I have surnamed thee." Given thee honourable titles, such as "my shepherd," "my anointed one." It may even refer to the name Cyrus, which was strictly a title of honour, but has completely taken the place of the original name, which we are told was Agradates.

5. "Girded thee." Given thee thy strength; the opposite of "loose" in ver. 1.

7. "Light . . . darkness." The Persians were not idolaters, but believed in two opposing powers, one good and one evil. Isaiah declares that light and darkness, good and evil, alike come from God, and are under His control. The result of Cyrus' conquests was the propagation of purer views of God's unity and omnipresence; and subsequently the Christian Church for many centuries flourished greatly in Persia.

8. After this proclamation of God's universal sovereignty, heaven and earth are to unite in carrying out the Divine purpose. The heavens are to pour down such spiritual influences as will produce righteousness, and the earth is to open, i. e. yield itself to these influences.

"Let them," i. e. let heaven and earth together bring forth salvation.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

p ch. 64. 8.

q ch. 29. 16.
Jer. 18. 6.
Rom. 9. 20.

r Jer. 31. 9.

s Isai. 21. 23.

t ch. 42. 5.

Jer. 27. 5.

u Gen. 1. 26,
27.

x Gen. 2. 1.

y ch. 41. 2.

z Or, *make*

straight.

2 Chron. 36.

22, 23.

Ezra 1. 1, &c.

ch. 44. 28.

a ch. 52. 3.

See Rom.

3. 24.

b Ps. 68. 31.

& 72. 10, 11.

ch. 49. 23.

& 60. 9, 10,

14, 16.

Zech. 8. 22,

23.

righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it.

9 Woe unto him that striveth with ^p his Maker! *Let* the potsherd *strive* with the potsherds of the earth. ^q Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?

10 Woe unto him that saith unto *his* father, What begetteth thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?

11 Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning ^r my sons, and concerning ^s the work of my hands command ye me.

12 ^t I have made the earth, and ^u created man upon it: I, *even* my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and ^x all their host have I commanded.

13 ^y I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will ^z direct all his ways: he shall ^a build my city, and he shall let go my captives, ^b not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts.

14 Thus saith the LORD, ^b The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans,

The next clause should be translated "and let it—the earth—cause "righteousness to spring up together;" i. e. the earth, under the influence of the righteousness poured down upon it from above, is also itself to produce righteousness.

9—13. The Jews apparently were often discontented, because with very high spiritual privileges they suffered many earthly trials. In these five verses Isaiah rebukes their discontent.

10. For man to complain of what God orders for him by His providence is not merely wicked, but as absurd as for an unborn babe to find fault with its parents. The last clause should be translated "Why travailest "thou?"

11—13. Verse 11 is ironical. Is the potsherd really to question God and give Him orders? The indignant response is given in ver. 12. God created not man only, but heaven. How can it be right for one of His creatures to question the Maker of the universe? Still God is so loving that in ver. 13, He gives His repining people a comforting assurance. Israel shall not suffer in Babylon for ever; a special interposition of God in his behalf shall raise up Cyrus to deliver him.

14. Yet Cyrus delivers Israel only for the Church's sake, because the salvation of mankind depended upon Israel's return from exile. And now Isaiah sees all mankind being gathered into it.

"Egypt," &c. Comp. ch. xliii. 3.

ISAIAH, XLV.

men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; ^c in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, *saying*, ^d Surely God *is* in thee; and ^e *there is* none else, *there is* no God.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

c Ps. 143. 8.

d 1 Cor. 14. 25.
e ver. 5.

15 Verily thou *art* a God ^f that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.

f Ps. 44. 24.
ch. 8. 17.
& 57. 17.

16 They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together *that are* ^g makers of idols.

g ch. 44. 11.

17 ^h *But* Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

h ch. 26. 4.
ver. 25.
Rom. 11. 26.

18 For thus saith the LORD ⁱ that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: ^k *I am* the LORD; and *there is* none else.

i ch. 42. 5.

k ver. 5.

19 I have not spoken in ^l secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: ^m I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

l Dent. 30. 11.
ch. 48. 16.

m Ps. 19. 8.
& 119. 137,
138.

“Men of stature,” i. e. tall. Herodotus (iii. 14.) says that the Ethiopians were singularly tall and handsome.

Their coming “in chains” denotes their complete subjugation to the Gospel, the triumphs of which are described by metaphors taken from earthly conquest.

15—17. An exclamation of the prophet in reverent wonder at the mysteriousness of the Almighty’s ways.

15. “Thou . . . hidest thyself,” i. e. thy working is deep and unsearchable. Who would have thought that in the exile to Babylon two so great things lay concealed as, first, the overthrow of idolatry, ver. 16; and, secondly, Israel’s ultimate triumph, ver. 17.

18—xlvi. 1, 2. Isaiah now contrasts these two things, dwelling, first upon the truth that salvation is to be found only in Jehovah; and then he illustrates the overthrow of idolatry by the fall of the idols of Babylon, which, upon the victory of Cyrus, became a mere mass of metal, forming a weary load to the poor beasts which had to carry them into captivity.

18. “He created it not in vain.” Heb. “for a tohu,” i. e. a waste. It is this which justifies the whole scheme of salvation. God formed the earth to be inhabited by men, and His justice therefore as well as His goodness makes it necessary that He should provide for the happiness and real welfare of His creatures.

19. “In secret.” God’s chief means for thus providing for man’s welfare is Holy Scripture, which is no secret or private declaration of His will, but a public proclamation of His righteous purposes, intended

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

n ch. 44. 17,
18, 19, &
46. 7. & 48. 7.
Rom. 1. 22,
23.

o ch. 41. 22.
& 43. 9. &
44. 7. & 46.
10. & 48. 14.

p ver. 5, 14, 18,
ch. 44. 8,
& 46. 9, &
48. 3, &c.

q Ps. 22. 27,
& 65. 5.

r Gen. 22. 16,
Heb. 6. 13.

s Rom. 14. 11,
Phil. 2. 10.

t Gen. 31. 53,
Deut. 6. 13,
Ps. 63. 11,
ch. 65. 16.

2 Or, *Surely
he shall say
of me. In
the LORD is
all righte-
ousness and
strength.*

u Jer. 23. 5,
1 Cor. 1. 30.

3 Heb. *right-
eousnesses.*

x ch. 41. 11,
y ver. 17.

z 1 Cor. 1. 31.

cir. 712.
a ch. 21. 9.
Jer. 50. 2.
& 51. 44.

20 ¶ Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: "they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god *that* cannot save.

21 Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: "who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? " and *there is* no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me.

22 ¶ Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else.

23 ¶ I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every "knee shall bow, "every tongue shall swear.

24 ¶ Surely, shall *one* say, in the LORD have I "righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and "all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.

25 ¶ In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and "shall glory.

CHAPTER XLVI.

1 *The idols of Babylon could not save themselves.* 3 *God saveth his people to the end.* 5 *Idols are not comparable to God for power,* 12 *or present salvation.*

BEL "boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your

for all mankind, and speaking so plainly that none need seek Jehovah in vain.

20. The heathen are summoned to hear God's voice as a necessary consequence of this public nature of inspiration. By the "escaped of "the nations," are meant those who by coming to Jehovah escaped from the errors of heathenism.

21. Comp. chs. xli. 22; xliii. 9; xliv. 7. "From that time." Rather, "from of old."

22. "All the ends of the earth," i. e. all mankind, from one end of the earth to the other.

23—25. Solemnly, in the presence of all mankind, the Almighty swears that the time shall come when all races and nations shall serve and worship Him only. In Phil. ii. 10, St. Paul applies the words of this oath to Christ. In the next two verses this conversion of the whole world to Jehovah is emphatically reiterated.

CHAPTER XLVI.

1. "Bel . . . Nebo." The two chief Babylonian gods, answering to Jupiter and Mercury.

carriages *were* heavy loaden ; ^b *they are* a burden to the weary *beast*.

2 They stoop, they bow down together ; they could not deliver the burden, ^c but ² themselves are gone into captivity.

3 ¶ Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, ^d which are borne *by me* from the belly, which are carried from the womb :

4 and *even* to *your* old age ^e I *am* he ; and *even* to hoar hairs ^f will I carry *you* : I have made, and I will bear ; even I will carry, and will deliver *you*.

5 ^g To whom will ye liken me, and make *me* equal, and compare me, that we may be like ?

6 ^h They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, *and* hire a goldsmith ; and he maketh it a god : they fall down, yea, they worship.

7 ⁱ 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, ^k *one* shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble.

8 Remember this, and shew yourselves men : ^l bring *it* again to mind, O ye transgressors.

9 ^m Remember the former things of old : for I *am* God, and ⁿ *there is* none else ; I *am* God, and *there is* none like me,

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

^b Jer. 10. 5.
^c Jer. 48. 7.
² Heb.
their soul.

^d Ex. 19. 4.
Deut. 1. 31.
& 32. 11.
Ps. 71. 6.
ch. 63. 9.

^e Ps. 102. 27.
Mal. 3. 6.
^f Ps. 48. 14.
& 71. 18.

^g ch. 40. 18,
25.

^h ch. 40. 19.
& 41. 6. &
44. 12, 19.
Jer. 10. 3.

ⁱ Jer. 10. 5.

^k ch. 45. 20.

^l ch. 44. 13.
& 47. 7.

^m Deut. 32. 7.
ⁿ ch. 45. 5, 21.

“Carriages,” as in ch. x. 28, mean, in old English, the thing carried. Translate “your packages,” made of the metal of these idols, “are heavy loads, a burden,” &c.

2. “Could not deliver the burden.” So far from saving Babylon, Bel and Nebo could not rescue themselves, but are made into burdens to be carried away for sale, as the ancient Persians hated idolatry.

“Themselves.” Heb., as in marg., “their soul,” the god being ironically called the soul of the image.

3, 4. With these idol-gods packed into burdens to be carried by asses and camels Isaiah contrasts Jehovah, Who from infancy to old age carries His people with the gentlest care.

5—7. At Babylon these idols had been made of the most costly materials, but in vain. They were just as powerless as the poor Jew’s block of wood (ch. xlv. 12—17.).

8—11. Again Isaiah repeats the argument that omniscience as well as omnipotence is the attribute of Deity, and gives the call of Cyrus as proof of Jehovah’s omniscience. If, as some say, these twenty-seven

ISAIAH, XLVII.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

o ch. 45. 21.
p Ps. 33. 11.
Prov. 19. 21.
& 21. 30.
Acts 5. 39.
Heb. 6. 17.
q ch. 41. 2, 25.
r Heb. *the man of my counsel.*
s ch. 44. 28.
& 45. 13.
t Num. 23. 19.
u Ps. 76. 5.
v Rom. 10. 3.
x ch. 51. 5.
Rom. 1. 17.
& 3. 21.
y Hab. 2. 3.
z ch. 62. 11.

10 ° declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, ^p My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure :

11 calling a ravenous bird ^q from the east, ² the man ^r that executeth my counsel from a far country : yea, ^s 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 ^t stouthearted, ^u that are far from righteousness :

13 ^x I bring near my righteousness ; it shall not be far off, and my salvation ^y shall not tarry : and I will place ^z salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.

CHAPTER XLVII.

1 God's judgment upon Babylon and Chaldea, 6 for their unmercifulness, 7 pride, 10 and overboldness, 11 shall be irresistible.

cir. 712.
a Jer. 48. 18.
b ch. 3. 26.

COME ^a down, and ^b sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground : *there is* no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans : for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.

chapters were written at Babylon when Cyrus was well known as the most dangerous enemy of the Chaldees, these repeated appeals would have been so transparently dishonest as to have covered the writer with ridicule.

11. "A ravenous bird." An eagle or vulture. Cyrus took for his standard a golden eagle standing with outstretched wings on the top of a spear.

XLVI. 12.—XLVII. 3.

We saw (ch. xlv. 16, 17.) that in the exile coupled with the call of Cyrus two things were involved, the salvation of Israel and the fall of idolatry. Both these were stages only, preparing the way for the salvation of mankind by the manifestation of Jehovah as the righteousness of His people (ch. liii. 11.).

CHAPTER XLVII.

1, 2. "Daughter of Babylon," i. e. inhabitants of Babylon, personified as a noble damsel, who, torn from the seclusion in which Oriental virgins were carefully guarded, must sit on the ground like a slave girl, and work at the mill.

A "throne," or seat, was a luxury allowed only to women of rank, the general manner of people in the East being to squat on the ground. While noble maidens were closely veiled and lived in luxury, the poorer women were forced to work hard, and passed their lives in such degradation as to lose all sense of shame.

ISAIAH, XLVII.

2 ° Take the millstones, and grind meal : uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.

3 ^d 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* ^f our redeemer, the LORD of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel.

5 Sit thou ^g silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans : ^h for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms.

6 ⁱ I was wroth with my people, ^k I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand : thou didst shew them no mercy ; ^l upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.

7 And thou saidst, I shall be ^m a lady for ever : so that thou didst not ⁿ lay these *things* to thy heart, ° 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 thine heart, ^p I am, and none else beside me ; ° I shall not sit *as* a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children :

9 but ^r these two *things* shall come to thee ^s in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood : they shall come upon thee in their perfection

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

^c Ex. 11. 5.
^d Judg. 16. 21.
^e Matt. 24. 41.

^d ch. 3. 17.
& 29. 4.
^e Jer. 13. 22,
26.

^f Nah. 3. 5.
^g Rom. 12. 19.

^f ch. 43. 3, 14.
^g Jer. 50. 34.
^h 1 Sam. 2. 9.

^h ver. 7.
ⁱ ch. 13. 19.
^j Dan. 2. 37.

ⁱ See 2 Sam.
24. 14.

^k Chr. 28. 9.
^l Zech. 1. 15.
^m ch. 43. 28.

^l Deut. 28. 50.
ⁿ ver. 5.
^o Rev. 18. 7.

ⁿ ch. 43. 8.
^o Deut. 32. 29.

^p ver. 10.
^q Zeph. 2. 15.

^q Rev. 18. 7.
^r ch. 51. 19.
^s 1 Thes. 5. 3.

2. "Pass over the rivers" may mean "ford rivers on thy way to exile."

3. "I will not meet thee as a man," i. e. kindly, humanely. But omitting the words inserted in italics, it may mean "I shall not meet a man," i. e. there will be no resistance.

4—7. Israel has a Redeemer, and therefore is delivered from captivity. Even that captivity was but a chastisement for its sins, and Babylon, God's instrument for punishment, used its day of power cruelly and mercilessly. Therefore God now casts it aside, and as it has no redeemer, it falls for ever.

6. "I have polluted," i. e. profaned (see ch. xliii. 28.). Judea was a consecrated land, and could be overcome only by Jehovah's abandoning it to its fate, and leaving it to be treated as ordinary common ground.

"The ancient." On the antiquity of Israel see ch. xlv. 7.

8—15. In punishment of her cruelty God condemns Babylon to perpetual servitude, and to loss of population, nor should the boasted science of the Chaldeans be able to avert these evils.

8. "Carelessly," i. e. in fancied security, without anxiety, see ch. xxxii. 9.

9. "In their perfection," i. e. completely. Babylon, which lately sat

ISAIAH, XLVII.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

^t for the multitude of thy sorceries, *and* for the great abundance of thine enchantments.

¹ Nah. 3. 4.

^u Ps. 52. 7.

^x ch. 29. 15.

Ezek. 8. 12.

& 9. 9.

² Or, *caused thee to turn away.*

³ ver. 8.

³ Heb, *the morning thereof.*

⁴ Heb.

expiate.

² 1 Thes. 5. 3.

10 For thou ^u hast trusted in thy wickedness: ^x thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath ² perverted thee; ^y and thou hast said in thine heart, I *am*, and none else beside me.

11 Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know ³ from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to ⁴ put it off: and ^z desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, *which* thou shalt not know.

12 Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.

^a ch. 57. 10.

^b ch. 44. 25.

Dan. 2. 2.

⁵ Heb, *viewers of the heavens.*

⁶ Heb, *that give knowledge concerning the months.*

^c Nah. 1. 10.

Mal. 4. 1.

13 ^a Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now ^b the ⁵ astrologers, the stargazers, ⁶ the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from *these things* that shall come upon thee.

14 Behold, they shall be ^c as stubble; the fire

as the queen-mother of kingdoms, sees herself suddenly stripped of king and ruling caste, and of her numerous population. From that day to this it has never been governed by a native dynasty, and is now uninhabited.

“For the multitude.” Lit. “in,” i. e. amidst, surprising thee at the very time when thou fanciedst that by thy boasted skill in astrology and divination thou couldst foresee everything. These occult arts are the “wickedness, wisdom, and knowledge” condemned in ver. 10.

11. “Therefore,” i. e. as if for the very purpose of showing that these boasted arts are mere folly, Babylon’s downfall is to happen in a manner most sudden and unexpected.

“From whence it riseth.” Lit. its morning, i. e. instead of its downfall coming gradually like the dawning day, Babylon should find itself without any warning in the full noon-tide blaze of trouble.

12. “From thy youth.” Chaldea had early been distinguished for its successful study of astronomy; but it soon degraded this noble science into astrology, and used it only for purposes of fortune-telling, till Chaldee and conjuror became synonymous terms.

13. The “astrologers” mapped out the sky into regions, and professed to tell a man’s whole fortunes by the positions of the heavenly bodies at the hour of his birth.

The “stargazers” predicted success or failure by the aspects of the planets: and the “monthly prognosticators” by the look of the new moon.

ISAIAH, XLVIII.

shall burn them; they shall not deliver ² themselves from the power of the flame: *there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it.*

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

15 Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, *even* ^dthy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee.

² Heb. *their souls.*
d Rev. 13. 11.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

¹ God, to convince the people of their foreknown obstinacy, revealed his prophecies. ⁹ He saveth them for his own sake. ¹² He exhorteth them to obedience, because of his power and providence. ¹⁶ He lamenteth their backwardness. ²⁰ He powerfully delivereth his out of Babylon.

HEAR ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and ^aare come forth out of the waters of Judah, ^bwhich swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, ^cbut not in truth, nor in righteousness.

^a Ps. 68. 26.

^b Dent. 6. 13.
ch. 65. 16.
Zeph. 1. 5.

^c Jer. 4. 2.
& 5. 2.

^d ch. 52. 1.

² For they call themselves ^dof the holy city, and ^estay themselves upon the God of Israel; The LORD of hosts *is* his name.

^e Mic. 3. 11.
Rom. 2. 17.

³ ^fI have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did *them* suddenly, ^gand they came to pass.

^f ch. 41. 22. &
42. 9. & 43. 9.
& 44. 7. 8.
& 45. 21. &
46. 9. 10.
^g Josh. 21. 45.

14. "There shall not be a coal." Rather, "It shall be no coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before;" i. e. it shall be no fire for ordinary or cheerful purposes, but an awful and consuming calamity.

15. Finally, Babylon is utterly forsaken. Diviners and traders both depart from her, and wander away to places where they can practise their arts more successfully than in the city, which neither of them had been able to save.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

The last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah are divided into three sections, marked by the emphatic assertion at the end of each of the first two (chs. xlviii. 22; lvii. 21.), that "there is no peace unto the wicked." In this, the last chapter of the first section, Isaiah repeats his rebuke of Israel for living in a manner so unworthy of its high privileges, but ends by urging the exiles to trust in Jehovah, and to prepare for the coming of the Messiah.

1, 2. "The waters of Judah." Comp. "the fountain of Israel," Ps. lxxviii. 26.

To "swear by the name of the Lord" (i. e. of Jehovah), means to profess allegiance to him. Ver. 2 is the continuation of the vain boast of the Jews. The final clause of ver. 1 asserts that these professions of trust in God were insincere.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

² Heb. *hard*.
^h Ex. 32. 9.
Deut. 31. 27.
ⁱ ver. 3.

4 Because I knew that thou *art* ² obstinate, and
^h thy neck *is* an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

5 ⁱ I have even from the beginning declared *it* to
thee; before it came to pass I shewed *it* thee: lest
thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and
my graven image, and my molten image, hath com-
manded them.

6 Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye
declare *it*? I have shewed thee new things from
this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not
know them.

7 They are created now, and not from the begin-
ning; 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 treacherously,
and wast called ^k a transgressor from the womb.

^k Ps. 58. 3.
^l Ps. 71. 9.
& 106. 8.
ch. 43. 25.
ver. 11.
Ezek. 20. 9,
14, 22, 44.
^m Ps. 75. 38.

9 ^l For my name's sake ^m will I defer mine anger,
and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut
thee not off.

3—5. Again the proof of Jehovah's omnipotence and omniscience drawn from the fulfilment of prophecy (comp. chs. xlv. 21; xlvi. 10.). As God foreknew that the Jews would be a people of a very obstinate disposition, He gave them this kind of proof as being especially convincing to men who would yield to nothing less than the highest and most satisfactory kind of evidence.

6. "Thou hast heard, see all this," i. e. look at it, examine whether this fulfilment is what was foretold.

"And will not ye declare?" (omit the inserted "it,") i. e. will not ye and your idols now announce some future event, that we too may "hear and see" what the result is. But Jehovah does not rest content with former prophecies. He declares also "new things, and hidden things," such as the call of Cyrus, the fall of Babylon, the destruction of its native dynasty, &c., that the exiles may have the last lingering doubt removed.

7. "They are created now," i. e. are absolutely new. But if it was the case that in the deliverance of the Jews from Babylon, much that God wrought was unlike to and higher than all He had ever wrought before, how much more true is it of the new order of things under the Gospel! (Comp. chs. xlii. 9; lxx. 17. Rev. xxi. 1.)

8, 9. But this new creation was not for Israel's sake, which had always been a rebellious people, but for God's glory. All the mercy and goodness shewed to the Jews was because the existence of their Church was a necessary stage in the preparation for the Church of Christ, in which God's attributes are at length adequately manifested.

10 Behold, ⁿ I have refined thee, but not ² with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

11 ^o For mine own sake, *even* for mine own sake, will I do *it*: for ^p how should *my name* be polluted? and ^q I will not give my glory unto another.

12 ¶ Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; ^r I *am* he; I *am* the ^s first, I also *am* the last.

13 ^t Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and ³ my right hand hath spanned the heavens: *when* ^u I call unto them, they stand up together.

14 ^x All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these *things*? ^y The LORD hath loved him: ^z he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm *shall be on* the Chaldeans.

15 I, *even* I, have spoken; yea, ^a I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.

16 Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; ^b I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there *am* I: and now ^c the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

10. "Not with silver." Rather, "not as silver." Silver is refined for its own sake, because of its intrinsic value. The Jews were refined in order that they might become fit to be the Apostles of our Lord and the preachers of the Gospel. But in this purifying furnace they shewed such high qualities that God confirmed His choice of them.

11. "Polluted," i. e. profaned (see ch. xlvii. 6.). Had God rejected the Jews, and so indefinitely delayed the coming of the Messiah, His Name, instead of being hallowed under the Gospel, would have been given up to profanation, and "His honour," i. e. that due to Him, would have been given to the idols, because apparently they would have triumphed.

12—16. A proof of Jehovah's Divinity inferred from creation, from prophecy, and from the call of Cyrus.

13. "They stand up together," like so many slaves, springing up at once to obey the master's call.

14. "All ye," &c. Again a summons to the whole world to produce any prophecy so plain and express as that of the call of Cyrus.

"The Lord loved him." Cyrus is the object of the Divine love, yet evidently the prophecy looks onward to Him of Whom Cyrus was a type (see ch. xlii. 1. St. John xvii. 24.).

16. "The Lord God, and His Spirit hath sent me." The speaker in ver. 15 was plainly Jehovah; in this verse also He claims pre-existence, saying "from the time that it was," or rather "came into being,

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ⁿ Ps. 66. 10.

² Or,

for silver.

See Ezek. 22.

20, 21, 22.

^o ver. 9.

^p See Dent.

32. 26, 27.

Ezek. 20. 9.

^q ch. 42. 8.

^r Dent. 32. 30.

^s ch. 41. 4.

& 44. 6.

Rev. 1. 17.

& 22. 13.

^t Ps. 102. 25.

³ Or,

the palm of

my right

hand hath

spread out.

^u ch. 40. 26.

^x ch. 41. 22.

& 43. 9.

& 44. 7. &

45. 20, 21.

^y ch. 45. 1.

^z ch. 44. 28.

^a ch. 45. 1,

2, &c.

^b ch. 45. 19.

^c ch. 61. 1.

Zech. 2. 8,

9, 11.

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17 Thus saith ^d the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I *am* the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, ^e which leadeth thee by the way *that* thou shouldest go.

^d ch. 43. 14.
& 44. 6, 24.
ver. 20.

^e Ps. 32. 8.
^f Deut. 32. 29.
Ps. 81. 13.
^g Ps. 119. 165.

18 ^f O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! ^g then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:

^h Gen. 22. 17.
Hos. 1. 10.

19 ^h 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.

ⁱ ch. 52. 11.
Jer. 50. 8.
& 51. 6, 45.
Zech. 2. 6, 7.
Rev. 18. 4.

20 ⁱ 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; say ye, The LORD hath ^k redeemed his servant Jacob.

^k Ex. 19. 4,
5, 6.
ch. 44. 22, 23.

^l See chap.
41. 17, 18.

^m Ex. 17. 6.
Num. 20. 11.
Ps. 105. 41.

21 And they ^l thirsted not *when* he led them through the deserts: he ^m caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.

ⁿ ch. 57. 21.

22 ⁿ *There is no peace*, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

“here am I.” For even if we interpret these words, not of the coming of creation into being (Prov. viii. 23.), but merely of the series of events connected with the call of Cyrus, still such a claim could be made only by Jehovah. Yet in this last clause we find it said that the Lord Jehovah and His Spirit sent this speaker, Who is Himself Jehovah. It follows therefore that the Divine Word is at once the Revealer and the Revealed; the Sender and the Sent. So our Lord claims that His working is inseparable from that of God the Father (St. John v. 17—19.), and yet that His coming was not of Himself, but that He was sent (ib. vii. 28.).

17—19. An earnest appeal to Israel to listen to his Redeemer, of Whose Divinity formal proof has just been given.

17. “To profit.” Idol-worship is unprofitable (chs. xli. 23; xliv. 10. Jer. x. 5.), but true religion is profitable for all things (1 Tim. iv. 8.).

20—22. Finally Israel is encouraged to look forward to deliverance from Babylon, but warned that even then the wicked must expect no peace. Ver. 21, by its direct reference to the miraculous supply of water granted to the Israelites at their exodus from Egypt, gives the assurance that an equally watchful providence shall take care of them at their exodus from Babylon.

CHAPTERS XLIX—LVII.

The controversy with idolatry is at an end. The appeal to prophecy and to the call of Cyrus is made no more. Throughout the whole of the second section Isaiah looks forward to the times of Messiah’s appearing and the founding of the Christian Church.

ISAIAH, XLIX.

CHAPTER XLIX.

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1 *Christ, being sent to the Jews, complaineth of them.* 5 *He is sent to the Gentiles with gracious promises.* 13 *God's love is perpetual to his church.* 18 *The ample restoration of the church.* 24 *The powerful deliverance out of captivity.*

LISTEN, ^aO isles, unto me; and hearken, ye ^a people, from far; ^bThe 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 ^cmy mouth like a sharp sword; ^din the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me ^ea polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;

3 and said unto me, ^fThou *art* my servant, O Israel, ^gin whom I will be glorified.

4 ^hThen I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: *yet* surely my judgment *is* with the LORD, and ²my work with my God.

5 And now, saith the LORD ⁱthat formed me from the womb *to be* his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, ³Though Israel ^kbe not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength.

^a ch. 41. 1.
^b ver. 5.
Jer. 1. 5.
Matt. 1. 20.
21. Luke 1.
15, 31.
John 10. 26.
Gal. 1. 15.
^c ch. 11. 4
& 51. 16.
Hos. 6. 5.
Heb. 4. 12.
Rev. 1. 16.
^d ch. 51. 16.
^e Ps. 45. 5.
^f ch. 42. 1.
Zech. 3. 8.
^g ch. 44. 23.
John 13. 31.
& 15. 8.
Eph. 1. 6.
^h Ezek. 3. 19.
² Or, *my reward.*
ch. 40. 10.
& 62. 11.
ⁱ ver. 1.
³ Or, *That Israel may be gathered to him, and I may, &c.*
^k Matt. 23. 37.

CHAPTER XLIX.

1—9. Messiah's appointment to be the Saviour, first of the Jews, vv. 1—4, and then of the Gentiles, vv. 5—9.

1. Messiah is the speaker, and He summons, first, the inhabitants of the "isles," i. e. the coastland of the Mediterranean, the scene of the labours of both St. Peter and St. Paul, and then the "people," Heb. peoples, i. e. the heathen nations generally, to listen to His commission.

2. "My mouth." Christ is to use not the weapons of earthly warfare like Cyrus, but those which influence the mind, reach the conscience, and rouse the feelings (comp. Heb. iv. 12. Rev. i. 16.). The hiding of Christ spoken of in the rest of the verse refers primarily to the long times of preparation before God's counsel was fully revealed: yet always is He the mighty weapon of the Almighty, sharp and polished, and ready beneath His hand, wherewith to penetrate the hearts of men; yet not in all cases put forth at once, but waiting till the full time has come.

3, 4. "My servant, O Israel." At first it was the literal Israel, in whom God should be glorified: now the name is given to Christ, Who is the true vicegerent of the Almighty (see on ch. xli. 8.). It was He Who had been the Jehovah of the Jewish Church, but as His labour among the Jews had been fruitless, God now gives Him the Gentile world as His reward. This promise is dwelt upon in vv. 5, 6.

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6 And he said, ²It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the ³preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a ¹light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

7 Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, ^mto him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, ⁿKings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

8 Thus saith the LORD, ^oIn an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, ^pand give thee for a covenant of the people, to ⁵establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;

9 that thou mayest say ^qto the prisoners, Go forth; to them that *are* in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures *shall be* in all high places.

10 They shall not ^rhunger nor thirst; ^sneither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them ^tshall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

^r Rev. 7. 16.

^s Ps. 121. 6.

^t Ps. 23. 2.

7. "To him whom man despiseth." Literally, as in margin, "to him who is despised in soul," i. e. utterly despised, despised in the inmost heart. In this verso the mystery is enuniated, which afterwards is more fully enlarged upon in chs. lii. 13—liii. 12. Throughout these last twenty-seven chapters Isaiah's method is to put forward one or two leading subjects, and perpetually revert to them. In this section the prominent thought is Messiah's humiliation followed by His exaltation.

8. "An acceptable time." Primarily, that in which the Gospel dispensation was at length made perfect and complete, Acts ii. 33; now, any time in which the Holy Ghost moves the hearts of men, 2 Cor vi. 1, 2.

"The people." Singular, and therefore the Jewish people. Christ is the basis of the covenant first to the literal, and afterwards to the spiritual Israel, Gal. vi. 15, 16.

"To establish the earth." Really, "to raise up the land" of Israel from its long degradation, after which it is to inherit the desolate regions of heathenism. Isaiah consistently keeps in the foreground Christ's work for the literal Israel, see vv. 5, 6. St. Matt. x. 6. Note that in vv. 8—13 Isaiah's subject is the happy effects which are to follow upon the Messiah's exaltation. On "earth" and "land," see ch. xxiv. 1.

10. "Heat." Properly, "the mirage," or delusive appearance of

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11 ^u And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. Be-fore
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12 Behold, ^x these shall come from far: and, lo, ^u these from the north and from the west; and these ^x from the land of Sinim. u ch. 40. 4.
x ch. 43. 5, 6.

13 ¶ ^y Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. y ch. 44. 23.

14 ^z But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. z See chap.
40. 27.

15 ^a Can a woman forget her sucking child, ² that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, ^b yet will I not forget thee. a See Psal.
103. 13.
Mat. 3. 17.
Matt. 7. 11.
2 Heb. from
having com-
passion.

16 Behold, ^c I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls *are* continually before me. b Rom. 11. 29.
c See Exod.
13. 9.

17 Thy children shall make haste; ^d thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee. Cant. 8. 6.
d ver. 19.

18 ^e Lift up thine eyes round 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, ^f as with an ornament, and bind them *on thee*, as a bride *doeth*. e ch. 60. 4.
f Prov. 17. 6.

water among the burning sands, ch. xxxv. 7. With the promise of springs of water in the desert, comp. ch. xlvi. 21.

12, 13. "The land of Sinim," i. e. China, as has been satisfactorily demonstrated by Gesenius. Not only are all obstacles in the Church's way to be changed into aids to her progress, but converts are to come to her from the most distant realms. In expectation of this glorious victory of the faith, soon let us hope to be accomplished, Isaiah summons all nature, ver. 13, to raise a hymn of thanksgiving.

14—16. "But Zion," &c. Zion, God's Church, could not realise these hopes of her Messiah's triumph. They were so strongly in contrast with her present distress, that her faith could not mount up to them. And even now, when we compare the actual state of the Church with her high expectations, we need to be again and again assured that God in His own time will fulfil all that He has promised (comp. 2 Cor. vi. 9, 10.). To Zion God now gives the assurance of His love under a metaphor drawn from the strongest of all human affections.

17, 18. "Shall make haste." While converts, children newly be- gotten to Zion in the Gospel, hasten to her from every land, her foes and all who opposed her progress, depart from her, finding no longer the opportunity within her to do her hurt. These converts are her orna- ments as the Bride of the Lamb (Jer. ii. 2. Rev. xxi. 9.).

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* See chap.
74. 1, 2.
Zech. 2. 4.
& 10. 10.
1 ch. 60. 4.
1 Matt. 3. 9.
Rom. 11. 11,
12, &c.

19 For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, ^s shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.

20 ^h The children which thou shalt have, ⁱ after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place *is* too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell.

21 Then shalt thou say in thine 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*?

^h ch. 60. 4.
& 66. 20.

22 ^k Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in *their* ² arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon *their* shoulders.

² Heb. bosom.
¹ Ps. 72. 11.
ver. 7.
ch. 52. 15.
& 60. 16.
³ Heb.
nourishers.
⁴ Heb.
princesses.
^m Ps. 72. 9.
Mic. 7. 17.
ⁿ Ps. 34. 22.
Rom. 5. 5.
& 9. 31.
& 10. 11.

23 ¹ And kings shall be thy ³ nursing fathers, and their ⁴ queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with *their* face toward the earth, and ^m lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD: for ⁿ they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

19. "The land of thy destruction," i. e. thy ruined land.

20. "The children . . . the other." Heb. the children of thy childlessness. Israel had long been barren, and made no converts for God; now enlarged in Christ she goes forth to convert the world. Comp. ch. liv. 1, and St. Matt. xxviii. 19.

21. "I have lost my children." Rather, "I am childless." Zion did not mourn because she had lost children, but because she had never borne any. She laments that she is "childless and solitary, an exile "and a wanderer to and fro." But now in Christ she finds herself surrounded by a numerous offspring. Alas! many of these, begotten in the Gospel by the Apostles (1 Cor. iv. 15.), like the seven churches of Asia, have been since lost to Christ.

22. "To the people." Heb. peoples. This increase of the Church is the result of her extension to the Gentile world.

"In their arms." Heb. bosom, i. e. with the utmost love and tenderness.

"Upon their shoulders," i. e. in litters, so as not to be exposed to public gaze.

23. "Nursing fathers." Rather, "bearers," the word used of the male slave whose business it was to wait upon and carry a young child. The metaphors in the rest of the verse suggest that those now so ready with offices of love were once enemies (comp. Ps. lxxii. 9.).

ISAIAH, L.

24 ° Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or
 2 the lawful captive delivered?

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25 But thus saith the LORD, Even the ³ captives
 of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of
 the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend
 with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save
 thy children.

o Matt. 12. 29,
 Luke 11. 21,
 22.

2 Heb. *the*
captivity
of the just.

3 Heb.
captivity.

p ch. 9. 20.

26 And I will ^p feed them that oppress thee with
 their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with
 their own ^q blood, as with ⁴ sweet wine: and all flesh
^r shall know that I the LORD *am* thy Saviour and
 thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

q Rev. 14. 20.
 & 16. 6.

4 Or, *new*
wine.

r Ps. 9. 16.
 ch. 60. 16.

CHAPTER L.

1 Christ sheweth that the dereliction of the Jews is not to be imputed to him, by his ability to save, 5 by his obedience in that work, 7 and by his confidence in that assistance. 10 An exhortation to trust in God, and not in ourselves.

THUS saith the LORD, Where *is* ^a the bill of your
 mother's divorcement, whom I have put away?
 or which of my ^b creditors *is it* to whom I have sold
 you? Behold, for your iniquities ^c have ye sold
 yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother
 put away.

a Deut. 24. 1.
 Jer. 3. 8.
 Hos. 2. 2.

b See 2 Kin.
 4.

c Matt. 18. 25.
 ch. 52. 3.

d Prov. 1. 21.
 ch. 65. 12.
 & 66. 4.

Jer. 7. 13.
 & 35. 15.

e Num. 11. 23.
 ch. 59. 1.

2 Wherefore, when I came, *was there* no man?
^d when I called, *was there* none to answer? ^e Is my

24. A difficulty in the way of the promise given in vv. 22, 23. How can the prey be delivered from a mighty power like Chaldea? especially as the Jews are lawful captives, consigned by God's own decree to exile in Babylon.

25, 26. Answer. Jehovah will appear as a still mightier warrior, and that which is impossible with men is easy with Him. See St. Matt. xii. 29.

CHAPTER L.

1. The answer is still continued. The Jews had been carried captive to Babylon, because their mother, the Jewish Church, had been divorced for her barrenness and infidelity. Then by a new metaphor the people are compared to debtors sold by their own default into slavery. Beneath lies the thought that Jehovah is still the husband of the Jewish Church, and that He will redeem her sons from the consequences of their own sins upon their repentance.

2. The reason of this divorcement is man's unwillingness to receive God at His coming, see St. John i. 11; v. 43. Yet was Jehovah as mighty and as willing to save as when He delivered His people out of Egypt. In ver. 3 His power is declared to be equally great in controlling the elements of nature as in governing man on earth.

ISAIAH. I.

hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and they die for thirst.

I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering.

The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to them that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.

I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

— In these six verses the Messiah is the speaker, declaring first His faith in His Father, His love at the same time, His humiliation, and His power to save the mighty warriors of the east, 23, 26, and yet He describes Himself as yet to be scorned by the unjust, conceivably, that Christ and Isaiah's words must have sounded like a riddle, so rapidly are the words of joy and shame interchanged: but in the Redeemer's Word, set to by His cross and passion, all becomes plain and easy.

2. "The tongue of the learned." See St. John viii 15. Christ without ceasing, teaching, possessed in the treasure of human knowledge.

"He wakeneth morning by morning . . . mine ear," i. e. inspiration. St. Paul was made to sing in 1 Cor. xii 3. To prepare the word might come it would be necessary to know it came in His waking hours, in the morning of His life.

3. "Hath opened mine ear." Hath made me know and understand His will, His love.

4. "I was not rebellious, neither turned away back." I was prepared to do all things at our Father's will, but the words may have been spoken in the morning of 5. "What God revealed to the ear of the Redeemer was the promise of His redemption, etc. He was not rebellious, but He said, 'I will, O God.' For the fulfilment, which He did in 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

5. "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair." In these verses we learn that Christ was made to suffer, a sin offering to us, a champion and representative of us, who were sinners, in the Temptation and the agony of the cross.

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the rock *whence* ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit *whence* ye are digged.

^c Rom. 4. 1, 16.
^h Heb. 11. 11,
12.

2 ^c Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah *that* bare you: ^d for I called him alone, and

^d Gen. 12. 1, 2.
^e Gen. 24. 1,
35.

^e blessed him, and increased him.

^f Ps. 102. 13.
ch. 40. 1.
& 52. 9.
ver. 12.

3 For the LORD ^f shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert ^g like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

^g Gen. 13. 10.
Joel 2. 3.

^h ch. 2. 3.
& 42. 4.
ⁱ ch. 42. 6.

4 ¶ Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: ^h for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest ⁱ for a light of the people.

^k ch. 45. 13.
& 56. 1.
Rom. 1. 16,
17.

5 ^k My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, ^l and mine arms shall judge the people; ^m the isles shall wait upon me, and ⁿ on mine arm shall they trust.

^l Ps. 67. 4.
& 98. 9.
^m ch. 60. 9.

ⁿ Rom. 1. 16.
^o ch. 40. 26.
^p Ps. 102. 26,
Matt. 24. 35,
2 Pet. 3. 10,
12.
^q ch. 50. 9.

6 ^o Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for ^p the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, ^q and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall

to much. They are exhorted to meditate upon the wonderful increase of the Jewish nation. Out of Abraham as a rock and Sarah as the pit of a quarry God has built up the mighty edifice of the Jewish nation, and why should they doubt now and despair of farther mercies? In ver. 2 the right translation is, "For I called him when he was one, and "blessed him, and made him many."

4—6. The second exhortation is addressed to the whole body of believing people. In ver. 4 "my people" is singular, and means the Jews, God's Church and "nation:" at the end of the verse and in ver. 5 it is plural, "the peoples," Gentiles. The Jewish Church therefore is exhorted to look for the speedy coming of the Messiah, and the conversion of the Gentiles, and especially of the coastlands of the Mediterranean (see ch. xi. 11.). to the faith.

5. "Salvation." Our Lord and His dispensation (St. Luke ii. 30.) "is gone forth," i. e. is so near, and so absolutely determined upon, that it is as if already His Advent had come. In ver. 6 the certainty of God's counsels is contrasted with the fleeting character of the visible world: for though the laws of nature are to us most stable and enduring, yet they are evanescent as smoke compared with the laws of the covenant of grace; for these rest upon God's moral attributes (see St. Luke xvi. 17.). Yet the words also point to the mighty change wrought on the earth by Christ's teaching.

die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished. Before
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7 ¶^r Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people^s in whose heart is my law; ^t fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. r ver. 1.
s Ps. 37. 31.
t Matt. 10. 28.
Acts 5. 41.

8 For^u 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. u ch. 50. 9.

9 ¶^x Awake, awake, ^y put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, ^z as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. ^a Art thou not it that hath cut ^b Rahab, and wounded the ^c dragon? x Ps. 44. 23.
ch. 52. 1.
y Ps. 93. 1.
Rev. 11. 17.
z Ps. 44. 1.
a Job 26. 12.
b Ps. 87. 4.
& 8). 10.
c Ps. 74. 13, 14.
ch. 27. 1.
Ezek. 29. 3.
d Ex. 14. 21.
ch. 43. 16.
e ch. 35. 10.

10 Art thou not it which hath ^d 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 ^e 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 ^f that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid ^g of a man f ver. 3.
g 2 Cor. 1. 3.
s Ps. 118. 6.

6. "In like manner," i. e. like smoke or a cast-off garment.

7, 8. The third exhortation is addressed to those who are believers not in name only, but in reality, because God's law is written upon their hearts. For such there is sure comfort in the thought that God's purposes of mercy are unchangeable.

9—16. In the first of these more stirring entreaties, the Messiah, as the representative of the Church, pleads for her with God that He would reveal Himself mightily for her rescue as He did in her deliverance from Egypt, vv. 9—11; then turning to the Jewish nation, He bids them believe that God will certainly save them.

"Rahab," Egypt, see ch. xxx. 7.

"The dragon," or crocodile, i. e. Pharaoh, see ch. xxvii. 1, and Ezek. xxix. 3.

11. "The redeemed . . ." Fulfilled, first, in the return from exile, a deliverance as wonderful, though in a different way, as the Exodus: fulfilled in a higher sense in those who are redeemed from sin, and made heirs of a heavenly country (see ch. xxxv. 10.).

12. "Thou." Fem., the Jewish people being in poetical language "the daughter of Zion." She fears man because she has lost her faith in God.

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that shall die, and of the son of man *which* shall be made ^has grass;

^h ch. 40. 6.
¹ Pet. 1. 24.
ⁱ Job 9. 8.
Ps. 104. 2.
ch. 40. 22.
& 42. 5.
& 44. 24.
² Or,
made him-
self ready.
^k Job 20. 7.

13 and forgettest the LORD thy maker, ⁱthat hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he ²were ready to destroy? ^kand where *is* the fury of the oppressor?

¹ Zech. 9. 11.

14 The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, ¹and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail.

^m Job 26. 12.
Ps. 74. 13.
Jer. 31. 35.

15 But I *am* the LORD thy God, that ^mdivided the sea, whose waves roared: The LORD of hosts *is* his name.

ⁿ Dent. 18. 18.
ch. 50. 21.
John 3. 34.
^o ch. 41. 2.
^p ch. 65. 17.
& 66. 22.
^q ch. 62. 1.
^r Job 21. 20.
Jer. 25. 15,
16.

16 And ⁿI have put my words in thy mouth, and ^oI have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, ^pthat I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, 'Thou *art* my people.

^s See Dent.
28. 28. 34.
Ps. 60. 3.
& 75. 8.
Ezek. 23.
32. 33. 34.
Zech. 12. 2.
Rev. 14. 10.

17 ¶ ^qAwake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which ^rhast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury; ^sthou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, *and wrung them out.*

14. "The captive exile . . ." &c. The certainty that the fury of the oppressor shall suddenly pass away is set before us in this verse very poetically. Babylon has fallen, and we have the picture of an exile there, captive, or rather bowed by confinement in prison, feverishly awaiting his release, lest in the confusion following upon the capture of the city he should be forgotten, and perish of hunger.

15, 16. The gender now changes into the masc., the words being spoken by God to the Messiah. The latter part of ver. 16 is in the Heb. "to plant the heavens, and to found the earth, and to say," &c. Christ is the appointed person, by Whom the new dispensation, often described in scriptural language as a new heaven and a new earth, is to be founded.

17—23. In the second entreaty Jerusalem is addressed as one stupefied by having drunk deeply of the cup of the wrath of God, but who now must rouse herself; for God will remove His cup from her, and make the Chaldeans drink of it.

17. "The cup of trembling," i.e. staggering, which makes the limbs totter. By wringing out the dregs is meant that Jerusalem has suffered to the utmost, having drained to the very last the stupefying drugs which had sunk to the bottom of the bowl. In ver. 18 her distress is aggravated by loneliness. Stupefied and reeling under national calamities she is abandoned to her fate, and no wise counsellor arises to guide her.

ISAIAH, LII.

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.

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19 ^tThese two *things* ²are come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? desolation, and ³destruction, and the famine, and the sword: ^uby whom shall I comfort thee?

^t ch. 47. 9.
² Heb.
happened.
³ Heb.
breaking.
^u Amos 7. 2.

20 ^xThy 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.

^x Lam. 2. 11,
12.

21 Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, ^ybut not with wine:

^y See ver. 17.
Lam. 3. 15.

22 thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God ^zthat pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, *even* the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again:

^z Jer. 50. 34.

23 but ^aI will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; ^bwhich 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.

^a Jer. 25.
17, 26, 28.
Zech. 12. 2.
^b Ps. 66. 11,
12.

CHAPTER LII.

¹ Christ persuadeth the church to believe his free redemption, ⁷ to receive the ministers thereof, ⁹ to joy in the power thereof, ¹¹ and to free themselves from bondage. ¹³ Christ's kingdom shall be exalted.

AWAKE, ^aawake; put on thy strength, O Zion; ^ach. 51.9, 17.
put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem,

19. "Two things," i.e. "desolation and destruction;" the first produced by famine, the second by the sword.

20. "A wild bull." Rather, stag or antelope. Jerusalem's children, powerless as an antelope ensnared in the hunter's net, abandon all thought of resistance, and faint beneath the heavy anger of the Deity.

23. Many instances are found in history of conquerors thus compelling the vanquished to lie down and submit to be walked over, see Josh. x.

24. From this extreme degradation, symbolical of that to which sin reduces its victims, God will ever rescue His people when they repent, as He did the exiles at Babylon.

CHAPTER LII.

1—10. In this, the last exhortation, we have the result of Zion's deliverance from Babylon. Adorned with her beautiful garments as the bride of Christ she becomes the habitation of God upon earth, and all the ends of the world look to her for salvation. The command to Zion,

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^b the holy city: for ^c henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised ^d and the unclean.

² ^e Shake thyself from the dust; arise, *and* sit down, O Jerusalem: ^f loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

³ For thus saith the LORD, ^g Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.

⁴ For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into ^h Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

⁵ Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day is ⁱ 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 ¶ ^k How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good,

lately so hopeless, to put on her beautiful garments, is the opposite of that given to Babylon in ch. xlvii. 2 to uncover herself.

1. "The uncircumcised," &c. The Church in its perfection is not to be inhabited by the unholy and profane.

2. "Arise, and sit down," i. e. not in the dust like Babylon, but on a throne, see ch. xlvii. 1.

"The bands of thy neck" are the fetters with which she was bound as a captive.

3. With this verse comp. Rom. vi. 23, and 1 St. Pet. i. 18, 19.

5. After enumerating the two worst periods of Jewish misfortune, Jehovah says, "Now therefore," at this present time, "what have I here" at Babylon, what special reason or advantage, that I should allow the Chaldeans to do with impunity that for which I punished Egypt and Assyria? The rest of the verse describes the misery of the exiles driven to blaspheme God by the cruelty wherewith they were treated by their heathen rulers.

6. "Therefore my people shall know my name," shall know that the name blasphemed among the heathen because of the exile of His people is that of a true and merciful God. They shall know also "in that day," in the time, still future, of their restoration, that Christ does speak by His prophets. The proof of prophecy is its fulfilment.

7. If at all times we hail with joy the approach of a messenger with good news, how much more beautiful are the feet of the heralds of the Gospel, telling us of Him Who is our peace and our salvation.

ⁱ Ezek. 36.
20, 23.
Rom. 2. 24.

^k Nah. 1. 15.
Rom. 10. 15.

that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion,
 'Thy God reigneth!

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8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the
 voice together shall they sing: for they shall see
 eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.

Ps. 93. 1.
 & 96. 10.
 & 97. 1.

9 Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste
 places of Jerusalem: ^m for the LORD hath comforted
 his people, ⁿ he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

^m ch. 51. 3.
ⁿ ch. 48. 20.
^o Ps. 98. 2, 3.
^p Luke 3. 6.
^q ch. 43. 20.
^r Jer. 50. 8.
 & 51. 6, 45.
^s Zech. 2. 6, 7.
^t 2 Cor. 6. 17.
^u Rev. 18. 4.

10 ^o The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in
 the eyes of all the nations; and ^p all the ends of
 the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

^r Lev. 22. 2.
 &c.

11 ^q Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence,
 touch no unclean *thing*; go ye out of the midst of
 her; ^r be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the
 LORD.

^s See Ex. 12.
 33, 39.
^t Mic. 2. 13.
^u Num. 10. 25.
 ch. 58. 8.
 See Ex. 14.
 19.

12 For ^s ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by
 flight: ^t for the LORD will go before you; ^u and the
 God of Israel *will* ^v be your rereward.

^v Heb. gather
 you up.

8. On Zion's watch-towers the sentinels strain their eyes looking for the approach of the long-wished-for messenger. As he is seen upon the hills they proclaim with a shout the glad tidings to the people within the city.

"Eye to eye," i. e. face to face, clearly and plainly.

9, 10. Finally, in preparation for the glorious prophecy just about to be revealed, Jerusalem, lately wasted by the Chaldeans, is commanded to rejoice. In St. Luke iii. 6, ver. 10 is united to ch. xl. 4, and the whole referred to the Baptist's proclamation of Christ.

CHAPTERS LII. 11—LIII.

The six exhortations addressed by the Messiah to His Church have prepared the way for this the very centre and highest summit of all prophecy. In it Isaiah sets forth Christ as the appointed sacrifice for sin, followed in ch. liv. by the wide spread of the Christian Church, and in ch. lv. by the invitation to all mankind to accept the free promises of the Gospel.

11. The return from Babylon, and re-establishment of the Jewish polity was a necessary preparation for Messiah's coming. Those "that bear the vessels of the Lord" are the priests and Levites, carrying back to Jerusalem the sacred utensils for the restoration of the Temple service. But the command belongs equally to those who are now set apart for the work of the sanctuary.

12. The exodus from Egypt had been "with haste," Exod. xii. 11, and "by flight," Exod. xiv. 5, but this shall be orderly and deliberate; and God's presence, like the pillar of the cloud and fire, shall guard the returning Church both in front and rear.

13. In the exodus from Egypt Moses was the great leader of Israel, and his especial title of honour is "the servant of Jehovah," Deut.

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13 ¶ Behold, ^x my servant shall ² deal prudently, ^y he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

^x ch. 42. 1. 14 As many were astonished at thee; his ^z visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

^z Ps. 22. 6, 7. 15 ^a so shall he sprinkle many nations; ^b the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for *that* ^c which had not been told them shall they see; and *that* which they had not heard shall they consider.

^b ch. 49. 7, 23.
^c ch. 55. 5.
Rom. 15. 21.
& 16. 25, 26.
Eph. 3. 5, 9.

CHAPTER LIII.

1 *The prophet, complaining of incredulity, excuseth the scandal of the cross, 4 by the benefit of his passion, 10 and the good success thereof.*

^a John 12. 38.
Rom. 10. 16.

WHO ^a hath believed our ^{2 3} report? and to whom ^b is the arm of the LORD revealed?

² Or, doctrine?

³ Heb. hearing? ^b ch. 51. 9. Rom. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 18.

xxxiv. 5. Isa. xli. 8. Naturally therefore the mention of this second exodus, and its contrast with the first in ver. 12, leads to the thought of its leader also, who was to be "like unto Moses," Deut. xviii. 18. But the exodus from Egypt and that from Babylon were types only of man's deliverance from sin, and the "servant of Jehovah," already referred to in chs. xlii. 1, 19; xlix. 3, 5; l. 10, as here set forth to us, is Christ. All lower and merely preparatory allusion is dismissed, and our minds are raised up to the thought of Him Who wrought salvation for the whole human race.

"Shall deal prudently" or wisely, the right translation, the other suggested rendering "shall prosper" being the result merely of wise dealing.

"Extolled," i. e. lifted up, raised to high power and dignity.

14. "As many . . ." Notice that this answers to the "so" in ver. 15. Just as there was general surprise and disappointment at the lowliness of Christ's appearance, so shall His exaltation be great and marvellous.

"His visage," &c. Not only did Christ come in great humility, but His agony and cruel death impressed the marks of suffering upon His face and person.

15. "Sprinkle." The sprinkling of blood signified the expiation of sin, see Heb. ix. 13, 14, 19—22.

"Shut their mouths at him" in reverence. This awe is felt for Christ by the Gentile kings on the news of His salvation being proclaimed to the whole heathen world instead of being confined to the Jews as in the previous dispensation.

CHAPTER LIII.

1. "Who hath believed," &c. While thus the Gentile world reverently listens to the preaching of the Gospel, Isaiah, speaking for himself and the whole order of the prophets, laments that their message had met with so cold a reception. Equally our Lord complains that men "will not come to Him that they may have life," St. John v. 40. Both passages

ISAIAH, LIII.

2 For ^c he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: ^d he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him.

3 ^e He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and ^f acquainted with grief: and ^{2 3} we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and ^g we esteemed him not.

4 Surely ^h he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he *was* ^{4 i} wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his ^{k 5} stripes we are healed.

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^c ch. 11. 1.
^d ch. 52. 14.
Mark 9. 12.

^e Ps. 22. 6.
ch. 49. 7.

^f Heb. 4. 15.
² Or, *he hid as it were his face from us.*

³ Heb. *as an hiding of faces from him, or, from us.*

^g John 1. 10, 11.

^h Matt. 8. 17.
Heb. 9. 28.
1 Pet. 2. 24.

⁴ Or, *tormented.*

ⁱ Rom. 4. 25.
⁵ Heb. *bruise.*

1 Cor. 15. 3. 1 Pet. 3. 18. k 1 Pet. 2. 24.

primarily spoken of the Jews are, alas! too generally true. The greatest of blessings is too often the least esteemed.

2. "He shall grow up," &c. Passing at one bound from the thought of the prophetic message to Him Who is the subject of all prophecy, Isaiah sets Christ before us in His humble parentage, His education in a remote village, and His refusal of all those worldly advantages which aid men in rising to greatness. As reasonably might men look for vegetation in an arid desert as in a remote Galilean village for a teacher who was to change the entire course of human thought. As regards His Divine nature Christ "emptied Himself," laying it entirely aside (Phil. ii. 7, in the Greek); and as regards His human nature He descended into the lower ranks of society, and bore man's name and lot in all its humility. "He took the form of a slave."

3. Primarily this verse refers to the constant opposition made by the Jews to our Lord's teaching during the three years of His ministration; to the tears which again and again He shed; and to His cruel death, when even His disciples hid their faces from Him and deserted Him. But in all ages there is a secondary fulfilment in the conduct of those who by rejecting Christ's blood trample under foot the Son of God afresh (Heb. x. 29.).

4, 5. Yet these sorrows were all borne for us, so that the conduct of those who reject Him is incomprehensible, as the opening word "surely" indicates. No language could more clearly affirm the vicarious nature of Christ's sufferings—that He bore them, not for Himself, but for others—than the repeated declarations of the prophet, repeated, as Dr. Kay shows, eleven times in this chapter, to that effect. Nor was the idea a new one, but was the foundation of the whole law of sacrifice, wherein the victim was to bear the sins of the offerer. See especially the law of the scapegoat, Lev. xvi. 21, 22.

"The chastisement of our peace" means that whereby peace was obtained for us. So Christ is repeatedly styled "our peace," see Eph. ii. 14, &c.

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1 Ps. 111. 176.
1 Pet. 2. 25.

2 Heb. *hath made the iniquity of us all to meet on him.*

3 Matt. 26. 63.
& 27. 12. 14.
Mark 14. 61.
& 15. 5.

4 1 Pet. 2. 23.

5 Acts 8. 32.

6 Or, *He was taken away by distress and judgment: but, &c.*

7 Dan. 9. 26.

8 Heb. *was the stroke upon him.*

9 Matt. 27.
57, 58, 60.

10 Heb. *deaths.*

11 1 Pet. 2. 22.

12 John 3. 5.

13 Or, *when his soul shall make an offering.*
2 Thes. 1. 11.

6 ¹ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet ^m he opened not his mouth: ⁿ he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

8 ³ He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for ^o he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people ⁴ was he stricken.

9 ^p And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his ⁵ death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* ^q deceit in his mouth.

10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: ⁶ when thou shalt make his soul ^r an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, ^s he shall prolong *his* days, and ^t the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

^r 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 24. ^s Rom. 6. 9. ^t Eph. 1. 5, 9.

6. "All we," all mankind, "have gone astray," and by Him, the one appointed victim, the sins of all mankind are borne. How borne and how the shepherd saves the sheep see in St. John x. 9, 11.

7. "And he was afflicted." Rather, "yet he submitted Himself, "and opened," &c. The verse expresses Christ's entire subjection to His Father's will, so that no indignation was roused in His mind by human injustice, nor by the desertion of His disciples, but in meek and calm silence He endured it all.

8. "From prison." The word really means "oppression," and, after the manner of the Heb. language, qualifies "judgment." Christ was regularly put upon His trial, but though His judge pronounced Him innocent, yet because of the violence of the multitude, and for political reasons, Pilate delivered Him to be crucified. Thus He was taken, or led away from an "unjust judgment" to the cross.

"And who shall declare his generation?" The words are difficult, but as rendered in the A. V. give a good sense; Who will enumerate Christ's posterity? i. e. no one will; for His career was short and transient. He founded no high family on earth, no noble lineage like that of David. He bore the cross, and despised the shame, and then went back thither whence He came, to sit at God's right hand.

9. Christ was crucified with malefactors, but was laid in the rich man's tomb, this honourable burial testifying to the innocence and blamelessness of His life.

10. Yet in very truth not Pilate, nor the Jews, but God thus afflicted Christ, and therefore as God is just, and incapable of doing wrong, there must be some reason for Messiah's sufferings. Yes, God did it, that

ISAIAH, LIV.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: "by his knowledge shall ^xmy righteous ^yservant ^zjustify many; ^afor he shall bear their iniquities.

12 ^bTherefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, ^cand he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was ^dnumbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and ^emade intercession for the transgressors.

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^u John 17. 3.
² Pet. 1. 3.
^x 1 John 2. 1.
^y ch 42. 1.
 & 49. 3.
^z Rom. 5. 18,
 19.
^a ver. 4, 5.
^b Ps. 2. 8.
 Phil. 2. 9.
^c Col. 2. 15.
^d Mark 15. 28.
 Luke 22. 37.
^e Luke 23. 34.
 Rom. 8. 34.
 Heb. 7. 25.
 & 9. 24.
 1 John 2. 1.

CHAPTER LIV.

1 *The prophet, for the comfort of the Gentiles, prophesieth the amplitude of their church, 4 their safety, 6 their certain deliverance out of affliction, 11 their fair edification, 15 and their sure preservation.*

SING ^a, O barren, thou *that* didst not bear; break ^a forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou *that* didst not travail with child: for ^bmore *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.

^a Zeph. 3. 14.
 Gal. 4. 27.
^b 1 Sam. 2. 5.

Christ might (1) be an offering for the sin of all mankind; (2) might have a numerous spiritual offspring by regeneration; and (3) might reign in His Church gloriously until His second Advent.

11. "He shall see," &c. Christ's sufferings are not in vain. Far as the Church falls short of what we might have hoped and expected, yet much has already been accomplished, and finally in God's own way and time she will do His work, and Christ will be satisfied. Such words assure us of the ultimate triumph of the Gospel.

"By his knowledge." Christ is not merely the object of saving knowledge, but the giver of it. All inspiration is from and by Him (Col. ii. 3.); and He justifies, not only by bearing our iniquities, but also by revealing to us that knowledge of God's will, which is necessary for our salvation.

12. "Therefore . . ." A repetition of the fundamental idea in ch. lii. 15, thus binding the whole prophecy together. It was upon the cross that Christ conquered, and rising victorious from the grave, He goes forth as a mighty warrior to win that world which He has sprinkled with His blood.

CHAPTER LIV.

1. The enlargement of the Church follows upon Messiah's sufferings and victory, but before that enlargement the Jewish nation is to be deprived of its special privileges. But though thus in a sense divorced and desolate, she will become the mother of Christian nations, instead of being barren as in the old days of her exclusiveness.

Before
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2 °Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes;

^c ch. 49. 13,
20.

3 for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; ^dand thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

^d ch. 55. 5.
& 61. 9.

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.

^e Jer. 3. 14.
^f Luke 1. 32.

5 °For thy Maker *is* thine husband; the ^fLORD of hosts *is* his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; ^gThe God of the whole earth shall he be called.

^g Zech. 14. 9.
Rom. 3. 29.

^h ch. 62. 4.

6 For the LORD ^hhath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

ⁱ Ps. 30. 5.
ch. 26. 20.
& 60. 13.
2 Cor. 4. 17.

7 ⁱFor a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

^k ch. 55. 3.
Jer. 31. 3.

8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; ^kbut with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

^l Gen. 8. 21.
& 9. 11.
ch. 55. 11.
See Jer. 31.
35, 36.

9 For this *is as* the waters of ^lNoah unto me: for *as* I have sworn that the waters of Noah should

2. Under the type of the enlargement of a tent is described the new and more spiritual constitution of the Catholic Church.

3. "Desolate cities." Cities which sin had laid waste, but which shall now be inhabited by men instinct with spiritual life.

4, 5. Israel's "youth" was the time when she entered into covenant with Jehovah at Sinai, Jer. ii. 2, and her "shame" was her perpetual violation of her marriage vows. Her "widowhood" refers to all those sad times in her history, when because of idolatry, Jehovah for the time divorced her and put her away. But all this sorrow and shame is past, because her husband has taken her again in marriage, and His omnipotence assures her of unending happiness.

6. "Hath called thee." Summoned thee back to take thy place once again as a wife.

"When thou wast refused." Really, "When she is cast off." A wife of youth, i. e. one married in her youth, is more loving and tender than one married in later life, and is therefore more grieved in spirit when she is cast off.

9, 10. As certainly as God will never again punish the earth with a deluge,

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no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 712.

10 For ^mthe mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; ⁿbut my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.

^m Ps. 46. 2.
ch. 51. 6.
Matt. 5. 18.
ⁿ Ps. 89. 33,
34.

11 ¶ O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with ^ofair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

^o 1 Chr. 29. 2.
Rev. 21. 13,
&c.

12 And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

13 And all thy children shall be ^ptaught of the LORD; and ^qgreat shall be the peace of thy children.

^p ch. 11. 9.
Jer. 31. 34.
John 6. 45.
1 Cor. 2. 10.
1 Thess. 4. 9.
1 John 2. 20.
^q Ps. 119. 165.

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.

16 Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an in-

so certainly will the Christian Church never be repudiated, as was the Church of the Jews. And in ver. 10 it is declared that its covenant shall endure even when the mountains, the strongest things on earth, pass away.

11, 12. The Church, lately compared to a sorrowful wife taken back by her husband with a covenant of everlasting love, is now described as a city which after many troubles is rebuilt with costly jewels. Comp. Rev. xxi. 18—21.

“Windows.” More correctly, “pinnacles,” or “battlements.”

13. “Taught of God.” Taught and led by the Holy Ghost. This verse shows that the precious stones of vv. 11, 12, are to be interpreted of spiritual graces.

14. “Thou shalt not fear,” i. e. thou shalt have no cause for fear. For the being “established in righteousness” implies the constant practice of uprightness, whereby the Church insures the favour of God, and gives no offence to man. Unjust and selfish conduct stirs up the bad feelings of human nature, and brings retribution upon itself.

15. “Shall surely gather.” Rather, “may gather together” for strife and battle; i. e. even if men do attack thee, it is not from God, not from the just ruler of all things, and must therefore fail.

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strument for his work ; and I have created the waster to destroy.

r ch. 45. 24,
25.

17 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper ; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, ^r and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the LORD.

CHAPTER LV.

1 *The prophet, with the promises of Christ, calleth to faith, 6 and to repentance.* 8 *The happy success of them that believe.*

a John 4. 14.
& 7. 37.
Rev. 21. 6.
& 22. 17.
b Matt. 13.
44, 46.
Rev. 3. 18.

HO, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; ^b come ye, buy, and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

² Heb. *ceigh.*

2 Wherefore do ye ² spend money for *that which is* not bread ? and your 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.

c Matt. 11. 28.
d ch. 54. 8.
& 61. 8.
Jer. 32. 40.

3 Incline your ear, and ^e come unto me : hear, and your soul shall live ; ^d and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the ^e sure mercies of David.

e 2 Sam. 7.
8, &c.
Ps. 89. 28.
Acts 13. 34.
f John 18. 37.
Rev. 1. 5.
g Jer. 30. 9.
Ezek. 34. 23.
Dan. 9. 25.
Hos. 3. 5.

4 Behold, I have given him *for* ^f a witness to the people, ^g a leader and commander to the people.

16, 17. To give the Church a more firm confidence in this promise of safety God declares that alike the weapons of war, and the "waster," the devastating conqueror who uses them, are from Him, and can be used only as He wills.

CHAPTER LV.

1. Upon the prophecy of the Church's enlargement follows an invitation to mankind to come and enjoy the spiritual banquet purchased for them by Christ's sufferings. It was pointed out on ch. liii. how repeatedly Isaiah declares that the sacrifice of Christ was vicarious : and therefore man takes the benefit without money and without price.

3—5. "The sure mercies of David," i. e. unconditional mercies which could neither be forfeited nor revoked, see 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. But the chief mercy thus guaranteed was that of the perpetual endurance of David's throne, which was fulfilled in Christ. Hence in ver. 4 "Behold I have given him," i. e. Him Who is the eternal king of David's line, "for a witness to the" "peoples," not people ; and so at the end of the verse. The Davidic throne is now to extend over the whole Gentile world. Hence too in ver. 5 the summons addressed to heathen nations to take as their Saviour one unknown to them before, and Who under

ISAIAH, LV.

5 ^b Behold, thou shalt call a nation *that* thou knowest not, ⁱ and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; ^k for he hath glorified thee.

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h ch. 52. 15.
Eph. 2. 11, 12.

i ch. 60. 5.
k ch. 60. 9.
Acts 3. 13.

6 ¶ ¹ Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near :

l Ps. 32. 6.
Matt. 5. 25.
& 25. 11.

7 ^m let the wicked forsake his way, and ² the unrighteous man ⁿ his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, ^o and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for ³ he will abundantly pardon.

John 7. 34.
& 8. 21.
2 Cor. 6. 1, 2.
Heb. 3. 13.
m ch. 1. 16.

8 ^p For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

n Heb.
the man of iniquity.

9 ^q For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

o Zech. 8. 17.
p Ps. 130. 7.
Jer. 3. 12.

10 For ^r 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 :

q Heb. *he will multiply to pardon.*

r 2 Sam. 7. 19.
q Ps. 103. 11.

11 ^s so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

r Deut. 32. 2.

12 ^t For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall ^u break forth before you into singing, and ^x all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

s ch. 54. 9.

t ch. 35. 10.
& 65. 13, 14.
u Ps. 96. 12.

& 98. 8.
ch. 14. 8.
& 35. 1, 2.
& 42. 11.

x 1 Chr. 16. 33.

the narrower constitution of the Jewish Church had even seemed to ignore them.

6, 7. A general exhortation addressed to all mankind to accept the mercies so freely offered in Christ, and which now are open to Gentile as well as Jew.

8, 9. "My thoughts," &c. Judged by human modes of thinking, God's dealings in love and grace surpass the bounds of possibility, but this is only because His moral nature rises as far above ours as the heavens are higher than the earth.

10, 11. Without rain the earth would quickly become a desert bereft of animal and vegetable life, but God by a wonderful machinery, often appealed to in Scripture as a witness for Him, e. g. Acts xiv. 17, supplies this need. And no less wonderful is the manner in which He provides for the wants of the soul, and in man's spiritual life His word is as powerful and indispensable as is the rain in the natural world.

ISAIAH, LVI.

Before
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^γ ch. 41. 19.
^z Mic. 7. 4.
^a Jer. 13. 11.

13 ^γ Instead of ^z 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 ^a for a name, for an everlasting sign *that* shall not be cut off.

CHAPTER LVI.

1 *The prophet exhorteth to sanctification.* 3 *He promiseth it shall be general without respect of persons.* 9 *He inveigheth against blind watchmen.*

² Or, *equity.*

^a ch. 46. 13.
 Matt. 3. 2.
 & 4. 17.
 Rom. 13.
 11, 12.

^b ch. 53. 13.

^c See Deut.
 23. 1, 2, 3.
 Acts 8. 27.
 & 10. 1, 2, 34.
 & 17. 4. &
 18. 7.
 1 Pet. 1. 1.

THUS saith the LORD, Keep ye ² judgment, and do justice: ^a for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

² Blessed is the man *that* doeth this, and the son of man *that* layeth hold on it; ^b that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

³ Neither let ^c the son of the 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.

12, 13. In these two verses the effects of God's wonder-working word are described. The first is deliverance from sin, which is to the soul what the exodus from Egypt was to the Israelites as a nation: the second is the bringing forth of all spiritual graces, compared to the upgrowth of a noble and beautiful vegetation in the place of noxious plants. Comp. ch. xxxv.

CHAPTERS LVI, LVII.

In these two chapters Isaiah turns from these grand prophecies concerning the offices and work of Christ to the people of his own time: and so exactly do his descriptions agree with what took place in the evil days of Manassah, that even those critics who assert that these last twenty-seven chapters were composed by some second Isaiah at the end of the Babylonian captivity, acknowledge that we have here the remains of a prophecy written by Isaiah himself towards the close of his life. But naturally, after setting before them the future glories of their Messiah, the prophet would thus exhort and warn the people living in his own days. It seems moreover probable from these descriptions that the Jewish tradition is true which says that Isaiah's life was prolonged into Manassah's reign.

CHAPTER LVI.

1, 2. In this exhortation to a holy life the observance of the Sabbath is strongly urged upon the people, because the neglect of it is sure practically to lead to the forgetting of those truths which each week are on it brought again to our remembrance.

3—5. The "stranger" or foreigner suffered under a national disability to enter the congregation of Israel: the eunuch is enumerated in

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4 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 ;

5 even unto them will I give in ^d mine house and within my walls a place ^e 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 polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant ;

7 even them will I ^f bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer : ^g their burnt offerings and their sacrifices *shall be accepted* upon mine altar ; for ^h mine house shall be called an house of prayer ⁱ for all people.

8 The Lord GOD ^k which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, ^l Yet will I gather *others* to him, ² beside those that are gathered unto him.

9 ¶ ^m All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, *yea*, all ye beasts in the forest.

10 His watchmen *are* ⁿ blind : they are all ignorant, ^o they *are* all dumb dogs, they cannot bark ; ³ sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

11 Yea, *they are* ^{4p} greedy dogs *which* ^{5q} can never have enough, and they *are* shepherds *that* cannot understand : they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.

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d 1 Tim. 3. 15.
e John 1. 12.
1 John 3. 1.

f ch. 2. 2.
1 Pet. 1. 1, 2.
g Rom. 12. 1.
1 Heb. 13. 15.
1 Pet. 2. 5.

h Matt. 21. 13.
Mark 11. 17.
Luke 19. 46.
i Mal. 1. 11.

k Ps. 147. 2.
ch. 11. 12.
l John 10. 16.
Eph. 1. 10.
& 2. 14, 15, 16.

2 Heb. *to his gathered.*
m Jer. 12. 9.
n Matt. 15. 14.
& 23. 16.

o Phil. 3. 2.
3 Or, *dreaming, or, talking in their sleep.*

4 Heb. *strong of appetite.*
p Mic. 3. 11.

5 Heb. *know not to be satisfied.*
q Ezek. 34. 2, 3.

Deut. xxiii. 1 at the head of those who were excluded from it by personal disqualifications. But in Christ "the middle wall of partition" severing Jews and Gentiles is broken down (Eph. ii. 14.); and the eunuch baptized by Philip, Acts viii. 38, was a proof that these personal disabilities are no longer recognised under the Gospel.

7. "Holy mountain." See on ch. xi. 9.

"Burnt offerings . . . sacrifices." Isaiah necessarily uses the language of his own time upon the same principle which has made the writers of the Bible use popular and not scientific terms. The Bible was written for the many and not for the few : and these material offerings signified the spiritual services of the Church, of which they were types. Yet notice how emphatically the place of God's worship is twice called the "house of prayer."

9—12. From this outlook into Christian times the prophet reverts suddenly to his own days. He sees the sheep utterly neglected, and

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r Ps. 10. 6.
Prov. 23. 35.
ch. 22. 13.
Luke 12. 19.
1 Cor. 15. 32.

12 Come ye, *say they*, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; ^r and to morrow shall be as this day, *and* much more abundant.

CHAPTER LVII.

1 *The blessed death of the righteous.* 3 *God reproveth the Jews for their whorish idolatry.* 13 *He giveth evangelical promises to the penitent.*

cir. 698.

² Heb. *men of kindness, or, godliness.*

^a Ps. 12. 1.
Mic. 7. 2.

^b 1 Kin. 14. 13.
See 2 Kings 22. 20.

³ Or, *from that which is evil.*

⁴ Or, *go in peace,*
Luke 2. 29.

^c 2 Chr. 16. 14.

⁵ Or, *before him.*

^d Matt. 16. 4.

THE righteous perisheth, and no man layeth *it* to heart: and ^{2a}merciful men *are* taken away, ^bnone considering that the righteous is taken away ³from the evil *to come*.

2 He shall ⁴enter into peace: they shall rest in ^ctheir beds, *each one walking* ⁵*in* his uprightness.

3 ¶ But draw near hither, ^dye 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,

those who should guard them given up to blindness and sloth, to greediness and drunkenness; and with indignation he calls to the neighbouring nations to arise and punish them, like the wild beasts falling upon an unguarded flock. And prophecy repeats itself. For such was also the state of things at Jerusalem, when, forty years after our Lord's resurrection, the Romans gathered their forces to destroy it.

CHAPTER LVII.

1. "The righteous . . ." Not especially Hezekiah, but rather the innocent men whose blood Manasseh so cruelly shed, 2 Kings xxi. 16. It was a proof of the corruption of the times that no man laid their death to heart.

"Merciful men." Lit. men of grace, religious men. Among these Hezekiah would be one, taken away, not in wrath, but in mercy, because in spite of his earnest efforts the nation was fast lapsing into a general apostacy, and this was sure to be followed by trouble and national ruin.

2. "Their beds," i. e. in their graves, Job xvii. 13. The term is full of hope, looking forward to that fuller teaching of a resurrection, which changes death into a sleep, 1 Cor. xv. 51. 1 Thess. iv. 14.

3, 4. "Sorceress," i. e. the whole community of those who had apostatized from the worship of Jehovah, and introduced heathenish rites of divination and soothsaying, see 2 Kings xxi. 6. Verse 4 describes their scoffs at those who remained true to their faith and suffered martyrdom at the hands of Manasseh.

5 enflaming yourselves ² with idols ^e under every green tree, ^f slaying the children in the valleys under the cliffs of the rocks?

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 ^g Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set ^h thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice.

8 Behind the doors also and the posts 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 ³ made thee a covenant with them; ⁱ thou lovedst their bed ⁴ where thou sawest *it*.

9 And ⁵ ^k thou wentest to the king with ointment,

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² Or, among the oaks. ch. 1. 24.

^e 2 Kin. 16. 4. & 17. 10. Jer. 2. 20.

^f Lev. 18. 21. & 20. 2.

^g 2 Kin. 16. 3. & 23. 10. Jer. 7. 31.

^h Ezek. 16. 20. & 20. 26.

ⁱ Ezek. 16. 16, 25.

³ Or, heced

⁴ *it for thyself larger than theirs.*

⁵ Ezek. 16. 26, 28. & 23. 2.—20.

^k Or, thou providedst

room. ⁵ Or, thou respectedst the king. ^k ch. 30. 6. Ezek. 16. 33. & 23. 16. Hos. 7. 11. & 12. 1.

5. The severity of the prophet's language is justified by the description of Moloch worship, which next follows, and in which we know that Manasse indulged, 2 Kings xxi. 6. The "valleys" really mean "torrent-beds," dry in summer, where "under cliffs," in hollows or ravines washed out by the violence of the stream in winter, the people found secluded spots fit for their horrid rites. Such ravines are numerous in Lebanon, but probably the valley of Hinnom was especially referred to.

6. The Jews are here accused of also worshipping smooth stones chosen from these torrent-beds, the word for "stream" being the same as that translated *valleys* in ver. 5. Numerous instances are mentioned in ancient writers of this most debased form of idolatry, which may have arisen from such stones having been set up originally as memorials, Gen. xxviii. 18; xxxv. 14, or from superstitious wonder at aërolites, whence perhaps the notion in Acts xix. 35. The last words should be translated "shall I be appeased for these things?" Can I be pacified until I have inflicted punishment?

7. "Thy bed," i. e. the altar for sacrifice, idolatry being in scriptural language called adultery. High hills and green trees were the favourite spots for the orgies of nature worship, 1 Kings xiv. 23, as dark chasms were for the blood-stained rites of Moloch.

8. "Behind," &c., i. e. besides these public idolatries they set up images in private in their own houses, in the very places where God had commanded them to set up memorials of His law, Deut. vi. 9. The rest of the verse describes the practice of idolatry under metaphors taken from adultery.

9. "The king." Probably Moloch, but the masculine idols were all Baalim, i. e. lords, sovereigns.

"With ointment," i. e. like an adulteress scented and perfumed to please her paramour. Comp. Prov. vii. 17. The last clause gives the

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and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase *thyself even* unto hell.

¹ Jer. 2. 25. ¹ *yet* saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast
² Or, *living*. found the ² life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved.

^m ch. 51. 12, 13. ¹¹ And ^m of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid *it* to thy heart? ⁿ have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?

12 I will declare thy righteousness, 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;

^o ch. 40. 3. & 62. 10. 14 and shall say, ^o Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people.

right sense, though the translation should be, "Thou hast gone down even to the grave," i. e. there is no trouble thou hast spared thyself in order to gratify thy passion for idolatry. On "hell," i. e. the grave, see ch. v. 14.

10. Though wearied with the length of her journeyings—even down to the grave to please her idol-king—her language is still that of infatuation. To worship him is like new life for her right hand. Comp. Jer. ii. 23—25.

11. "Of whom," &c. The reason of this eager resort to idolatry is that Judah misconstrues God's long-suffering. He bore long with His people, but when chastisement came by what seemed the natural up-growth of the Assyrian empire, Judah in her fear longed for some god specially devoted to her interests like the heathen idols, which were supposed to be always ready to help their own worshippers, and did not require moral purity nor punish men for sin like Jehovah.

"Thou hast lied," i. e. been false to the covenant which bound thee to Me.

12. "Thy righteousness," i. e. what thou regardest as righteousness, and by which thou seekest to justify thyself.

13. "Thy companies." Lit. thy gatherings, all the things thou hast collected round thee to protect thee, but especially thy numerous idols. But all these are powerless. Jehovah alone could secure the Jews in the possession of the land of promise, and of the holy hill on which their temple was built.

14. "And shall say." Rather, "And he shall say." It is the voice of God bidding them prepare a way, not merely for the dispersed Jews to return to their country, but for the meek to come in all ages to Christ.

ISAIAH, LVII.

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15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, ^p whose name is Holy; ^q I dwell in the high and holy place, ^r with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, ^s to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

^p Job 6. 10.
^q Luke 1. 49.
^r Ps. 68. 4.
^s Zech. 2. 13.
^r Ps. 34. 18.
& 51. 17.
& 138. 6.
ch. 66. 2.

16 ^t For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls ^u which I have made.

^s Ps. 147. 3.
ch. 61. 1.

17 For the iniquity of ^x his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: ^y I hid me, and was wroth, ^z and he went on ² frowardly in the way of his heart.

^t Ps. 85. 5.
& 103. 9.
Mic. 7. 18.

18 I have seen his ways, and ^a will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to ^b his mourners.

^u Num. 16. 22.
Job 34. 14.

19 I create ^c the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace ^d to *him that is* far off, and to *him that is* near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.

^z Heb. 12. 9.
^x Jer. 6. 13.
^y ch. 8. 17.
& 45. 15.

20 ^e But the wicked *are* like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

^z ch. 9. 13.

21 ^f *There is* no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

² Heb. *turning away*.

^a Jer. 3. 22.
^b ch. 61. 2.

^c Heb. 13. 15.
^d Acts 2. 39.
Eph. 2. 17.

^e Job 15. 20.
&c.
Prov. 4. 16.

^f ch. 48. 22.

15, 16. Verse 15 gives the assurance that the promise made at the end of ver. 13 will be fulfilled. To the infinite God eternity is not too vast nor the heart of the humblest man too small to be for Him a fit dwelling-place. Hence in ver. 16 a reason for His shewing mercy is drawn from human weakness.

17—19. "Covetousness," i. e. the too great love of earthly things, and so the root of all evil, 1 Tim. vi. 10, had been the great sin of the heathen world, and God had oftentimes smitten the Gentiles for it, and hid Himself from them; but now He was about to reveal Himself to them in mercy. Verse 19 is repeatedly quoted as authorizing the preaching of Christ to the Gentiles, Acts ii. 39. Eph. ii. 13. Those "near" were the Jews, Eph. ii. 17.

20, 21. In vv. 18, 19 an unconditional promise of comfort and peace to all mankind seemed to be given. In these two verses Isaiah warns us that such blessings, by the very nature of things, cannot be enjoyed by the wicked.

CHAPTERS LVIII—LXVI.

The third and last section of this great prophecy, after dealing with the sins which were most prevalent among the Jews after the return from exile, then sets forth the work of Christ in His Church.

Before
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CHAPTER LVIII.

1 *The prophet, being sent to reprove hypocrisy, 3 expresseth a counterfeit fast and a true. 8 He declareth what promises are due unto godliness, 13 and to the keeping of the sabbath.*

² Heb. *with the throat.*

CRY ² aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew 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.

^a Mal. 3. 14.

3 ^a Wherefore have we fasted, *say they*, and thou seest not? *wherefore* have we ^b afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your ³ ⁴ labours.

^b Lev. 16. 23, 31. & 23. 27.

³ Or, *things wherewith ye grieve others.*

⁴ Heb. *griefs.*

^c 1 Kings. 21. 9, 12, 13.

⁵ Or, *ye fast not as this day.*

^d Zech. 7. 5.

^e L. v. 16, 23.

⁶ Or, *to afflict his soul for a day?*

^f Esth. 4. 3.

Job 2. 8.

Dan. 9. 3.

Jonah 3. 6.

^g Neh. 5. 10,

11, 12.

⁷ Heb. *the bundles of the yoke.*

^h Jer. 34. 9.

ⁱ Heb. *broken.*

4 ^c Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ⁵ ye shall not fast as *ye do this* day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

5 Is it ^d such a fast that I have chosen? ^e ⁶ a day for a man to afflict his soul? *is it* to bow down his head as a bulrush, and ^f to spread sackcloth and ashes *under him*? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?

6 *Is* not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, ^g to undo ⁷ the heavy burdens, and ^h to let the ⁸ oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

CHAPTER LVIII.

1, 2. A great change is now represented as having taken place in the nation. It is no longer given to idolatry; it prides itself upon its study of the Scriptures, and takes delight in God's public service, and yet the prophet is commanded to warn it with trumpet voice against the sins of formalism and hypocrisy which are as hateful to God as open idolatry.

3, 4. Fasting is mentioned as a special exemplification of this Pharisæism. Compare St. Matt. vi. 16. St. Luke xviii. 12. No mortification of their own secret desires, no self-denial, and no kindness accompanied it, but a harsh and exacting spirit towards others.

“To smite with the fist of wickedness” refers to conduct such as that forbidden in Exod. xxi. 18.

5—7. True fasting, defined in the next clause as the afflicting of the

ISAIAH, LVIII.

7 *Is it not* ¹to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are ²cast out to thy house? ³when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from ¹thine own flesh?

8 ^mThen shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; ⁿthe glory of the LORD ³shall 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 ^ospeaking ^ovanity;

10 and *if* thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness *be* as the noon day:

11 and the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in ⁴drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters ⁵fail not.

12 And *they that shall be* of thee ^pshall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 698.

¹Ezek. 18 7, 16.
²Matt. 25. 35.

²Or,
afflicted.

^kJob 31. 19.

¹Gen. 29. 14.

Neh. 5. 5.

^mJob 11. 17.

ⁿEx. 14. 19.

ch. 52. 12.

³Heb. *shall*

gather thee

up.

^oPs. 12. 2.

⁴Heb.

droughts.

⁵Heb. *lie,*

or, deceive.

^pch. 61. 4.

soul, does not consist in bodily mortification, though that is not forbidden, but in active exertions to remedy wrongs of every kind, and in the practice of charity, not only abroad but also at home.

8. One who thus obeys the law spiritually shall be blessed with light and healing, and his journey through life shall be like that of the Israelites in the wilderness, with the pillar of cloud and fire guarding them on every side.

9, 10. Isaiah repeats the great truth declared in vv. 6—8; but with reference to the duty of prayer, and not, as there, to fasting.

The “yoke” means oppression; “the putting forth of the finger,” scornful treatment of others; and the “speaking vanity,” words of slander and falsehood.

“To draw out the soul,” is to give it wider interests instead of that exclusiveness and narrowness which are the characteristics of the selfish man.

11, 12. The blessings with which God rewards a true and sincere obedience are first personal, making the believer’s own soul fruitful like a watered garden; and secondly, he is making a blessing to others, de-

ISAIAH, LIX.

Before
CHRIST
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q ch. 56. 2.

13 ¶ If ^athou 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 own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own* words:

r Job 22. 26.

14 ^rthen shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD;

s Deut. 32. 13.
& 33. 29.

and I will cause thee to ^sride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: ^tfor the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

t ch. 1. 20.
& 40. 5.
Mic. 4. 4.

CHAPTER LIX.

1 *The damnable nature of sin.* 3 *The sins of the Jews.* 9 *Calamity is for sin.* 16 *Salvation is only of God.* 20 *The covenant of the Redeemer.*

a Num. 11. 23.
ch. 50. 2.

BEHOLD, the LORD's hand is not ^ashortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

² Or, *have made him hide.*

2 but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins ²have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear.

b ch. 1. 15.

3 For ^byour hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

c Job 15. 35.
Ps. 7. 14.

4 None calleth for justice, nor *any* pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; ^cthey conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

scribed as the rebuilding of places which had long lain waste, and of ruins of which the foundations only had existed for many generations. He thus becomes the repairer of the breach made by sin, and the restorer of paths by which outcasts may find a way prepared for their return to a habitation of peace.

13, 14. The same lesson is here taught with reference to the keeping of the Sabbath.

“Not doing thine own ways” implies the doing the way of others, first of God, in seeking His honour; and also of man in labouring for his good. So, in the next clause, we must sacrifice our own desires to do that which is for God's pleasure, and for the true happiness of our neighbour. The last clause is simply “nor speaking words.” A duty is not done by mere talk.

“To ride upon the high places of the earth.” See Deut. xxxii. 13.

CHAPTER LIX.

1—4. There is no break between this and the preceding chapter. It is a continuation of the same exhortation, but it describes formalism as

ISAIAH, LIX.

5 They hatch ²cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web : he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and ³that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.

6 ^dTheir 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.

7 ^eTheir feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood : their thoughts *are* thoughts of iniquity ; wasting and ⁴destruction *are* in their paths.

8 The way of peace they know not ; and *there is* no ⁵judgment in their goings : ^fthey have made them crooked paths : whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

9 Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us : ^gwe wait for light, but behold ^hobscurity ; for brightness, *but* we walk in darkness.

10 ^hWe grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if *we had* no eyes : we stumble at noon day as in the night ; *we are* in desolate places as dead *men*.

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² Or, *adders'*.

³ Or, *that which is sprinkled is as if there brake out a viper.*

^d Job 8. 14, 15.

^e Prov. 1 16, Rom. 3. 15.

⁴ Heb *breaking*

⁵ Or, *right.*

^f Ps. 125. 5, Prov. 2. 15.

^g Jer. 8. 15.

^h Dent. 28. 29, Job 5. 14, Amos 8. 9.

having now deepened into open sin, such as prevailed side by side with Pharisaism among the Jews in the last days of their existence as a nation. Verse 1 is closely connected with the promises given at the end of the previous chapter, and the reason why those blessings are withheld is shown to be no want of power or willingness in God, but their own sins.

5, 6. "Cockatrice." See ch. xi. 8.

"Spider's web." A snare malignant and full of art, but unsubstantial (Job viii. 14.).

"He that eateth of their eggs dieth." Explained by some of the adoption of their principles ; and by others of their schemes working mischief even before they are ripe for execution.

"Crushed." The word used in Job xxxix. 15. If the foot tread on the egg, a venomous viper issues forth ; i. e. the corruption of morals is so great that if repressed in one place, it only breaks forth in an intenser form elsewhere. In ver. 6 the flimsy nature of the spider's web suggests the thought that the weaving of wicked schemes leads to no lasting profit.

8. "The way of peace." Even that highway so beautifully described in ch. xxxv. 8, as "the way of holiness."

9—15. In this stanza the prophet, joining himself with the Jews, bewails their dark and hopeless condition ; and then, vv. 16—18, describes the coming of Jehovah to punish the wicked and save the just.

9, 10. "Justice," i. e. righteousness, described as following the Jews, but unable to overtake them. God wills the sanctification of the sinner, but he flees from it. In ver. 10 Isaiah describes the infatuation of the

Before
CHRIST
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¹ ch. 38, 14.
Ezek. 7, 16.

11 We roar all like bears, and ¹mourn 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;

¹ Matt. 12, 34.

13 in transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering ^kfrom the heart words of falsehood.

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 ²maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw *it*, and ³it displeased him that *there was* no judgment.

² Or, *is*
accounted
mad.

³ Heb. *it*
was evil in
his eyes.

¹ Ezek. 22, 30.

^m Mark 6, 6.

ⁿ Ps. 98, 1.
ch. 63, 5.

^o Eph. 6, 14,
17.

¹ Thess. 5, 8.

16 ¹And he saw that *there was* no man, and ^mwondered that *there was* no intercessor: ⁿtherefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.

17 ^oFor he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he

people during the forty years between the resurrection and the destruction of their city; and equally of unbelievers now, who in the noontide light of revelation yet grope and stumble as if the faculty of sight were wanting. No amount of light will enable the blind or the dead to see.

11, 12. "We roar," &c. The people alternating between violent and gentle sorrow, confess their iniquity by the voice of the prophet.

14. "Justice." See on ver. 9. Righteousness tries to overtake them no more, but abandons the vain pursuit.

"The street." Really the wide open space left in a city where people assembled for business. There can be no hope left for a nation, in the dealings of whose citizens there is neither truth nor equity.

15. "Maketh himself a prey," i. e. in attempting to deal with men utterly dishonest he only gives himself up to be plundered.

16. "No man," i. e. no one willing or capable to put an end to this utter wickedness.

"No intercessor." Rather, "none to interpose," the larger meaning of the word. An intercessor is one who prays for others that they may not be punished: but Jehovah comes here as a mighty warrior, to execute stern justice. Yet, as ever, punishment with God ends in grace and mercy.

"His righteousness, it sustained him." It was this special attribute of God, i. e. His righteousness, that was manifested in and was the basis of the interposition. Hence, in ver. 17, it is described as the Divine warrior's breastplate.

ISAIAH, LX.

put on the garments of vengeance *for* clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke. Before CHRIST
cir. 698.

18 ^p According to *their* ² deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompence. p ch. 63. 6.
² Heb. *re-*
compencers.

19 ^q 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 ^r like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall ³ lift up a standard against him. q Ps. 113. 3.
Mal. 1. 11.

r Rev. 12. 15.

3 Or, *put him*
to flight.

20 And ^s the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. s Rom. 11. 26.

21 ^t 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. t Heb. 8. 10.
& 10. 16.

CHAPTER LX.

¹ *The glory of the church in the abundant access of the Gentiles, 15 and the great blessings after a short affliction.* a Eph. 5. 14.
2 Or, *be en-*
lightened;
for thy light
cometh.

ARISE, ^a ² shine; for thy light is come, and ^b the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. b Mal. 4. 2.

18. "To the islands," i. e. the heathen world. This manifestation of God's justice is not to be confined to Israel, though it may begin there. The covenant people are smitten first because they had enjoyed greater privileges, (St. Luke xii. 47.); but injustice, falsehood, cruelty, and the like, are sure to bring down punishment upon the guilty everywhere.

19. "So shall they fear," &c. God's chastisements are all for man's good, and so the manifestation of His justice serves only to widen the boundaries of His grace. The destruction of Jerusalem was a necessary condition for the enlargement and spiritualizing of the Church. In the next clause "the enemy" is Antichrist (1 St. John ii. 18.), the mysterious power which ever resists Christ, and seeks, sometimes by violence from without, more frequently by corruption from within, to oppose the spread of His Gospel, but against whose attacks the Holy Ghost is the Church's standard-bearer.

20. In Rom. xi. 26 St. Paul makes a special application of this promise to the time, still future, when the Jews shall be grafted again into their own olive-tree. Its complete fulfilment will be at the second Advent.

21. A promise that the Church shall continue until her Lord comes again, confirmed in St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

CHAPTER LX.

The promises contained in this chapter, though to some extent already fulfilled in the Christian Church, are so large and glorious as plainly to

Before
CHRIST
cir. 698.

2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

e ch. 49. 6, 23.
Rev. 21. 24.

3 And the ^eGentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

d ch. 49. 18.

4 ^dLift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, ^ethey come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at *thy* side.

e ch. 49. 20,
21, 22,
& 66. 12.

5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because ^fthe ²abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the ³forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

f Rom. 11. 25.

2 Or,
*noise of the
sea shall be
turned to-
ward thee.*

6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and ^gEphah; all they from ^hSheba shall come: they shall bring ⁱgold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.

3 Or, *wealth,*
ver. 11.

ch. 61. 6.

g Gen. 25. 4.

h Ps. 72. 10.

i ch. 61. 6.

Matt. 2. 11.

k Gen. 25. 13.

7 All the flocks of ^kKedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and ^lI will glorify the house of my glory.

l Hag. 2. 7, 9.

await a more complete accomplishment, perhaps at the time connected by St. Paul with the prediction given in ch. lvii. 20.

1, 2. A command is given to Zion to "arise and shine," yet with a light not her own, but shed upon her by Jehovah, Who is described as rising like the morning sun. But previously to this second Advent of Christ darkness is once again to cover "the people," pl. the peoples of the earth, like that which oppressed them before His nativity, ch. ix. 2.

3, 4. The complete accomplishment of these prophecies belongs to the time when "the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in," Rom. xi. 25. The first part of ver. 4 is repeated from ch. xlix. 18.

4. "Nursed at thy side." Rather, "carried on thy side:" the daughters as having less physical strength are carried on the hips after the Oriental manner, while the boys walk. See ch. xlix. 22, where also the Gentiles are represented as bringing back to Zion her own long-lost children.

5. "Flow together." Really the word rendered "lightened" in Ps. xxxiv. 5, i. e. thou shalt be made bright.

"Shall fear." More correctly, "tremble," flutter and throb with strong emotion, but of joy, rather than of alarm.

"Of the sea," i. e. of the nations dwelling round the Mediterranean.

"Forces." Rather, "wealth," as in marg.

6, 7. The neighbouring nations, represented by the Arab descendants of Abraham and Keturah, come in such numbers as to cover the ground

8 Who *are* these *that* fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Before
CHRIST
cir. 698.

9 ^m Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, ⁿ to bring thy sons from far, ^o their silver and their gold with them, ^p unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, ^q because he hath glorified thee.

10 And ^r the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, ^s and their kings shall minister unto thee: for ^t in my wrath I smote thee, ^u but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

11 Therefore thy gates ^x shall be open continually; ^y they shall not be shut day nor night; that *men* may bring unto thee the ^z forces of the Gentiles, and *that* their kings *may be* brought.

12 ^v For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, *those* nations shall be utterly wasted.

13 ^z 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 ^a the place of my feet glorious.

with their camels, bringing gold and incense for the Temple service, and flocks for sacrifice, the spiritual services of the Christian Church being represented under terms borrowed from the Jewish dispensation.

8. But distant nations are coming too. Their fleets, seen afar off upon the horizon, look like clouds borne along by the wind, or like a flock of doves flying home to the dovecot.

9. "The ships of Tarshish first." The words suggest the thought that the maritime nations will take a foremost place in this enlargement of the Church. For the ships of Tarshish, see ch. ii. 16.

10. As in the bringing of rams and flocks for sacrifice (ver. 7.), so in this description of the rebuilding of Jerusalem Isaiah is probably to be spiritually understood of the building up of the Church in Christian graces.

11. The gates continually open indicate not merely a state of settled peace and security, but that access to the Church will never be refused either to Jew or Gentile (Eph. ii. 18.).

"Forces." Really, "wealth," as in ver. 5, and margin.

12. "Serve thee," i. e. Zion, yet not in the narrow sense of the Jewish nation, but as the Jewish Church, when, in her grandeur as the Church of her Messiah, she reflects the glory of the Saviour risen upon her as the Sun of Righteousness (see ver. 1.).

"Shall perish." Comp. St. Matt. xxi. 44.

13. "The place of my sanctuary." Zion, where the Temple stood.

"The place of my feet," i. e. the place of My throne, with My footstool before it (Ezek. xliii. 7.). Some understand the trees mentioned

Before
CHRIST
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^b ch. 49. 23.
Rev. 3. 9.

^c Heb. 12. 22.
Rev. 14. 1.

^d ch. 49. 23.
& 61. 6. &
66. 11, 12.
^e ch. 43. 3.

^f ch. 26. 1.

^g Rev. 21. 23.
& 22. 5.

^h Zech. 2. 5.

14 The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall ^b bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, ^c The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

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, ^d and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that ^e I the LORD *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

17 For brass I will bring gold, and 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 borders; but thou shalt call ^f thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

19 The ^g sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and ^h thy God thy glory.

here literally of choice timber brought for the rebuilding of Zion and the Temple: others of a paradise round the holy city, adorned "with every tree pleasant to the sight" (Gen. ii. 9.). If this chapter foretells a still future glory of the Church, this latter exposition is preferable. But see ch. lxxv.

14. Though this verse is not to be restricted in its application to the Jewish community, yet it may have a literal fulfilment in especial honour and respect being paid them in the last days, according to the principle laid down by St. Paul in Rom. xi. 28, 29. It would also be a just compensation for the contempt in which they have been held by Christian nations.

15—17. In these verses there is that intricacy of metaphor so much admired by Orientals (ch. xxx. 28.). Zion is a rejected wife, and a desolate land, through which no traveller journeys, but becomes a child tenderly fostered by Gentile nations and their kings. In ver. 17 the thought reverts to the literal city with the golden age of Solomon restored; but, unlike Solomon's exactors, who made his "service grievous" (1 Kings xii. 4; and comp. 1 Kings v. 13.), these will act righteously, and the rulers by their justice will secure the city's peace.

18. The new Jerusalem needs no earthly wall (Zech. ii. 4, 5.), for the salvation wrought for her by Christ is her protection: nor need she be shut in with gates, for "praise," i.e. the joyful service of God, is her security.

19. With this verse compare Rev. xxi. 23; xxii. 5.

ISAIAH, LXI.

20 ⁱ 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.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 698.
ⁱ See Amos
8. 9.

21 ^k Thy people also *shall be* all righteous : ^l they shall inherit the land for ever, ^m the branch of my planting, ⁿ the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

^k ch. 52. 1.
Rev. 21. 27.
^l Ps. 37. 11, 22.
Matt. 5. 5.
^m ch. 61. 3.
Matt. 15. 13.
John 15. 2.
ⁿ ch. 29. 23.
& 45. 11.
Eph. 2. 10.
^o Matt. 13.
31, 32.

22 ^o A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation : I the LORD will hasten it in his time.

CHAPTER LXI.

1 The office of Christ. 4 The forwardness, 7 and blessings of the faithful.

THE ^a Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me ; because the LORD ^b hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek ; he hath sent me ^c to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim ^d liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound ;

^a ch. 11. 2.
Luke 4. 18.
John 1. 32.
& 3. 34.
^b Ps. 45. 7.
^c Ps. 147. 3.
ch. 57. 15.
^d ch. 42. 7.
See Jer.
34. 8.

21. "All righteous." Yet the parables of the tares (St. Matt. xiii. 30.) and the net (ib. 49.) seem to teach that as long as this dispensation lasts good and evil will be mingled, and exist side by side within the Church. Apparently it is a description of the Church in its real essence, and such as it ought to be, but leading us on to the hope that a time is coming when this bright picture will be more nearly realized than it ever has hitherto.

22. "A little one," &c. This is the rule under the Gospel (1 Cor. i. 27, 28.). St. Paul, "the least of the Apostles," labours more abundantly than they all (1 Cor. xv. 9, 10 ; and see St. Matt. xx. 27.).

"I will hasten it." This prospect, so indefinitely postponed, will yet be realized, and that rapidly at last, but only when the full time has come. There is with God no delay, but neither does He do anything prematurely.

CHAPTER LXI.

1. The first six clauses of this chapter were read by our Lord in the synagogue at Nazareth (St. Luke iv. 16—19.), and thus we know that after the description of the Church in its perfect development given us in the last chapter we now have set before us the nature of Christ's work in it. The description is taken from the jubilee year, itself a type of the Gospel dispensation.

"Anointed." Not merely consecrated to His offices of prophet, priest, and king, but also endued with the spiritual powers necessary for the right discharge of them. With this verse compare ch. xi. 2.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 698.

2 ° to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and † the day of vengeance of our God; ° to comfort all that mourn;

° See Lev. 25. 9.
† ch. 34. 8.
& 63. 4.
& 66. 14.
Mal. 4. 1, 3.
2 Thes. 1. 7,
8, 9.
§ ch. 57. 18.
Matt. 5. 4.
h Ps. 30. 11.
i ch. 60. 21.
k John 15. 8.
l ch. 41. 8.
& 58. 12.
Ezek. 36.
34, —36.

3 to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, h 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, i the planting of the LORD, k that he might be glorified.

4 ¶ And they shall l build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

m Eph. 2. 12.

5 And m strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.

n Ex. 19. 6.
ch. 60. 17.
& 66. 21.
1 Pet. 2. 5, 9.
Rev. 1. 6.
& 5. 10.
o ch. 60. 5.
11. 16.
p ch. 40. 2.
Zech. 9. 12.

6 n But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ° ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

7 p For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: there-

2, 3. "Day of vengeance." Just as the destruction of Jerusalem came rapidly at last, yet only after long preaching of the Gospel to that generation, so will similar manifestations of Christ in punishment, and finally the day of judgment, come only after a protracted time of grace. Hence the mention of the Divine vengeance is not felt by the prophet as any interruption of his message of mercy. Comp. chs. i. 27, 28; xxx. 25; and also Rom. xi. 12; and the type of the Divine interpositions, Exod. xiv. 20.

4. With this verse compare ch. lviii. 12.

5. The literal meaning of these two verses is that the Jews shall leave all secular callings to be performed by Gentiles, while they shall be a nation of priests, maintained in opulence by Gentile labour. But St. Peter describes all Christians as a royal priesthood (1 St. Pet. ii. 9.); and though when grafted back into their own olive-tree, the Jews may have a priority in honour, the exclusion of Gentiles from the ministry of the word is contrary to the whole idea and to every principle of the Catholic Church. See Rom. x. 12. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Gal. iii. 28; v. 6. We conclude therefore that these promises belong not to the Jewish nation but to the Jewish Church which, after the Advent of the Messiah, becomes Christian.

7, 8. "Double." See ch. xl. 2.

"They shall rejoice." This change from the second to the third person is according to Hebrew usage, though contrary to our own (see ch. xxiii. 13.). In ver. 8 the largeness of their recompence is ascribed to

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fore in their land they shall possess the double : everlasting joy shall be unto them. Before
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8 For ^aI the LORD love judgment, ^rI hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, ^sand I will make an everlasting covenant with them. q Ps. 11. 7.
r ch. 1. 11, 13.
s ch. 55. 3.

9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, ^tthat they are the seed *which* the LORD hath blessed. t ch. 65. 23.

10 ^uI will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for ^xhe hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, ^yas a bridegroom ^zdecketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels. u Hab. 3. 18.
x Ps. 132. 9, 16.
y ch. 49. 18.
Rev. 21. 2.
z Heb.
decketh as
a priest.

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 ^zrighteousness and ^apraise to spring forth before all the nations. z Ps. 72. 3.
& 85. 11.
a ch. 60. 18.
& 62. 7.

CHAPTER LXII.

1 The fervent desire of the prophet to confirm the church in God's promises. 5 The office of the ministers (unto which they are incited) in preaching the gospel, 10 and preparing the people thereto.

FOR Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the right-

Jehovah's attribute of justice. As in punishment so in reward God deals with men according as they have dealt with His gifts, St. Matt. xxv. 21.

“Directing their work” really means “assigning their reward.”

9. “Among the people.” Heb. the peoples. Even the heathen shall feel the moral superiority of those who are circumcised in heart (Rom. ii. 29.).

10, 11. The Messiah Who, in vv. 4—9, had foretold the glorious result of the Spirit's anointing Him for His office, now exults in His work, describing Himself as clothed by Jehovah in a dress of honour, the reward given in the East to those who have been successful. See Gen. xli. 42. Esth. viii. 15. Zech. iii. 5.

10. “Ornaments.” Really a head-dress like the High-priest's turban, and so very beautiful. This clothing of the Messiah is in ver. 11 explained as symbolizing such a change upon earth as shall make righteousness, the Church's inner life, and praise, the outward exhibition of it, as natural and necessary products as the growth of seed in a watered garden.

CHAPTER LXII.

1. After this hymn of exultation the Messiah continues His speech, still

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- ousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp *that* burneth.
- ^a ch. 60. 3. 2 ^a And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: ^b and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.
- ^c Zech. 9. 16. 3 Thou shalt also be ^c a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.
- ^d Hos. 1. 10.
^e 1 Pet. 2. 10.
^f ch. 49. 14.
& 54. 6, 7.
^g ch. 54. 1.
^h That is,
My delight
is in her.
ⁱ That is,
Married.
^j Heb. *with*
the joy of the
bridegroom.
^k ch. 65. 19. 4 ^d Thou shalt no more be termed ^e Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed ^f Desolate: but thou shalt be called ^g Hephzi-bah, and thy land ^h Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.
- 5 For *as* a young man marrieth a virgin, *so* shall thy sons marry thee: and ⁴ *as* the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, *so* ⁸ shall thy God rejoice over thee.
- ^h Ezek. 3. 17.
& 33. 7.
ⁱ Or, *ye*
that are
the LORD's
remem-
brancers. 6 ^h I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, *which* shall never hold their peace day nor night: ⁵ ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence,

describing His work for and in the Church. It is now that of intercession until the promises made to her are fulfilled.

2. "A new name" implies, in Heb. idiom, a change of state and character. Though the Christian Church is the same in essence as that of the Jews, yet its transformation from a local into a universal Church, no longer preparatory but proclaiming to mankind Christ's finished work and teaching, involves so great a practical difference as to make it seem new.

3. "A crown . . . in the hand." The spiritual Zion is not the crown of universal sovereignty worn by the Almighty from all eternity, but is the symbol of human redemption, and as being wrought in time it rests upon God's palm, ready to be bestowed by Him upon the Church's Bridegroom, Christ (see ch. lxi. 10.).

4. "Hephzi-bah" was the name of Manasseh's mother; and as the queen-mother was always a person of great influence, and Manasseh only twelve years old when he ascended the throne, we can scarcely doubt but that there is an allusion to her in the choice of this title.

5. "So shall thy sons marry thee." Believers who, as owing her filial love, are the Church's children, may nevertheless be described as marrying her to express a more eager desire for her possession, and the wish to belong to her by inalienable right: while God rejoices in her as the husband to whom she pertains, and whose office it is to protect and love her (see Eph. v. 25—27.).

6, 7. Like sentinels upon a city's walls watching over its safety, so the

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7 and give him no ²rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem ¹a praise in the earth.

8 The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, ³Surely I will no more ^kgive thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured:

9 but they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD; and they that have brought it together shall drink it ¹in the courts of my holiness.

10 ¶ Go through, go through the gates; ^mprepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; ⁿlift up a standard for the people.

11 Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, ^oSay ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his ^preward is with him, and his ⁴work before him.

12 And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city ^qnot forsaken.

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² Heb. silence.
¹ ch. 61. 11.
Zeph. 3. 20.
³ Heb. If I give, &c.
^k Deut. 28. 31, &c.
Jer. 5. 17.

¹ See Deut. 12. 12. & 14. 23, 26. & 16. 11, 14.
^m ch. 40. 3. & 57. 14.
ⁿ ch. 11. 12.

^o Zech. 9. 9. Matt. 21. 5. John 12. 15.
^p ch. 40. 10. Rev. 22. 12.

⁴ Or, recompence.

^q ver. 4.

devout are perpetually to unite their prayers with Christ's intercessions till Zion become in reality what she is in expectation. The want of these prayers on man's side, or their coldness, may be the reason why the Church still falls so very far short of the bright picture drawn of her by Isaiah.

8, 9. An allusion to Deut. xiv. 23. The enjoyment of the fruit of one's labours indicates security from without and good government from within. The feasting unmolested in the courts of the temple may indicate, as many interpreters suppose, liberty of worship. But besides this these Levitical banquets are a type of the enjoyment in the Church of spiritual blessings, and of the feast of the Lord's Supper.

10—12. Every effort is to be made to gather all mankind into the Church. A highway, from which every stone of obstruction has been removed, is to be prepared for "the people," sing., the Jews. A banner is to be lifted up, as a signal for the peoples, pl., Gentile nations (see ch. xlix. 22.), to join their march. A Divine proclamation summons all the world to Christ's Advent, in words which, if used of the first Advent in ch. xl. 10, are applied to the second Advent in Rev. xxii. 12. Finally, referring to ver. 2, the Church's children are called by new names indicative of what they must become, if Christ's Advent is to be hastened; while the titles given to the Church indicate that its mission under the Gospel shall not be as unproductive as was that of the literal Zion (see ch. liv. 1.).

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CHAPTER LXIII.

1 *Christ sheweth who he is, 2 what his victory over his enemies, 7 and what his mercy toward his church. 10 In his just wrath he remembereth his free mercy. 15 The church in their prayer, 17 and complaint, profess their faith.*

WHO is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this *that is* ² glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

² Heb. *decked.*

^a Rev. 19. 13. 2 Wherefore ^a *art thou* red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

^b Lam. 1. 15. ³ I have ^b trodden the winepress 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.

^c ch. 34. 8. ⁴ For the ^c day of vengeance *is* in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

^d ch. 41. 28. ⁵ ^d And I looked, and ^e *there was* none to help; and I wondered that *there was* none to uphold: therefore mine own ^f arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.

^e John 16. 32.

^f Ps. 98. 1. ⁶ And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and ^g make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

^g Rev. 16. 6.

CHAPTER LXIII.

1. Edom, the red, is the symbol of the enemies of Zion, and as the last chapter closed with the picture of Jew and Gentile crowding into the Church, so here we have the picture of the Captain of her salvation returning from the overthrow of her enemies. Comp. ch. xxxiv. 5, 6.

“**Travelling.**” Lit. “bending forward,” like one marching with energy, and taking long steps.

“**I that speak,**” &c. Though pronouncing and executing judgment, yet He does it as one “**mighty to save,**” because, as in ch. lxi. 2, “the **day of vengeance**” is also the day of redemption (see ver. 4.).

3—6. The trampling of the grapes is always an emblem of the Divine judgments.

3. “**Alone.**” Because “the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son” (St. John v. 22.). With ver. 5 comp. ch. lix. 16. The whole six verses are in the form of a dialogue. and set before us a brilliant and stirring delineation of the Messiah as a warrior, with which we should compare the representation of Him in Rev. xix. 11—16, where we read of the battle which is to precede His coming.

7 ¶ I will mention the lovingkindnesses 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 lovingkindnesses.

8 For he said, Surely they *are* my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour.

9 ^hIn all their affliction he was afflicted, ⁱand the angel of his presence saved them: ^kin his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and ^lhe bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

10 But they ^mrebelled, and ⁿvexed his holy Spirit: ^otherefore he was turned to be their enemy, *and* he fought against them.

11 Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, *and* his people, *saying*, Where *is* he that ^pbrought them up out of the sea with the ^qshepherd of his flock? ^rwhere *is* he that put his holy Spirit within him?

12 That led *them* by the right hand of Moses ^rwith his glorious arm, ^sdividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?

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^h Judg. 10. 16.
Zech. 2. 8.
Acts 9. 4.
ⁱ Ex. 14. 19.
& 23. 20, 21.
& 33. 14.
Mal. 3. 1.
Acts 12. 11.
^k Deut. 7. 7, 8.
^l Ex. 19. 4.
Deut. 1. 31.
& 32. 11, 12.
ch. 46. 3, 4.
^m Ex. 15. 24.
Num. 14. 11.
Ps. 78. 56.
& 95. 9.
ⁿ Ps. 78. 40.
Acts 7. 51.
Eph. 4. 30.
^o Ex. 23. 21.
^p Ex. 14. 20.
& 32. 11, 12.
Num. 14. 13,
14, &c.
Jer. 2. 6.
^q Or, *shepherds*, as
Ps. 77. 20.
^r Num. 11.
17, 25.
Neh. 9. 20.
Dan. 4. 8.
Hag. 2. 5.
^s Ex. 15. 6.
Ex. 14. 21. Josh. 3. 16.

Ixiii. 7—Ixiv. 12.

Assured in the previous dialogue that the Messiah would shortly appear in person to accomplish the salvation of His people, the prophet pours out in this hymn his thanksgivings mingled with the confession of the nation's sin.

8. "Children that will not lie," i. e. deal falsely by Me, and act contrary to the relationship which exists between us as father and children. The verse does not refer to God's foreknowledge, see ch. xlvi. 8, but is a confession made by the prophet in the name of the people that God had ever acted by them as a loving father.

9. "Angel of his presence." The reference is to the Angel who conducted the Israelites through the wilderness (Exod. xiv. 19; xxiii. 20—23.), and who was no other than Jehovah Himself (ib. xxxiii. 12—17.). But this presence was not confined to the time of the exodus, and we must take the expressions here and in ver. 10 as descriptive generally of God's goodness and of the waywardness of Israel.

11. This verse should be translated, "Then His people remembered 'the days of Moses of old, saying,' &c. Taught by God's chastisements, ver. 10, the people repent, and calling the former days to remembrance, utter these longing questions expressive of their desire that the old relation between them and Jehovah should be renewed.

12. The "glorious arm" is Jehovah's Almighty power, and the more

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† Ps. 106. 9.

u 2 Sam. 7. 23.

x Deut. 26. 15.

Ps. 80. 14.

y Ps. 33. 14.

2 Or, *the*

multitude.

z Jer. 31. 20.

Hos. 11. 8.

a Deut. 32. 6.

1 Chr. 29. 10.

ch. 64. 8.

b Job 14. 21.

Eccles. 9. 5.

3 Or, *our*

redeemer

from ever-

lasting is

thy name.

c Ps. 119. 10.

d See chap.

6. 10, with

John 12. 40.

Rom. 9. 18.

e Num. 10. 36.

Ps. 90. 13.

f Deut. 7. 6.

& 26. 19.

ch. 62. 12.

Dan. 8. 24.

g Ps. 74. 7.

4 Or, *thy*

name was

not called

upon them,

ch. 65. 1.

13 † That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, *that* they should not stumble?

14 As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, ^u to make thyself a glorious name.

15 ¶ ^x Look down from heaven, and behold ^y from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where *is* thy zeal and thy strength, ^z the sounding ^a of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained?

16 ^a Doubtless thou *art* our father, though Abraham ^b be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, *art* our father, ³ our redeemer; thy name *is* from everlasting.

17 O LORD, why hast thou ^c made us to err from thy ways, *and* ^d hardened our heart from thy fear? ^e Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.

18 ^f The people of thy holiness have possessed *it* but a little while: ^g our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.

19 We are *thine*: thou never barest rule over them; ⁴ they were not called by thy name.

correct translation is, "that caused His glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses."

13. "As a horse in the wilderness." As easily as a horse journeys over a level expanse of turf.

14. "As a beast." Rather, "like cattle," &c. The settlement of the people in Canaan is compared to the descent of the cattle from the hills, where they graze for a short time in summer, to their permanent homesteads in the valleys.

15. The enumeration of Jehovah's past mercies naturally leads on to this appeal for a fresh interposition on behalf of His people.

"The sounding of thy bowels," i. e. Thy compassion.

16. "Though Abraham," &c. A similar though less forcible metaphor than that in ch. xlix. 15. Abraham and Israel may forget their offspring, but in Jehovah they have a Father Whose love is sure.

17. The expostulation now grows more bold and warm. By not hearing their prayer Jehovah seems to cast them off, and leave them to grow hardened in their sins.

18. "Have possessed it," i. e. the land of promise, see ver. 14.

19. This verse explains ver. 17, and should be translated, "We are become as they over whom Thou never barest rule: as they that were never called by Thy name," i. e. we are treated like the heathen, and are thereby made into heathens.

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CHAPTER LXIV.

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1 *The church prayeth for the illustration of God's power. 5 Celebrating God's mercy, it maketh confession of their natural corruptions. 9 It complaineth of their affliction.*

O H that thou wouldest ^arend the heavens, that ^a Ps. 144. 5.
thou wouldest come down, that ^bthe moun- ^b Judg. 5. 5.
tains might flow down at thy presence, ^b Mic. 1. 4.

2 as *when* ²the melting fire burneth, the fire ² Heb.
causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name ^{the fire of}
known to thine adversaries, *that* the nations may ^{meltings.}
tremble at thy presence!

3 When ^cthou didst terrible things *which* we ^c Ex. 34. 10.
looked not for, thou camst down, the mountains ^{Judg. 5. 4, 5.}
flowed down at thy presence. ^{Ps. 68. 8.}
^{Hab. 3. 3, 6.}

4 For since the beginning of the world ^d*men* have ^d Ps. 31. 19.
not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the ¹ Cor. 2. 9.
eye ³seen, O God, beside thee, *what* he hath prepared ³ Or, *seen a*
for him that waiteth for him. ^{God beside}
^{thee, which}
^{doeth so for}
^{him, &c.}

5 Thou meetest him that rejoiceth ^eand worketh ^e Acts 10. 25.
righteousness, *those that* remember thee in thy ^f ch. 26. 8.
ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned:
⁵ in those is continuance, and we shall be saved. ^e Mal. 3. 6.

CHAPTER LXIV.

1. This earnest burst of prayer follows immediately upon the passionate exclamations at the end of ch. lxiii. Whoever it was that divided the prayer into two chapters, he displayed an entire inability to understand Isaiah's emotions, and follow the course of his thoughts.

2. The translation of this verse is difficult, but the meaning is plain. The prophet longs for some manifestation of God as rapid and mighty as the action of fire, and that the nations might be violently agitated by it like boiling water.

3, 4. An allusion to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. And not less wonderful will be God's interpositions in time to come. St. Paul applies the words to our Lord's Incarnation (1 Cor. ii. 9.), and they will equally be verified at His second coming.

5. "Thou meetest him," &c. There is love and mercy not merely for the Church as a whole at these great interpositions of God's power, but for each individual at all times who finds his happiness in God and in working righteousness. The next clause should be translated, "Behold Thou wast wroth, for we had sinned." The chastisement lamented in ch. lxiii. 18, 19, had been just and merited, but it served only to heighten God's mercy. For "in those," in God's ways, "is continuance." He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever: and though His covenant may be abrogated with the Jewish Church, it will be a change only of form, and not of substance. There will still be for men a way of salvation.

B-fore
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^h Phil. 3. 9.
ⁱ Ps. 90. 5, 6.
^k Hos. 7. 7.

^l Heb.
melted.
^m Heb. *by the*
band: as
Job 8. 4.

ⁿ ch. 63. 16.
^o ch. 29. 16.
& 43. 9.
Jer. 18. 6.
Rom. 9. 20,
21.

^p Eph. 2. 10.
^q Ps. 74. 1, 2.
& 79. 8.

^r Ps. 79. 13.

^s Ps. 79. 1.

^t 2 Kin. 25. 9.
^u Chr. 36. 19.
Ps. 74. 7.

^v Ezek. 24. 21,
25.

^w ch. 42. 14.

^x Ps. 83. 1.

6 But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all
^h our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all
do ⁱ fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind,
have taken us away.

7 And ^k *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 ^l consumed
us, ^m because of our iniquities.

8 ⁿ But now, O LORD, thou *art* our father; we
are the clay, ^o and thou our potter; and we all *are*
^p the work of thy hand.

9 Be not ^q wroth very sore, O LORD, neither
remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech
thee, ^r we *are* all thy people.

10 Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a
wilderness, ^s Jerusalem a desolation.

11 ^t Our holy and our beautiful house, where our
fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all
^u our pleasant things are laid waste.

12 ^v Wilt thou refrain thyself for these *things*, O
LORD? ^w wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us
very sore?

CHAPTER LXV.

¹ *The calling of the Gentiles.* ² *The Jews, for their incredulity, idolatry, and hypocrisy, are rejected.* ⁸ *A remnant shall be saved.* ¹¹ *Judgments on the wicked, and blessings on the godly.* ¹⁷ *The blessed state of the new Jerusalem.*

^a Rom. 9. 24,
25, 26, 30,
& 10. 30.
Eph. 2. 12,
13.

I ^a AM sought of *them that* asked not *for me*; I
am found of *them that* sought me not: I said,

6—8. A more full confession of Israel's iniquity and its punishment, followed by its unconditional surrender of itself into God's hands.

10—12. These words are a lamentation over the approaching destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Chaldeans, but they refer even more forcibly to the removal of the Jewish polity by the Romans, rendered inevitable by the refusal of the nation to accept Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah.

CHAPTER LXV.

In this chapter the imploring appeal with which the preceding one ended is answered. Impenitent Israel is to be rejected, and the Gentiles called in its stead, vv. 1—16; upon this follows a state of happiness like that of the primeval paradise, vv. 17—25. Though partially fulfilled in the Christian dispensation, a more complete fulfilment is probably to be expected.

1. "I am sought . . . sought me not." Two different verbs in the Hebrew, of which the first means "inquiring of," "seeking religious

Behold me, behold me, unto a nation *that* ^b was not called by my name.

2 ^c 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;

3 a people ^d that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; ^e that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense ² upon altars of brick;

4 ^f which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, ^g which eat swine's flesh, and ^h broth of abominable *things is in* their vessels;

5 ⁱ which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These *are* a smoke in my ^j nose, a fire that burneth all the day.

6 Behold, ^k *it is* written before me: ^l I will not keep silence, ^m but will recompense, even recompense into thier bosom,

7 your iniquities, and ⁿ the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the LORD, ^o which have burned incense upon the mountains, ^p and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.

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^b ch. 63. 1. ^c Rom. 10. 21.

^d Deut. 32. 21.

^e ch. 1. 29. & 66. 17. See Lev. 17. 5.

^f Heb. upon bricks.

^g Deut. 18. 11.

^h ch. 66. 17. See Lev. 11. 7.

ⁱ Or, pieces.

^j See Matt. 9. 11.

^k Luke 5. 30. & 18. 11.

^l Jude 10.

^m Or, anger.

ⁿ Deut. 32. 34. Mal. 3. 16.

^o Ps. 50. 3.

^p Ps. 79. 12.

^q Jer. 16. 18.

^r Ezek. 11. 21.

^s Ex. 20. 5.

^t Ezek. 18. 6.

^u Ezek. 20. 27, 28.

“counsel and guidance of the Deity.” The Gentiles who knew nothing of Jehovah now, first of all, inquire concerning Him, and finally as the result of what they hear, are induced to seek Him; and not in vain.

2—4. The carnal Israel is rejected for two sins, of which the first is idolatry, the second Pharisaism. This idolatry they practised “in gardens,” not in places set apart for God’s service, but in all pleasant spots suited for revelling.

3. “Altars of brick,” i. e. altars irregularly constructed; but as the Hebrew is “upon bricks,” many understand it of the tiled roofs of houses. See Jer. xix. 13.

4. “Among the graves,” i. e. they stay, pass the night in the tombs, apparently to consult the dead, who appear to them in dreams.

“Swine’s flesh.” The sacrifice was followed by a feast upon the flesh of the victim, and swine were generally sacrificed to licentious deities. Such a sacrifice was thus doubly revolting, and most hateful to a pious Jew.

5. While some thus reject God altogether for idols, those who nominally serve Him offer Him only a self-righteous formalism. This was their second sin, Pharisaism.

6, 7. “It is written,” i. e. recorded “before me.” Israel’s sin, blotted out by no repentance, but repeated in successive generations, stands recorded before God, and must bring upon the nation retribution. A nation is condemned only when thus the sin of the fathers is persevered in by their descendants.

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P Joel 2. 14.

8 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and *one* saith, Destroy it not; for ^p a blessing *is* in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.

q ver. 15, 22.
Matt. 24. 22
Rom. 11. 5, 7.

9 And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine ^a elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.

r ch. 33. 9.
& 35. 2.

s Josh. 7. 24,
26.
Hos. 2. 15.

10 And ^r Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and ^s the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.

t ch. 56. 7.
& 57. 13.
ver. 25.

u Ezek. 23. 41.
1 Cor. 10. 21.

11 ¶ But ye *are* they that forsake the LORD, that forget ^t my holy mountain, that prepare ^u a table for that ² troop, and that furnish the drink offering unto that ³ number.

2 Or, *Gad*.

3 Or, *Meni*.

x 2 Chron. 36.
15. 16.

Prov. 1. 24,
&c. ch. 66. 4.

Jer. 7. 13.
Zech. 7. 7.

Matt. 21.
34,—43.

12 Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: ^{*} 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,

8. "As the new wine," &c. The trampling of grapes in the wine-press is always the symbol of the Divine wrath. It might seem therefore that when God's anger falls upon Israel, and tramples under foot its national existence, the result would be Israel's destruction. But no: that trampling has another side. The grape is destroyed, but the juice, God's blessing within it, is thereby set free. So the crushing of Israel shall set free the new wine of the Gospel, to gladden the whole Gentile world.

"Destroy it not" is an entreaty addressed to the vintager when about to subject the grapes to this rough process: the answer shows that only by this process can the Divine purpose be carried out. But how grand and universal is this truth! When famine and pestilence and war are abroad in the earth, it might seem as if they only crushed and destroyed. But new life springs up out of the previous ruin.

9. "A seed." The same idea under a different form. Out of Jacob is to come forth that which, developing like a seed into a new plant, is to inherit in richer abundance all the blessings of the Jewish covenant. And a seed unless it die brings forth no fruit, St. John xii. 24.

10. "Sharon," a fertile plain on the Mediterranean, and "Achor," a rich valley near Jericho, are put for the whole land of promise.

11, 12. "But ye..." The prophecy now reverts to idolatrous Israel.

"Troop" and "number" are really the names of two heathen deities, the first being *Gad*, i. e. Fortune; the second *Meni*, i. e. Fate or Destiny. The lot of the Israelites who worship these idols is contrasted in the four following verses with the happiness of the spiritual Israel.

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:

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14 behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and ^y shall howl for ^z vexation of spirit.

^y Matt. 8. 12.
Luke 13. 28.

^z Heb.
breaking.

^a See Jer.

23. 22.

Zech. 8. 13.

^a ver. 9. 22.

^b ch. 62. 2.

Acts 11. 26.

^c Ps. 72. 17.

Jer. 4. 2.

^d Deut. 6. 13.

Ps. 63. 11.

ch. 19. 18.

& 45. 23.

Zeph. 1. 5.

^e ch. 51. 16.

& 66. 22.

² Pet. 3. 13.

Rev. 21. 1.

³ Heb. come
upon the
heart.

15 And ye shall leave your name ^a for a curse unto ^a my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and ^b call his servants by another name:

16 ^c that he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and ^d 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.

17 For, behold, I create ^e new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor ³ 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 ^f I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the ^g voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

^f ch. 62. 5.

^g ch. 35. 10.

& 51. 11.

Rev. 7. 17.

& 21. 4.

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 an hundred years old; ^h but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed.

^h Eccles. 8. 12.

15. "Your name . . . another name." While change of name according to Hebrew usage means change of condition, it is impossible to forget that literally the name Jew has become a bye-word, and that Christian is looked upon not as Jew spiritualised, but as its contrary and opposite.

16. "God of truth." Heb. "God of Amen" (twice). See 2 Cor. i. 20. Rev. iii. 14.

17, 18. The crushing of the grapes to produce the new wine takes now the grander form of the creation of a new heaven and earth. In ver. 18 this new creation is explained as the making of Jerusalem to be a cause of rejoicing, and the Jews of joy.

20. The duration of human life is to be restored to that of the patriarchs before the flood. There is to be neither premature death nor premature decay. To die at the age of a hundred years would be in this paradise a child's death, and even the sinner will be cut off at so early a stage only by the special condemnation of the Almighty.

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21 And ¹they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

ⁱ See Lev.

26. 16.
Deut. 28. 30.
ch. 62. 8.
Amos 9. 14.

^k Ps. 92. 12.

¹ ver. 9. 15.

² Heb.

*shall make
them con-
tinue long,
or, shall
wear out.*

^m Deut. 28. 41.

Hos. 9. 12.

ⁿ ch. 61. 9.

^o Ps. 32. 5.

Dan. 9. 21.

22 They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for ^kas the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and ¹mine elect ²shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

23 They shall not labour in vain, ^mnor bring forth for trouble; for ⁿthey *are* the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.

24 And it shall come to pass, that ^obefore they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

^p ch. 11. 6.

7. 9.

^q Gen. 3. 14.

25 The ^pwolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: ^qand dust *shall be* the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

CHAPTER LXVI.

1 The glorious God will be served in humble sincerity, 5 He comforteth the humble with the marvellous generation, 10 and with the gracious benefits of the church. 15 God's severe judgments against the wicked. 19 The Gentiles shall have an holy church, 24 and see the damnation of the wicked.

^a 1 Kin. 8. 27.

2 Chr. 6. 18.

Matt. 5. 34,

35.

Acts 7. 43,

49. & 17. 24.

THUS saith the LORD, ^aThe 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?

21, 22. A reversal of the denunciation in Deut. xxviii. 30.

"As the days of a tree," i. e. a thousand years or more.

23. "Their offspring with them." To all their other blessings is to be added domestic happiness, resting upon the Divine favour inherited through successive generations. Compare the description of national sin in ver. 7, as being iniquity begun by the fathers and continued by the children, with the account given here of national piety.

25. "Dust shall be the serpent's meat." See Gen. iii. 14. The paradise on earth foretold here, and in ch. xi. 6—9, is thus inseparably connected with the humiliation of Satan, and the victory of the Seed of the Woman, promised to our first parents at the Fall.

CHAPTER LXVI.

After the bright picture so powerfully delineated in the last chapter, the prophet points out the main characteristics in which the new dispensation differs from and is superior to the old; he next foretells the conversion of the whole heathen world, and the ingathering of the Jews; and, finally, ends with a mingled picture of happiness and judgment.

1, 2. See ch. lvii. 15. No earthly temple is a fit abode for the God

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2 For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: ^b but to this *man* will I look, ^c *even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and* ^d trembleth at my word.

3 ^e He that killeth an ox *is as if* he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a ² lamb, *as if* he ^f cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, *as if* he offered swine's blood; he that ³ burneth incense, *as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

4 I also will choose their ⁴ delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; ⁵ because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose *that* in which I delighted not.

5 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, ^h ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, ⁱ Let the LORD be glorified: but ^k he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.

6 A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the LORD that rendereth recompence to his enemies.

7 Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.

Who fills the universe: but there is a temple fit for Him in the heart of the contrite and humble, because the restoration of that heart is God's own work (1 Cor. iii. 16.).

3, 4. Sacrifices are absolutely forbidden: for to each of the four main particulars in which bloody and unbloody sacrifices are summed up, Isaiah adds some crime or hateful deed, implying that all alike are looked upon with abhorrence by God. Hence in ver. 4 the miserable rejection of those who abide by the legal observances of the old dispensation and refuse the spiritual mercies of the new covenant. The latter part of the verse is repeated from ch. lxx. 12.

5. "Ye that tremble," &c. The humble and contrite of ver. 2.

"Your brethren." This directly refers to the unconverted Jews persecuting those who accepted Christ, but see St. Matt. x. 22. St. Luke xxi. 16, 17.

6. The Jews had persecuted their believing brethren on the plea of seeking God's glory. Really, He is glorified by the coming of the armies of Rome to destroy the guilty city; and in this verse His war-cry is heard pealing from town and temple as He appears to give victory in the conflict to those who love Him.

7—8. This victory is now described as the bringing forth of that

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^b ch. 57. 15.
& 61. 1.

^c Ps. 34. 18.
& 51. 17.

^d Ezra 9. 4.
& 10. 3.

^e Prov. 28. 14.
ver. 5.

^f ch. 1. 11.
2 Or, kid.

^g Deut. 23. 18.

^h Heb. mak-
eth a mem-
orial of,
Lev. 2. 2.

ⁱ Or, devices.

^k Prov. 1. 24.
ch. 65. 12.
Jer. 7. 13.

^h ver. 2.

ⁱ ch. 5. 19.

^k 2 Thes. 1. 10.
Tit. 2. 13.

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8 Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? *or* shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

² Or, *beget?* 9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not ² 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:

11 that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the ³ abundance of her glory.

³ Or,
brightness.
¹ ch. 48. 18.
& 60. 5.

12 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, ¹ I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye ^m suck, ye shall be ⁿ borne upon *her* sides, and be dandled upon *her* knees.

^m ch. 60. 16.
ⁿ ch. 41. 22.
& 60. 4.

13 As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

14 And when ye see *this*, your heart shall rejoice, and ^o 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.

^o See Ezek.
37. 1, &c.

^p ch. 9. 5.
² Thess. 1. 8.

15 ^p For, behold, the LORD will come with fire,

spiritual dispensation with which the Jewish Church had been in travail so long, and whose birth nevertheless at last seemed so sudden, because "Jehovah hastened it in its time," ch. lx. 22.

8. "A nation." The upgrowth of the Gentile Church was wonderfully rapid, "and yet the prophecy may also look forward to a further fulfilment, when the national conversion of Israel shall be as 'life from the 'dead' to the world'" (*Dr. Kay*). The substitution of the Gospel for the Law (St. John i. 17.) seems clearly to be the first object of the prophecy, but it is foretold in terms larger than have been at present filled up. Ver. 9 especially suggests that the preservation of the Jewish nation since the coming of Christ has equally a purpose with the long care of it before His Advent.

10—14. The metaphor is still continued. Zion is at length a mother (see ch. liv. 1.), and not only is there the general command given to rejoice with her, but the whole Gentile world is summoned to gather round her as children, and enjoy the abundance of her spiritual glory.

14. "Like an herb." Heb. "as the young grass."

15, 16. At every visitation of man by God there is, as in the pillar

and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. Before CHRIST
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16 For by fire and by ⁹his sword will the LORD ⁹ch. 27. 1. plead with all flesh : and the slain of the LORD shall be many.

17 ¹They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens ²behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD. 1 ch. 65. 3, 4.
2 Or, one after another.

18 For I know their works and their thoughts : it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues ; and they shall come, and see my glory.

19 ³And I will set a sign among them, and I will ³Luke 2. 34. send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal,

of cloud and fire, a twofold aspect, necessitated by man's free-will, mercy for the penitent and judgment for those who have refused the Divine offers of grace and salvation (see on chs. vi. 10 ; xxx. 25 ; lxi. 2.).

17. "Behind one tree," i. e. an Asherah, or wooden statue of the Semitic Venus, which was the object of their idolatry (see ch. xvii. 8.); but the right reading is probably "behind one man," standing in their midst as the leader of their worship, like Jaazaniah in Ezek. viii. 11.

"The abomination." A generic term for vermin, such as the creeping things enumerated in Lev. xi. 29, 30.

"The mouse" is probably the jerboa, which was eaten by the Arabs.

18. "It shall come," i. e. the time is coming, when all nations shall be gathered together for judgment.

19—21. Of these congregated nations those which escape, i. e. the believing portion, are to go as missionaries throughout the heathen world, where they are to declare God's glory. Not only so, but they are to bring thence "all your brethren," which can only mean the dispersed Jews, from all nations to Jehovah's holy mountain, Jerusalem. After which God will take of the Gentiles to be priests and Levites. The holy mountain is in the language of Isaiah the universal Church (see ch. ii. 2.), and these words seem to indicate that the gathering in of the fulness of the Gentiles, followed by the salvation of all the Jews (Rom. xi. 25, 26.), is to be the work of Gentile missionaries, while the first gathering in both of Gentiles and of Jews, to whom everywhere the Gospel was first preached, was the work of Jewish missionaries (Acts viii. 4, &c.).

19. "A sign." Possibly some miraculous display of Christ's power, which will precede this final ingathering of Jew and Gentile.

"Pul." Possibly the same as Phut, i. e. Libya.

"Lud." Also probably a region of Africa.

"Tubal." A Scythian race (Ezek. xxxviii. 2.).

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† Mal. 1. 11.

“ Rom. 15. 16.

2 Or, *coaches*.

× Ex. 19. 6.

ch. 61. 6.

1 Pet. 2. 9.

Rev. 1. 6.

7 ch. 65. 17.

2 Pet. 3. 13.

Rev. 21. 1.

× Zech. 14. 16.

3 Heb. from

new moon

to his new

moon, and

from sab-

bath to his

sabbath-

4 Ps. 65. 2.

5 ver. 16.

6 Mark 9. 44,

46, 48.

and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; † and they shall declare my glory 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 2 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.

21 And I will also take of them for × priests and for Levites, saith the LORD.

22 For as y 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.

23 And z it shall come to pass, that 3 from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, a shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.

24 And they shall go forth, and look upon b the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their c worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

“ Javan.” Greece and the “ isles afar off,” together represent the whole world.

20. “ Swift beasts.” Rather, dromedaries.

22—24. The new dispensation, after this ingathering of the fulness of Gentile and Jew, is to know no further reverse, but “ all flesh ” is to worship God in it continually, while the punishment of transgressors is described in terms applied by our Lord to the final judgment (St. Mark ix. 44.). So in the Revelation of St. John the words and images of Isaiah in these closing chapters are repeatedly referred to, and made applicable to the final restitution of all things. Possibly therefore these last chapters belong first to our Lord’s Advent in the flesh and the founding of the Christian Church; next they await a more full accomplishment in the events which are to precede His second Advent: while finally, they look on to the consummation of all things, and the completion of the dispensation under which we now live.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

JEREMIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

THE name Jeremiah probably means the "Lord exalts." Like the name of Isaiah, it is thus typical of the fate of Israel. The book before us shows how the Lord would cast down Jerusalem from her place: hope to the downstricken is held out in the name of the prophet.

Jeremiah commenced his ministry in the reign of Josiah, when the impious idolatries of Amon were practised in Jerusalem; and, though the fact is not mentioned, it is reasonable to suppose that the reforms effected by Josiah were in some way due to the influence of Jeremiah. The life of the prophet cannot be appreciated in any better way than by a careful study of his writings, and of the corresponding portions of the books of Kings and Chronicles. One important event of his times however is passed over in silence by Scripture, which is the downfall of the Assyrian empire. Josiah lost his life (2 Kings xxiii. 29.) in an attempt to prevent the Egyptians from attacking the Assyrians. About four years later we find that not Assyria, but Babylon was the ruling power in the East. It was at this time that the Egyptians sustained a crushing defeat from Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish, and from this time date some of the most important prophecies of Jeremiah, especially chapter xxv., in which he foretold the overthrow of the mighty empire the foundations of which had just been laid.

Of the death of Jeremiah nothing is known. According to a tradition of the second century A.D. he was stoned in Egypt; in fact, it has been supposed that he is the martyr to whom allusion is made in Heb. xi. 37, "they were stoned." Scripture however terminates his history by telling us that he went into Egypt after the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. He was rightly regarded by the Jews as one of the greatest of their prophets; and there were some, indeed, who actually expected his personal return to earth before the coming of the Messiah (St. Matt. xvi. 14. St. John i. 21.).

INTRODUCTION.

The reader will be struck by the wonderful way in which Jeremiah reproduces other portions of Scripture. This is in no way due to any reserve about the prophet, as though he were afraid to utter his own words. It is rather to be accounted for in the following way:—He wished to shew the living character of God's word—prophecies uttered years ago by Balaam were still in force. His frequent repetition of earlier prophecies taught those to whom he spoke that his was not the first warning that they had received. And again, his mind was so completely impregnated with Scripture that when in trouble himself he could find no readier vent to his feelings than in the words of other sufferers. In this way, under God's providence, Jeremiah becomes the guardian of the inspired writings. There is hardly a book of the Bible written before the Captivity to which he does not in some way refer.

The most difficult question connected with his writings is the following: upon what principle are they arranged in their present form? The clue to the answer is to be found in ch. xxxvi., where we read of a command being given to him to write a roll of his prophecies from the times of Josiah down to the fourth year of Jehoiakim (vv. 1, 2.). This roll was burnt by the king, and in the place of it was written another (ver. 32.), in which were added "many like words." This roll apparently occupies chs. i.—xvii., to which were added subsequently prophecies of a similar nature, chs. xviii.—xxiv. belonging to later times, but occupying their present position on account of the similarity of the subject-matter. This constitutes the first Book of Jeremiah. Chs. xxv.—xxxvi. both begin and end with the reign of Jehoiakim. They treat of the personal history of the prophet in chronological order from chs. xxv.—xxxiv., the last two chapters, namely chs. xxxv., xxxvi., being a historical appendix referring to the times of Jehoiakim. These form the second Book of the collection. Chs. xxxvii.—xliv. form a distinct portion, and contain the narrative of the besieged resident, and his fate after the capture of Jerusalem. To these is added a short prophetic appendix in ch. xlv. containing a personal promise made by the prophet to his friend Baruch. This constitutes the third Book. The fourth Book contains prophecies respecting the foreign nations, and extends from chs. xlvi.—li. 58, the remaining portion being a historical appendix added by a later editor, as appears from ch. li. 64. It is impossible in so short a space to give every reason that can be adduced for the above classification, but if the reader studies the book with this principle before him he will find it far more intelligible than if he reads it at haphazard.

CHAPTER I.

Before
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1 *The time, 3 and the calling of Jeremiah.* 11 *His prophetic visions of an almond rod and a seething pot.* 15 *His heavy message against Judah.* 17 *God encourageth him with his promise of assistance.*

THE words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were ^a 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, ^b in the thirteenth year of his reign.

3 It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, ^c unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, ^d unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive ^e in the fifth month.

4 Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

5 Before I ^f formed thee in the belly ^g I knew thee ; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I ^h sanctified thee, and I ² ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

^a Josh. 21. 18.
¹ Chr. 6. 60.
ch. 32. 7, 8, 9.

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^b ch. 25. 3.

^c ch. 33. 2.

^d ch. 52. 12,
15.

^e 2 Kin. 25. 8.

^f Isa. 49. 1, 5.
^g Ex. 33. 12,
17.

^h Luke 1. 15,
41.
Gal. 1. 15, 16.

² Heb. gave.

BOOK I. CHAPTERS I.—XXIV.

Prophecies of Jeremiah relating to the fall of Jerusalem and the Captivity, arranged in historical order from the time of Josiah to that of Zedekiah.

CHAPTER I.

1—3. A short introduction to the whole work, written either by the prophet himself or by some editor.

1. "Hilkiah." To be distinguished from the High-priest (2 Kings xxii. 4, &c.). See below, ch. xxix. 3.

"Anathoth." See Josh. xxi. 18.

3. "It came," i. e. the "Word of the LORD." Comparing this verse with ch. xxv. 3, it appears that the ministry of Jeremiah at Jerusalem lasted about forty years.

4—10. The prophet's account of his call to the ministry.

5. "Before I formed thee." Comp. Acts ix. 15, 16. Observe the striking parallel between Jeremiah and St. Paul throughout their respective ministries.

"I sanctified thee." The word "sanctify" is frequently used by the sacred writers when they speak of man being set apart as an instrument in the hands of God (see Isa. xiii. 3.). Such was Jeremiah, appointed to be a prophet not to Judah only but to the nations (see ver. 10 ; chs. xxv. 9, &c. ; xli. —xlix.). His prophecies respecting the nations culmi-

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6 Then said I, ⁱ Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I *am* a child.

ⁱ Ex. 4. 10.
& 6. 12, 30.
Isai. 6. 5.

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 ^k whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

^k Num. 22.
20, 38.
Matt. 28. 20.

8 ^l Be not afraid of their faces: for ^m I *am* with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

^l Ezek. 2. 6.
& 3. 9.
ver. 17.

9 Then the LORD put forth his hand, and ⁿ touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have ^o put my words in thy mouth.

^m Ex. 3. 12.
Deut. 31. 6, 8.
Josh. 1. 5.
ch. 15. 20.
Acts 25. 17.
Heb. 13. 6.

10 ^p See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to ^q root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

ⁿ Isai. 6. 7.

^o Isai. 51. 16.
ch. 5. 14.

^p 1 Kin. 19. 17.

^q ch. 18. 7.

² Cor. 10. 4, 5.

11 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto

nate in chs. 1.—li., where he foretells the doom of Babylon, which, from the time of Isaiah, had been regarded by the prophets as the type of all that was, strictly speaking, "Gentile," or opposed to the kingdom of God.

6. "I cannot speak." Compare this with the words of Moses (Exod. iv. 10.), and observe how the LORD treats each in accordance with his age. Moses was advanced in age, and his timorous excuse was reproved; Jeremiah is but a child, and his modest retiring spirit (see ch. xiv. 5.) is encouraged.

7. "for thou shalt go." There can be no doubt that Jeremiah must have undertaken several missionary journeys. We know that he went as far as the Euphrates (ch. xiii. 1—7.); his intimate acquaintance with the old Eastern world makes it highly probable that his travels must have been extensive.

8. "I am with thee." Comp. Acts xviii. 9, 10.

9. "touched my mouth." The child's lips like those of the elder prophet (Isa. vi. 6, 7.) required this "touch" before they could speak God's words. Observe the fearless way in which Jeremiah speaks throughout his ministry to all classes alike. This verse furnishes the key to his whole character.

"my words." The reader will observe that Jeremiah took this command literally. He frequently repeats in slightly varied forms the words of former prophets, shewing that he acknowledged them to be the words of God which still awaited their fulfilment; occasionally, however, he bursts forth into an impassioned strain of prophecy in which we cannot distinguish traces of any earlier writings.

10. "I have this day set thee." Such was the task entrusted to the child. A king could not have had a more lofty commission. The reader will bear this verse in mind, as he will find it constantly repeated by the prophet.

11—16. Two visions indicate to the prophet the certainty with which

JEREMIAH, I.

me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree.

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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 ^ra seething pot; and the face thereof ^ris ^stoward the north.

Meaning of the
^r Ezek. 11. 3,
7. & 24. 3.

^s Heb. from
the face of
the north.

14 Then the LORD said unto me, Out of the ^snorth an evil ^sshall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.

^s ch. 4. 6.
& 6. 1.

^s Heb. shall
be opened.

15 For, lo, I will ^tcall all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they shall ^uset 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.

^t ch. 5. 15.
& 6. 22.
& 10. 22.

& 25. 9.

^u ch. 39. 3.
& 43. 10.

16 And I will utter my judgments against them

God would execute His vengeance, and also the direction whence this chastisement upon Judah and Jerusalem might be expected to break forth.

11. "what seest thou." The reader will observe many other instances of symbolic prophecy in Jeremiah.

The word "almond" in Hebrew sounds nearly the same as the word which is translated "hasten," hence the first vision is intended to represent the vigilance or haste with which God would fulfil ver. 10.

"a rod." Not like Aaron's rod, but simply a branch with leaves. The word is not used as in Isa. x. 5, to imply correction, but simply in the typical way explained above.

13. "a seething pot." Lit., a pot blown upon by the fire (comp. Ezek. xxiv. 3.). The "face" of the boiling pot was so placed that the contents might run from the north towards Judah.

14. "Out of the north." The "north" is first used by Joel (ii. 20.) to signify Assyria; the later prophets indicated Babylon by this word (comp. Ezek. i. 4. Zeph. ii. 13.).

15. "all the families of the north." See below, ch. xxxiv. 1.

"every one his throne." See ch. xxxix. 3. The setting up of the throne was intended to imply that they claimed the sovereignty over Judah.

16. "utter . . . judgments." A phrase frequently used by Jeremiah, meaning to have a law-suit with another, and therefore implying sometimes to "proceed" against a person, as the word is used here and in ch. xii. 1; comp. ch. ii. 35; at other times to "pronounce judgment," as in chs. iv. 12; xxxix. 5.

"them," i. e. the men of Judah, who are implied by Jerusalem and Judah in the last verse, and are now more clearly defined as the "forsakers," &c.

JEREMIAH, I.

Before
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touching all their wickedness, ^x who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands.

^x Deut. 28, 20.
ch. 17, 13.
[†] 1 Kin. 18, 46.
² Kin. 4, 29.
& 9, 1.
Job 38, 3.
Luke 12, 35.
1 Pet. 1, 13.
17 Thou therefore ^y gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all I command thee: ^z be not dismayed at their faces, lest I ² confound thee before them.

^z Ex. 3, 12.
ver. 8.
Ezek. 2, 6.
² Or, *break to pieces.*
^a Isai. 50, 7.
ch. 6, 27.
& 15, 20.
18 For, behold, I have made thee this day ^a a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land.

^b ver. 8.
19 And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; ^b for I *am* with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.

CHAPTER II.

1 God, having shewed his former kindness, expostulateth with the Jews their causeless revolt, 9 beyond any example. 14 They are the causes

17—19. A short exhortation to the prophet to speak to the people the words of God, assuring him once more that no harm can befall him.

17. "gird up thy loins." See 1 Kings xviii. 46. "Set to thy work," "be not dismayed," or "be not confounded" (comp. St. Mark viii. 38.).

18. "I have made thee." Three figures imply the invincible position in which God would place Jeremiah: he is as "a defenced city" which cannot be taken by the "whole land" when they rise in mutiny against him; as an "iron pillar" to support the "king of Judah;" as a "brazen wall" against the nobles, priests, and rabble. Here again we have a key to Jeremiah's character. His intrepid conduct on all occasions, and his profound meditations upon the apparent inconsistency between God's revelation of Himself and His apparent dealings with man, are founded alike upon this promise.

19. "they shall fight." Tribulation was therefore under the old Covenant a necessary passage-chamber into the kingdom of Heaven.

CHAPTERS II. 2—III. 5.

We may consider this to be the earliest prophecy of Jeremiah's extant. It obviously accords with the times of Josiah, as Judah is apparently on good terms with Egypt, and an alliance between the two countries is in project (ch. ii. 18, 36.), while references to the open idolatry and the reckless cruelty of the times (vv. 20, 28, 33, 34.) make it clear that the reforms of Josiah had not yet been commenced. It may be added that the mention of Assyria (ver. 18.) puts out of the question any reference to the times of Jehoiakim. The prophecy may be called "The Parable of the Woman taken in Adultery."

JEREMIAH, II.

of their own calamities. 20 The sins of Judah. 31 Her confidence is rejected.

Before
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MOREOVER the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember ² thee, the kindness of thy ^a youth, the love of thine espousals, ^b when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land *that was* not sown.

3 ^c Israel *was* holiness unto the LORD, *and* ^d the firstfruits of his increase: ^e all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the LORD.

² Or, for thy sake.
^a Ezek. 16. 8, 22, 60.
& 23. 3, 8, 19.
Hos. 2. 15.
^b Deut. 2. 7.
^c Ex. 19. 5, 6.
^d Jam. 1. 18.
Rev. 14. 4.
^e ch. 12. 14.
See ch. 50. 7.

4 ¶ Hear ye the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel:

5 thus saith the LORD, ^f What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, ^g and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?

^f Isai. 5. 4.
Mic. 6. 3.
^g 2 Kin. 17. 15.
Jonah 2. 8.

6 Neither said they, Where *is* the LORD that ^h brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through ⁱ 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?

^h Isai. 63. 9, 11, 13.
Hos. 13. 4.
ⁱ Deut. 8. 15, & 32. 10.

CHAPTER II.

1—3. Israel was wooed by God in the wilderness of Sinai, and was espoused to Him as a pure bride when the Law was given.

2. "in the ears of Jerusalem." Probably the prophet was at Anathoth when he received this command.

"the kindness." The affection of Israel for God was so shortlived that the mention of it by Jeremiah seems to be ironical. Israel's lapse into heathenism and unbelief can be distinctly traced in the Pentateuch (Exod. xxxii. Num. xi., xiii., xx.).

3. "holiness . . . firstfruits . . . increase . . . devour . . . offend." All these words had a legal meaning (see Lev. xxii. 10, 12, 16.). Israel was as the first-fruits consecrated to God, and none of the families were suffered to injure him. There is an allusion here to the Amalekite war (Exod. xvii. 8—15.).

4—8. But Israel did not continue faithful to her first love; high and low alike have forsaken Jehovah.

5. "What iniquity." That is, unfairness. Comp. Deut. xxxii. 4.

"vanity," i. e. idols (see ch. x. 15.).

6. "through the wilderness." Comp. Deut. xxxii. 10—13.

JEREMIAH, II.

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7 And I brought you into ^{2k} a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye ^l defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination.

² Or, *the land of Carmel.*

^k Num. 13, 27.

& 14. 7, 8.

Deut. 8. 7,

8, 9.

^l Lev. 18, 25,

27, 28. Num.

35, 33, 34.

Ps. 78. 58, 59.

& 106. 38.

ch. 3. 1.

& 16. 18.

^m Mal. 2. 6, 7.

Rom. 2. 20.

ⁿ ch. 23. 13.

^o ver. 11.

^p Hab. 2. 18.

^q Ezek. 20.

37, 36.

Mic. 6. 2.

^r Ex. 20. 5.

Lev. 20. 5.

^s Or, *over to.*

^t Mic. 4. 5.

^u Ps. 115. 4.

Isai. 37. 19.

ch. 16. 20.

^v Ps. 106. 20.

Rom. 1. 23.

^w ver. 8.

^x Isai. 1. 2.

ch. 6. 19.

^y Ps. 36. 9.

ch. 17. 13.

& 18. 14.

John 4. 14.

8 The priests said not, Where *is* the LORD? and they that handle the ^m law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, ⁿ and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after *things that* ^o do not profit.

9 Wherefore ^p I will yet plead with you, saith the LORD, and ^q with your children's children will I plead.

10 For pass ³ over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing.

11 ^r Hath a nation changed *their* gods, which *are* ^s yet no gods? ^t but my people have changed their glory for ^u *that which* doth not profit.

12 ^x Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD.

13 For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the ^y fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

7. "And I brought you." The prophet continues the address begun in ver. 5, which had been broken off by the parenthetic ver. 6.

"plentiful." Lit., Carmel; a land like Carmel.

"defiled." Referring to the dark days of the judges (Judg. xvii. &c.).

"mine heritage." See Isa. xlvii. 6. It is a phrase frequently used by Jeremiah.

8. "The priests," &c. The prophet mentions the four ruling classes. How degraded must the people have been who followed these leaders.

9—13. Such a lapse is unparalleled in history.

9. "plead." Sometimes God pleads with His people by appealing to His kindness, as in Mic. vi. 2; sometimes by chastising them, as in Deut. viii. 2. Here He pleads in both ways.

10. "Chittim . . . Kedar," i. e. the whole world from East to West, lit. from Cyprus to Arabia.

11. "Hath a nation." None of these nations have forsaken their ancient forms of worship, though they were false. Israel has not only forsaken the religion of her ancestors, but has also forsaken the true God.

12. "Be astonished." See Isa. i. 2.

13. "two evils." The heathen had committed only one evil. They had their broken cisterns, as Jeremiah calls their false gods; Israel had forsaken the true God for the sake of acquiring these broken cisterns.

JEREMIAH, II.

14 ¶ *Is* Israel ^a a servant? *is* he a homeborn slave? why is he ² spoiled?

15 ^a The young lions roared upon him, *and* ³ yelled, and they made his land waste: his cities are burned without inhabitant.

16 Also the children of Noph and ^b Tahapanes ⁴ have broken the crown of thy head.

17 ^c Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, when ^d he led thee by the way?

18 And now what hast thou to do ^e in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of ^f Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river?

19 Thine own ^g wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that *it is* an evil *thing* and bitter, that thou hast forsaken 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 ^h thou saidst, I will not ⁱ transgress; when ^j upon every high hill and under

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^z See Exod. 4. 22.

² Heb. become a spoil?

^a Isai. 1. 7. ch. 4. 7.

³ Heb. gave out their voice.

^b ch. 43. 7, 8, 9.

⁴ Or, feed on thy crown. Deut. 33. 20.

Isai. 8. 8.

^c ch. 4. 18.

^d Deut. 32. 10.

^e Isai. 30. 1, 2.

^f Josh. 13. 3.

^g Isai. 3. 9.

Hos. 5. 5.

^h Ex. 19. 8.

Josh. 24. 18.

Judg. 10. 16.

1 Sam. 12. 10.

⁵ Or, serre.

ⁱ Deut. 12. 2.

Isai. 57. 5, 7.

ch. 3. 6.

14—19. This two-fold crime is the cause of all Israel's troubles.

14. "a servant." Israel was the bride of Jehovah (ver. 2.), how is it that she becomes slave to Assyria, Egypt, and others? The answer is given in ver. 17.

15. "The young lions." See Isa. v. 29. These are types of the various enemies that have overrun Palestine from time to time during the history of Israel.

"are burned," or, "are overthrown." Either a reference to the past history, or else indicating the certainty of future overthrow.

16. "Noph . . . Tahapanes." Memphis and Daphne in Egypt, which are represented as "feeding" on Israel.

17. "when he led thee." This is well illustrated by the historic Pss. lxxviii., cv., cvi.

18. "Egypt . . . Sihor . . . Assyria . . . the river." And now, instead of trusting in Jehovah, there are parties in Israel (see Hos. vii. 11.), one urging for an alliance with Egypt, another with the Eastern powers. "Sihor" is the Nile; "the river" is the Euphrates.

19. "Thine own wickedness." All this trouble overtakes thee simply because thou hast forsaken Jehovah.

20—25. Israel's early passion for idolatry is now intensified to such a degree that it may be compared to the unbridled lust of a brute beast.

20. "I have broken," &c. Better translated, "For of old time thou hast broken" thy yoke; and "thou didst say I will not obey, but upon every," &c. The metaphor employed is the same as that which recurs in Hosea.

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every green tree thou wanderest, ^k playing the harlot.

^k Ex. 34. 15, 16.

21 Yet I had ^l planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed; how then art thou turned into ^m the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?

^l Ex. 15. 17.
ⁿ Ps. 44. 2.
& 89. 8.

^o Isa. 5. 1, &c.
& 60. 21.

22 For though thou ⁿ wash thee with nitre, and take thee much sope, *yet* ^o thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.

^p Matt. 21. 33.
^q Mark 12. 1.
^r Luke 20. 9.

^m Deut. 32. 32.
ⁿ Isa. 1. 21.
& 5. 4.

23 ^p How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim? see thy way ^q in the valley, know what thou hast done: ^r *thou art* a swift dromedary traversing her ways;

ⁿ Job 9. 30.

^o Deut. 32. 34.
^p Job 14. 17.
^q Hos. 13. 12.

^r Prov. 30. 12.
^s ch. 7. 31.

² Or, *O swift dromedary.*

^r Job 39. 5, &c. ch. 14. 6.

24 ^r ^s a wild ass ^t used to the wilderness, *that* snuffeth up the wind at ^u her pleasure; in her occasion who can ^v turn her away? all they that seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her.

³ Or, *O wild ass, &c.*

⁴ Heb. *taught.*

⁵ Heb. *the desire of her heart.*

25 Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but ^a thou saidst, ⁷ There is no hope: no; for I have loved ^t strangers, and after them will I go.

⁶ Or, *reverse it?*

^s ch. 18. 12.

⁷ Or, *Is the case desperate?*

^t Deut. 32. 16.
^u ch. 3. 13.

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,

27 saying to a stock, *Thou art* my father; and to

21. "a noble vine." See Isa. v. 2, 4.

22. "nitre . . . sope." See Isa. i. 25.

23. "How canst thou say." The open character of Israel's idolatry is the clearest reply to her self-justification.

"the valley," i. e. of Hinnom (see below, ch. vii. 31.). As the camel or the wild ass rushes to and fro in the wilderness, so does Israel go from one idol to another.

24. "in her month," i. e. season.

25. "Withhold," &c. God warns Israel against this hopeless pursuit after false gods. They cannot satisfy the thirsty spirit, they cannot repair the sandals that are worn out in the pursuit.

"There is no hope." Comp. ch. xviii. 12. The advice is of no use. "No;" we prefer to follow our own course.

"strangers." Foreign people, foreign gods, and foreign fashions, as Zeph. i. 8.

26—28. How fruitless is all this idolatry.

26. "As the thief." Jeremiah spies out the idolater as a detective does a thief. He hears a man say to his idol what should be addressed to Jehovah (Isa. lxiii. 16. Deut. xxxii. 18.). Yet in the time of trouble their own consciences bear witness to the folly of their idolatry. They then address the right words (Ps. iii. 7.) to the right Person.

JEREMIAH, II.

a stone, Thou hast ²brought me forth: for they have turned ³*their* back unto me, and not *their* face: but in the time of their ⁴trouble they will say, Arise, and save us.

28 But ^xwhere *are* thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they ^ycan save thee in the time of thy ⁴trouble: for ^z*according to* the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah.

29 ^aWherefore will ye plead with me? ye all have transgressed against me, saith the LORD.

30 In vain have I ^bsmitten your children; they received no correction: your own sword hath ^cdevoured your prophets, like a destroying lion.

31 ¶ O generation, see ye the word of the LORD. ^dHave I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness? wherefore say my people, ^eWe are lords; ^fwe will come no more unto thee?

32 Can a maid forget her ornaments, *or* a bride her attire? yet my people ^ghave forgotten me days without number.

33 Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways.

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² Or, *begotten me.*

³ Heb. *the hinder part of the neck.*

⁴ Judg. 10. 10.

Ps. 78. 34.

Isai. 26. 16.

^x Deut. 32. 37.

Judg. 10. 14.

^y Isai. 45. 20.

⁴ Heb. *evil.*

^a ch. 11. 13.

^a ver. 23. 35.

^b Isai. 1. 5.

& 9. 13.

ch. 5. 3.

^c 2 Chr. 36. 16.

Neh. 9. 26.

Matt. 23. 29.

&c.

Acts 7. 52.

¹ Thes. 2. 15.

^d ver. 5.

⁵ Heb.

We have dominion.

^e Ps. 12. 4.

^f Deut. 32. 15.

^g Ps. 106. 21.

ch. 13. 25.

Hos. 8. 14.

28. "let them arise." Jeremiah ironically defies the idol to answer the prayer of Ps. iii. 7, assigning as ironically the reason why the idol ought to be able to do so. Each city has its own protecting deity.

29—37. All methods hitherto employed have failed to cure Israel of her idolatry.

29. "plead with me." Referring to ver. 23 the vain attempt of the people to justify themselves. The words imply still further the idea of striving against God.

30. "correction." See Zeph. iii. 2. Jehovah's ministers of correction" or "instruction" suffered martyrdom. See 2 Kings xxi. 16.

31. "O generation." See Deut. xxxii. 5.

"Have I been." God asks whether He has brought the people into a wilderness and a dark desert, or why it is that they assert their own lordship and break off His yoke from them. He continues the same pathetic appeal in the next verse. The newly-married bride forgets not her bridal girdle, yet Israel has persistently forgotten her first husband.

33. "Why trimmest thou." Spoken in mockery; "What a proper course you take to show your affection! This is what you mean by "making your ways so wicked."

JEREMIAH, III.

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^h Ps. 106. 38.
ch. 19. 4.
² Heb.
digging.
ⁱ ver. 23, 29.
^k ver. 9.
^l Prov. 28. 13.
¹ John 1. 8,
10.
^m ver. 18.
ch. 31. 22.
Hos. 5. 13.
& 12. 1.
ⁿ Isai. 30. 3.
ch. 37. 7.
^o 2 Chron. 28.
16, 20, 21.
^p 2 Sam. 13. 19.

34 Also in thy skirts is found ^h the blood of the souls of the poor innocents: I have not found it by ² secret search, but upon all these.

35 ⁱ Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, ^k I will plead with thee, ^l because thou sayest, I have not sinned.

36 ^m Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? ⁿ thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, ^o as thou wast ashamed of Assyria. *Why gaddest thou*

37 Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and ^p thine hands upon thine head: for the LORD hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them.

CHAPTER III.

1 God's great mercy in Judah's vile whoredom. 6 Judah is worse than Israel. 12 The promises of the gospel to the penitent. 20 Israel re-proved, and called by God, maketh a solemn confession of their sins.

² Heb.
Saying.

^a Deut. 24. 4.
^b ch. 2. 7.
^c ch. 2. 20.
Ezek. 16. 26,
28, 29.

THEY ² say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, ^a shall he return unto her again? shall not that ^b land be greatly polluted? but thou hast ^c played the harlot

34. "Also in thy skirts." Their garments are stained with the blood of murdered infants and others slain in cold blood.

"I have not . . . search." Better translated, "thou didst not find them breaking into thine house," in which case the act of homicide might have been justifiable (Exod. xxii. 2, 3).

"upon all these," i. e. on account of all this idolatry.

35. "I am innocent." The guilt of Manasseh passed on to succeeding generations (2 Kings xxiv. 3, 4.), and the cruel spirit of persecution though now under restraint, was still as much alive as it was then.

"I will plead." God now pronounces His sentence as Judge. One last question is asked, which is unanswered—"Why this reliance on foreign powers instead of on Jehovah?"

37. "from him," i. e. the king of Egypt.

"confidences," i. e. those in whom you place your confidence.

"them." The Egyptians.

CHAPTER III.

1—5. The case being clearly made out against the adulteress, sentence of divorce is pronounced against her. This chapter is closely connected with the preceding. "Jehovah hath rejected . . . saying (not 'they say') If a man," &c. The sentence is pronounced out of God's own book (Deut. xxiv. 1—4.).

JEREMIAH, III.

with many lovers; ^d yet return again to me, saith the LORD.

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629.

2 Lift up thine eyes unto ^e the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. ^f In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; ^g and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness.

3 Therefore the ^h showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a ⁱ whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed.

4 Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou art ^k the guide of ^l my youth?

5 ^m Will he reserve *his anger* for ever? will he keep *it* to the end? Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest.

6 ¶ The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen *that* which ⁿ backsliding Israel hath done? she is ^o gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.

1. "yet return again." Not an imperative, but rather an expression of wonder, "to think of returning to me again!"

2. "Lift up thine eyes." No words of mercy appear here, though they were plentiful in the last expostulation. The time of probation is over.

3. "the showers." Even temporal blessings have been withheld, which are types of spiritual blessings withdrawn. See below, ch. xiv. 1.

4. "from this time." See ch. ii. 20, 27. Probably some of Josiah's reforms had now been projected.

5. "Behold." More than a few good words, such as those in the last verse, are necessary to make a life acceptable to God. Comp. St. Matt. vii. 21, 22.

6. The prophecy, commencing at this verse, continues till the end of chapter vi., and expands what has been said in the preceding five verses about the rejection of impenitent Israel. It may be divided into four sections.

Section I. iii. 6—iv. 2. The fate of the Ten Tribes is an example of warning to Judah.

6—10. The example of Israel is a warning which has been given in vain. The whole land is defiled with idolatry of the most bare-faced description, and there is no real national repentance.

6. "the days of Josiah." Of course before the eighteenth year of his reign, when his reforms were commenced, and after the thirteenth year, when Jeremiah's ministry began. Judah and Israel are here

JEREMIAH, III.

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7 ^p And I said after she had done all these *things*, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous ^a sister Judah saw *it*.

^{p2} Kin. 17. 13.

^q Ezek. 16. 46. & 23. 2, 4.

^r Ezek. 23. 9.

^{s2} Kin. 17.

6, 18.

^t Ezek. 23. 11, &c.

8 And I saw, when ^r for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had ^s put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; ^t yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.

² Or, *fame*.

^u ch. 2. 7.

ver. 2.

^x ch. 2. 27.

9 And it came to pass through the ² lightness of her whoredom, that she ^u defiled the land, and committed adultery with ^x stones and with stocks.

^{y2} Chr. 34. 33.

Pos. 7. 14.

³ Heb. *in*

falsehood.

^z Ezek. 16. 51.

& 23. 11.

10 And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me ^y with her whole heart, but ³ feignedly, saith the LORD.

11 And the LORD said unto me, ^z The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.

^{a2} Kin. 17. 6.

^b Ps. 86. 15.

& 103. 8, 9.

ver. 5.

^c Lev. 26. 40,

& Deut.

30. 1, 2, &c.

Prov. 28. 13.

^d ver. 2.

^e Ezek. 16. 15,

24. 25.

^f ch. 2. 25.

^f Deut. 12. 2.

12 ¶ Go and proclaim these words toward ^a 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* ^b merciful, saith the LORD, *and* I will not keep *anger* for ever.

13 ^c Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast ^d scattered thy ways to the ^e strangers ^f under

compared to two sisters; the latter is named "Apostate," the former "Faithless."

8. "bill of divorce." See the last prophecy.

9. "lightness," i. e. She thought light of it herself.

10. "for all this," i. e. in spite of all this degradation.

"her whole heart." Even the first reforms of Josiah were only partial. The same half-heartedness prevailed as in the days of Hezekiah (Isa. xxix. 13, 14.).

11—18. Israel, as more excusable than Judah, is now summoned to repent, and is assured that forgiveness and restoration to Zion will be the result of repentance, and in the end Judah shall join her.

11. "hath justified herself." Comp. Ezek. xvi. 51, and xxiii. 11. Hence Judah must expect to undergo the same fate as Samaria.

12. "the north," i. e. the regions whither the ten tribes had been deported (2 Kings xvii. 23.).

"I will not keep." Comp. ver. 5. Israel was not yet excluded from forgiveness.

13. "acknowledge thine iniquity." Thus does Jeremiah take up the gospel of repentance already preached by Isaiah, i. 18—20.

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every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD. Before
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14 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; ^g for I am married unto you: and I will take you ^g one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: g ch. 31. 32.
Hos. 2. 19,
20.
h Rom. 11. 5.

15 and I will give you ⁱ pastors according to mine heart, which shall ^k feed you with knowledge and understanding. i ch. 23. 4.
Ezek. 34. 23.
Eph. 4. 11.
k Acts 20. 28.

16 And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: ¹ neither shall it ² come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall ³ that be done any more. 1 Isai. 65. 17.
2 Heb. come
upon the
heart.
3 Or, it be
magnified.

17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, ^m to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they ⁿ walk any more after the ⁴ imagination of their evil heart. m Isai. 60. 9.
n ch. 11. 8.
4 Or, stub-
bornness.
o See Isaiah
11. 13.
Ezek. 37.
16,—22.
Hos. 1, 11.

18 In those days ^o the house of Judah shall walk

14. "I am married to you," i. e. I am your only Lord and true husband, as was explained in the last prophecy. Comp. Deut. xxiv. 1—4. "Zion." The seat of the kingdom of God.

15. "pastors . . . my heart." Comp. 1 Sam. xiii. 14. Such is one of the important Messianic elements dwelt upon by Jeremiah. The great deliverer of the nation is to be one descended from David. Comp. ch. xxiii. 5.

"knowledge and understanding." Referring to the gifts of the Holy Spirit (Isa. xi. 1—5; ii. 2—4.). A great outpouring of the Spirit is characteristic of the Messianic days (Joel ii. 28.).

16. "when ye be multiplied." The increase of the population of the Holy Land in the times of the Messiah is dwelt upon by Jeremiah (ch. xxiii. 3. Ezek. xxxvi. 11. Hos. i. 10. Isa. liv. 1—3.).

"those days." Meaning the "latter days," or the days of the Messiah. Jeremiah mentions the absence of the Ark as no cause of regret in these days. Sacrament and symbol would have no meaning, as the Person signified would be present.

"visit it," i. e. miss it.

"be done any more," i. e. a new Ark would not have to be made.

17. "the throne of the Lord." Hitherto the Ark might have been considered to be Jehovah's throne or footstool, henceforth the new Jerusalem would be regarded as such.

"the nations." The Gentiles "flow in streams" (Isa. ii. 2.) to the mountain of the Lord.

18. "the house of Judah." Observe how Jeremiah mentions them after the nations, signifying that by her idolatrous conduct Judah had

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² Or, to.

^p ver. 12.
ch. 31. 8.

^q Amos 9. 15.

³ Or, *caused
your fathers
to possess.*

^r Ps. 106. 24.

Ezek. 20. 6.

Dan. 8. 9. &

11. 16, 41, 45.

⁴ Heb. *land
of desire.*

⁵ Heb. *an
heritage of
glory, or,
beauty.*

^s Isai. 63. 16.

⁶ Heb. *from
after me.*

⁷ Heb. *friend.*

^t Isai. 43. 8.

ch. 5. 11.

^u Isai. 15. 2.

^x ver. 14.

Hos. 14. 1.

^y Hos. 6. 1.

& 14. 4.

^z Ps. 121. 1, 2.

^a Ps. 3. 8.

^b ch. 11. 13.

Hos. 9. 10.

² with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of ^p the north to ^q the land that I have ³ given for an inheritance unto your fathers.

19 But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee ^r a ⁴ pleasant land, ⁵ a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, ^s My father; and shalt not turn away ⁶ from me.

20 ¶ Surely *as* a wife treacherously departeth from her ⁷ husband, so ^t have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD.

21 A voice was heard upon ^u 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.

22 ^x Return, ye backsliding children, *and* ^y I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou *art* the LORD our God.

23 ^z Truly in vain *is* salvation *hoped for* from the hills, *and from* the multitude of mountains: ^a truly in the LORD our God *is* the salvation of Israel.

24 ^b For shame hath devoured the labour of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters.

degraded herself to the level of the Gentiles. He also leads us to infer that Israel would return sooner than Judah.

19—25. Can it be possible that Israel will not return? No. The prophet fancies that he hears their penitential cries echoing from the high places where they had defiled themselves. They confess their shame and their sin.

19. "But I said," i. e. Jehovah. "To say" is used frequently by the Hebrews where we should use "to think." God's "thoughts" of old were to make His people glorious among the Gentiles. It is not His fault that they have become degraded. This is explained in the next verse.

22. "Return." The dialogue is frequently employed by Jeremiah. These words are spoken by Jehovah. The people's reply commences at "Behold we come."

23. "from the hills," i. e. our worship on the high places has proved futile.

"multitude of mountains," i. e. the multitudes of bustling worshippers on the hill-tops.

24. "shame," i. e. Baal-worship. Comp. Hos. ix. 10.

"our youth," i. e. the times of the Judges, when idolatry was introduced (Judg. xvii.).

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25 We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us: ^o for we have sinned against the LORD ^{Before CHRIST} our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even ^{cir. 612.} unto this day, and ^o ^{Ezra 9. 7.} have not obeyed the voice of the ^c LORD our God. ^{ch. 22. 21.}

CHAPTER IV.

¹ God calleth Israel by his promise. ³ He exhorteth Judah to repentance by fearful judgments. ¹⁹ A grievous lamentation for the miseries of Judah.

IF thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, ^a ^{ch. 3. 1, 22.} return unto me: and if thou wilt put away ^{Joel 2. 12.} thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove. ^b ^{Deut. 10. 20.} ^{Isai. 45. 23.} ^{& 65. 16.} ^{See ch. 5. 2.}

² ^b And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, ^c in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; ^d and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they ^e glory. ^c ^{Isai. 48. 1.} ^{Zech. 8. 8.} ^d ^{Gen. 22. 18.} ^{Ps. 72. 17.} ^{Gal. 3. 8.} ^e ^{Isai. 45. 25.} ^{1 Cor. 1. 31.}

³ For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, ^f Break up your fallow ground, and ^g sow not among thorns. ^f ^{Hos. 10. 12.} ^g ^{Matt. 13. 7, 22.} ^h ^{Deut. 10. 16.} ^{& 30. 6.} ^{ch. 9. 26.} ^{Rom. 2. 28, 21.} ^{Col. 2. 11.}

⁴ ^h Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah

25. "We lie down." They are content to bear the punishment of their guilt now that they can discern the chastening hand of Jehovah, and that the threats of the law are fulfilled (Deut. xxviii. 15.).

CHAPTER IV.

1, 2. Israel having repented, God once more calls her by a promise.

1. "return unto me." Repeated by the prophet for the sake of earnestness: "If thou wilt really return unto me." Supply "if" before "thou," from ver. 1.

2. "And thou shalt . . . nations." The repentance of Israel will cause Gentiles to acknowledge the Deity of Jehovah.

Section II. iv. 3—31. Judah and Jerusalem called to repentance.

3—9. Let Judah learn a lesson from the history of Israel, and return to Jehovah, otherwise His wrath will burst forth upon her. The judgment is at hand. Destruction approaches from the North, and the trumpets and beacons warn the people to flee into strongholds for refuge.

3. "Break up." See Hos. x. 12; indicating the beginning of a new life.

4. "your heart." Your religion must be real. See Rom. ii. 29.

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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.

ch. 8. 14.

5 ¶ Declare ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem; and say, Blow ye the trumpet in the land: cry, gather together, and say, ¹ Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced cities.

² Or,
strengthen.
^k ch. 1. 13,
14, 15, &
6. 1, 22.

6 Set up the standard toward Zion: ² retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the ^k north, and a great ³ destruction.

³ Heb.
breaking.
¹ 2 Kin. 24. 1.
ch. 5. 6.
Dan. 7. 4.
^m ch. 25. 9.
ⁿ Isai. 1. 7.
ch. 2. 15.

7 ¹ The lion is come up from his thicket, and ^m the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place ⁿ to make thy land desolate; and thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant.

^o Isai. 22. 12.
ch. 6. 26.

8 For this ^o 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.

^p Ezek. 14. 9.
² Thess. 2. 11.
^q ch. 5. 12.
& 14. 13.

10 Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! ^p surely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, ^q saying, Ye shall have peace; whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul.

^r ch. 51. 1.
Ezek. 17. 10.
Hos. 13. 15.

11 At that time shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem, ^r A dry wind of the high places in the

5. "trumpet . . . standard." The people are called to a true sense of their danger by the blowing of the trumpet; the banner is raised, "toward Zion," to point to the true place of refuge.

7. "lion." Explained more fully in the next clause as the destroyer of nations (comp. ch. l. 23.), leaving no room to doubt that Babylon is intended.

8. "turned back." The sins of Manasseh continue to call down Divine vengeance.

9. "the heart of the king," i. e. his mind is at a loss what to do.

10. Jeremiah pauses for a moment to lament the evils which have been brought by the false prophets. He contrasts the words which God has revealed to him (vv. 3—9.) with the often repeated oracle of the false prophets, "ye shall have peace." Jeremiah experienced no conflict more severe than that which he encountered with the false prophets (see below).

11—26. In spite of the peaceful assurances of the false prophets

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wilderness toward the daughter of my people, not to fan, nor to cleanse,

12 *even* ² a full wind from those *places* shall come unto me: now also ^s will I ³ give sentence against them.

13 Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and ^t his chariots *shall be* as a whirlwind: ^u his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for we are spoiled.

14 O Jerusalem, ^x wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?

15 For a voice declareth ^y from Dan, and publisheth affliction from mount Ephraim.

16 Make ye mention to the nations; behold, publish against Jerusalem, *that* watchers come ^z from a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah.

17 ^a As keepers of a field, are they against her round about; because she hath been rebellious against me, saith the LORD.

18 ^b Thy way and thy doings have procured these

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² Or, a fuller wind than those.

^s ch. 1. 16.

³ Heb. utter judgments.

^t Isai. 5. 28.

^u Deut. 28. 49.

Lam. 4. 19.

Hos. 8. 1.

Hab. 1. 8.

^x Isai. 1. 16.

Jan. 4. 8.

^y ch. 8. 16.

^z ch. 5. 15.

^a 2 Kin. 25. 1, 4.

^b Ps. 107. 17.

Isai. 50. 1.

ch. 2. 17, 19.

the enemy approaches, as an east wind, as black clouds, as horses of the storm. Let Jerusalem repent even at this moment, while the Babylonians are advancing from Dan to Mount Ephraim. Why has all this happened? It is the wickedness of Judah, and that alone. It is this, and the sudden, frightful, complete desolation of Jerusalem which overwhelms the prophet's heart with grief.

11. "not to fan nor to cleanse." The wind is too powerful for such purposes as these.

12. "unto me," i. e. to God, Who will cause it to blow upon Judah.

13. "he shall come," i. e. the impending evil.

"Woe unto us!" Jeremiah in his favourite dramatic style represents the people as giving up all for lost as soon as they see the cloud arise.

14. "vain thoughts." Such as idolatry and confidence in the security of the Temple and the impregnable character of the fortresses round Jerusalem.

15. "a voice." A messenger is represented as coming from Dan the northern extremity of Palestine, and from Mount Ephraim the northern boundary of Judah.

16. "to the nations." So certain is the doom of Jerusalem that Jeremiah will publish to the Gentiles the story of her fall before it has occurred.

"watchers," i. e. vigilant soldiers, compared to leopards in ch. v. 6.

17. "keepers of a field." They watch Jerusalem with the same care that the farmers bestow on their own land.

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things unto thee ; this *is* thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thine heart.

c Isai. 15. 5.
& 16. 11.
& 21. 3.
& 22. 4.
ch. 9. 1. 10.
See Luke
19. 42.

19 ¶ My ^ebowels, my bowels! I am pained at ²my 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.

² Heb. *the walls of my heart.*

20 ^d Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are ^emy tents spoiled, *and* my curtains in a moment.

d Ps. 42. 7.
Ezek. 7. 26.
^e ch. 10. 20.

21 How long shall I see the standard, *and* hear the sound of the trumpet?

f Rom. 16. 19.

22 For my people *is* foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: ^fthey *are* wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.

g Isai. 24. 19.
h Gen. 1. 2.

23 ^g I beheld the earth, and, lo, *it was* ^hwithout form, and void; and the heavens, and they *had* no light.

i Isai. 5. 25.
Ezek. 33. 20.

24 ⁱ I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly.

k Zeph. 1. 3.

25 I beheld, and, lo, *there was* no man, and ^kall 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.

l ch. 5. 10, 18.
& 30. 11.
& 46. 28.

27 For thus hath the LORD said, The whole land shall be desolate; ^lyet will I not make a full end.

m Hos. 4. 3.
n Isai. 5. 30.
& 50. 3.

28 For this ^mshall the earth mourn, and ⁿthe

19. "My bowels." In this and the two following verses the inhabitants of Jerusalem are expressing their horror at the impending calamity.

21. "How long." God gives His answer in ver. 23, ascribing the reason first in ver. 22.

24. "I beheld." The picture is similar to that painted by Isaiah (xxxiv. 11, &c.). The reference to Gen. i. 2 is striking. Palestine is reduced to a state of chaos.

"moved lightly." Better "rocked to and fro."

26. "a wilderness," i. e. the wilderness of Judæa.

27—31. Great though the desolation is to be, yet Judah shall not be annihilated. The destruction can be averted only by heartfelt repentance, and not by hypocritical reforms.

27. "a full end." The mercy of God was greater than even the prophet had imagined at first (ver. 10.).

28. "earth mourn." Nature herself sympathises with the calamity of Judah.

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heavens above be black: because I have spoken *it*, I have purposed *it*, and ° will not repent, neither will I turn back from it.

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° Num. 23. 19.
ch. 7. 16.

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 city *shall be* forsaken, and not a man dwell therein.

30 And *when* thou *art* spoiled, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with crimson, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, ^p though thou rentest thy ² face with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; ⁴ *thy* lovers will despise thee, they will seek thy life.

^p 2 Kin. 9. 30.
Ezek. 23. 40.
² Heb. *eyes*.
⁴ ch. 22. 20, 22.
Lam. 1. 2, 19.

31 For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, *and* the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion, *that* bewaileth herself, *that* ^r spreadeth her hands, *saying*, Woe is me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers.

^r Isai. 1. 15.
Lam. 1. 17.

CHAPTER V.

¹ *The judgments of God upon the Jews, for their perverseness, 7 for their adultery, 10 for their impiety, 19 for their contempt of God, 25 and for their great corruption in the civil state, 30 and ecclesiastical.*

RUN ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the

29. "The whole city," i. e. either the inhabitants of Jerusalem, or, more probably, the inhabitants of the different cities.

30. "thou clothest thyself." Jerusalem like Jezebel tries to paint over her ugliness, but it is of no avail. The fate of the idolatress awaits her. Comp. 2 Kings ix. 30.

31. "I have heard." The terror of Jerusalem added to her sufferings has at last brought her upon her knees before God. Such is the true value of affliction. It beats us down—but where? on our knees. Notice the parallel between this verse and ch. iii. 25.

CHAPTER V.

Section III. v. 1—31. The justification of the judgments pronounced in the last section.

1—9. Jerusalem is given up to profligacy. Not only are the poor and uneducated given up to all that is vile, but the wealthy and enlightened are equally criminal. For this reason God has determined to punish the nation.

1. "Run ye to and fro." We are reminded here of Gen. xviii. 32. The

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brood places thereof: 'if ye can find a man, 'if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth: 'and I will pardon it.

2 And 'though they say, 'The LORD liveth: surely they 'swear falsely.

3 O LORD, say not 'thine eyes upon the truth: thou hast 'stricken them, but they have not grieved: thou hast consumed them, but 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 '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 they have known the way of the LORD, and the judgment of their God: but these have altogether 'broken the yoke, and burst the bonds.

6 Wherefore 'a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the 'evenings shall spoil them: 'a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings 'are increased.

7 'How shall I pardon thee for this, thy children have forsaken me, and 'sworn by them, 'that are no gods: 'when I had tol them to the full, they then

Highway of Jerusalem is represented as greater than that of the cities of the plain.

2. "The Lord liveth." See ch. iv. 2. They used oaths only to confirm lies: see Lev. xix. 12.

3. "the truth" is factuality, opposed to the word "falsely" in the last verse. God has regard to factuality, and therefore He cannot pardon His people with impunity.

4. "Surely these are poor." Jeremiah's first surprise was that he had noticed his search to the common people who would know no better.

5. "the great," i.e. the higher order of people who, he thinks, "must 'know the way."

"burst the bonds," i.e. the great are become like the rebellious heathen. (Ps. lxxv.)

6. "a lion." See ch. iv. 7, and comp. Hos. xiii. 7, 8.

7. "How shall I pardon?" i.e. "Wherefore should I pardon?" the answer is implied in the lower part of the verse and ver. 8. Their iniquity and the obstinateness which accompanies it make pardon impossible.

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committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses.

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8 ¹ They were *as* fed horses in the morning: every one ² neighed after his neighbour's wife.

Ezek. 22. 11.

ch. 13. 27.

9 ¹ Shall I not visit for these *things*? saith the LORD: ² and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

ver. 29.

ch. 9. 9.

ch. 44. 22.

10 ¹ Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy; ² but make not a full end: take away her battlements; for they *are* not the LORD's.

ch. 39. 8.

ch. 4. 27.

ver. 18.

11 For ¹ the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the LORD.

ch. 2. 20.

12 ¹ They have belied the LORD, and said, ² It is not he; neither shall evil come upon us; ³ neither shall we see sword nor famine:

2 Chr. 36. 12.

ch. 4. 20.

Isa. 29. 15.

ch. 14. 13.

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, ¹ behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.

ch. 1. 9.

15 Lo, I will bring a ¹ nation upon you ² from far, O house of Israel, saith the LORD: it *is* a mighty nation, it *is* an ancient nation, a nation whose lan-

Deut. 28. 49.

Isa. 5. 26.

ch. 1. 16.

Isa. 29. 3.

ch. 4. 16.

8. "in the morning." More probably to be translated, "wandering about."

10—17. The command is given to the Babylonians to commence the work of punitive justice. It is to no avail that the false prophets speak of peace, Jeremiah's words are like a devouring fire, the mighty nation shall come and lay the land desolate.

10. "her walls." Regarding Judæa as the vineyard of Jehovah.

"make not a full end." Even with God's chastisements there is mercy tempered. See ch. iv. 27, and Isa. x. 5—7.

"battlements." Translated "branches" (Isa. xviii. 5.), to which perhaps as well as Isa. v. 1—7, Jeremiah refers.

11. "For the house of Israel." Implying, as ch. iii. 6, that Judah could not expect to escape the fate which had overtaken Israel.

12. "It is not he." Like the person in Ps. xiv. 1.

13. "and the prophets." This is the taunt which the "liars" of ver. 12 applied to Jeremiah and other true prophets.

14. "fire." Comp. Isa. i. 31: x. 17; ch. xxiii. 20.

15. "a nation from far." Deut. xxviii. 49.

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guage thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say.

16 Their quiver *is* as an open sepulchre, they *are* all mighty men.

ⁱ Lev. 26. 16.
Deut. 28. 31,
33.

17 And they shall eat up thine ⁱ harvest, and thy bread, *which* thy sons and thy daughters should eat: they shall eat up thy flocks and thine herds: they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword.

^k ch. 4. 27.

18 Nevertheless in those days, saith the LORD, I ^k will not make a full end with you.

^l Deut. 29. 24,
&c.

^j Kin. 9. 8, 9.
ch. 13. 22.
& 16. 19.

^m ch. 2. 13.

ⁿ Deut. 28. 43.

19 And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, ^l Wherefore doeth the LORD our God all these *things* unto us? then shalt thou answer them, Like as ye have ^m forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, so ⁿ shall ye serve strangers in a land *that is* not your's.

^o Isai. 6. 9.
Ezek. 12. 2.

Matt. 13. 14.
John 12. 40.

Acts 28. 26.
Rom. 11. 8.

² Heb. *heart*,
Hos. 7. 11.

^p Rev. 15. 4.

^q Job 26. 10,
& 38. 10, 11.

Ps. 104. 9.
Prov. 8. 23.

20 ¶ Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying,

21 Hear now this, O ^o foolish people, and without ² understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not:

22 ^p fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand *for* the ^q bound of the sea by a perpetual decree,

16. "an open sepulchre," i. e. every arrow in their quiver adds another corpse to the grave.

17. "And they shall eat up." The reference is to the threats of the Law against the disobedient. Deut. xxviii. 51.

18. "a full end." See ch. iv. 27.

19—31. The prophet now states the cause of this calamity. The sin of the people is self-inflicted: blindness to the love of God, and deafness to His word. Their deeds of robbery, deceit and cruelty are the aggravation of their guilt, and it is only the approval of the people which enables the false prophets to have such success.

19. "Like as ye have forsaken me." Observe how the structure of Jeremiah's language exhibits the perfect justice of the punishment.

20. "Declare this." Jeremiah's reiterations of the charges against the people are often spoken of as monotonous, but we must remember that his duty was to bring their sins home to them. He now appeals to natural religion. Are they worse than the heathen, deaf and dumb to this appeal?

21. "O foolish people." See Isa. vi. 10.

JEREMIAH, V.

that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?

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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, ^rthat giveth rain, both the ^aformer and the latter, in his season: ^the reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.

^r Ps. 147. 8.
ch. 14. 22.
Matt. 5. 45.
Acts 14. 17.
^s Deut. 11. 14.
Joel 2. 23.
^t Gen. 8. 22.

25 ^uYour iniquities have turned away these *things*, and your sins have withholden good *things* from you.

^u ch. 3. 3.
² Or, *they pry as fowlers lie in wait.*

26 For among my people are found wicked men: ²they ^xlay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men.

^x Prov. 1. 11, 17, 18.
Hab. 1. 15.
³ Or, *coop.*

27 As a ³cage is full of birds, so *are* their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich.

28 They are waxen ^vfat, they shine: yea, they ^voverpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not ^zthe cause, the cause of the fatherless, ^ayet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.

^v Deut. 32. 15.
^z Isai. 1. 23.
Zech. 7. 10.

29 ^bShall I not visit for these *things*? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

^a Job 12. 6.
Ps. 73. 12.
ch. 12. 1.
^b ver. 9.
Mal. 3. 5.

30 ¶ ⁴A wonderful and ^ohorrible thing is committed in the land;

31 the prophets prophesy ^dfalsely, and the priests ⁵bear rule by their means; and my people ^olove to *have it* so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

⁴ Or, *Astonishment and filthiness.*
^c ch. 23. 14.
Hos. 6. 10.
^d ch. 14. 14.
& 23. 25, 26.
Ezek. 13. 6.
⁵ Or, *take into their hands.*
^o Mic. 2. 11.

24. "that giveth rain." See Deut. xxviii. 12. Jeremiah appeals to their sense of providence. The Hebrews admitted no secondary causes.

25. "Your iniquities." The dearth mentioned in ch. xiv. had probably just occurred.

26. "they lay wait." The whole of their sin is wilful.

27. "As a cage full of birds." Their only desire has been to enrich themselves with the plunder of the victims entrapped by them.

28. "They are waxen fat." See Deut. xxxii. 15.

"they overpass," &c., i. e. they actually go beyond what can be called wrong.

31. "the prophets . . . the priests . . . my people." This explains the difficulty which Jeremiah felt, vv. 4, 5. It was the fault of the people that they encouraged such base teachers. The priests sided with the people and supported the false prophets.

JEREMIAH, VI.

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CHAPTER VI.

1 *The enemies sent against Judah* 4 *encourage themselves.* 6 *God setteth them on work because of their sins.* 9 *The prophet lamenteth the judgments of God because of their sins.* 18 *He proclaimeth God's wrath.* 26 *He calleth the people to mourn for the judgment on their sins.*

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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 ^aBeth-haccerem: ^bfor evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction.

^a Neh. 3. 14.

^b ch. 1. 14.
& 4. 6.

² Or,
*dwelling
at home.*

2 I have likened the daughter of Zion to a ²comely and delicate woman.

^c 2 Kin. 25.

1. 4.
ch. 4. 17.

3 The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her; ^cthey shall pitch *their* tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place.

^d ch. 51. 27.

Joel 3. 9.

^e ch. 15. 8.

4 ^dPrepare ye war against her; arise, and let us go up ^eat noon. Woe 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.

³ Or, *pour
out the en-
gine of shot.*

6 For thus hath the LORD of hosts said, Hew ye down trees, and ³cast a mount against Jerusalem:

CHAPTER VI.

Section IV. The impending judgment.

1—8. The dramatic style of the last section is continued. The tidings of the invasion have reached the northern boundary of the territory of Judah, and the inhabitants are urged to flee. Soon shall Jerusalem fall into the hands of the vigorous warriors who are ready to attack noon, evening, or night.

1. "Tekoa . . . Beth-haccerem." Towns southward of Jerusalem in the territory of Judah. They are especially selected so as to indicate the direction in which the people were to flee.

2. "I have likened." He compares Jerusalem to a field (not a woman) into which shepherds will come and feed their flocks to their content.

3. "shepherds." Figuratively put for rulers.

4. "Prepare . . . woe unto us . . . arise." Words put into the mouths of the invaders, exhibiting their vigour and determination. They complain that daytime is not long enough for their attack.

6. "trees." They cleared away the ground so as to have more space for their siege operations.

"mount." A common mode of attack in old times (see Isa. xxxvii. 33.). They threw up a mound against the wall of the besieged city,

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this *is* the city to be visited; she *is* wholly oppression in the midst of her.

7 ^fAs a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness: ^gviolence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually *is* grief and wounds.

8 Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest ^hmy soul ²depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited.

9 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets.

10 To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ⁱear *is* uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, ^kthe 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; ¹I am weary with holding in: I will pour it out ¹ch. 20. 9. ^mupon the children abroad, and upon the assembly ^mch. 9. 21. of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with *him that is* full of days.

and as soon as it reached the level of the top of the wall the soldiers would rush up the "mount," and pour in upon the city like a storm.

7. "As a fountain." The stream that gushes out from a cistern shews what is inside the cistern, just so the violence, &c. shews what is inside Jerusalem.

8. "Be thou instructed," or better, "be thou corrected" (see Zeph. iii. 2.). Observe that even yet the time for repentance has not passed away.

9—15. The guilt of Jerusalem and the certainty of punishment is here again mentioned, as well as the awful character of the destruction which would know of no distinction whether of years or of condition in life.

9. "They shall thoroughly glean." No such promise as chs. iv. 27 or v. 10, 18, is here made. The destruction is to be complete.

"thine hand." The Babylonian general is compared to the vine-dresser moving his hand backwards and forwards (Isa. i. 25.) as he searches for grapes.

10. "To whom shall I speak." He refers to ver. 8. He has uttered the last warning, but nobody cares to hear it.

11. "Therefore I." Or, "Notwithstanding" their deafness "I am full," &c., i. e. I am obliged to speak.

"shall be taken," i. e. overtaken by this judgment, as explained in the next verse.

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^f Isai. 57. 20.

^g Ps. 55. 9,
10, 11,
ch. 20. 8.
Ezek. 7. 11,
23.

^h Ezek. 23. 18.
Hos. 9. 12.

² Heb. *be
loosed, or,
disjointed.*

ⁱ ch. 7. 26.
Acts 7. 51.
See Exod.
6. 12.

^k ch. 20. 8.

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ⁿ Deut. 28. 30.
ch. 8. 10.

12 And ⁿ 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.

^o Isai. 56. 11.
ch. 8. 10.
& 14. 18.
& 23. 11.
Mic. 3. 5, 11.

13 For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one *is* given to ^o covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

^p ch. 8. 11.
Ezek. 13. 10.
² Heb. *bruise*,
or, *breach*.

14 They have ^p healed also the ² hurt of the *daughter* of my people slightly, ^q saying, Peace, peace; when *there is* no peace.

^q ch. 4. 10.
& 14. 13.
& 23. 17.
^r ch. 3. 3.
& 8. 12.

15 Were they ^r 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.

^s Isai. 8. 20.
ch. 18. 15.
Mat. 4. 4.
Lutke 16. 29.
^t Matt. 11. 23.

16 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the ^s old paths, where *is* the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find ^t rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk *therein*.

^u Isai. 21. 11.
& 58. 1.
ch. 25. 4.
Ezek. 3. 17.
Hab. 2. 1.

17 Also I set ^u watchmen over you, *saying*, Harken 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.

^x Isai. 1. 2.

19 ^x Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon ^y this people, *even* ^y the fruit of their thoughts, because

^y Prov. 1. 31.

12. "And their houses." See ch. viii. 10. Deut. xxviii. 30.

15. "Were they ashamed." Rather, "They are put to shame because," &c. They are brought into a shameful plight, yet they do not feel their shame.

16—21. Of what use are vain oblations that are no more than outward service? They cannot make up for the sins of wilful obstinacy and self-inflicted deafness. Therefore the whole world is summoned to hear God pronounce judgment.

16. "the old paths," i.e. the paths in which the ancient saints of Israel walked (see ch. xviii. 15.). Similarly, "the good way," means the way of the good man.

17. "watchmen." Prophets, as Isa. xxi. 11.

The "sound of the trumpet" is the word of God uttered by the prophet. See Amos iii. 6.

18. "O congregation." That is, the whole inhabited world, who are called upon to learn a lesson from the fate of Judah.

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they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.

20 ^z To what purpose cometh there to me incense ^a from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? ^b your burnt offerings *are* not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me.

21 Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will lay stumblingblocks before 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 ^c 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 ^d 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: ^e anguish hath taken hold of us, *and* pain, as of a woman in 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, ^f gird thee with ^f ch. 4. 8.

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^z Ps. 40. 6.
& 50. 7, 8, 9.
Isai. 1. 11,
& 66. 3.
Amos 5. 21.
Mic. 6. 6, &c.
^a Isai. 60. 6.
^b ch. 7. 21.

^c ch. 1. 15.
& 5. 15.
& 10. 22.
& 50. 41,
42, 43.

^d Isai. 5. 30.

^e ch. 4. 31.
& 13. 21.
& 49. 24.
& 50. 43.

20. "To what purpose." A reply to an imaginary interruption on the part of the people pleading that at any rate they had a true form of worship. Comp. Isa. i. 13.

"Sheba." See Isa. lx. 6.

"sweet cane." Isa. xliii. 24.

21. "stumblingblocks," explained ver. 22.

22—26. The sentence is now finally pronounced.

22. "sides of the earth," i. e. the most distant parts of the earth that is known. See Isa. xiv. 15.

23. "They shall lay hold." The cruelty of the Northern nations is depicted in the inscriptions lately discovered. It appears however that the Babylonian general who captured Jerusalem was more humane than the majority of conquerors.

24. "We have heard." Jeremiah puts these words into the mouths of the people. They describe their feelings as they hear of the advance of the enemy. This thought is enlarged in ch. viii. 13—20.

25. "Go not forth." Jeremiah's counsel to the people. It will not be safe to leave the city.

"fear is on every side." A favourite expression of Jeremiah's (chs. xx. 3, 10; xlv. 5; xlix. 29.).

26. "gird thee with sackcloth." To indicate the certainty of the punishment he advises Jerusalem to go into mourning at once.

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 § ch. 25. 34.
 Mic. 1. 10.
 h Zech. 12. 10.

sackcloth, [§] and wallow thyself in ashes: ^h make thee mourning, *as for* an only son, most bitter lamentation: for the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us.

ⁱ ch. 1. 18.
 & 15. 20.

27 I have set thee *for* a tower *and* ⁱ a fortress among my people, that thou mayest know and try their way.

^k ch. 5. 23.
^l ch. 9. 4.
^m Ezek. 22. 18.

28 ^k They *are* all grievous revolters, ^l walking with slanders: *they are* ^m brass and iron; *they are* all corrupters.

29 The bellows are burned, the lead is consumed of the fire; the founder melteth in vain: for the wicked are not plucked away.

ⁿ Isai. 1. 22.
^o Or, *Refuse silver.*

30 ⁿ ² Reprobate silver shall *men* call them, because the LORD hath rejected them.

CHAPTER VII.

¹ *Jeremiah is sent to call for true repentance, to prevent the Jews' captivity.* 8 *He rejecteth their vain confidence.* 12 *by the example of Shiloh.* 17 *He threateneth them for their idolatry.* 21 *He rejecteth the sacrifices of*

27—30. Jeremiah is compared to a silver-smith. He has orders to refine the nation, to separate the dross from the silver.—He finds no silver.

27. “a tower and a fortress.” Comp. ch. i. 18. Instead of “tower,” read “refiner.” These are the words of God to Jeremiah.

28. “They are all,” &c. The reply of Jeremiah when he has finished his task.

29. “The bellows are burned.” He has heated his furnace to the utmost, actually burned his bellows in the process; he has used all his lead in his attempt to make the metal run.

“the wicked.” He drops his metaphor quite suddenly. His preaching had been without effect.

30. “rejected.” The sense of Jeremiah is better maintained by translating this word “reprobate.” Comp. Rom. i. 28.

CHAPTER VII.

It appears that this and the following three chapters form a complete whole, consisting of three distinct sections. The exact date of the prophecy is uncertain; but as there is a clear reference to it in ch. xxvi. 9, and as that chapter is known to date from the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, this must be of about the same date (see vv. 6, 17.). The occasion of the utterance of it was some great public festival, when large numbers of people were assembled in the Temple. It has a peculiar interest, as it is the only sermon now remaining which is known to have been preached in the Temple.

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the disobedient. 29 He exhorteth to mourn for their abominations in Tophet, 32 and the judgments for the same.

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THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 ^a 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, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD.

^a ch. 26. 2.

3 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, ^b Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

^b ch. 18. 11.
& 26. 13.

4 ^c Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, *are* these.

^c Mic. 3. 11.

5 For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly ^d execute judgment between a man and his neighbour;

^d ch. 22. 3.

6 *if* ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, ^e neither walk after other gods to your hurt:

^e Dent. 6. 14,
15. & 8. 19.
& 11. 28.
ch. 13. 10.

7 ^f then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

^f Dent. 4. 40.
& ch. 3. 18.

8 ¶ Behold, ^h ye trust in ⁱ lying words, that cannot profit.

^h ver. 4.
ⁱ ch. 5. 31.
& 14. 13. 14.

Section I. vii. 1—viii. 3. The insufficiency of the Temple and of the sacrifices to avert from Jerusalem the punishment which she deserves.

1—15. The prophet stands at one of the gates and warns the entering throng of worshippers against self-complacency and false security. Let them amend their lives, then they shall receive a blessing. He recites a long catalogue of their sins against the Decalogue, and then shews by the example of Shiloh that the mere sacred associations connected with a sacred place gave no ground for security against punishment.

3. "ways . . . doings." Two words having very different meanings. The "doings" are those acts which tend to form the man's "ways" or "bent," or "character."

4. "The temple." Thrice repeated for emphasis, according to Jeremiah's frequent usage. The people thought that the Temple buildings would be a sufficient charm against evil (see Mic. iii. 11.).

6. "if ye oppress." This verse indicates the times of Jehoiakim. (See ch. xxii. 17.)

"innocent blood." Jeremiah regards the present reign as a revival of the times of Manasseh. (See 2 Kings xxi. 16.)

8. "lying words." Some of the promises made by the false prophets, as ch. vi. 14.

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- ^k 1 Kin. 18. 21. ⁹ Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and ^l walk after other gods whom ye know not ;
- ^l Ex. 20. 3. ver. 6. ¹⁰ and come and stand before me in this house,
- ^m Ezek. 23. 39. ² which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations ?
- ⁿ Heb. *whereupon my name is called.* ¹¹ Is ^o this house, which is called by my name, become a ^p den of robbers in your eyes ? Behold, even I have seen *it*, saith the LORD.
- ^o Isai. 56. 7. ¹² But go ye now unto ^q my place which *was* in Shiloh, ^r where I set my name at the first, and see ^s what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel.
- ^r Deut. 12. 11. ¹³ And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, ^t rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not ; and I ^u called you, but ye answered not ;
- ^s 1 Sam. 4. 10, 11. ¹⁴ therefore will I do unto *this* house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to ^x Shiloh.
- ^t Chr. 36. 15. ver. 25. ch. 11. 7. ¹⁵ And I will cast you out of my sight, ^y as I have cast out all your brethren, ^z *even* the whole seed of Ephraim.
- ^u Prov. 1. 24. Isai. 65. 12. & 66. 4.
- ^x 1 Sam. 4. 10, 11. Ps. 78. 60. ch. 26. 6.
- ^y 2 Kin. 17. 23. ^z Ps. 78. 67, 68.

9. "Will ye steal." Comp. Hos. iv. 2. Observe the distinct reference to six out of the ten Commandments.

10. "which is called by my name." As every name of God is a revelation of His Being, Jeremiah implies that the Temple was a place where God's glory was manifested in some special way.

"We are delivered," i.e. we are free—we may do it with impunity.

11. "I have seen," i.e. to what use you have turned the Temple.

12. "Shiloh." It is not certain to what the allusion here made is. The town was originally constituted by Joshua the religious capital of Palestine. The Tabernacle was there at the time of Eli. In the days of Jeroboam I. it existed (1 Kings xi. 29.), and it certainly was standing after the captivity (Jer. xli. 5.). In Ps. lxxviii. 60, we read that some terrible massacre occurred there, but the date of it is uncertain. We may conjecture that it suffered in the Assyrian invasions. It may be the case, however, that Jeremiah means to say no more than that Shiloh had lost the sacred character with which God once had invested it.

13. "rising up early," a phrase peculiar to Jeremiah. (See St. Matt. xx. 1.)

15. "cast you out." Comp. Deut. xxix. 28.

"all your brethren." See 2 Kings xvii. 20.

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16 Therefore ^a pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me : ^b for I will not hear thee.

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^a Ex. 32. 10.
ch. 11. 14.
& 14. 11.
^b ch. 15. 1.

17 ¶ Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

18 ^c The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead *their* dough, to make cakes to the ² queen of heaven, and to ^d pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger.

^c ch. 44. 17,
19.

² Or, *frame,*
or, *work-*
manship
of heaven.
^d ch. 19. 13.

19 ^e Do they provoke me to anger? saith the LORD : *do they* not *provoke* themselves to the confusion of their own faces?

^e Deut. 32.
16, 21.

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 ; ^f Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh.

^f Isai. 1. 11.
ch. 6. 20.
Amos 5. 21.
See Hosea
8. 13.

16—28. The punishment cannot be averted by prayer, because the people have no faith in the true God. No sacrifice can avail, because they are only effectual when accompanied by obedience. Judah has ever been disobedient, therefore sentence is pronounced against her.

16. "Therefore pray not." Comp. chs. xiv. 19, &c. ; xv. 1 ; xviii. 20. 1 St. John v. 11.

17. "Seest thou not." This barefaced idolatry seems to indicate Jehoiakim's times.

18. "The children . . . the fathers." He mentions them because the worship of the "Queen of heaven" was only devised for female idolaters. But these people are so prone, that they care little what rite they practise provided that it is idolatrous.

"queen of heaven." The full moon. See ch. xlv. 17, &c. He refers to some hideous form of planet-worship of Eastern origin. It was closely connected with the worship of Tammuz (Ezek. viii. 14.). According to the Babylonian legend, the "Queen of heaven" went down to the abodes of the dead to recover Tammuz (The Son of Life).

19. "Do they provoke." Comp. Deut. xxxii. 16—21.

20. "mine anger." It is striking that the sin of man should affect the destiny of other creatures, yet such was the result of God's sentence upon creation (Gen. iii. 17.).

21. "Put your burnt offerings," i.e. lump together sacrifices and burnt offerings, and eat them all alike ; they are all equally unholy, so

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^f 1 Sam. 15. 22.
Ps. 51. 16, 17.
Hos. 6. 6.

² Heb. concerning the matter of.

^h Ex. 15. 26.
Deut. 6. 3.
ch. 11. 4, 7.

ⁱ Ex. 19. 5.
Lev. 26. 12.

^k Ps. 81. 11.
ch. 11. 8.

^l Deut. 29. 19.
Ps. 81. 12.

³ Or, stubbornness.

⁴ Heb. were.
^m ch. 2. 27.
& 32. 33.
Hos. 4. 16.

ⁿ 2 Chr. 36. 15.
ch. 25. 4.
& 29. 19.

^o ver. 13.

^p ver. 24.
ch. 11. 8.
& 17. 23.
& 25. 3, 4.

^q Neh. 9. 17, 29.
ch. 19. 15.
^r ch. 16. 12.

^s Ezek. 2. 7.

^t ch. 5. 3.
& 32. 33.

⁵ Or, instruction.
^u ch. 9. 3.

22 ^s For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, ² concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices :

23 but this thing commanded I them, saying, ^h Obey my voice, and ⁱ I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

24 ^k But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but ^l walked in the counsels *and* in the ³ imagination of their evil heart, and ⁴ ^m went 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 ⁿ sent unto you all my servants the prophets, ^o daily rising up early and sending *them* :

26 ^p yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but ^q hardened their neck: ^r they did worse than their fathers.

27 Therefore ^s 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 their God, ^t nor receiveth ⁵ correction: ^u truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.

that you need not be afraid of profaning them. The burnt offerings according to Lev. i. 9, ought to be entirely burnt upon the altar.

22. "For I spake not." See an exact parallel to this in 1 Sam. xv. 22. The law of obedience was the earliest law of all (Gen. ii. 16, 17.) and the most important. The law of sacrifice was of secondary importance. Hence it followed that even if the sacrifices had been pure, they could not annul the law of obedience. (See ch. vi. 20. Ps. xl. 6; l. 8; li. 16, 17.)

23. "but this thing." A brief abstract of the Law.

27. "Therefore thou shalt speak." Of course if the people rejected the word of Jehovah, Jeremiah could hardly be surprised if they rejected his own message. We shall observe hereafter how sorely the prophet's faith was tried in this way. (See below, ch. xx.)

28. "truth is perished." A glance back to ch. v.

29—viii. 3. Jerusalem is profaned, and utterly lost on account of the idolatry and backsliding of the people. Punishment shall be inflicted in the same place where the sin has been committed; the corpses of the

JEREMIAH, VII.

29 ¶^x Cut off thine 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: ^y they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it.

31 And they have built the ^z high places of Tophet, which *is* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to ^a burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; ^b which I commanded *them* not, neither ² came it into my heart.

32 Therefore, behold, ^c 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: ^d for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place.

33 And the ^e carcases 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.

34 Then will I cause to ^f cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for ^g the land shall be desolate.

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^x Job 1. 20.
Isai. 15. 2.
ch. 16. 6.
& 48. 37.
Mic. 1. 16.
^y 2 Kin. 21.
4. 7.
2 Chron. 33.
4. 5. 7.
ch. 23. 11.
& 32. 34.
Ezek. 7. 20.
& 8. 5, 6, &c.
Dan. 9. 27.
^z 2 Kin. 23. 10.
ch. 19. 5.
& 32. 35.
^a Ps. 106. 38.
^b See D. ut.
17. 3.
^c Heb. *came it upon my heart.*
^d ch. 19. 6.
^e 2 Kin. 23. 10.
ch. 19. 11.
Ezek. 6. 5.
^f Deut. 28. 26.
Ps. 79. 2.
ch. 12. 9.
& 16. 4.
& 34. 20.
^g Isai. 24. 7, 8.
ch. 16. 9.
& 25. 10.
& 33. 11.
Ezek. 26. 13.
Hos. 2. 11.
Rev. 18. 23.
^h Lev. 26. 33.
Isai. 1. 7.
& 3. 26.

idolaters shall be dishonoured in the same valley where they have dishonoured their God, while the living shall be tortured with anxiety and fear to such a degree that they shall desire death in preference to life.

29. "thine hair." The "hair," or, "holy crown," was the mark of consecration of the High-priest (Exod. xxix. 6.) and of the Nazarite (Num. vi. 5.). Here it is taken to be the distinguishing mark of Jerusalem, the chief town of the nation of priests. But now the "hair" is to be shorn off, or, in other words, Jerusalem is profaned.

"high places," i.e. open summits of hills where the complete shame of Jerusalem may be witnessed by all persons.

30. "abominations," those which had been introduced by Manasseh.

31. "high places of Tophet," i.e. idolatrous shrines such as the shrine of Chemosh, which had been erected by Solomon on the Mount of Olives (1 Kings xi. 7.), and which had only been recently destroyed by Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 13.). On "Tophet," see 2 Kings xxiii. 10.

"which I commanded them not." See Lev. xx. 2—5.

32. "till there be no place." See Isa. v. 8; i.e. till there is no more room to bury, and then "the carcases of this people shall be meat," &c. See Deut. xxviii. 26.

JEREMIAH, VIII.

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CHAPTER VIII.

1 *The calamity of the Jews, both dead and alive.* 4 *He upbraideth their foolish and shameless impenitency.* 13 *He sheweth their grievous judgment,* 18 *and bewaileth their desperate estate.*

AT that time, saith the LORD, they 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, and the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have sought, and ^a whom they have worshipped : they shall not be gathered, ^b nor be buried ; they shall be for ^c dung upon the face of the earth.

^a 2 Kin. 23. 5.
Ezek. 8. 16.
^b ch. 22. 19.
^c 2 Kin. 9. 36.
Ps. 83. 10.
ch. 9. 22.
& 16. 4.
^d Job 3. 21, 22.
& 7. 15, 16.
Rev. 9. 6.

3 And ^d 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 ?

^e ch. 7. 24.

5 Why *then* is this people of Jerusalem ^e slidden

CHAPTER VIII.

1. "the bones." Such is the dishonour shewed to the promoters of the idolatry mentioned in ch. vii. 18. Their corpses defile the altars which they themselves had consecrated.

3. "death shall be chosen." See Deut. xxviii. 66.

Section II. viii. 4—ix. 1. The obstinacy of the people, and the awful character of their punishment.

4—13. The people do not behave with ordinary common sense. Generally if a man slips he rises, if he goes out of the right road he turns back, but these people never think of rising or returning, they go on in their wicked course as madly as the horse when he rushes into battle. See the birds of passage. They return at their season. Judah never returns. And yet they are proud about their knowledge of the Law ! So much the worse for them. They shall be punished for attending to their lying priests and prophets.

5. "Why then is this people." They seem to lack the wisdom of the majority of mortals.

JEREMIAH, VIII.

back by a perpetual backsliding? ^f they hold fast deceit, ^g they refuse to return.

6 ^h I hearkened and heard, *but* they 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, ⁱ the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and ^k the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but ^l my people know not the judgment of the LORD.

8 How do ye say, We are wise, ^m and the law of the LORD *is* with us? Lo, certainly ⁿ in vain made he *it*; the pen of the scribes *is* in vain.

9 ^o The wise *men* are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and ^p what wisdom *is* in them?

10 Therefore ^q 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 ^r covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

11 For they have ^s healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, ^t Peace, peace; when *there is* no peace.

12 Were they ^u ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed,

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^f ch. 9. 6.
^g ch. 5. 3.
^h 2 Pet. 3. 9.

ⁱ Isai. 1. 3.
^k Cant. 2. 12.

^l ch. 5. 4. 5.

^m Rom. 2. 17.

ⁿ Or, *the false pen of the scribes worketh for falsehood.*
Isai. 10. 1.
^o ch. 6. 15.

^p Or, *Have they been ashamed, &c.*

^q Heb. *the wisdom of what thing.*

^r Deut. 28. 30.
ch. 6. 12.

Amos 5. 11.
Zeph. 1. 13.

^s Isai. 56. 11.
ch. 6. 13.

^t ch. 6. 14.
^u Ezek. 13. 10.

^v ch. 3. 3.
& 6. 15.

“perpetual,” as opposed to the man who, in ver. 4, only slips once and picks himself up again as soon as he can.

“deceit,” i.e. error.

6. “I hearkened,” i.e. God, Who weighs human actions (1 Sam. ii. 3.).

“not aright,” i.e. wrongly, just as “not commanded” (ch. vii. 31.) means “forbad.”

7. “the stork.” An argument from nature similar to that employed by Isaiah, i. 3. Instinct renders the ox and ass sensible to their master's kindness, it makes the birds of passage obedient to the law of nature, but Israel has neither the common sense of other men nor the instinct of a brute.

8. “How do ye say.” He addresses the priests and prophets as is plain from ver. 10 (comp. ch. ii. 8.).

“Lo, certainly.” The remark of Jeremiah upon the priests' conduct. Each of them has made the Law into a lie.

“the scribes,” the class of priests who made a special study of the Law, which was all to no purpose, while the Law itself was perverted and falsely expounded by others.

9. “The wise are ashamed.” This is their punishment.

10. “Therefore will I give,” &c. See ch. vi. 13—15.

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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.

² Or, *In gathering I will consume.*

¹ Isai. 5. 1, &c. Joel 1. 7.

^u Matt. 21. 19. Luke 13. 6, &c.

^z ch. 4. 5.

13 ² I will surely consume them, saith the LORD: *there shall be* no grapes ^t on the vine, nor figs on the ^u fig tree, and the leaf shall fade; and *the things that* I have given them shall pass away from them.

^v ch. 9. 15. & 23. 15.

³ Or, *poison.*

^z ch. 14. 19.

14 ¶ Why do we sit still? ^x 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 ^y water of ³ gall to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD.

15 We ^z looked for peace, but no good *came*; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!

^a ch. 4. 15.

^b Judg. 5. 22. ch. 47. 3.

⁴ Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

^c Ps. 58. 4, 5. Eccles. 10. 11.

16 The snorting of his horses was heard from ^a Dan: the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his ^b strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land, and ⁴ all that is in it; the city, and those that dwell therein.

17 For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which *will not be* ^c charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the LORD.

13. "I will surely consume." This verb is opposed to the verb "I have given" in the second clause. The prophet means, "I have pruned away all their waste branches, and now I will appoint those who shall trample over the prostrate plants."

14—ix. 1. The people counsel flight at the rapid advance of the unexpected foe whom Jehovah sends against them. The prophet in vain laments their impending woe. He hears them reiterate the presumptuous cry against which he had warned them (ch. vii. 4.), and knows what must be the inexorable reply of God. The people utter one short cry of wonder at their desolate state, and the prophet concludes the section with a bitter lamentation for their self-incurred misery.

14. "Why do we sit still." They now find that Jeremiah was right in his advice (ch. iv. 5—7.). The enemy are close and it is time to flee.

"water of gall," i.e. poison. They feel that they cannot escape.

15. "We looked for peace." Too late. They put their trust in false prophets (ch. vi. 14.).

16. "from Dan." The Babylonians have just entered the Holy Land at the Northern frontier, and all the inhabitants at once are terror-stricken. (Comp Isa. x. 28—31.)

"strong ones," i.e. cavalry.

17. "I will send serpents." Jacob was warned of the danger which should come through Dan (Gen. xlix. 17.). There is also a reference

JEREMIAH, IX.

18 ¶ *When* I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart *is* faint ² in me. Before CHRIST
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19 Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of ² my people ³ because of them that dwell in ⁴ a far country: *Is* not the LORD in Zion? *is* not her king in her? Why have they ⁵ provoked me to anger with their graven images, *and* with strange vanities? ² Heb. upon.
³ Heb. because of the country of them that are far off.
⁴ Isai. 39. 3.
⁵ Deut. 32. 21.
Isai. 1. 4.

20 The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.

21 ¹ For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am ² black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. ¹ ch. 4. 19. & 9. 1. & 14. 17.
² Joel 2. 6. Nab. 2. 10.

22 *Is there* no ¹ balm in Gilead; *is there* no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people ⁴ recovered? ¹ Gen. 37. 25. & 43. 11. ch. 46. 11. & 51. 8.
⁴ Heb. gone up?

CHAPTER IX.

¹ *Jeremiah lamenteth the Jews for their manifold sins, 9 and for their judgment. 12 Disobedience is the cause of their bitter calamity. 17 He exhorteth to mourn for their destruction, 23 and to trust not in themselves, but in God. 25 He threateneth both Jews and Gentiles.*

OH ² that 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 Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place

² Heb. Who will give my head, &c.
² Isai. 22. 4. ch. 4. 19. & 13. 17. & 14. 17. Lam. 2. 11. & 3. 48.

to the plague of serpents (Num. xxi. 6.). Jeremiah has chosen the word "cockatrice" on account of the resemblance in sound which it has in Hebrew to the word *northern* (comp. Joel ii. 20.).

18. "When I would comfort myself." Jeremiah speaks from here to the end of the section.

20. "The harvest is past." A sort of proverb implying that all is lost, harvest and vintage alike.

21. "For the hurt." Few things are more striking in Jeremiah than his intense sympathy for his people. He foreshadows in this way a greater One. (See St. Matt. xxiii. 37, 38.)

22. "balm." See ch. xlvi. 11. Jeremiah means to imply that nothing could cause his people to recover. Balm came from Gilead.

CHAPTER IX.

1. "mine eyes a fountain." He can find comfort in nothing but tears, and wishes that his whole head was a cistern full of them.

Section III. ix. 2—22. The cause of Jeremiah's tears.

2—9. Gladly would Jeremiah escape from the midst of his fellow-countrymen, such liars are they, so faithless, so deceiving.

JEREMIAH, IX.

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b ch. 5, 7, 8.

c Ps. 64. 3.
Isai. 59. 4,
13, 15.

d 1 Sam. 2. 12.

Hos. 4. 1.

e ch. 12. 6.

Mic. 7. 5, 6.

² Or, *friend*.

f ch. 6. 28.

³ Or, *mock*.

g Isai. 1. 25.

Mal. 3. 3.

h Hos. 11. 8.

i Ps. 12. 2.

& 120. 3.

ver. 3.

k Ps. 28. 3.

& 55. 21.

⁴ Heb. *in*

the midst

of him.

⁵ Or, *wait*

for him.

l ch. 5, 9, 20.

m ch. 12. 4.

& 23. 10.

Hos. 4. 3.

⁶ Or,

pastures.

of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for ^b they *be* all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men.

3 And ^c 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 ^d know not me, saith the LORD.

4 ^e Take ye heed every one of his ² neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will ^f walk with slanders.

5 And they will ³ deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, *and* weary themselves to commit iniquity.

6 Thine 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, ^g 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 speaketh ⁱ deceit: *one* speaketh ^k peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but ⁴ in heart he layeth ⁵ his wait.

9 ¹ 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 ^m for the ⁶ habitations of the wilder-

2. "treacherous men." Jeremiah seems to have been more grieved by the utter faithlessness of his people than by their other glaring sins. The fact was that "faithlessness" was the root of all the evil. (See ch. iii. 7.)

4. "Take ye heed." Comp. Mic. vii. 5, 6. The old story of Esau (Gen. xxvii. 36.) was acted over again by these people (comp. Hos. xii. 3.).

6. "Thine habitation." Jeremiah addresses some imaginary person and warns him of his danger.

7. "I will melt them." Comp. ch. vi. 27—30.

"how shall I do," i.e. I can do nothing else.

8. "Their tongue." He makes these references to the Psalms to shew that the general character of the people had been unchanged since the days of David. (Comp. Rom. iii. 10—18.)

10—16. So he weeps for the mountain and meadow-land that is laid waste, for the city that lies in ruins, and for all the misery that the people have brought upon them by their wilful sins.

JEREMIAH, IX.

ness a lamentation, because they are ²burned up, so that none can pass through *them*; neither can *men* hear the voice of the cattle; ³ⁿ both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled; they are gone.

11 And I will make Jerusalem ^oheaps, and ^pa den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah ⁴desolate, without an inhabitant.

12 ¶ ^qWho *is* the wise man, that 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 ^rwalked after the ⁵imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, ^swhich their fathers taught them:

15 therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will ^tfeed them, *even* this people, ^uwith wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.

16 I will ^xscatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: ^yand I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them.

17 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Consider ye,

10. "both the fowl." Comp. ch. l. 3. A destruction is approaching, which will be as complete as that caused by the flood (Gen. vi. 7.).

11. "And I will make." Observe how suddenly the person of the speaker changes. This is one of the most striking instances that we meet with of "God speaking by the prophets." They actually speak in His Person.

12. "Who is the wise man," i.e. does it require very much wisdom to penetrate into the cause of the desolation of the land and the scattering of the people? The answer might be readily found in Deut. xxviii. 15; xxix. 18.

16. "I will scatter them." Comp. Lev. xxvi. 33. He means that as they have broken their side of the covenant, God will assuredly act as He had promised.

17—22. This calamity is soon to overtake the people. They had better at once hire the mourners. Death will come unexpectedly to do his fatal work, and the open fields will be full of corpses.

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² Or,
desolate.

³ Heb. from
the fowl
even to, &c.

ⁿ ch. 4. 25.
^o Isai. 25. 2.
^p Isai. 13. 22.
& 34. 13.
cb. 10. 22.

^q Heb,
desolation.

^r Ps. 107. 43.
Hos. 14. 9.

^r ch. 3. 17.
& 7. 24.

^s Or, stub-
bornness.

^t Gal. 1. 14.

^u Ps. 80. 5.

^v ch. 8. 14.
& 23. 15.
Lam. 3. 15, 19.

^x Lev. 26. 33.
Deut. 28. 64.

^y Lev. 26. 33.
ch. 44. 27.
Ezek. 5. 2, 12.

JEREMIAH, IX.

- Before
CHRIST
cir. 600. and call for ^z the mourning women, that they may come; and send for cunning *women*, that they may come:
- ^z 2 Chr. 35. 25.
Job 3. 8.
Eccles. 12. 5.
Amos 5. 16.
Matt. 9. 23.
^a ch. 14. 17. 18 and let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that ^a our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters.
- ^b Lev. 18. 28.
& 20. 22. 19 For a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion, How are we spoiled! we are greatly confounded, because we have forsaken the land, because ^b our dwellings have cast *us* out.
- 20 Yet hear the word of the LORD, O ye women, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbour lamentation.
- ^c ch. 6. 11. 21 For death is come up into our windows, *and* is entered into our palaces, to cut off ^c the children from without, *and* the young men from the streets.
- ^d ch. 8. 2.
& 16. 4. 22 Speak, Thus saith the LORD, Even the carcases of men shall fall ^d as dung upon the open field, and as the handful after the harvestman, and none shall gather *them*.
- ^e Eccles. 9. 11. 23 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, ^e Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man*

17. "cunning women," i.e. professional mourners such as those mentioned in St. Mark v. 38.

19. "How are we spoiled." Comp. Mic. ii. 4.

20. "teach your daughters." Your professional mourners will not be sufficient in numbers to bewail the multitudes of the dead; teach the profession to your children.

21. "death is come up." See Joel ii. 9. It comes like the thief in the night.

22. "Even the carcases." Death seems to be personified in this verse as in the last. Here he appears as a reaper, but no one follows him to gather in his ghastly harvest. The bodies lie as dung upon the fields.

Section IV. ix. 23—x. 25. The hope that is held out, and the emptiness of it.

23—26. Not earthly wisdom, but knowledge of God is man's true glory. Not external ordinances but a renewed heart is what He requires. Therefore Judah shall be punished in the same way as Egypt or Edom or any other nation.

23. "wisdom." See ch. viii. 9. Wisdom, might, and riches cannot avert the doom of Jerusalem.

JEREMIAH, X.

glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches :

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24 but ^flet him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth : ^gfor in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD.

^f 1 Cor. 1. 31.
2 Cor. 10. 17.

^g Mic. 6. 8.
& 7. 18.

25 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that ^hI will ²punish all *them which are* circumcised with the uncircumcised ;

^h Rom. 2. 8, 9.
² Heb. visit upon.

26 Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all *that are* ³in the ⁱutmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness : for all *these nations are* uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel *are* ^kuncircumcised in the heart.

³ Heb. cut off into corners, or, having the corners of their hair polled.

ⁱ ch. 25. 23, & 49. 32.

^k Lev. 26. 41.
Ezek. 44. 7.
Rom. 2. 28, 29.

CHAPTER X.

1 *The unequal comparison of God and idols.* 17 *The prophet exhortheth to flee from the calamity to come.* 19 *He lamenteth the spoil of the tabernacle by foolish pastors.* 23 *He maketh an humble supplication.*

HEAR ye the word which the LORD speaketh unto you, O house of Israel :

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2 thus saith the LORD, ^aLearn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven ; for the heathen are dismayed at them.

^a Lev. 18. 3.
& 20. 23.

24. "but let him that glorieth." It is only by Judah's learning to copy her God in respect of His mercy, judgment, and righteousness, that she can be saved, and Jeremiah knows that this cannot be. (See Mic. vi. 8.)

25. "circumcised with the uncircumcised." The covenant of circumcision cannot save those who are uncircumcised in heart. (See Gal. v. 6.)

26. "Egypt, Judah, Edom . . ." Observe how he places Judah among the uncircumcised nations. He thus explains his meaning in the last verse.

"that are in the utmost corners," or, "that have the corners (of their beards) cut off," referring to the custom forbidden (Lev. xix. 27.). The phrase is only found here and in ch. xxv. 23 ; xlix. 32.

CHAPTER X.

1—16. The folly of idolatry, and the ridiculous manufacture of idols. How can a sensible person compare Jehovah with them ?

2. "the way of the heathen," i.e. religion, as in ch. v. 4, 5.

"signs of heaven," eclipses, meteoric displays, and the like.

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² Heb. statutes, or, ordinances are vanity.

^b Isai. 40. 19, 20. & 44. 9, 10, &c. & 45. 20.

^c Isai. 41. 7. & 46. 7.

^d Ps. 115. 5. & 135. 16. Hab. 2. 19. 1 Cor. 12. 2.

^e Ps. 115. 7. Isai. 46. 1, 7.

^f Isai. 41. 23.

^g Ex. 15. 11. Ps. 86. 8, 10.

^h Rev. 15. 4.

³ Or, it liketh thee.

⁴ Ps. 89. 6.

⁴ Heb. in one, or, at once.

^k Ps. 115. 8. Isai. 41. 23. Hab. 2. 18. Zech. 10. 2. Rom. 1. 21, 22.

¹ Dan. 10. 5.

^m Ps. 115. 4.

⁵ Heb. God of truth. Ps. 31. 5.

ⁿ 1 Tim. 6. 17.

⁶ Heb. king of eternity. ^o Ps. 10. 16.

3 For the ² customs of the people *are* vain: for ^b *one* cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax.

4 They deck it with silver and with gold; they ^c fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.

5 They *are* upright as the palm tree, ^d but speak not: they must needs be ^e borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for ^f they cannot do evil, neither also *is it* in them to do good.

6 Forasmuch as *there is* none ^g like unto thee, O LORD; thou *art* great, and thy name *is* great in might.

7 ^h Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for ³ to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as ⁱ among all the wise *men* of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, *there is* none like unto thee.

8 But they are ⁴ altogether ^k brutish and foolish: the stock *is* a doctrine of vanities.

9 Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, and ¹ gold from Uphaz, the work of the workman, and of the hands of the founder: blue and purple *is* their clothing: they *are* all ^m the work of cunning *men*.

10 But the LORD *is* the ⁵ true God, he *is* ⁿ the living God, and an ^{6 o} everlasting king: at his wrath

3. "the people," i.e. heathen people. Compare with this the description in Isaiah of an idol-factory (ch. xlv. 9—19.), which was evidently in Jeremiah's mind as he delivered this portion of the discourse.

5. "upright," or, rather, "turned work." The idols are really nothing more than a log of palm wood turned into a round pillar.

"they cannot do evil." See Isaiah xli. 23.

6. "Forasmuch as there is none." Jeremiah wishes to make a strong assertion, and so uses a double negative. "None, none is like unto thee."

7. "doth it appertain," i.e. fear.

8. "the stock is a doctrine of vanities." He is contrasting the doctrine of vanities with the "doctrine" (or chastisement) of Jehovah (Deut. xi. 2.), and means "the teaching of idols is wood." No wonder then that under such teaching people become brutish.

9. "Tarshish . . . Uphaz." Probably taken as representing West and East. They will take any trouble to get fine idols. The locality of Uphaz, elsewhere only mentioned in Dan. x. 5, is unknown. There is no reason to identify it with Ophir. Tarshish was in Spain.

10. "But the Lord." He describes the majesty of God, and leaves us to infer that the people had done nothing to glorify Him.

JEREMIAH, X.

the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

11 ² Thus shall ye say unto them, ^P The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, *even* ^q they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.

12 He ^r hath made the earth by his power, he hath ^s established the world by his wisdom, and ^t hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.

13 ^u When he uttereth his voice, *there is* a ³ multitude of waters in the heavens, and ^x he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings ⁴ with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.

14 ^y Every man ⁵ is ^z brutish in *his* knowledge: ^a every founder is confounded by the graven image: ^b for his molten image *is* falsehood, and *there is* no breath in them.

15 They *are* vanity, and the work of errors: in the time of their visitation ^c they shall perish.

16 ^d The portion of Jacob *is* not like them: for he *is* the former of all *things*; and ^e Israel *is* the rod of his inheritance: ^f The LORD of hosts *is* his name.

17 ¶ ^g Gather up thy wares out of the land, O ⁶ inhabitant of the fortress.

18 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will ^h sling

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² In the Chaldean language.

^p See Ps. 96. 5. q ver. 15.

Isai. 2. 18. Zech. 13. 2.

^r Gen. 1. 1, 6, 9. Ps. 136. 5, 6. ch. 51. 15, &c.

^s Ps. 93. 1. ^t Job 9. 8.

Ps. 104. 2. Isai. 40. 22.

^u Job 38. 34. ^v Or, noise.

^x Ps. 135. 7. ^y Or, for rain.

ch. 51. 17, 18. ^z Or, is more brutish than to know.

^a Prov. 30. 2. ^b Isai. 42. 17.

& 44. 11. & 45. 16.

^c Hab. 2. 18. ^d ver. 11.

^e Ps. 16. 5. & 73. 26.

& 119. 57. ch. 51. 19.

Lam. 3. 24. ^f Deut. 32. 9.

Ps. 74. 2. ^g Isai. 47. 4.

& 51. 15. & 54. 5.

ch. 31. 35. & 32. 18.

& 50. 34. ^h See ch. 6. 1.

Ezek. 12. 3, &c.

⁶ Heb. *inhabitress*.

^h 1 Sam. 25. 29. ch. 16. 13.

11. "Thus shall ye say unto them." The following words are paraphrased into Chaldee from Isa. lx. 12. But why should Jeremiah make the people address the idolaters in a foreign language? Simply because he knew that before so very long they will have to talk it. He thus points out the certainty of the captivity.

12. "He hath made." He resumes the thought of ver. 10, which had been interrupted by the address to the idolaters.

13. "When he uttereth." The thunder, as in Ps. xxix., is spoken of as the voice of God. This is the argument of natural religion.

14. "in his knowledge," or, "without knowledge."

"every founder," i.e. idol-maker. He is put to shame by the powerless idol, when he contrasts with it the active might of Jehovah.

15. "errors," or, illusions.

16. "The portion of Jacob," i.e. Jehovah. See Deut. iv. 19, 20; xxxii. 9.

17—22. The people will be carried away captive, and Jerusalem will be laid waste in punishment for the sins of her inhabitants.

17. "thy wares," i.e. packages. Get ready to start on your journey.

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out the inhabitants of the land at this once, and will distress them, ⁱ that they may find *it so*.

i Ezek. 6. 10.
k ch. 4. 19.
& 8. 21. &
9. 1.
i Ps. 77. 10.
m Mic. 7. 9.
n ch. 4. 20.

19 ¶^k Woe is me for my hurt! my wound is grievous: but I said, ^l Truly this *is* a grief, and ^m I must bear it.

20 ⁿ My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me, and they *are* not: *there is* 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.

o ch. 1. 15. &
4. 6. & 5. 15.
& 6. 22.
P ch. 9. 11.

22 Behold, the noise of the bruit is come, and a great commotion out of the ^o north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, and a ^p den of dragons.

q Prov. 16. 1.
& 20. 24.

23 ¶ O LORD, I know that the ^q way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

r Ps. 6. 1.
& 38. 1.
ch. 30. 11.

24 O LORD, ^r correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou ^s bring me to nothing.

s Heb. *diminish me*.

t Ps. 79. 6.
t Job 18. 21.
1 Thes. 4. 5.
2 Thes. 1. 8.
u ch. 8. 16.

25 ^s Pour out thy fury upon the heathen ^t that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name: for they have eaten up Jacob, and ^u devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate.

18. "at this once," i.e. immediately.

"that they may find it so," i.e. that they may feel and find out by experience that Jehovah is the true God.

19. "Woe is me." This and the next verse are supposed to be spoken by Jerusalem lamenting her overthrow (comp. ch. iii. 25.).

20. "My tabernacle," i.e. houses. Comp. Isa. liv. 2.

21. "the pastors." See ch. ii. 8.

22. "Behold . . . the bruit," or, "Hark! a rumour! Behold! They come!" He supposes them to be actually within range of hearing.

"desolate." See ch. ix. 11.

23—25. Jeremiah's prayer for himself and the people.

23. "I know," or, as an old proverb says, "Man proposeth, God disposeth."

"man that walketh," i.e. man at his best. It is a different word from that used in the first clause.

24. "O Lord, correct me," i.e. when Thou correctest me do so as Thy justice permits, not as Thine anger would demand, in which case I (i.e. the nation) should be utterly reduced in numbers.

25. "Pour out thy fury." See Ps. lxxix. 6, 7.

CHAPTER XI.

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1 *Jeremiah proclaimeth God's covenant, 8 rebuketh the Jews' disobeying thereof, 11 prophesieth evils to come upon them, 18 and upon the men of Anathoth, for conspiring to kill Jeremiah.*

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, cir. 608.
saying,

2 Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak unto the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

3 and say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; ^a Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant, ^a Deut. 27. 26.
Gal. 3. 10.

4 which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, ^b from the iron furnace, saying, ^c 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: ^b Deut. 4. 20.
¹ Kin. 8. 51.
^c Lev. 26. 3, 12.
ch. 7. 23.

5 that I may perform the ^d oath which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing ^d Deut. 7. 12,
13.
Ps. 105. 9, 10.

CHAPTER XI.

This with the next two chapters forms a complete whole. The subject is the general disobedience of Judah, and the consequences of her conduct. It is divided into three sections of which the first covers the first seventeen verses of this chapter. It probably dates from the time of Josiah, shortly after the event described in 2 Kings xxii. 8.

Section I. xi. 1—17. The covenant is solemnly renewed by Jeremiah on the part of the people. He then glances at the history of their disobedience in the past, shewing that their history repeats itself now. He concludes by denouncing God's judgment against them.

2. "Hear ye . . . and speak." Probably the prophets as a class are here addressed by God.

"this covenant," i.e. the book of the Law, as it is called in 2 Kings xxiii. 21.

3. "and say thou." Jeremiah is singled out from the prophets to perform this task.

"Cursed be the man." Deut. xxvii. 26. The covenant had already been confirmed (Josh. viii. 30—35.).

4. "which I commanded." See Exod. xix. 5.

"Obey my voice." See Lev. xxvi. 12.

5. "that I may perform." See Deut. vii. 12, 13.

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with milk and honey, as *it is* this day. Then answered I, and said, ²So be it, O LORD.

² Heb. *Amen*,
Deut. 27.
15,—26.

6 ¶ Then the LORD said unto me, Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, ^e and do them.

^e Rom. 2. 13.
Jam. 1. 22.

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, ^f rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice.

^f ch. 7. 13, 25.
& 35. 15.

^e ch. 7. 26.

8 ^g Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but ^h walked every one in the ³ 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.

^h ch. 3. 17.
& 7. 24.
& 9. 14.

³ Or, *stubbornness*.

9 ¶ And the LORD said unto me, ⁱ A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

ⁱ Ezek. 22. 25.
Hos. 6. 9.

10 They are turned back to ^k the 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 covenant which I made with their fathers.

^k Ezek. 20. 18.

11 Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able ⁴ to escape; and ¹ though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.

⁴ Heb. *to go forth of*.

¹ Ps. 18. 41.
Prov. 1. 23.

Isai. 1. 15.
ch. 14. 12.

Ezek. 8. 18.
Mic. 3. 4.

Zech. 7. 13.

^m Deut. 32.
37, 38.

⁵ Heb. *evil*.

12 Then shall the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and ^m cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their ⁵ trouble.

5. "So be it," or, Amen, the word which was used after the recital of each curse (Deut. xxvii. 15—26.). Jeremiah says "Amen" in behalf of the people who should have said it.

6. "Proclaim." It seems that Jeremiah made a circuit of the city, reading aloud the above words.

9. "A conspiracy." Apparently there was a party in Jerusalem which was considerably opposed to Josiah's reforms. That Jeremiah himself was conspired against is evident from ver. 18.

10. "their forefathers." Referring to the conduct of Israel in the wilderness.

12. "Then shall the cities." See ch. ii. 28.

13 For according to the number of thy ⁿ cities were thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that ²shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal.

14 Therefore ^opray 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 ³trouble.

15 ^pWhat hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath ⁴wrought lewdness with many, and ^rthe holy flesh is passed from thee? ⁵when thou doest evil, then thou ^srejoicest.

16 The LORD called thy name, ^tA 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, ^uthat planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee, for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke me to anger in offering incense unto Baal.

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ⁿ ch. 2. 28.

² Heb. *shame*,
ch. 3. 24.
Hos. 9. 10.

^o Ex. 32. 10.
ch. 7. 16.
& 14. 11.
1 John 5. 16.

³ Heb. *evil*.

^p Ps. 50. 16.
Is. 1. 11, &c.

⁴ Heb. *What
is to my be-
loved in my
house.*

^q Ezek. 16.
25, &c.

^r Hag. 2. 12,
13, 14.

^s Tit. 1. 15.

⁵ Or, *when
thy evil is.*

^t Prov. 2. 14.

^u Ps. 52. 8.

Rom. 11. 17.

^v Isai. 5. 2.
ch. 2. 21.

13. "streets of Jerusalem." The open character of the idolatry of Manasseh is in the prophet's mind.

14. "Therefore pray not." See ch. vii. 16.

"for their trouble," i.e. on account of it.

15. "What hath my beloved," &c. The whole passage, like the preceding prophecy, is directed against hypocritical services and vain confidence in the Temple (comp. ch. xxiii. 11.). The title "beloved" (Deut. xxxiii. 12.) applies to Jerusalem because it was situated in the tribe of Benjamin.

"seeing she hath wrought," i.e. while she is guilty of this gross hypocrisy. See ch. vii. 10, 11.

"the holy flesh." Here and Hag. ii. 12 only. As this sanctified all that it touched (Lev. vi. 27.), the removal of it signified the impossibility of sanctifying the heart of the people.

16. "A green olive." Ps. lii. 8. Jeremiah compares the Davidic kingdom to the olive tree; the tumult or storm in which the branches were broken was the political crisis at the death of Solomon, from which time, practically speaking, the kingdom had collapsed.

17. "which they have done against themselves," i.e. "evil fruit" "which they have brought forth to their own hurt."

Section II. xi. 18—xii. 17. The conspiracies detected and punished, followed by a promise to the penitent.

18—23. The general hardness of the Jewish heart is well typified in the men of Anathoth, and Jeremiah himself is a type of many others

The first part of the chapter discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It is essential for the business to have a clear and concise record of its financial activities, as this will enable the management to make informed decisions regarding the future of the business. The records should be kept in a safe and secure place, and should be accessible to all concerned parties.

The second part of the chapter deals with the various methods of accounting. It discusses the different types of accounts, such as the balance sheet, the profit and loss account, and the cash flow statement. It also explains how these accounts are prepared and how they are used to analyze the financial performance of the business.

The third part of the chapter focuses on the importance of budgeting. It explains how a budget can be used to plan for the future and to control the business's expenses. It also discusses the various factors that can affect the budget, such as changes in market conditions and the business's operations.

The fourth part of the chapter discusses the importance of financial ratios. It explains how these ratios can be used to compare the business's performance with that of its competitors and to identify areas for improvement. It also discusses the various types of ratios, such as the current ratio, the debt to equity ratio, and the return on investment ratio.

The fifth part of the chapter deals with the importance of financial statements. It explains how these statements are prepared and how they are used to provide information to the business's stakeholders. It also discusses the various types of financial statements, such as the balance sheet, the profit and loss account, and the cash flow statement.

The sixth part of the chapter discusses the importance of financial forecasting. It explains how this process can be used to predict the business's future financial performance and to identify potential risks. It also discusses the various methods of forecasting, such as the trend method, the ratio method, and the regression method.

The seventh part of the chapter deals with the importance of financial control. It explains how this process can be used to ensure that the business is operating within its budget and to identify areas for improvement. It also discusses the various methods of financial control, such as the budgetary control method, the standard cost method, and the variance analysis method.

The eighth part of the chapter discusses the importance of financial risk management. It explains how this process can be used to identify and mitigate the business's financial risks. It also discusses the various methods of financial risk management, such as the diversification method, the hedging method, and the insurance method.

The ninth part of the chapter deals with the importance of financial reporting. It explains how this process can be used to provide information to the business's stakeholders and to ensure that the business is complying with the relevant financial reporting standards. It also discusses the various methods of financial reporting, such as the annual financial statement method, the quarterly financial statement method, and the monthly financial statement method.

The tenth part of the chapter discusses the importance of financial planning. It explains how this process can be used to develop a clear and concise plan for the business's future financial activities. It also discusses the various methods of financial planning, such as the budgeting method, the forecasting method, and the risk management method.

CHAPTER XII

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CHAPTER III

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INTRODUCTION

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have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and *if* in the land of peace, *wherein* thou trustest, *they wearied thee*, then how wilt thou do in ^k the swelling of Jordan?

^k Josh. 3. 15.
^l Chr. 12. 15.
ch. 49. 19.
& 50. 44.
¹ ch. 9. 4.
& 11. 19, 21.
² Or, *they*
cried after
thee fully.
^m Prov. 26. 25.
³ Heb. *good*
things.

6 For even ¹thy brethren, and the house of thy father, even they have dealt treacherously with thee; yea, ²they have called a multitude after thee: ^mbelieve them not, though they speak ³fair words unto thee.

⁴ Heb.
the love.

7 ¶ I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage; I have given ⁴the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies.

⁵ Or, *yelleth.*

⁶ Heb.
giveth out
his voice.

8 Mine heritage is unto me as a lion in the forest; it ⁵⁶crieth out against me: therefore have I hated it.

⁷ Or, *taloned.*

⁸ Or, *cause*
them to
come.

9 Mine heritage *is* unto me *as* a ⁷speckled bird, the birds round about *are* against her; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, ⁸ⁿcome to devour.

⁹ Isai. 56. 9.

ch. 7. 33.

o ch. 6. 3.

p Isai. 5. 1, 5.

10 Many ^opastors have destroyed ^pmy vineyard,

Jeremiah. He must prepare himself for something worse, for a conspiracy against him by the members of his own family.

"the swelling of Jordan." Probably the jungle on the banks of Jordan, which was the abode of lions (ch. xlix. 19).

6. "they have called a multitude." The marginal version gives better sense.

7—13. The reproof of God is continued. The desolation of which Jeremiah complains comes from God. He has summoned the destroyer because the pastors have destroyed His vineyard. They are to be blamed, not He.

7. "mine house," i.e. Israel and Judah.

"dearly beloved." Comp. ch. xi. 15. It is a marvellous instance of God's love to find that He continues to use this phrase of His apostate people, but comp. ch. iii. 14.

8. "as a lion." How different in character from what it should have been (Gen. xlix. 9); it is now no longer God's son. This lion-like opposition to God's will has made Him withdraw His love or "hate it."

9. "a speckled bird," i.e. one of different plumage from the rest of the flight, which is sure to be attacked by the others.

"all the beasts of the field." A sudden change in metaphor, referring to Isa. lvi. 9.

10. "Many pastors." Referring to the hordes brought in by Nebuchadnezzar (comp. chs. vi. 2, 3; xxiv. 1.).

"have destroyed." This and the other perfects are to be taken as pointing out prophetic certainty. The exactness of the Divine retribution is all the more striking when we see the way in which Isaiah used the word "shepherd" (ch. lvi. 11.).

JEREMIAH, XII.

they have ¹trodden my portion under foot, they have made my ²pleasant portion a desolate wilderness.

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¹ Isai. 63. 18.

² Heb.
*portion of
desire.*

^r ver. 4.

^s Isai. 42. 15.

11 They have made it desolate, *and being* desolate ^rit mourneth unto me; the whole land is made desolate, because ^sno 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 ^tThey have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns: they have put themselves to pain, *but* shall not profit: and ³they shall be ashamed of your revenues because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

^t Lev. 26. 16.

Deut. 28. 38.

Micah 6. 15.

Hag. 1. 6.

³ Or, *ye.*

14 ¶ Thus saith the LORD against all mine evil neighbours, that ^utouch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit; Behold, I will ^xpluck them out of their land, and pluck out the house of Judah from among them.

^u Zech. 2. 8.

^x Deut. 30. 3.
ch. 32. 37.

15 ^yAnd it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I will return, and have compassion on them, ^zand will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land.

^y Ezek. 28. 25.

^z Amos 9. 14.

16 And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, ^ato swear by my name, The LORD liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be ^bbuilt in the midst of my people.

^a ch. 4. 2.

^b Ephes. 2.

20, 21.

1 Pet. 2. 5.

11. "being desolate it mourneth." It laments that it is not used for the purpose for which God created it (Isa. xlv. 18, 19.).

12. "no flesh." Comp. Gen. vi. 3; i.e. sinful man.

13. "wheat . . . thorns." They reap just the opposite of what they have sown. The proverb is of course not to be taken in a material sense, though no doubt the desolation of the land is in the prophet's mind.

"your revenues," i.e. what you reap from the seed you have sown.

14—17. Those who have thus destroyed Jerusalem shall be punished in their turn, but in the end if they repent they shall be restored.

14. "mine evil neighbours," i.e. those who lived in the neighbourhood of God's land, against whom the latter portion of the book is spoken.

"pluck out the house of Judah." As was the case at the return from the captivity, which was a type of a greater deliverance to follow in the last times.

16. "if they will learn." Observe that in some of the prophecies

JEREMIAH, XIII.

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c Isai. 60. 12.

17 But if they will not ° obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the LORD.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 *In the type of a linen girdle, hidden at Euphrates, God prefigureth the destruction of his people.* 12 *Under the parable of the bottles filled with wine he foretelleth their drunkenness in misery.* 15 *He exhorteth to prevent their future judgments.* 22 *He sheweth their abominations are the cause thereof.*

cir. 602. **T**HUS saith the LORD unto me, Go 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,

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.

5 So I went, and hid it by Euphrates, as the LORD commanded me.

6 And it came to pass after many days, that the LORD said unto me, Arise, go to Euphrates, and

against foreign nations this is more distinctly foretold. Here, however, we should notice that they are to dwell "in the midst of" God's "people," not, as it is now, God's people in the midst of them.

17. "But if they will not obey." All prophecy, therefore, is conditional. We need not be surprised, therefore, if some prophecies seem to fail in being fulfilled.

CHAPTER XIII.

Section III. xiii. 1—27. An appendix to the preceding justifying God's dealing with His people.

1—11. The parable of the linen girdle.

1. "a linen girdle." The material is important. It typified Israel in its character of a priestly nation.

"put it not in water," i. e. see what becomes of it if it is not washed. The unwashed state of the girdle represents the corruption of the Jewish priest-people at this time.

4. "go to Euphrates." No doubt the river Euphrates. Jeremiah seems to have been well acquainted with Babylon (ch. xxix.), and the Babylonians seem to have known something about him (ch. xxxix. 11—14.). Taking the girdle to the Euphrates was a symbolical act, prophetic of the captivity. This like all other symbolical acts of Jeremiah is followed by a discourse to which it serves as a sort of text.

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take the girdle from thence, which I commanded thee to hide there.

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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 ^a will a Lev. 26. 19. I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem.

10 This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which ^b walk in the ² imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which b ch. 9. 14.
& 11. 8.
& 16. 12.
² Or, stub-
bornness. is good for nothing.

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 ^c they might be unto me for a c Ex. 19. 5.
d ch. 33. 9. people, and ^d 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?

7. "the girdle was marred." The people were enfeebled by the captivity as appears from the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

10. "This evil people." This explains the purifying process of the captivity. The evil portion was entirely destroyed.

11. "as the girdle cleaveth." Jeremiah appears to be a type of Jehovah, to Whom the people should have cleaved (Deut. iv. 4; x. 20.), as the girdle did to Jeremiah.

"for a name, and for a praise," &c. See Deut. xxvi. 16—19. Inf. ch. xxxiii. 9.

12—17. The parable of the bottles, and the application of it. The bottles represent men, just as in ch. xiii. 12 the bottles filled with wine represent the Jewish people intoxicated with the cup of God's vengeance (see Ps. lx. 3.). All classes suffer from the effects of this deadly draught; and the dashing of the bottles against each other represents the factious divisions in Jerusalem which should make her fall an easy prey into the hands of her enemies.

12. "Do we not certainly know." The people seem to confess their inability to see the force of the remark just made.

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13 Then shalt thou say unto them, 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, ^e with drunkenness.

^e Is. 51. 17, 21.
& 63. 6.
ch. 25. 27.
& 51. 7.

14 And ^f I will dash them ² one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the LORD: I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, ³ but destroy them.

^f Ps. 2. 9.

² Heb. *a man against his brother.*

³ Heb. *from destroying them.*

15 ¶ Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the LORD hath spoken.

^g Josh. 7. 19.

16 ^g Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause ^h darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye ⁱ look for light, he turn it into ^k the shadow of death, *and* make *it* gross darkness.

^h Isai. 5. 30.
& 8. 22.

Amos 8. 9.

ⁱ Isai. 59. 9.

^k Ps. 44. 19.

17 But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for *your* pride; and ^l mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD's flock is carried away captive.

^l ch. 9. 1.
& 14. 17.
Lam. 1. 2, 16.
& 2. 18.

18 Say unto ^m the king and to the queen, Humble yourselves, sit down: for your ⁴ principalities shall come down, *even* the crown of your glory.

^m See 2 Kin. 24. 12.
ch. 22. 26.

⁴ Or, *head* *lives.*

19 The cities of the south shall be shut up, and

15. "Hear ye, and give ear." An exhortation to the people to pay attention to the deep truth which this symbolical act teaches them.

16. "Give glory to the Lord." Comp. Josh. vii. 19. He exhorts them to humility.

"before he cause," &c. Comp. Isa. lix. 9, 10.

17. "in secret places." The prophet will retire from his public ministry, and do nothing but pray privately for the people.

"the Lord's flock." Another reminder of God's love. Comp. chs. xi. 15; xii. 7.

18—27. The conclusion to the whole prophecy commencing at ch. xi. 1. He first addresses the king and queen, and then the whole people of Jerusalem, assuring them of their future punishment.

18. "and the queen." From the time of Bathsheba the queen-mother is always mentioned in the account of the reign of each king. She was a person, as appears from the instances of Athaliah and Jezebel, of considerable political importance.

"sit down," i. e. in lowly humility (see Isa. xlvii. 1—3.), with which compare this passage.

19. "The cities of the south," i. e. Judah. The last fortresses that remained in Palestine after Jerusalem and the northern forts had been captured.

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none shall open *them*: Judah shall be carried away captive all of it, it shall be wholly carried away captive. Before
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20 Lift up your eyes, and behold them ⁿ that ⁿ ch. 6. 22. come from the north: where *is* the flock *that* was given thee, thy beautiful flock?

21 What wilt thou say when he shall ² punish ² Heb. *visit upon.* thee? for thou hast taught them *to be* captains, *and* as chief over thee: shall not ^o sorrows take thee, as ^o ch. 6. 24. a woman in travail?

22 And if thou say in thine heart, ^p Wherefore ^p ch. 5. 19. & 16. 10. come these things upon me? For the greatness of thine iniquity are ^q thy skirts discovered, *and* thy heels ³ made bare.

23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? *then* may ye also do good, that are ⁴ accustomed to do evil. ^q Isai. 3. 17. & 47. 2, 3. ver. 26. Ezek. 16. 37, 38, 39. Nah. 3. 5. ³ Or, *shall be violently taken away.*

24 Therefore will I scatter them ^r as the stubble ⁴ Heb. *taught.* that passeth away by the wind of the wilderness. ^r Ps. 1. 4. Hos. 13. 3.

25 ^s This *is* thy lot, the portion of thy measures from me, saith the LORD; because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in ^t falsehood. ^s Job 20. 29. Ps. 11. 6.

26 Therefore ^u will I discover thy skirts upon thy face, that thy shame may appear. ^t ch. 10. 14. ^u ver. 22. Lam. 1. 8. Ezek. 16. 37. & 23. 29. Hos. 2. 10.

27 I have seen thine adulteries, and thy ^x neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, *and* thine abomi- ^x ch. 5. 8.

20. "Lift up your eyes." He announces the captivity. The Babylonians are at hand, and the sheep are at once scattered, sheep which the head of the Theocratic people was commanded to feed (Ps. lxxviii. 71.).

21. "What wilt thou say." Better translated, "What wilt thou say when He (i. e. God) shall set over thee as a head those whom thou hast tried to train to be thy dear friends?" All in vain was the attempt to curry favour with Babylon. The fickle policy of Judah was well known in the East.

22. "skirts . . . heels." Signifying that they would have to do slaves' work.

23. "Can the Ethiopian." As a negro is naturally black, and a leopard naturally striped, so Judah is naturally inclined to sin, and she will not change.

25. "the portion of thy measures," i. e. thy allotted portion.

26. "discover." See Nah. iii. 5. According to Nahum the fate of Egypt was a warning to Assyria; and such is the fall of Nineveh, which had only recently occurred, to Jerusalem.

"upon thy face," i. e. before thee.

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† Isai. 65. 7.
ch. 2. 20.
& 3. 2, 6.
Ezek. 6. 13.

² Heb. *after when yet?*

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² Heb. *the words of the dearths, or, restraints.*

† Isai. 3. 26.

ⁱ ch. 8. 21.

ⁱ See 1 Sam. 5. 12.

ⁱ Ps. 40. 14.

ⁱ 2 Sam. 15. 30.

nations † on the hills in the fields. Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? ² when shall it once be?

CHAPTER XIV.

1 The grievous famine † causeth Jeremiah to pray. 10 The Lord will not be intreated for the people. 13 Lying prophets are no excuse for them. 17 Jeremiah is moved to complain for them.

THE word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah concerning ² the dearth.

2 Judah mourneth, and ⁱ the gates thereof languish; they are ⁱ black unto the ground; and ⁱ the cry of 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 ⁱ ashamed and confounded, ⁱ and covered their heads.

4 Because the ground is chapt, for there was no

27. "wilt thou not be made clean?" What! after ver. 23 can there be hope? Yes, a glimmer, for the love of the Father to His sinful children is unbounded, or rather the bounds of His mercy surpass human thought.

CHAPTERS XIV—XVII.

These four chapters all refer to the same subject, the drought mentioned in ch. xiv. 1. Like many other prophecies in Jeremiah it is divided into four sections.

Section I. xiv. 1—xv. 9. The threat. Comp. chs. xi. 6—17, xiv. 1—9. The prophecy commences with a touching description of the famine by which Palestine was devastated. Jeremiah offers up a prayer for the distressed people.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. "the dearth." Comp. ch. xii. 4. The plural "dearths," which is given in the margin, expresses the intensity of the drought.

2. "the gates thereof," i. e. those who sit in the gates. Comp. Isa. xxiv. 4.

"black unto the ground," i. e. they sink down to the ground clad in mourning.

3. "their little ones." Not their children, but menials whom they little valued. It was not worth while sending a valued servant on so hopeless and perilous a task.

4. "is chapt," or, is confounded. The ground like the husbandman does not know what to do.

rain in the earth, the plowmen were ashamed, they covered their heads.

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5 Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook *it*, because there was no grass.

6 And ^f the wild asses did stand in the high places, ^f ch. 2. 24. they snuffed up the wind like dragons; their eyes did fail, because *there was* no grass.

7 ¶ O LORD, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou *it* ^g for thy name's sake: for our back- ^g P's. 25. 11. slidings are many; we have sinned against thee.

8 ^h O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in ^h ch. 17. 13. 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?

9 Why shouldest thou be as a man astonied, as a mighty man ⁱ *that* cannot save? yet thou, O LORD, ⁱ Isai. 50. 1. ^k *art* in the midst of us, and ² we are called by thy name; leave us not. ^k Exod. 29. 45, 46. Lev. 26. 11, 12.

10 ¶ Thus saith the LORD unto this people, ¹ Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the LORD doth not accept them; ^m he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. ² Heb. *thy name is called upon us*, Dan. 9. 18, 19. ¹ See ch. 2. 23, 24, 25. ^m Hos. 8. 13. & 9. 9.

5. "the hind." Even the beasts unite with man and earth in shewing their general consternation (comp. Joel i. 20.).

6. "like dragons," or, jackals. The comparison is obvious to any one who has observed the ass or the dog when suffering from extreme thirst.

"fail." Lit. they are consumed, they grow dim.

7. "O Lord." Jeremiah is encouraged to pray for his people once more by reason of the hope which was held out to him, ch. xvii. 13.

"for thy name's sake." His name was revealed (Exod. xxxiv. 6.). The prophet prays that God will prove Himself to be such as His name revealed Him to be.

8. "as a stranger." It seems as if God felt no more interest in the land than a stranger or a traveller.

9. "astonied," i. e. paralysed, and unable to help.

"we are called." See ch. xv. 16. Deut. xxviii. 10. It is as though we were to make our title of Christians as a plea for Christ's hearing our prayers.

10—18. The reply of God. Jeremiah is not to pray. He appeals to his fellow-prophets' utterances. They have foretold peace. God replies that they are false prophets, and that they shall be themselves consumed, and that Jeremiah shall bewail their captivity.

10. "Thus have they loved," referring to what is coming. They

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11 Then said the LORD unto me, ⁿ Pray not for this people for *their* good.

ⁿ Ex. 32. 10.
ch. 7. 16.
& 11. 14.

12 ^o When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and ^p when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but ^q I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.

^o Prov. 1. 28.
Isai. 1. 15.
& 58. 3.
ch. 11. 11.
Ezek. 8. 18.
Mic. 3. 4.
Zech. 7. 13.

13 ^r 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 ² assured peace in this place.

^p ch. 6. 20.
& 7. 21. 22.
^q ch. 9. 16.

^r ch. 4. 10.
² Heb. *peace of truth.*

14 Then the LORD said unto me, ^s The prophets prophesy lies in my name: ^t I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.

^s ch. 27. 10.
^t ch. 23. 21.
& 27. 15.
& 29. 8, 9.

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, ^u yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed.

^u ch. 5. 12, 13.

16 And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; ^x 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.

^x Ps. 79. 3.

17 Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them; ^y Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day,

^y ch. 9. 1.
& 13. 17.
Lam. 1. 16.
& 2. 18.

have wandered in such a way that God will not accept them. Comp. Hos. viii. 13; ch. ix. 9, which prophecy was now to be fulfilled.

12. "When they fast." The reference is as in other places to external service unfelt by the heart.

13. "Ah, Lord God!" We cannot ourselves realize this difficulty of the prophet. We know however from his own experience that he could not at first sight distinguish (ch. xxviii. 6—9.) the utterances of the false prophets.

14. "a thing of nought," probably an idol, or the oracle of an idol.

16. "I will pour." Comp. ch. ii. 19. By an exact law of retribution their wickedness falls on their own heads.

17. "this word," i. e. the following description of the prophet's feelings. Observe that to the false prophets the name of the true God is not mentioned. The tears of Jeremiah are a sufficient warrant of the coming tribulation.

JEREMIAH, XIV.

and let them not cease: ^z for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow.

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^z ch. 8. 21.

18 If I go forth into ^a the field, then behold the slain with the sword! and if I enter into the city, then behold them that are sick with famine! yea, both the prophet and the priest ² go about into a land that they know not.

^a Ezek. 7. 15.

² Or, make merchandise against a land, and men acknowledge it not, ch. 5. 31.

19 ^b Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul lothed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and ^c there is no healing for us? ^d we looked for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble!

^b Lam. 5. 22.

^c ch. 15. 18.

^d ch. 8. 15.

20 We acknowledge, O LORD, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers: for ^e we have sinned against thee.

^e Ps. 106. 6.

Dan. 9. 8.

21 Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: ^f remember, break not thy covenant with us.

^f Ps. 74. 2, 20. & 106. 45.

22 ^g Are there any among ^h the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? ⁱ art not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.

^g Zech. 10. 1, 2.

^h Deut. 32. 21.

ⁱ Ps. 135. 7.

& 147. 8.

Isaï. 30. 23.

ch. 5. 24.

& 10. 13.

“**virgin daughter.**” A phrase frequently used (see Isa. xxxvii. 22.) to express the impregnable character of the fortresses around Jerusalem.

18. “**go about,**” i.e. migrate. Thus does God reject the petition of Jeremiah; but he with that importunity which characterises all true prayer, and is the fruit of all real faith, intercedes once more for the people.

19—22. Jeremiah appeals to God's covenant, acknowledging that the people have broken their side of it, will not God keep His promise?

19. “**Hast thou utterly rejected.**” Surely the tribe of Judah could not be rejected (Ps. lxxviii. 68, 69.), surely Zion cannot be cast away as worthless.

“**we looked for peace,**” &c. See ch. viii. 15.

20. “**We acknowledge.**” Comp. ver. 7. Confession of sin is regarded as a condition of forgiveness. See Lev. xxvi. 40—42, to which Jeremiah undoubtedly refers. See also Deut. xxx. 1—10.

21. “**for thy name's sake.**” See note on ver. 7. God is unchangeable. How can He abhor what He has chosen, or disgrace what He has made a throne for His glory?

22. “**that can cause rain.**” As in ch. iii. 3 the weather is dependent on the will of God.

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CHAPTER XV.

1 *The utter rejection and manifold judgments of the Jews. 10 Jeremiah, complaining of their spite, receiveth a promise for himself, 12 and a threatening for them. 15 He prayeth, 19 and receiveth a gracious promise.*

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^a Ezek. 14.
14, &c.

^b Ex. 32. 11, 12.
Ps. 93. 6.

^c 1 Sam. 7. 9.

THEN said the LORD unto me, ^a Though ^b Moses and ^c Samuel stood before me, *yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth.*

^d ch. 43. 11.
Ezek. 5. 2, 12.
Zech. 11. 9.

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; ^d 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.

^e Lev. 26. 16,
&c.

² Heb.

families.

^f Deut. 23. 26.
ch. 7. 33.

³ Heb.

I will give them for a removing.

^g Deut. 23. 25.
ch. 24. 9.

Ezek. 23. 46.

^h 2 Kings

21. 11, &c.

& 23. 26.

& 24. 3, 4.

ⁱ Isai. 51. 19.

⁴ Heb. *to*

ask of thy

peace?

^k ch. 2. 13.

3 And I will ^e appoint over them four ² kinds, saith the LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and ^f the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy.

4 And ³ I will cause them to be ^g removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of ^h Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for *that* which he did in Jerusalem.

5 For ⁱ who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside ⁴ to ask how thou doest?

6 ^k Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou

CHAPTER XV.

1—4. The appeal is more decidedly rejected, and the desolation of the land is again denounced in language more terrible than that in the preceding prophecies.

1. "Though Moses and Samuel." The references are to such passages as Exod. xvii. 11. 1 Sam. xii. 17. Comp. Ezek. xiv. 14, 20.

2. "Whither shall we go forth." Apparently the people are supposed to ask this question in mockery. The reply informs them that not merely captivity, but death by sword and famine awaits them.

3. "I will appoint." See note on ch. xiii. 21. Thus are the people reminded of the Law which they had broken (Deut. xxviii. 26.).

4. "Manasseh the son of Hezekiah." A historical retrospect, intended to lead the people to trace the history of their apostasy.

5—9. An expansion of the ideas contained in the preceding verses, assigning the reasons for refusing Jeremiah's prayer.

5. "who shall have pity." No one will feel any sympathy for Jerusalem; no, not even take the trouble to ask after her.

JEREMIAH, XV.

art ¹gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; ^mI am weary with repenting.

7 And I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land; I will bereave *them* of ²children, I will destroy my people, *since* ⁿthey return not from their ways.

8 Their widows are increased to me above the sand of the seas: I have brought upon them ³against the mother of the young men a spoiler at noonday: I have caused *him* to fall upon it suddenly, and terrors upon the city.

9 ^oShe that hath borne seven languisheth: she hath given up the ghost; ^pher 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 ¶ ^qWoe 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; *yet* every one of them doth curse me.

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¹ ch. 7. 24.

^m Hos. 13. 14.

² Or, *whatsoever is dear.*

ⁿ Isai. 9. 13.
ch. 5. 3.

Amos 4. 10,
11.

³ Or, *against the mother city a young man spoiling, &c. or, against the mother and the young men.*

^o 1 Sam. 2. 5.

^p Amos 8. 9.

^q Job 3. 1. &c.
ch. 20. 14.

6. "I am weary." Comp. ch. vi. 11.

7. "I will fan them." Comp. Ps. i. 4.

"the gates of the land," i. e. the different cities. Comp. Nah. iii. 15. By "the land" is meant Judah.

8. "the young men," i. e. the warriors. Their mother is to be afflicted equally with the mother of seven children.

"a spoiler," i. e. Nebuchadnezzar.

"at noonday," i. e. when least of all an attack would be expected, explained by "suddenly" in the next clause.

9. "She that hath borne seven." See 1 Sam. ii. 5.

"her sun," used metaphorically as Ps. lxxxiv. 11. The whole of this section is prophetic, and there is no need to suppose that the prophet is in any way referring to the battle of Megiddo, or to the eclipse that occurred on that occasion.

Section II. xv. 10—xvi. 9. Admonition to the Prophet.

10—18. He complains that God will not hear his prayer, and in return is promised strength at the time when the riches of Judah shall pass into the enemies' land.

10. "I have neither lent." Jeremiah had not mixed himself up with human affairs, but yet he is treated as a debtor would be by a hard-hearted usurer.

JEREMIAH, XV.

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² Or, *I will
intreat the
enemy for
thee.*
r ch. 39, 11, 12.
& 40. 4, 5.

³ Ps. 44. 12.
ch. 17. 3.

^t ch. 16. 13.
& 17. 4.
^u Deut. 32. 22.

^x ch. 12. 3.

^y ch. 11. 20.
& 20. 12.

^z Ps. 63. 7.

^a Ezek. 3. 1, 3.
Rev. 10. 9, 10.

^b Job 23. 12.
Ps. 119. 72,
111.

³ Heb. *thy
name is call-
ed upon me.*

11 The LORD said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily ² I will cause ^r 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 ³ spoil without price, and *that* for all thy sins, even in all thy borders.

14 And I will make *thee* to pass with thine enemies ^t into a land *which* thou knowest not: for a ^u fire is kindled in mine anger *which* shall burn upon you.

15 ¶ O LORD, ^x thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and ^y revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that ^z for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.

16 Thy words were found, and I did ^a eat them; and ^b thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for ³ I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

11. "Verily it shall be well with thy remnant." The meaning appears to be, "Verily I will set thee free to thy good." The reason is explained in the next clause to be that in the time of trouble the prophet's enemies (i. e. the Jews and their rulers) will turn to him in supplication. We shall find this fulfilled in ch. xxi. 1, 2, and other places.

12. "Shall iron break." Jeremiah did not understand the reply in ver. 11. He did not see how Judah, even if she were iron, could resist that terrible iron from the north, that brass, the Babylonian empire. Brass is used as an epithet of Babylon, Ps. cvii. 16. But the promise is made not to the nation, but to himself. It is in accordance with the promise made to him, ch. i. 18, 19, and below ver. 20.

13. "Thy substance," &c. See ch. xvii. 3, 4. Jeremiah appeared before God as the representative of the nation, and therefore their wealth, their sins, and their borders are called his.

14. "I will make thee to pass." Words of double import. The nation went against her will to Babylon, Jeremiah against his will to Egypt.

"a fire is kindled." See Deut. xxviii. 36; xxxii. 22.

15. "O Lord, thou knowest." These words shew that the prophet had not fully understood the promise in ver. 11. He appeals to God for his protection. Strange that the faith which burnt so brightly in the last chapter should have now grown so dim.

16. "Thy words were found." He acknowledges that he had not sought after the prophetic office, but that he gladly accepted it because God called him to it.

JEREMIAH, XV.

17 °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.

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c Ps. 1. 1.
& 26. 4, 5.
d ch. 30. 15.

18 Why is my ^dpain perpetual, and my wound incurable, *which* refuseth to be healed? wilt thou be altogether unto me ^eas a liar, and ^fas waters that ²fail?

e See chap. 1.
18, 19.

f Job 6. 15,
& c.

2 Heb. *be
not sure?*

g Zech. 3. 7.
h ver. 1.

i Ezek. 22. 26.
& 44. 23.

19 Therefore thus saith the LORD, ^gIf thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt ^hstand before me: and if thou ⁱtake forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.

20 And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen ^kwall: and they shall fight against thee, but ^lthey shall not prevail against thee: for I *am* with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

k ch. 1. 18.
& 6. 27.

l ch. 20. 11, 12.

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.

17. "I sat not in the assembly," &c. He gave up all his old merry companions because God had called him to a higher life.

"because of thy hand." That hand of God which was so often laid upon the prophets (1 Kings xviii. 46. Ezek. xxxvii. 1.).

"for thou hast filled me." Jeremiah was like Amos, who (Amos iii. 8.) could not refrain himself after having received God's revelation.

18. "Why is my pain." He keeps on feeling the "indignation" described in the last verse, and must go on fulfilling God's commands.

"wilt thou be unto me." Lit. "wilt thou be unto me as a failing brook?" to which travellers go expecting to find water, but it is all gone. Yet we find that Jeremiah continued to persevere.

19—21. God encourages the disheartened prophet by reminding him of the promises made in His word (ch. i. 17—19.), explaining to him what had appeared so enigmatic.

19. "If thou return." God gently reproves the prophet of his impatience. But let us remember the terrible trial to which Jeremiah had been subjected, and then remember the two promises (Ps. cxix. 86. 1 Cor. x. 13.).

"take forth the precious from the vile." The reference is to ch. vi. 27—30. Jeremiah himself needs to be refined. His words (ver. 18.) show that he is not yet like pure silver.

"as my mouth," i. e. as the instrument with which I speak (comp. Exod. iv. 16.).

20. "I will make thee." See ch. i. 18, 19.

21. "the wicked . . . the terrible," i. e. the Jews and the Babylonians.

JEREMIAH, XVI.

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CHAPTER XVI.

1 *The prophet, under the types of abstaining from marriage, from houses of mourning and feasting, foresheweth the utter ruin of the Jews, 10 because they were worse than their fathers. 14 Their return from captivity shall be stranger than their deliverance out of Egypt. 16 God will doubly recompense their idolatry.*

cir. 601. **T**HE word of the LORD came also unto me, saying,

2 Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or 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 ;

^a ch. 15. 2. 4 they shall die of ^a grievous deaths ; they shall not be ^b lamented ; neither shall they be buried ; *but* they shall be ^c as dung upon the face of the earth : and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine ; and their ^d carcases shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.

^e Ezek. 24. 17, 22, 23. 5 For thus saith the LORD, ^e Enter not into the house of ² mourning, neither go to lament nor bemoan them : for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the LORD, *even* lovingkindness and mercies.

^f ch. 22. 13. 6 Both the great and the small shall die in this land : they shall not be buried, ^f neither shall *men* lament for them, nor ^g cut themselves, nor ^h make themselves bald for them :

^g Lev. 19. 28.
^h Deut. 14. 1.
ⁱ ch. 41. 5.
^j & 47. 5.
^k Isai. 22. 12.
^l ch. 7. 29.

CHAPTER XVI.

1—9. Jeremiah, reinstated into his office, is now advised as to his conduct. He is not to marry lest his children be overtaken in the impending disaster. He is also to abstain alike from the houses of mourning and feasting, because the multitude of slain will be so great, that it will be equally hard to mourn as to feast.

2. "Thou shalt not take thee a wife." See ch. xv. 10.

"this place," i. e. Judæa, as is evident from ver. 3. The unmarried prophet was of course a striking sign to the Jews, for the prophets as a rule were married. *z*

5. "I have taken away my peace." All this calamity is caused by God's withdrawing His part of the covenant.

6. "nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald." As these customs were forbidden by the Law (Lev. xix. 28. Deut. xiv. 1.), the words lead us to infer that all the Law-breakers shall be consumed.

JEREMIAH, XVI.

7 neither shall *men* ² tear *themselves* for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead; neither shall *men* give them the cup of consolation to ¹ drink for their father or 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, ^k 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 shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, ¹ 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, ^m Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law;

12 and ye have done ⁿ worse than your fathers; for, behold, ^o ye walk every one after the ³ imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me:

13 ^p therefore will I cast you out of this land ^q 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 shew you favour.

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² Or, *break bread for them*, as Ezek. 24. 17. Hos. 9. 4. See Deut. 26. 14.

Job 42. 11.

¹ Prov. 31. 6, 7.

^k Is. 24. 7, 8. ch. 7. 34. & 25. 10. Ezek. 26. 13. Hos. 2. 11. Rev. 18. 23.

¹ Deut. 29. 24. ch. 5. 19. & 13. 22. & 22. 8.

^m Deut. 29. 25. ch. 22. 9.

ⁿ ch. 7. 26.

^o ch. 13. 10.

³ Or, *stubbornness*.

^p Deut. 4. 26, 27, 28.

& 23. 36, 33, 64, 65.

^q ch. 15. 14.

7. "tear themselves." The marginal version is better. The reference is to the same custom as 2 Sam. iii. 35; xii. 17.

9. "I will cause to cease." See ch. vii. 34.

10—15. The cause of the rejection of the people is their idolatry, but a greater punishment is at hand, the captivity.

10. "And it shall come to pass." Comp. ch. ix. 12—15. Such blindness of heart would be inconceivable, were we not to see daily instances of it. The habit of sin must close the heart to the light of truth.

13. "there shall ye ... day and night," i.e. "You like idolatry? Then God will take you at your word. He will bring you to a land where there are plenty of idols, where you may sit up all night and worship them if you please." In such bitter irony the prophet declares that their sin shall become their punishment.

JEREMIAH, XVI.

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14 ¶ Therefore, behold, the ^rdays 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 ^sI will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

^t Amos 4. 2.
Hab. 1. 15.

16 ¶ Behold, I will send for many ^tfishers, 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.

^u Job 34. 21.
Prov. 5. 21.
& 15. 3.
ch. 32. 19.

17 For mine ^ueyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.

^x Isai. 40. 2.
ch. 17. 18.
^y Ezek. 43.
7. 9.

18 And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin ^xdouble; because ^ythey have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things.

^z Ps. 18. 2.

19 O LORD, ^zmy strength, and my fortress, and

14. "Therefore, behold." By promising deliverance from the strange land, Jeremiah implies the certainty of the exile just as Isaiah enforces his prophecy (ch. xxxix. 6, 7.) by foretelling the deliverance (ch. xl. 1, 2.). Like Isaiah he contrasts the return from the exile with the exodus, implying that they would be in bondage in Babylon as they were in Egypt. See Deut. xxx. 1—10.

16—18. A more emphatic warning of the exile.

16. "fishers . . . hunters." See Amos iv. 2. These metaphors are intended to express the hopelessness of escape. The Babylonians are as determined to take their prey as the fisherman or the huntsman.

17. "For mine eyes." Whatever their blindness might be (ver. 10.), God was well aware of what was going on.

18. "And first," i. e. the punishment must come before their deliverance.

"double." See Isa. xl. 2.

"carcasses." The idols were like a dead carcase, which would defile the land.

19—21. A further reply to the question asked by the people (ver. 10.).

19. "O Lord, my strength." Jeremiah finds vent to his feelings in the book which is the storehouse of comfort, the book of Psalms (see Pss. xxviii. 7; lix. 17; xviii. 2.). Compare Jonah's use of the Psalms in his prayer (ch. ii. 2—9.).

JEREMIAH, XVII.

^a 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* ^b wherein *there is* no profit.

20 Shall a man make gods unto himself, and ^c they are no gods?

21 Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that ^d my name is

² The LORD.

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^a ch. 17. 17.

^b Isai. 44. 10.
ch. 2. 11.
& 10. 5.

^c Isai. 37. 19.
ch. 2. 11.
Gal. 4. 8.

^d Ex. 15. 3.
ch. 33. 2.
Amos 5. 8.

² Or, JEHOVAH.
Ps. 83. 18.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *The captivity of Judah for her sin.* 5 *Trust in man is cursed, 7 in God is blessed.* 9 *The deceitful heart cannot deceive God.* 12 *The salvation of God.* 15 *The prophet complaineth of the mockers of his prophecy.* 19 *He is sent to renew the covenant in hallowing the sabbath.*

THE sin of Judah is written with a ^a pen of iron, and with the ² point of a diamond: *it is* ^b graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars;

2 whilst their children remember their altars and their ^c groves by the green trees upon the high hills.

3 O my mountain in the field, ^d I will give thy substance and all thy treasures to the spoil, and thy high places for sin, throughout all thy borders.

4 And thou, even ³ thyself, shalt discontinue from

^a Job 19. 24.

² Heb. *nail.*

^b Prov. 3. 3.
² Cor. 3. 3.

^c Judg. 3. 7.
2 Chr. 24. 18.
& 33. 3. 19.

Isai. 1. 29. ^e
& 17. 8.

ch. 2. 20.
d ch. 15. 13.

³ Heb. *in thyself.*

“the Gentiles shall come.” He attempts to stir up the hearts of the people against idolatry by declaring to them the nature of the true God.

CHAPTER XVII.

1—4. Closely connected with the preceding. The idolatry of the people is perfectly plain.

1. “table of their heart.” Comp. Exod. xxxii. 16. The law of God should have been written on their hearts (inf. xxxi. 33.), but they now had the statutes of idolatry written there instead.

“horns of your altars,” i.e. the idolatrous altars erected by Jehoiakim.

2. “whilst their children,” &c. i.e. “As they remember their children, so do they their altars,” or they make pets of their altars, &c.

3. “O my mountain.” Mount Zion, which as the special site of God’s presence was exalted above other mountains (Ps. lxxviii. 15, 16.), as a mountain above the plain. See Isa. ii. 3; Ps. xxiv. 3.

4. “discontinue.” An important word (see Exod. xxiii. 11.), pointing especially to the breach of the law of the Sabbath. See below, vv. 21, 22.

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e ch. 16. 13.
f ch. 15. 14.

g Is. 30. 1, 2.
& 31. 1.

h See Isaiah
31. 3.

i ch. 48. 6.

k Job 20. 17.

l Deut. 29. 23.

m Ps. 2. 12.
& 34. 8.

& 125. 1.
& 146. 5.

Prov. 16. 20.
Isai. 30. 18.

n Job 8. 16.
Ps. i. 3.

o Or,

restraint.

p 1 Sam. 16. 7.

1 Chr. 28. 9.
Ps. 7. 9.

& 139. 23, 24.
Prov. 17. 3.

ch. 11. 20.
& 20. 12.

Rom. 8. 27.
Rev. 2. 23.

P Ps. 62. 12.
ch. 32. 19.

Rom. 2. 6.

q Or, gather-
eth young
which she
hath not
brought
forth.

thine heritage that I gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in ^e the land which thou knowest not: for ^fye have kindled a fire in mine anger, *which* shall burn for ever.

5 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; ^g Cursed *be* the man that trusteth in man, and maketh ^h flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

6 For he shall be ⁱ like the heath in the desert, and ^k shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, ^l in a salt land and not inhabited.

7 ^m Blessed *is* the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.

8 For he shall be ⁿ as a tree planted 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 ^o drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

9 ¶ The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

10 I the LORD ^p search the heart, I try the reins, ^p even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

11 *As* the partridge ^q sitteth *on* eggs, and hatcheth *them* not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right,

Section IV. xvii. 5—27. Further exposition of the sin of the people.

5—13. The curse which attends trust in man is contrasted with the blessing which falls upon those who put their whole trust in Jehovah. This points out to Judah the cause of her impending ruin. Yet so deceitful is her heart, that she cannot see her own misery. This is illustrated by a proverb. He concludes with prayer for deliverance.

5. "Cursed be the man." Apparently an allusion to Deut. xxvii. 15.

6. "like the heath," more probably, "like a naked man." See Ps. cii. 17.

"shall inhabit." Comp. Deut. xxix. 23.

7. "Blessed is the man." Observe the striking use that Jeremiah makes of Ps. i.

9. "The heart." The connexion is very simple. The issues of life are in the heart, the blessing and the curse overtake persons accordingly as they keep their hearts diligently or not.

11. "As the partridge." The point of comparison is, that the young birds forsake the partridge which never laid the eggs out of which they are hatched. He refers to the covetous character of Jehoiakim.

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^a shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be ^r a fool.

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^q Ps. 55. 23.

^r Luke 12. 20.

12 ¶ A glorious high throne from the beginning *is* the place of our sanctuary.

13 O LORD, ^s the hope of Israel, ^t all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, *and* they that depart from me shall be ^u written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the ^x fountain of living waters.

^s ch. 14. 8.

^t Ps. 73. 27.

Isai. 1. 24.

^u See Luke

10. 20.

^x ch. 2. 13.

14 Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for ^y thou *art* my praise.

^y Deut. 10. 21.

Ps. 109. 1.

& 148. 14.

^z Isai. 5. 19.

Ezek. 12. 22.

Amos 5. 18.

2 Pet. 3. 4.

^a ch. 1. 4, &c.

² Heb. *after*

thee.

15 ¶ Behold, they say unto me, ^z Where *is* the word of the LORD? let it come now.

16 As for me, ^a I have not hastened from *being* a pastor ² to follow thee: neither have I desired the woeful day; thou knowest: that which came out of my lips was *right* before thee.

17 Be not a terror unto me: ^b thou *art* my hope in the day of evil.

^b ch. 16. 19.

18 ^c Let them be confounded that persecute me, but ^d let not me be confounded: let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed: bring upon them the day of evil, and ^{3e} destroy them with double destruction.

^c Ps. 35. 4.

& 40. 14.

& 70. 2.

^d Ps. 25. 2.

³ Heb.

break them

with a double

breach.

^e ch. 11. 20.

12. "A glorious throne." Better taken as a vocative, "O glorious throne," and connected with the next verse.

13. "written in the earth." Characters written in the dust are easily effaced.

"because they have forsaken." Comp. ch. ii. 13.

14—27. Jeremiah prays for strength, and in answer to his prayer is pointed out the only way by which the nation may be saved.

14. "Heal me." He prays against the desponding spirit which he felt (ch. xv. 10—18.).

15. "Where is the word." The prophet was constantly taunted with the fact that his prophecies were unfulfilled. See Amos v. 18—20.

16. "I have not hastened," i. e. "I have not turned in haste from being a shepherd and following Thee." He disclaims any intention of forsaking his office.

"the woeful day," the day of the Lord, which from the time of Joel has been a constant theme of prophecy.

"out of my lips." He means that all the words which he had spoken were taught him by God.

17. "Be not a terror." He appeals to God to give some evidence that He is really speaking through him.

18. "Let them be confounded." See Ps. xxxv. 4.

JEREMIAH, XVII.

B fore
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19 ¶ Thus said 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, ^f 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; ^g Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring *it* in by the gates of Jerusalem;

22 neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I ^h commanded your fathers.

23 ⁱ 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 ^k then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the 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 ^l the places about Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from ^m the plain, and from the mountains, and from ⁿ the south, bringing burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and meat offerings, and in-

^f ch. 19. 3.
& 22. 2.

^g Num. 15.
32. &c.
Neh. 13. 13.

^h Ex. 20. 8.
& 23. 12.
& 31. 13.
Ezek. 20. 12.
ⁱ ch. 7. 24, 26.
& 11. 10.

^k ch. 22. 4.

^l ch. 32. 44.
& 33. 13.
^m Zech. 7. 7.
ⁿ Zech. 7. 7.

19. "Thus said the Lord." The prophet is reinstated, and God entrusts him once more with a mission.

"the gate of the children." It is hopeless to identify this with any known gate at Jerusalem. Probably it was in the Temple court-yard.

20. "ye kings." He addresses all the line of kings who had passed through that gate, and had broken the Sabbatical law.

25. "the throne of David." The covenant with David shall be once more renewed. Thus is Jeremiah's importunity in prayer rewarded. He has actually wrestled with God and prevailed, obtaining a respite for the people.

JEREMIAH, XVIII.

cense, and bringing ° sacrifices of praise, unto the house of the LORD.

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 ^p will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, ^q and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.

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° Ps. 107. 22.
& 116. 17.

^p ch. 21. 14.
& 49. 27.
Lam. 4. 11.
Amos 1. 4,
7, 10, 12.
& 2. 2, 5.

^q 2 Kin. 25. 9.
ch. 52. 13.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *Under the type of a potter is shewed God's absolute power in disposing of nations.* 11 *Judgments threatened to Judah for her strange revolt.* 18 *Jeremiah prayeth against his conspirators.*

THE word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, cir. 605.
saying,

2 Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

3 Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the ² wheels.

4 And the vessel ³ that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he ⁴ 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, ^a cannot I do with you as this

² Or, frames,
or, seats.

³ Or, that he
made was
marred, as
clay in the
hand of the
potter.

⁴ Heb.
returned
and made.

^a Isai. 45. 9.
Rom. 9. 20,
21.

27. "But if ye will not." Observe again how distinctly Jeremiah points out the conditional character of God's promises.

CHAPTER XVIII.

This chapter, dating from the time of Jehoiakim, and the next two, which belong to Zedekiah's time, are placed here on account of the close connection which they have with ch. xvii. They contain two symbolic prophecies, and an account of the sufferings of the prophet at the hands of the priests and people.

Section I. xviii. 1—23. The symbol of the potter and the clay, followed by an address and a complaint.

1—10. Jeremiah visits the potter, and learns a lesson from seeing him make a new vessel out of the same clay with which he had made a pitcher that was good for nothing. The potter represents Jehovah, the clay Judah. Jehovah can restore Israel as easily as the potter can remould the clay. Hence it follows that if Israel will repent the sentence pronounced in the last chapter may be reversed.

2. "the potter's house." See St. Matt. xxvii. 10.

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^b Isai. 64. 8.

potter? saith the LORD. Behold, ^b as the clay *is* in the potter's hand, so *are* ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

^c ch. 1. 10.

7 *At what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to ^c pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy *it*;

^d Ezek. 18. 21.
& 33. 11.

^e ch. 26. 3.
Jonah 3. 10.

8 ^d if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, ^e I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.

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, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

^f 2 Kin. 17. 13.
ch. 7. 3. &
25. 5. & 26.
13. & 35. 15.

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: ^f return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.

^g ch. 2. 25.

12 And they said, ^g There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.

^h ch. 2. 10.
1 Cor. 5. 1.

13 Therefore thus saith the LORD; ^h Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things:

6. "so are . . . hand." The reader must bear in mind that the potter did not throw the clay away when it was spoiled, but that he remoulded it. This shews that God's unlimited power over man is regulated by man's own conduct.

7. "At what instant." Comp. ch. i. 10.

10. "I will repent." As in the case of Jonah and the men of Nineveh, see *note* on ch. xvii. 27.

11—23. Accordingly the people are called to repentance; but they refuse the call, and after a notice of their blindness sentence is pronounced against them. The prophet proceeds to show how his words were received by the people, and concludes with a prayer that God's will may be done.

11. "I frame." Jeremiah chooses this word on account of a potter being called a "framer" by the Hebrews.

"return ye now." Comp. ch. vii. 3; xxxv. 15.

12. "There is no hope," i. e. it is no use your warning us always in the same way. See ch. ii. 25, with the whole of which passage this is closely connected.

JEREMIAH, XVIII.

the virgin of Israel hath done ¹a very horrible thing.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 605.

14 Will a man leave ²the snow of Lebanon *which cometh* from the rock of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?

¹ ch. 5. 30.
² Or, my fields for a rock, or for the snow of Lebanon? shall the running waters be forsaken for the strange cold waters?

15 Because my people hath forgotten ^kme, they have burned incense to ¹vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways *from* the ^mancient paths, to walk in paths, *in* a way not cast up;

^k ch. 2. 13, 32, & 3. 21, & 13. 25, & 17. 13.

16 to make their land ⁿdesolate, and a perpetual ^ohissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head.

¹ ch. 10. 15, & 16. 19.

17 ^pI will scatter them ^qas with an east wind before the enemy; ^rI will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity.

^m ch. 6. 16.

ⁿ ch. 19. 8, & 49. 13, & 50. 13.

^o 1 Kin. 9. 8.

Lam. 2. 15.

Mic. 6. 16.

^p ch. 13. 24.

^q Ps. 48. 7.

^r See chap. 2. 27.

18 ¶ Then said they, ^sCome, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; ^tfor 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 ³with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.

^s ch. 11. 19.

^t Lev. 10. 11.

Mal. 2. 7.

John 7. 48, 49.

³ Or, for the tongue.

13. "virgin of Israel." See ch. xiv. 17.

14. "Will a man leave." By leaving out the italics the meaning becomes plainer. "Will the snow of Lebanon leave, i. e. forsake the rock?" The snow never leaves Lebanon.

"shall the cold . . . forsaken," i. e. The streams are constantly supplied by springs that have unknown sources, but "Israel (ver. 15.) has forgotten Me." The prophet is appealing to an argument from nature, as in ch. viii. 7.

15. "they have caused," i. e. the idols. The pernicious effects of idolatry were far greater than the reader will believe. St. Paul dwells upon this in Rom. i. 21—32.

"ancient paths." See ch. vi. 16.

"a way not cast up." A highway or causeway, such as Isaiah speaks of (ch. xl. 3.).

17. "east wind." See Ps. xlvi. 7.

"back." Comp. ch. ii. 27. Note again the exact retribution.

18. "Then said they." Such was the whole effect of Jeremiah's message. A conspiracy is now devised against him in Jerusalem as was the case a little while ago at Anathoth.

"the law shall not perish." A sneer at Jeremiah's Levitical descent (Deut. xxxiii. 10.).

"with the tongue," i. e. get up some story against him which will ensure his murder. That this was their object is plain from ver. 23.

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^u Ps. 109. 4, 5.
^x Ps. 35. 7.
& 57. 6.
ver. 22.

^y Ps. 109. 9,
10.

² Heb. *pour
them out.*

^z ver. 20.

³ Heb. *for
death.*

^a Ps. 35. 4.
& 109. 14.
ch. 11. 20.
& 15. 15.

19 Give heed to me, O LORD, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me.

20 ^u Shall evil be recompensed for good? for ^x 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 ^y deliver up their children to the famine, and ² 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 ^z they have digged a pit to take me, and hid snares for my feet.

23 Yet, LORD, thou knowest all their counsel against me ³ to slay *me*: ^a 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.

CHAPTER XIX.

Under the type of breaking a potter's vessel is foreshewed the desolation of the Jews for their sins.

cir. 605.

THUS 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;

19. "Give heed to me, O Lord." This prayer is offered by Jeremiah on account of the words of the people in the last verse, "let us not give heed to any of his words."

20. "Shall evil," &c. Jeremiah had been doing his best to reclaim the people, why does he receive such treatment? Ps. xxxv. 12.

21. "Therefore deliver thou up." Comp. Ps. cix. According to the rigour of the Jewish law nothing else could be done. How could God be just if He allowed such wickedness to remain unpunished?

CHAPTER XIX.

Section II. xix. 1—13. The symbol of the broken pitcher, followed by an interpretation of the symbol.

1. "Ancients of the people . . . of the priests." The word ancients must be explained as the word elders in ch. xxvi. 17, to mean some of

JEREMIAH, XIX.

2 and go forth unto ^athe valley of the son of Hinnom, which *is* by the entry of ²the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee,

3 ^band 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, his ears shall ^ctingle.

4 Because they ^dhave 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 ^ethe blood of innocents;

5 ^fthey have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire *for* burnt offerings unto Baal, ^gwhich I commanded not, nor spake *it*, neither came *it* into my mind:

6 therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor ^bThe 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; ⁱand I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives: and their ^kcarcasses 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 ^ldesolate, and an

the oldest of the priests and people. It was important to take these as they would remember the circumstances under which the words in ver. 3 were first uttered. The earthen vessel was intended to remind them of the prophecy in the previous chapter which was now so shortly to be fulfilled. The breaking of the vessel would remind them of Ps. ii. 9, indicating the punishment of those who had cast off God's yoke.

2. "the east gate." Probably the potsherd gate.

3. "Behold, I will bring evil." Cited from 2 Kings xxi. 12.

"shall tingle." This shews that the fate of Shiloh, and a comparison between Shiloh and Jerusalem, was still in Jeremiah's mind (1 Sam. iii. 11.).

4. "estranged," i.e. treated it as a common place, and not as if it had been consecrated by God's Presence.

"blood of innocents." See ch. ii. 34.

5. "they have built also." Repeated in substance from ch. vii. 31, 32.

8. "And I will make desolate." See ch. xviii. 16.

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^a Josh. 15. 8.
² Kin. 23. 10.
ch. 7. 31.

² Heb. *the sun gate.*
^b ch. 17. 20.

^c 1 Sam. 3. 11.
² Kin. 21. 12.
^d Deut. 28. 20.
Isal. 65. 11.
ch. 2. 13, 17,
19. & 15. 6.
& 17. 13.

^e 2 Kin. 21. 16.
ch. 2. 34.
^f ch. 7. 31, 32.
& 32. 35.

^g Lev. 18. 21.

^b Josh. 15. 8.

ⁱ Lev. 26. 17.
Deut. 28. 25.

^k Ps. 79. 2.
ch. 7. 33.
& 16. 4.
& 34. 20.

^l ch. 18. 16.
& 49. 13.
& 50. 13.

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hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof.

^m Lev. 26. 29.
Deut. 28. 53.
Isai. 9. 20.
Lam. 4. 10.

9 And I will cause them to eat the ^m 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.

ⁿ So chap.
51. 63, 64.

10 ⁿ Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee,

^o Ps. 2. 9.
Isai. 30. 14.
Lam. 4. 2.

11 and shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; ^o Even so will I break this people and this city, as *one* breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot ² be made whole again: and they shall ^p bury *them* in Tophet, till *there be* no place to bury.

² Heb. *be heated.*
^p ch. 7. 32.

12 Thus will I do unto this place, saith the LORD, and to the inhabitants thereof, and *even* make this city as Tophet:

^q 2 Kin. 23. 10.

13 and the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled ⁴ as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose ^r roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and ^s have poured out drink offerings unto other gods.

^r 2 Kin. 23. 12.
ch. 32. 29.
Zeph. i. 5.
^s ch. 7. 18.

14 Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whither the LORD had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in ^t the court of the LORD's house; and said to all the people,

^t See 2 Chron.
20. 5.

15 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her

9. "I will cause them to eat." See Deut. xxviii. 53, &c. Lev. xxvi. 29.

10. "thou shalt break the bottle." Note the difference between this symbol, and that which was recorded in the last chapter. The ill-formed clay could be remoulded, but what is more useless than a broken piece of earthenware?

12. "this city as Tophet," i. e. treat it as Josiah had treated the valley of Hinnom (2 Kings xxiii. 10.).

13. "upon whose roofs." Selected as open flat spaces convenient for planet-worship (Zeph. i. 5.).

Section III. xix. 14—xx. 6. The consequence of the symbolic sermon.

15. "Behold, I will bring." No doubt the strange act of Jeremiah had been spoken of in the city, so that in a short time a large concourse

JEREMIAH, XX.

towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because ^u they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words.

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^u ch. 7. 26.
& 17. 23.

CHAPTER XX.

1 *Pashur, smiting Jeremiah, receiveth a new name, and a fearful doom.*

7 *Jeremiah complaineth of contempt, 10 of treachery, 14 and of his birth.*

NOW Pashur the son of ^a Immer the priest, who ^{cir. 605.}
^a1 Chr. 24. 14. was also chief governor in the house of the LORD, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things.

2 Then Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that *were* in the high gate of Benjamin, 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 ² Magor-missabib.

² That is,
Fear round,

Ps. 31. 13.
ver. 10.

ch. 6. 25.
& 46. 5.
& 49. 23.

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 ^b will deliver all the strength of this city, and all the labours thereof, and all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the

^b 2 Kin. 20.
17. & 24.
12.—16. &
25. 13. &c.
ch. 3. 24.

had assembled in the Temple to hear more about the matter. The words in the text give a short abstract of Jeremiah's address in the Temple. The effect of it appears to have been perfectly overwhelming.

CHAPTER XX.

1. "Pashur." Another person of this name is mentioned in the next chapter. They were both of priestly families (see 1 Chron. xxiv. 14, 9.).

"chief governor." Probably the chief of the Levitical guard of the Temple.

2. "the stocks." So called from their object being to twist, or distort the limbs.

3. "Magor-missabib." See ch. vi. 25. Pashur being called by this name is a symbol of the "terror" which would soon "surround" Jerusalem.

5. "all the labours thereof," i. e. the produce of the labour of the inhabitants.

JEREMIAH, XX.

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kings of Judah will 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 thine 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 ^c prophesied lies.

^c ch. 14. 13.
14. & 23. 15.
& 29. 21.

7 ¶ O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was ² deceived: ^d thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: ^e I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me.

² Or, *enticed.*

^d ch. 1. 6, 7.

^e Lam. 3. 14.

8 For since I spake, I cried out, ^f I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily.

^f ch. 6. 7.

9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But *his word* was in mine heart as a ^g burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and ^h I could not *stay*.

^g Job 32. 18,

19.

Ps. 39. 3.

^h Job 32. 18.

Acts 18. 5.

6. "thou hast prophesied lies." Probably Pashur had been in favour of an alliance with Egypt, the object of which was to prevent the advance of Nebuchadnezzar. Pashur is the first of the false prophets mentioned by name into contact with whom Jeremiah was brought.

Section IV. xx. 7—18. The Prophet's lamentation.

Of the many trials to which Jeremiah was exposed none affected him so grievously as the false prophets. This lamentation is one of the most important passages to be observed by those who would study the character of the prophet. We see from this chapter that he was a man subject to the most rapid and most powerful alternations of feeling. He begins with a melancholy complaint of the persecutions to which any one was subject who prophesied in the name of the Lord. Then the complaint suddenly passes into an exulting expression of hope based upon the fact that the Lord had called him. But from this hopeful state he sinks down into a deeper state of despondency, lamenting the day of his birth, and complaining of the wretchedness of a prophet's life.

7. "thou hast deceived." Better "thou hast persuaded me" (see ch. xv. 16.). Had Jeremiah counted the cost of the promise? (ch. i. 17—19.)

"thou art stronger." God has seized him, as it were, and constrained him to prophesy.

8. "since I spake," i. e. whenever I spake.

9. "Then I said." He had made up his mind to forsake the calling of a prophet. He could not do so, for he felt what other prophets had experienced (Ps. xxxix. 1—3.).

JEREMIAH, XX.

10 ¹For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, *say they*, and we will report it. Before
CHRIST
cir. 605.

²^k All 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. ¹ Ps. 31. 13.
² Heb.
*Every man
of my peace.*
^k Job 19. 19.
Ps. 41. 9. &
55. 13, 14.
Luke 11. 53,
54.
^l ch. 1. 8, 19.
^m ch. 15. 20.
& 17. 18.
ⁿ ch. 23. 40.

11 But ¹the LORD *is* with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not ^mprevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: *their* ⁿeverlasting confusion shall never be forgotten.

12 But, O LORD of hosts, that ^otriest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart, ^plet me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause. ^o ch. 11. 20.
& 17. 10.
^p Ps. 54. 7.
& 59. 10.

13 Sing unto the LORD, praise ye the LORD: for ^qhe hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evildoers. ^q Ps. 35. 9,
10, & 109.
30, 31.

14 ¶ ^rCursed *be* the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed. ^r Job 3. 3.
ch. 15. 10.

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 ^soverthrew, and repented not: and let him ^thear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noontide; ^s Gen. 19. 25.
^t ch. 18. 22.

10. "the defaming of many." See Ps. xxxi. 13.

"All my familiars," &c. Pss. xli. 9; xxxv. 15; xxxviii. 17.

11. "a mighty terrible one." The word "terrible" is generally, as in ch. xv. 21, used in a bad sense, "oppressor." We cannot suppose that Jeremiah can ascribe the title to God, except so far as God would "oppress" those who had hitherto been his oppressors.

12. "But, O Lord." See chs. xi. 20; xvii. 10.

14. "Cursed be the day." Comp. ch. xv. 10. The words are more or less taken from Job iii. 3—11. Jeremiah required the patience and faith of Job. Before we blame Jeremiah for his language, let us remember the trials to which he was exposed, and also that the Holy Spirit was not given in the same fulness of measure as it was on the day of Pentecost. His language reminds us of the Boanerges; and the same language applies to him which was used to them, "Ye know not of what spirit ye are." We should observe however that Jeremiah is not said to have been reproved for his language here as in ch. xv. 19. This however is no proof that his words did not deserve blame.

JEREMIAH, XXI.

Before
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cir. 605.

^u Job 3. 10,
11.

^x Job 3. 20.

^y Lam. 3. 1.

17 ^u 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 ^x Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to ^y see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame ?

CHAPTER XXI.

¹ Zedekiah sendeth to Jeremiah to enquire the event of Nebuchadrezzar's war. ³ Jeremiah foretelleth a hard siege and miserable captivity. ⁸ He counselleth the people to fall to the Chaldeans, ¹¹ and upbraideth the king's house.

cir. 589.

THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, when king Zedekiah sent unto him ^a Pashur the son of Melchiah, and ^b Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, saying,

^a ch. 38. 1.

^b 2 Kin. 25. 18.

ch. 29. 25.

& 37. 3.

^c ch. 37. 3, 7.

2 ^c Enquire, I pray thee, of the LORD for us ; for Nebuchadrezzar 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

CHAPTERS XXI—XXIV.

These four chapters, though apparently disconnected, yet have one thought in common, which is the fall of Zedekiah and the captivity of Judah. They date from the beginning of the blockade of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (ch. xxi. 4.).

CHAPTER XXI.

1—7. Prophecy against Zedekiah.

1. "Pashur." See ch. xxi. 1.

2. "Nebuchadrezzar." This is the more accurate way of spelling this king's name.

"his wondrous works." The people expected to be saved by a miracle as they were in Hezekiah's time.

4. "Behold, I will turn back." The reader should notice that in all the prophecies dating from Zedekiah's reign, Jeremiah speaks of the downfall of Jerusalem as unavoidable. He means in this verse that God will make the armed men with their weapons turn back into the city.

JEREMIAH, XXI.

your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and *against* the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and ^d I will assemble them ^d into the midst of this city.

Before?
CHRIST
cir. 583.
d Isai. 13. 4.

5 And I myself will fight against you with an ^e outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even ^e in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath.

e Ex. 6. 6.

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, ^f I will deliver ^f Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, 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; ^g he shall not spare ^g them, neither have pity, nor have mercy.

f ch. 37. 17.
& 39. 5. &
52. 9.
g Deut. 28. 50.
2 Chr. 36. 17.

8 And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, ^h I set before you the way of ^h life, and the way of death.

h Deut. 20. 19.

9 He that ⁱ 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 Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and ^k his life shall be ^k unto him for a prey.

i ch. 38. 2.
17. 13.

10 For I have ^l set my face against this city for evil, and not for good, saith the LORD: ^m it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall ⁿ burn it with fire.

k ch. 39. 18.
& 45. 5.

l Lev. 17. 10.
ch. 44. 11.

m Amos 9. 4.

n ch. 38. 3.

& ch. 34. 2, 22.
& 37. 10. &
38. 18, 23.
& 52. 13.

5. "And I myself." If they could not hope to withstand the Babylonians, how could they expect to do so when God Himself was also arrayed against them?

6. "a great pestilence." More fully described in Lam. ii. 21; iii. 4, 15; iv. 8; v. 10. Contrast this with the reply of Isaiah to Hezekiah's mission (Isa. xxxvii. 21—35.).

8—10. Surrender is the only safety.

8. "the way of life." See Deut. xxx. 15.

9. "he that goeth out." This advice was frequently given by the prophet, e. g. chs. xxvii. 11; xxxviii. 2.

"falleth to the Chaldeans." A common phrase in Jeremiah. It means to desert.

"shall be . . . for a prey," i. e. He shall escape with his life, and nothing more.

JEREMIAH, XXII.

- Before
CHRIST
cir. 589.
cir. 609.
- o ch. 22, 3.
Zech. 7, 9.
2 Heb. *Judge*.
P Ps. 101, 8.
- q Ezek. 13, 8.
3 Heb.
inhabitantess.
r ch. 49, 4.
- 4 Heb.
visit upon.
s Prov. 1, 31.
Is. 3, 10, 11.
t 2 Chr. 36, 19.
ch. 52, 13.
- 11 And touching the house of the king of Judah, say, Hear ye the word of the LORD ;
- 12 O house of David, thus saith the LORD ;
- o 2 Execute judgment ^p in the morning, and deliver *him that is* spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, lest my fury go out like fire, and burn that none can quench *it*, because of the evil of your doings.
- 13 Behold, ^q I *am* against thee, O ³ inhabitant of the valley, *and* rock of the plain, saith the LORD ; which say, ^r Who shall come down against us ? or who shall enter into our habitations ?
- 14 But I will ⁴ punish you according to the ^s fruit of your doings, saith the LORD : and I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and ^t it shall devour all things round about it.

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *He exhorteth to repentance, with promises and threats.* 10 *The judgment of Shallum, 13 of Jehoiachim, 20 and of Coniah.*

cir. 609. **T**HUS saith the LORD ; Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word,

11—14. He is preparing the way for the great prophecy that follows in the next two chapters, where he shews that from the wreck of the house of David a mightier kingdom is to arise.

12. "O house of David," i. e. the royal family and the attendants of the court of Zedekiah.

"in the morning," or quickly, as Ps. cxliii. 8.

"the oppressor." It appears that at this time the power of the nobles had become so strong, that the king was unable to do anything without them (ch. xxxviii. 5.).

13. "inhabitant of the valley," referring to the lower city.

"rock of the plain," i. e. Mount Zion, these two names completing the whole of what was meant by Jerusalem.

14. "in the forest." To be explained as ch. xxii. 7 metaphorically of the population of the land. See Deut. xx. 19.

CHAPTERS XXII—XXIII. 8.

The longest portion of the prophecy, containing the doom of the three preceding kings, and the promise of the Righteous Branch. We may regard it as a poetical expansion of ch. xxi. 6—10.

CHAPTER XXII.

1—9. The prophet urges the reigning king to do what is right, if he would have Jerusalem and the Temple preserved ; because unless the present vicious state of society changes, neither the beauty of Jerusalem nor her strength can preserve her.

1. "Go down." He was probably in the Temple. See ch. xxvi. 10.

JEREMIAH, XXII.

2 and say, ^a Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in ^a by these gates : Before CHRIST
cir. 609.
ch. 17. 20.

3 thus saith the LORD ; ^b Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor : and ^c do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. b ch. 21. 12.
c See ver. 17.

4 For if ye do this thing indeed, ^d then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting ² upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people. d ch. 17. 25.
2 Heb. for David upon his throne.

5 But if ye will not hear these words, ^e I swear by myself, saith the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation. e Heb. 6. 13, 17.

6 For thus saith the LORD unto the king's house of Judah ; Thou *art* 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 ^f thy choice cedars, ^g and cast *them* into the fire. f Isai. 37. 24.
g ch. 21. 14.

8 And many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, ^h Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this great city ? h Deut. 29. 24, 25.
1 Kin. 9. 8, 9.

9 Then they shall answer, ⁱ Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them. i 2 Kin. 22. 17.
2 Chr. 34. 25.

10 ¶ Weep ye not for ^k the dead, neither bemoan k 2 Kin 22.20.

2. "these gates." The place where all public business was transacted, and justice administered.

3. "Execute judgment." Comp. ch. xxi. 12.

4. "if ye do this thing." Comp. ch. xvii. 25.

6. "Thou art Gilead unto me." He addresses the palace, comparing it to Gilead in beauty and to Lebanon in strength.

7. "I will prepare." Lit. "sanctify." See note on ch. i. 5.

"choice cedars." Jeremiah is thinking about the Assyrian invasion (Isa. xxxvii. 24.).

8. "And many nations." See Deut. xxix. 24—26.

10—12. Historical retrospect of the times of Shallum.

10. "the dead," i. e. Josiah. Weep not for him, for he died before the time of this great misery. See Isa. lvii. 1, 2.

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¹ ver. 11.

^m See I Chron.

3. 15, with

² Kin. 23. 30.

ⁿ 2 Kin. 23. 34.

him: *but* weep sore for him ¹that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.

11 For thus saith the LORD touching ^mShallum the son of Josiah king of Judah, which reigned instead of Josiah his father, ⁿwhich 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.

^o 2 Kin. 23.

35. ver. 18.

^p Lev. 19. 13.

Deut. 24. 14,

15.

Mic. 3. 10.

Hab. 2. 9.

Jam. 5. 4.

13 ¶ ^oWoe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; ^p*that* useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work;

² Heb.

through-
aired.

³ Or, *my*

windows.

14 *that* saith, I will build me a wide house and ²large chambers, and cutteth him out ³windows; and *it is* cieled with cedar, and painted with vermilion.

^q 2 Kin. 23. 25.

^r Ps. 123. 2.

Isai. 3. 10.

15 Shalt thou reign, because thou closest *thyself* in cedar? ^qdid not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, *and then* ^r*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.

^s Ezek. 10. 6.

17 ^sBut thine eyes and thine heart *are* not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for ⁴violence, to do *it*.

⁴ Or,

incursion.

“him that goeth away,” i. e. Shallum or Jehoahaz, who (2 Kings xxiii. 34.) died an exile in Egypt.

13—19. The reign of Jehoiakim.

13. “that buildeth his house.” Jeremiah is attempting to point out the gradual deterioration of the house of Judah. Jehoiakim is here especially accused of greed, gross injustice, and oppression.

“his neighbour's service.” Making bondsmen of them.

14. “cieled with cedar.” The cedar was the most expensive wood that could be employed (Isa. ix. 10.). Jehoiakim was living in this luxurious way at a time when Jerusalem was almost at her last gasp. We must remember that the people were already heavily taxed to pay tribute to Pharaoh (2 Kings xxiii. 35.).

15. “closest thyself.” Lit. “art eager.” He means that eagerness for a grand palace is not the characteristic of a king after God's heart. See Deut. xvii. 16—20.

“thy father,” i. e. Josiah.

16. “was not this to know me.” A short summary of man's duty towards God, shewing that it is inseparably connected with his duty towards his fellow-creatures. See Mic. vi. 8.

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18 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; ^tThey shall not lament for him, *saying*, ^u"Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!

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^t ch. 16, 4, 6.
^u See 1 Kings
13, 30.

19 ^xHe shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

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^x 2 Chr. 36, 6.
ch. 36, 30.

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. 599.

21 I spake unto thee in thy ²prosperity; *but* thou saidst, I will not hear. ^yThis *hath been* thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice.

² Heb. prosperities.
^y ch. 3, 25.
& 7, 23, &c.

22 The wind shall eat up all ^zthy pastors, and ^athy lovers shall go into captivity: surely then shalt thou be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness.

^z ch. 23, 1.
^a ver. 20.

23 O ³inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars, how gracious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, ^bthe pain as of a woman in travail!

³ Heb. inhabitress.
^b ch. 6, 24.

24 As I live, saith the LORD, ^cthough Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah ^dwere the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence;

^c See 2 Kings
24, 6, 8.
^d 1 Chr. 3, 16.
ch. 37, 1.
^d Cant. 8, 6.
Hag. 2, 23.

18. "They shall not lament." Compare a similar prophecy (ch. xxxvi. 30.). As to the fulfilment of it nothing is known. His death is mentioned (2 Kings xxiv. 6.), and his capture by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Chron. xxxvi. 6.), but nothing beyond is mentioned.

20—30. The reign of Jehoiachin.

20. "Lebanon . . Bashan . . the passages." The highest mountains in Palestine, whence Jeremiah supposes the distant prospect of Babylon to be before the mourner. "The passages," i. e. Mount Abarim (Num. xxvii. 12.).

22. "The wind." Personified as a shepherd feeding on these evil shepherds.

"thy lovers," i. e. the kings of Jerusalem, as is evident from ver. 20, and from the context.

23. "inhabitant of Lebanon." Jerusalem, which was now so rich in cedar-roofed buildings, that the prophet sarcastically calls it Lebanon.

"how gracious," i. e. how wilt thou mourn.

24. "Coniah," or Jeconiah, the last of Jerusalem's lovers (ver. 20.).

"the signet." This being the most valuable thing that a man possessed, Jeremiah implies the vanity of the hopes of the party which both at Babylon and also at Jerusalem was expecting Jehoiachin to return from the captivity.

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- 25 ^e 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.
- 26 ^f 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 ² desire to return, thither shall they not return.
- 28 *Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he ^g 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 ^h O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD.
- 30 Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man *that* shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, ^k sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

CHAPTER XXIII.

¹ *He prophesieth a restoration of the scattered flock.* ⁵ *Christ shall rule and save them.* ⁹ *Against false prophets,* ³³ *and mockers of the true prophets.*

^a **W**OE ^a 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

26. "thy mother." See ch. xiii. 18.

28. "broken idol." Better "broken vessel." The question implies that he is just like a piece of pottery to which the potter ascribes no special value.

29. "O earth." Repeated three times for the sake of greater solemnity. He calls the inhabitants of the earth, i. e. Palestine, to attend to this terrible prophecy.

30. "childless." Jehoiachin, if not actually childless, would be considered such according to Jewish notions, as he was the last king that sat upon the throne of Judah, outliving apparently his uncle and successor (Jer. lii. 11, 31).

CHAPTER XXIII.

1—8. A warning to Zedekiah the reigning monarch, and a promise of a great king.

1. "Woe . . . pastors." Comp. ch. ii. 8. This and the next verse contain a short summary of the preceding prophecies.

against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: ^b behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.

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^b Ex. 32. 34.

3 And ^c 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.

^c ch. 32. 37.
Ezek. 34. 13,
&c.

4 And I will set up ^d shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.

^d ch. 3. 15.
Ezek. 34. 23,
&c

^e Isai. 4. 2.
& 11. 1. &
40. 10, 11.
ch. 33. 14,
15, 16.

^f Dan. 9. 24.
Zech. 3. 8.
& 6. 12.
John 1. 45.

^g Ps. 72. 2.
Is. 9. 7.
& 32. 1, 18.

^h Deut. 33. 28.
Zech. 14. 11.

ⁱ ch. 32. 37.

^j ch. 33. 16.
1 Cor. 1. 30.

^k Heb.
Jehovah-
tsidkenu.

5 ¶ Behold, ^e the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, ^f and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

6 ^g In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel ^h shall dwell safely: and ⁱ this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, ^j THE LORD OUR RIGHT-
EOUSNESS.

2. "against the pastors," i. e. Zedekiah.

"have not visited them," i. e. neglected them; the word is used in this verse in a twofold sense.

3. "the remnant." See Isa. x. 20—23. Observe that no promise is made of the restoration of the monarchy. The ancient promise made to David in 2 Sam. vii. 12—16 having been revoked in the last two verses of the last chapter, God promises that a new set of rulers shall arise, who are summed up in the person of the Branch.

4. "shall they be lacking." Not missed.

5. "Behold, the days come." Note the indefinite character of the prophecy so far as the time is concerned. Jeremiah is contrasting these times with the immediate present.

"unto David." The promise, though cancelled, is renewed in language not unlike that of Nathan (2 Sam. vii. 12.).

"Branch." See Isa. iv. 2; lxi. 11.

"a King." An individual, not like the shepherds mentioned in ver. 4. This shews that "Branch" is used here as in Zech. vi. 12 for the name of a person.

"prosper." See ch. iii. 15. Isa. lii. 13.

"judgment...justice." This person resembles David in this respect (2 Sam. viii. 15.).

6. "Judah...Israel." An extension of the promise (Deut. xxxiii. 28.).

"his name." Not the new name given to Israel and Judah, but another name of the person who has just been called "Branch."

"THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." There is in these words an obvious reference to Zedekiah, whose name means "Righteousness of

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^k ch. 16. 14,
15.

7 Therefore, behold, ^k 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 ;

^l Isaï. 43. 5, 6.
ver. 3.

8 but, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, ^l and from all countries whither I had driven them ; and they shall dwell in their own land.

^m See Hab.
3. 16.

ⁿ ch. 5. 7, 8.
& 9. 2.

^o Hos. 4. 2, 3.
² Or,

cursing.

^p ch. 9. 10.
& 12. 4.

³ Or, *violence.*

^q ch. 6. 13.

& 8. 10.

Zeph. 3. 4.

^r ch. 7. 30.

& 11. 15.

& 32. 34.

Ezek. 8. 11.

& 23. 33.

9 ¶ Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets ; ^m all my bones shake ; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness.

10 For ⁿ the land is full of adulterers ; for ^o because of ² swearing the land mourneth ; ^p the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their ³ course is evil, and their force *is* not right.

11 For ^a both prophet and priest are profane ; yea, ^r in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD.

“ the LORD.” The great King here foretold would realise what many of the Jews must have longed for when their last king received a name typical of so great blessings. This king was to be called the LORD or Jehovah, or in other words he was to be Jehovah. Besides that, He is to be our righteousness, to accomplish the glorious work which Isaiah assigned to Him (Isa. xlv. 25. Ezek. xxxiv. 23—31.). It is worth while observing that the Targum, which represents a very early Jewish interpretation of the Scriptures, interprets these verses of the Messiah.

7. “ Therefore, behold.” Repeated from ch. xvi. 14, 15. The cause of the deliverance however is not mentioned in that place. It is reserved as a riddle for those to solve who could understand this verse. It implies that God must become man.

9—40. A glance at the present. The false prophets.

9—15. The prophet is overcome by the thought of the prophets who are now estranging the people from God. Their punishment is at hand.

9. “ Mine heart is broken.” See *note* on ch. xx. 7.

“ the words of his holiness.” He is staggered at the way in which the prophets have made light of God’s Holy Word.

10. “ adulterers.” Though there is no doubt that this sin was very prevalent in these days (chs. v. 7, 8 ; ix. 2, &c.), yet it seems as if here Jeremiah uses it in a metaphorical sense to express the “ adulteration ” of the Word of God. The next words point to this.

“ the land mourneth.” The drought (chs. xii. 4 ; xiv. 2.).

“ their course.” Their mode of life.

“ their force,” i. e. they put out all their strength to do wickedness. See Isa. v. 22.

12 ^a Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery *ways* in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I ^t will bring evil upon them, *even* the year of their visitation, saith the LORD.

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^s Ps. 35. 6.
^p Prov. 4. 19.
^{ch.} 13. 16.
^t ch. 11. 23.

13 And I have seen ²³ folly in the prophets of Samaria; ^u they prophesied in Baal, and ^x caused my people Israel to err.

² Or, *an absurd thing.*
³ Heb, *unsavoury.*
^u ch. 2. 8.

14 I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem ⁴ an horrible thing: ^y they commit adultery, and ^z walk in lies: they ^a strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as ^b Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah.

^x Isai. 9. 16.
⁴ Or, *filthiness.*
^y ch. 29. 23.

^z ver. 26.
^a Ezek. 13. 22.
^b Deut. 32. 32.
Isai. 1. 9, 10.

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with ^c wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is ⁵ profaneness gone forth into all the land.

^c ch. 8. 14.
& 9. 15.
⁵ Or, *hypocrisy.*

16 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: ^d they speak a vision of their own heart, *and* not out of the mouth of the LORD.

^d ch. 14. 14.
ver. 21.

17 They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, ^e Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the ⁶ imagination of his own heart, ^f No evil shall come upon you.

^e ch. 6. 14.
& 8. 11.
Ezek. 13. 10.
Zech. 10. 2.
⁶ Or, *stubbornness,*
ch. 13. 10.
^f Mic. 3. 11.

18 For ^g who hath stood in the ⁷ counsel of the

^g Job 15. 8.
¹ Cor. 2. 16.
⁷ Or, *secret.*

12. "Wherefore their way." Ps. xxxv. 6.

13. "I have seen folly." The prophets of Jerusalem appear worse than the Baal prophets of Ahab. Whatever their lives may have been, they did not at any rate make much profession about the truth of their religion.

15. "I will feed them." See ch. ix. 15. Deut. xxix. 17—19.

16—22. A caution against listening to the false prophets.

16. "Hearken not." Then, as in all ages, it was only by their fruits that the false prophets could be distinguished (St. Matt. vii. 15—20.). They kept on promising peace (ver. 17.), but (ver. 19.) the hope of it was vain.

"make you vain," i. e. deceive you. Jeremiah seems in ver. 17 to divide the prophets into two classes, the political and the spiritual. Each was equally false.

18. "who hath stood." None of these he infers had been commis-

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- ^h ch. 25. 32. & 30. 23. LORD, and hath perceived and heard his word? who hath marked his word, and heard *it*?
- ⁱ ch. 30. 24. 19 Behold, a ^h whirlwind of the LORD is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked.
- ^k Gen. 49. 1. 20 The ⁱ anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: ^k in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly.
- ^l ch. 14. 14. & 27. 15. & 29. 9. 21 ^l I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.
- ^m ver. 18. 22 But if they had ^m stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have ⁿ turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.
- ⁿ ch. 25. 5. 23 *Am* I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off?
- ^o Ps. 139. 7. &c. Amos 9. 2, 3. P^r 1 Kin. 8. 27. Ps. 139. 7. 24 Can any ^o hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. ^p Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD.
- 25 I have heard what the prophets 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;

sioned by God, otherwise they would have attempted to stay the flood of iniquity (ver. 22.).

19. "Behold, a whirlwind." Jeremiah declares what he knows, as opposed to the utterings of the false prophets (ver. 17.).

20. "in the latter days," i. e. in the course of time they shall understand the cause of the whirlwind just mentioned. Their suffering shall bring their sin into their remembrance.

21. "I have not sent." This and the next verse confirm the statement made in ver 16.

22. "if they had stood." Comp. ver. 18.

23—32. The false utterances of the prophets which they deliver in God's name will be punished.

23. *Am I a God at hand.*" The omniscience of God is an argument against the false prophets. They had acted as if He were ignorant of them. He now undeceives them.

25. "I have dreamed." See Deut. xiii. 1. Not necessarily referring to a superstitious use of dreams, but rather to the mode in which the revelation was communicated.

26. "How long." The question is continued to the end of ver. 27. The prophet shows his impatience at the present state of things.

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27 which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, ^q as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal.

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^q Judg. 3. 7.
& 8. 33, 34.

28 The prophet ² 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.

² Heb. *with whom is.*

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, ^r I *am* against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbour.

^r Dent. 18. 20.
ch. 14. 14, 15.

31 Behold, I *am* against the prophets, saith the LORD, ³ that use their tongues, and say, He saith.

³ Or, *that smooth their tongues.*

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 ^s their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

^s Zeph. 3. 4.

33 ¶ And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What *is* ^t the burden ^t Mal. 1. 1.

28. "The prophet that hath a dream." Only be plain and open. Do not invent your prophecies.

"What is the chaff." By these two metaphors are signified the false utterances of the prophets as contrasted with the word of God. "The seed is the word of God," the chaff or husk is of no use whatever.

29. "Is not my word," like fire which consumes the chaff, like a hammer which would break in pieces the false utterances even if they were like a rock.

30. "I am against the prophets that steal." Jeremiah hints at three classes of false prophets. The first are the plagiarists who copy the utterances of others, and have not a word of their own to say.

31. "that use their tongues." The second class. They manage to stammer out "Thus saith," but after that break down in hopeless confusion.

32. "prophesy false dreams." The third and worst class; plausible, no doubt, and fluent, but not a word of truth in their teaching.

"their lightness." Lit. "their wantonness."

33—40. A sketch of the false prophets, and a threat held out against them.

33. "What is the burden." By the word "burden" is frequently meant a prophecy, or outspoken oracle. It was a favourite expression in the mouths of the false prophets.

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^u ver. 39.

of the LORD? thou shalt then say unto them, What burden? ^u I will even forsake you, saith the LORD.

² Heb.
visit upon.

34 And *as for* the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of the LORD, I will even ² 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 the words of the living God, of the 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;

^x Hos. 4. 6.

^y ver. 33.

39 therefore, behold, I, even I, ^x will utterly forget you, and ^y I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, *and cast you out of my presence*:

^z ch. 20. 11.

40 and I will bring ^z an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

“What burden?” not interrogatively, but Thou shalt tell them what the burden is.

35. “What hath the Lord answered?” They are to give up this hypocritical use of the word “burden,” and to speak of prophecy in proper terms as an “answer” of God to human enquiries, or as the “Word” of God when He vouchsafes a revelation.

36. “every man's word shall be his burden.” He uses the word “burden” in a double sense. The “false prophet” shall be crushed by his own false utterance.

39. “I will utterly forget you.” Probably, “I will surely drive you “out.” There is a play upon the word burden which cannot be expressed in English.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 *Under the type of good and bad figs.* 4 *he foresaw the restoration of them that were in captivity,* 8 *and the desolation of Zedekiah and the rest.*

THE ^a LORD shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the LORD, after that Nebuchadrezzar ^b king of Babylon had carried away captive ^c 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.

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^a Amos 7. 1, 4. & 8. 1.

^b 2 Kings 24. 12, &c.

^c 2 Chr. 36. 10.

^e See chap. 22. 24, &c. & 29. 2.

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, ² they were so bad.

² Heb. for badness.

3 Then said the LORD unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I 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 ³ 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.

³ Heb. the captivity.

6 For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and ^d I will bring them again to this land: and ^e I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up.

^d ch. 12. 15. & 29. 10.

^e ch. 32. 41. & 33. 7. & 42. 10.

^f Deut. 30. 6. ch. 32. 39.

Ezek. 11. 17. & 36. 26, 27.

7 And I will give them ^f an heart to know me,

CHAPTER XXIV.

1—10. Symbolic prophecy of the future of Judah and her king.

1. "baskets of figs." See Amos viii. 2. These represented the people, who could be divided into two classes only, the good and the bad. Thus the Old Testament like the New knows no neutral ground between good and bad (St. Mark ix. 40.).

2. "that are first ripe," and therefore the best.

5. "Like these good figs." As a man accepts the good figs and rejects the bad, so will God deal with His people. There were already in captivity by this time Ezekiel and Daniel, and no doubt many others like them.

6. "I will set mine eyes." See Deut. xxx. 3.

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ε ch. 30. 22.
& 31. 33. &
32. 38.

η ch. 20. 13.
ι ch. 29. 17.

κ See chap.
43, & 44.

² Heb. *for*
removing,
or, vexation.

¹ Deut. 28. 25,
37.

¹ Kin. 9. 7.
² Chr. 7. 20.
ch. 15. 4.
& 29. 18.
& 34. 17.

ᵐ Ps. 44. 13,
14.

ᵃ ch. 29. 18,
22.

that I *am* the LORD : and they shall be ^ε my people, and I will be their God : for they shall return unto me ^η with their whole heart.

8 And as the evil ^ι figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so evil ; surely thus saith the LORD, So will I give Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this land, and ^κ them that dwell in the land of Egypt :

9 and I will deliver them ^² to ^¹ be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for *their* hurt, ^ᵐ to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt ^ᵃ 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 consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers.

CHAPTER XXV.

1 *Jeremiah reproving the Jews' disobedience to the prophets, 8 foretelleth the seventy years' captivity, 12 and after that, the destruction of Babylon. 15 Under the type of a cup of wine he foresheweth the destruction of all nations. 34 The howling of the shepherds.*

607.
ending.
606.
beginning.
ᵃ ch. 36. 1.

THE word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah ^ᵃ in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that *was* the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon ;

9. "and I will deliver them." See ch. xv. 4. Deut. xxviii. 37.

BOOK II. CHAPTERS XXV—XXXVI.

The personal history of Jeremiah during the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, accompanied by a historical appendix.

CHAPTER XXV.

The general judgment.

1—11. Judah has been constantly warned to repent, the time of her punishment is now at hand.

1. "the fourth year of Jehoiakim." One of the most important epochs in the world's history. The Assyrian empire had been practically overthrown for about twenty years, and Nebuchadrezzar had just commenced his long reign. All the prospects of Babylon were bright, as the horizon of Judah grew darker and darker. Yet at this time, just after Nebuchadrezzar's great victory at Carchemish, the fall of his empire is foretold (ver. 26.).

JEREMIAH, XXV.

2 the which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,

Before
CHRIST
cir. 606.

3 ^b 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; ^c but ye have not hearkened.

^b ch. 1. 2.
From 629.
till 606.

4 And the LORD hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, ^d rising early and sending *them*; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear.

^c ch. 7. 13. &
11. 7, 8, 10.
& 13. 10, 11.
& 16. 12.
& 17. 23. &
18. 12. & 19.
15. & 22. 21
^d ch. 7. 13, 25.
& 26. 5.
& 29. 19.

5 They said, ^e 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:

^e 2 Kin. 17. 13.
ch. 18. 11.
& 35. 15.
Jonah 3. 8.

6 and go not after other gods to 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 ^f provoke me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.

^f Deut. 32. 21.
ch. 7. 19.
& 32. 30.

8 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words,

9 behold, I will send and take ^g all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, ^h my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and ⁱ make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.

^g ch. 1. 15.

^h ch. 27. 6.
& 43. 10.
See Isaiah
44. 28.
& 45. 1.
ch. 40. 2.
ⁱ ch. 18. 16.

3. "the three and twentieth year." Made up of nineteen years of Josiah's and four of Jehoiakim's reign.

4. "rising early." See ch. vii. 13.

5. "Turn ye," i. e. Repent. The plain practical teaching of all the prophets down to John the Baptist. We find an instance of this style of teaching in Jer. vii.

7. "that ye might provoke me," i. e. so that you have provoked me. He explains the consequence of their disobedience.

9. "the families of the north." Comp. ch. i. 13, 14.

"my servant." Striking language to be used of a heathen king (chs. xxvii. 6; xliii. 10. He was God's servant in so far as he had to carry out His purpose towards Judah, just as the Assyrians (Isa. x. 5.).

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² Heb. *I will cause to perish from them.*
^k Isai. 24. 7.
ch. 7. 34.
& 16. 9.
Ezek. 26. 13.
Hos. 2. 11.
Rev. 18. 23.

¹ Eccles. 12. 4.
^m 2 Chr. 36.
21. 22.
Ezra 1. 1.
ch. 29. 10.
Dan. 9. 2.

³ Beginning
cir. 606.
² Kin. 24. 1.
ending
cir. 536.
Ezra 1. 1.

⁴ Heb.
visit upon.
ⁿ Isai. 13. 19.
& 14. 23.
& 21. 1, &c.
& 47. 1.

ch. 50. 3, 13,
23, 29, 40, 45,
& 51. 25, 26.

^o ch. 50. 9.
& 51. 27, 23.

^p ch. 50. 41.
& 51. 27.

^q ch. 27. 7.

^r ch. 50. 23.
& 51. 6, 24.

^s Job 21. 20.
Ps. 75. 8.

Isai. 51. 17.
Rev. 14. 10.

^t ch. 51. 7.
Ezek. 23. 24.
Nah. 3. 11.

10 Moreover ² I will take from them the ^k voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, ¹ the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.

11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, *and* an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

12 And it shall come to pass, ^m when ³ seventy years are accomplished, *that* I will ⁴ punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, ⁿ and will make it perpetual desolations.

13 And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, *even* all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations.

14 ^o For many nations ^p and great kings shall ^q serve themselves of them also: ^r 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 unto me; Take the ^s wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it.

16 And ^t 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

10. "the voice of mirth," ch. vii. 34.

11. "seventy years." See ch. xxix. 10, and compare Isa. xxiii. 15. The Babylonian empire lasted exactly this number of years.

12—29. Judah has become heathenish, and shall be punished with the same scourge as the heathen nation.

12. "I will punish the king of Babylon." Comp. Isa. x. 12.

"perpetual desolations." See Isa. xiii. 19—22.

13. "in this book." Referring to the fourth book of Jeremiah, which commences at ch. xlvi. The book in question was carried to Babylon in the fourth year of Zedekiah and cast into the Euphrates (ch. li. 59—64.).

15. "Take the wine cup." Comp. chs. xlix. 12; li. 7. Ps. lx. 3. Rev. xviii. 6. The student should notice the number of references in the Apocalypse to Jeremiah's prophecies against Babylon.

17. "Then took I the cup." He resumes the metaphor which was laid aside at the end of the last verse.

JEREMIAH, XXV.

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 ^u a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and ^x a curse ; as *it is* this day ;

19 ^y Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people ;

20 and all ^z the mingled people, and all the kings of ^a the land of Uz, ^b and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Azzah, and Ekron, and ^c the remnant of Ashdod,

21 ^d Edom, and ^e Moab, and the children of ^f Ammon,

22 and all the kings of ^g Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the ^h isles which *are* beyond the ⁱ sea,

23 ^j Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all ^k that are in the utmost corners,

24 and ^l all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the ^m mingled people that dwell in the desert,

Before
CHRIST
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u ver. 9. 11.
x ch. 24. 9.
y ch. 46. 2, 25.
z ver. 24.
a Job 1. 1.
b ch. 47. 1, 5, 7.
c See Isa. 20. 1.
d ch. 49. 7, &c.
e ch. 48. 1.
f ch. 49. 1.
g ch. 47. 4.
h 2 Or, region by the sea side.
i ch. 49. 23.
j Heb. cut off into corners, or, having the corners of the hair polled :
k ch. 9. 26, & 49. 32.
l 2 Chr. 9. 14.
m See ver. 20. ch. 49. 31, & 50. 37. Ezek. 5. 5.

18. "the kings thereof," i.e. Jehoiakim and his two successors. Jerusalem is punished first, being the most guilty.

"as it is this day." We shall find many expressions like this which the prophet inserted in a revision of his writings made after the captivity. See ch. xi. 5.

19. "Pharaoh," who had just been defeated, and had sipped the cup, but who did not drink it to the dregs till some years later.

20. "all the mingled people" (see Exod. xii. 38, and below, ver. 24.), probably hired troops such as were employed by Egypt (ch. xlvi. 21.).

"Uz" (Lam. iv. 21.), generally supposed to be on the borders of Edom.

"Azzah," i.e. Gaza. Gath is omitted. It appears to have been destroyed (2 Chron. xxvi. 6.), and its destruction served Amos (vi. 2.), with a text for one of his plain-dealing reproofs.

"remnant of Ashdod." It had suffered under the Tartan's invasion (Isa. xx. 1.), and was now considerably reduced in strength.

22. "kings of the isles." The sea-coast of the Mediterranean and Tyrian colonies.

23. "Dedan." A Hamitic tribe (Gen. x. 7.), living in the neighbourhood of the Persian gulf.

"Tema." An Arabian tribe (Isa. xxi. 13.) of which nothing certain is known.

"Buz." A tribe descended from Abraham, and dwelling in the neighbourhood of Uz.

"utmost corners." See ch. ix. 26.

JEREMIAH, XXV.

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CHRIST
cir. 606.

m ch. 49. 34.

n ch. 50. 9.

o ch. 51. 41.

p Hab. 2. 16.

q Isai. 51. 21.
& 63. 6.

r Prov. 11. 31.

ch. 49. 12.

Ezek. 9. 6.

Obad. 16.

Luke 23. 31.

1 Pet. 4. 17.

² Heb.

upon which
my name is
called.

^s Dan. 9. 18,

19.

^t Ezek. 38. 21.

^u I-sai. 42. 13.

Joel 3. 16.

Amos 1. 2.

^x Ps. 11. 4.

ch. 17. 12.

^y 1 Kin. 9. 3.

Ps. 132. 14.

^z Isai. 16. 9.

ch. 48. 33.

25 and all the kings of Zimri, and all the kings of
^m Elam, and all the kings of the Medes,

26 " and all the kings of the north, far and near,
one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world,
which *are* upon the face of the earth: ^o 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; ^p Drink ye,
and ^q be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no
more, because of the sword which I will send among
you.

28 And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup
at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto
them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ye shall
certainly drink.

29 For, lo, ^r I begin to bring evil on the city
^{2 s} which is called by my name, and should ye be
utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished:
for ^t 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 ^u roar
from on high, and utter his voice from ^x his holy
habitation; he shall mightily roar upon ^y his habita-
tion; he shall give ^z a shout, as they that tread *the*
grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth.

25. "Zimri." A region totally unknown.

"Elam." At the head of the Persian gulf, near the mouths of the Tigris.

26. "the kings of the north." Armenia.

"Sheshach." By a curious species of cypher a synonym for Babel: just as in ch. li. 11, the phrase "midst of them that rise up against me," "stands for Chaldeans." An older form of cypher exists in Isa. vii. 6, where, by the name Tabeal, Remaliah is signified. Jeremiah brings his prediction to the overthrow of Babylon.

27. "Drink ye," &c., i. e. drink it to the very dregs.

28. "if they refuse." Indicating the certainty with which Babylon would overcome these kingdoms, and in her turn would be overthrown.

29. "should ye be utterly unpunished?" As in past times the overthrow of many a heathen city had been a warning to Jerusalem, so now does Jerusalem become a warning to the heathen cities.

30—38. God declares that the whole world shall be judged.

30. "The Lord shall roar." Comp. Joel iii. 16. Amos i. 2; but it is not now from Zion that the Lord roars. His thunder from heaven proclaims the judgment.

"a shout." An allusion to the vintagers' shout; see ch. xlviii. 33.

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31 A noise shall come *even* to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath ^a a controversy with the nations, ^b he will plead with all flesh; he will give them *that are wicked* to the sword, saith the LORD.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 606.

^a Hos. 4. 1.
Mic. 6. 2.
^b Isai. 66. 16.
Joel 3. 2.

32 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and ^c a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

^c ch. 23. 19.
& 30. 24.

33 ^d 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 ^e lamented, ^f neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.

^d Isai. 66. 16.

^e ch. 16. 4, 6.

^f Ps. 79. 3.
ch. 8. 2.
Rev. 11. 9.

34 ¶ ^g Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves *in the ashes*, ye principal of the flock: for ² the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like ³ a pleasant vessel.

^g ch. 4. 8.
& 6. 26.

² Heb. *your days for slaughter.*

³ Heb. *a vessel of desire.*

35 And ⁴ the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape.

⁴ Heb. *flight shall perish from the shepherds, and escaping from, &c.*

Amos 2. 14.

36 A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and an howling of the principal of the flock, *shall be 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 ^h his covert, as the lion: for their land is ⁵ desolate because of the fierce-

^h Ps. 76. 2.

⁵ Heb. *a desolation.*

The winepress is often used as a figure of great slaughter. Joel iii. 13. Rev. xiv. 14—20.

31. "A noise," i. e. tumult of a marching army. See Isa. xvii. 12—14.

32. "whirlwind." Comp. ch. xxiii. 19.

33. "the slain of the Lord." The reference is to the great day of the Lord, which had been foretold from the time of Joel, at which the people had scoffed. Jeremiah intensifies the terrors described by his predecessor.

34. "ye shepherds." A metaphor for the rulers as in ch. xviii. 1—4.

"like a pleasant vessel." Recalling ch. xix. 10, 11.

36. "A voice of," &c. Better translated, "Hark! the cry of the shepherds," &c.

"hath spoiled." Lit. "is spoiling;" the act is commencing.

37. "peaceable habitations," i. e. those hitherto peaceable.

38. "as the lion." See Hos. v. 14.

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ness of the oppressor, and because of his fierce anger.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 Jeremiah by promises and threatenings exhorteth to repentance. 8 He is therefore apprehended, 10 and arraigned. 12 His apology. 16 He is quit in judgment, by the example of Micah, 20 and of Urijah, 24 and by the care of Ahikam.

610.
ending.
609.
beginning.

IN the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this word from the LORD, saying,

^a ch. 19. 14.

2 Thus saith the LORD; Stand in ^a the court of the LORD's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD's house, ^b all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; ^c diminish not a word;

^b Ezek. 3. 10.
Matt. 28. 20.

^c Acts 20. 27.

^d ch. 36. 3.

3 ^d if so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may ^e repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings.

^e ch. 18. 8.
Jonah 3. 8, 9.

4 And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; ^f If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you,

^f Lev. 26. 14,
&c.
Deut. 28. 15.

5 to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, ^g whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending *them*, but ye have not hearkened;

^g ch. 7. 13, 25.
& 11. 7. &
25. 3, 4.

6 then will I make this house like ^h Shiloh, and will make this city ⁱ a curse to all the nations of the earth.

^h 1 Sam. 4.
10, 11.
Ps. 78. 60.
ch. 7. 12, 14.
ⁱ Isai. 65. 15.
ch. 24. 9.

“the oppressor.” A word generally used (ch. xlvi. 16.) as an epithet for the sword; here it stands by itself, and is personified as “the destroyer.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

The tribulation of the Prophets of the Lord.

1—19. An attempt against Jeremiah's life frustrated.

1—6. Brief abstract of a prophecy of Jeremiah's.

1. “In the beginning.” A very vague expression. Probably the event occurred previous to the fourth year of Jehoiakim.

2. “Stand in the court.” Comp. chs. vii—x., with which this chapter is closely connected; in fact vv. 2—6 are an abstract of ch. vii.

3. “if so be they will hearken.” The reader should remember that this was on the occasion of a great festival, and that an opportunity was offered for moving the masses.

“that I may repent.” Comp. ch. xviii. 8, &c.

JEREMIAH, XXVI.

7 So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 609.

8 ¶ Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking 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, saying, 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 gathered 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 ²in the entry of ²Or, at the door. 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, ³This man is worthy to die; ^kfor he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.

³ Heb. The judgment of death is for this man.

ch. 38. 4.

12 Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and

7—11. Arrest, trial, and condemnation of Jeremiah for blasphemy.

7. "So the priests and the prophets." The whole of the opposition which Jeremiah experienced at this time came from these persons. As yet the princes were friendly to him, because he had not hitherto uttered any prophecies of a political nature. The world always leaves the Church alone till it feels her to pinch like a tight shoe.

8. "had made an end of speaking." This shews that the startling nature of the prophecy had gained the attention of a large portion of the crowd.

"all the people," who were influenced no doubt by the false prophets and priests.

"Thou shalt surely die." Such seemed to them to be the true meaning of the law of blasphemy (Lev. xxiv. 14—16.). How could a man foretell the overthrow of God's sanctuary without blaspheming?

9. "without an inhabitant." Referring to what he had said in his sermon (ch. ix. 9—11.).

"were gathered." The Law required the congregation to stone the blasphemers.

10. "the princes." This appears to have been a formal trial held in the gate (ch. xxxvi. 10.) which Jotham probably had built. 2 Kings xv. 35.

11. "worthy to die." See marg., and comp. Deut. xix. 6.

12—19. Jeremiah's defence and liberation.

12. "Then spake Jeremiah." His defence is simple. He appeals

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B-fore
CHRIST
cir. 609.

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.

¹ ch. 7. 3.

13 Therefore now ¹amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will ^mrepent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.

^m ver. 3, 19

ⁿ ch. 33. 5.

14 As for me, behold, ⁿI *am* in your hand: do with me ²as seemeth good and meet unto you.

² Heb. as it is good and right in your eyes.

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.

^o See Acts 5. 34, &c.

17 ^oThen rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spake to all the assembly of the people, saying,

^p Mic. 1. 1. cir. 710.

18 ^pMicah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts;

^q Mic. 3. 12.

^qZion shall be plowed *like* a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.

^r 2 Chr. 32. 26.

19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? ^rdid he not fear the LORD,

to the law by which they would condemn him. He had spoken in the name of the Lord, and therefore (Deut. xviii. 22.) they must wait to see whether he has spoken presumptuously or not.

13. "amend your ways." The princes no less than the others needed this plain preaching (ch. vii. 3—5).

14. "do with me," &c. Comp. Josh. ix. 25.

16. "This man is not worthy to die." They recognise the appeal to the Law of Moses, and at the same time feel the practical remedy to their coming troubles which Jeremiah points out.

17. "certain of the elders," i. e. old people who had remembered hearing of the story when they were young. The case of Micah is made a precedent for Jeremiah's defence.

18. "Micah . . . prophesied." Jeremiah gives us the words exactly as they stand in Micah. This shews us that some of the prophetic works were circulated among the people at this early date. It is also worthy of remark that Jeremiah referred to Micah frequently in his address (chs. vii—x.).

JEREMIAH, XXVI.

and besought ²the LORD, and the LORD ³repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? ⁴Thus might we procure great evil against our souls.

^{Before}
CHRIST
cir. 609.

² Heb.
the face of
the LORD.

³ Ex. 32. 14.
² Sam. 24. 16.
⁴ Acts 5. 39.

20 And there was also a man that prophesied in the name of the LORD, Urijah the son of Shemaiah of Kirjath-jerim, who prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah :

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 ³common people.

cir. 609.

24 Nevertheless ⁴the 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.

³ Heb.
sons of
the people.
⁴ 2 Kings 22.
12, 14.
ch. 39. 14.

19. "and besought the Lord." There is no record of this intercession of Hezekiah. His prayer for help (Isa. xxxvii. 16, &c.) may have been regarded by the people as such.

20—24. Conspiracy against the prophet Urijah. His murder and the fate of Jeremiah.

20. "And there was also a man." He, like many other martyrs, is otherwise unknown. His prophecy was of a threatening character, similar to Jeremiah's.

21. "the king sought." Here again it should be observed that the princes shewed no hostile spirit to Urijah. The opposition came from the persecuting king.

22. "Elnathan." (See ch. xxxvi. 12—15.) A man of considerable position, and friendly to the prophets. His father had held a high position in the state during the time of Josiah (2 Kings xxii. 12, 15.).

"into Egypt." Ostensibly to seize Urijah, but probably upon some political mission connected with the growth of Nebuchadnezzar's power.

23. "the common people." 2 Kings xxiii. 6.

24. "Ahikam." One of Jeremiah's intimate friends ; his sons continued the friendship (chs. xxxix. 14 ; xl. 5, 6.).

Before
CHRIST
cir. 598.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 *Under the type of bonds and yokes he prophesieth the subduing of the neighbour kings unto Nebuchadnezzar. 8 He exhorteth them to yield, and not to believe the false prophets. 12 The like he dooth to Zedekiah. 19 He foretelleth, the remnant of the vessels shall be carried to Babylon, and there continue until the day of visitation.*

cir. 598.

^a See ver. 3,
12, 20,
ch. 28. 1.

² Or,
*hath the
LORD said.*

^b ch. 28. 10, 12.
So Ezek. 4. 1.
& 12. 3. &
24. 3, &c.

³ Or,
*concerning
their mas-
ters, saying.*

^c Ps. 115. 15.
& 146. 6.
Isai. 45. 12.

^d Ps. 115. 16.
Dan. 4. 17,
25, 32.

^e ch. 28. 14.

^f ch. 25. 9.
& 43. 10.
Ezek. 29. 18,
20.

^g ch. 28. 14.
Dan. 2. 33.

IN the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah ^a king of Judah came this word unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 Thus ² saith the LORD to me ; Make thee bonds and yokes, ^b 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 ;

4 and command them ³ to say unto their masters, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel ; Thus shall ye say unto your masters ;

5 ^c 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 ^d have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me.

6 ^e And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, ^f my servant ; and ^g the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The certainty of the Babylonian Captivity.

The title of the chapter is not consistent with vv. 3—12. The name of Zedekiah should be substituted for Jehoiakim.

2—11. A symbolical prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion, followed by a warning against false prophets and sorcerers.

2. "put them upon thy neck." This Jeremiah actually did, as appears from ch. xxviii. 10. Compare a symbolical prophecy of Isai. li. 5, Isa. xx. 2.

3. "Edom," &c. Comp. ch. xxv. 21, 22. These ambassadors had come to Jerusalem probably with the view of forming an alliance against Babylon. This, however, was not accomplished, as Zedekiah was compelled to go to Babylon (ch. li. 59.) and swear allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar (2 Chron. xxxvi. 13.) this same year.

5. "I have made," i. e. God, Who Himself is Lord of all things, can delegate any portion of His sovereignty to whomsoever He pleases.

JEREMIAH, XXVII.

7 ^b And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, ⁱ until the very time of his land come: ^k and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.

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^h 2 Chr. 36. 20.

ⁱ ch. 25. 12.

& 50. 27.

Dan. 5. 26.

^k ch. 25. 14.

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 ² dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon:

² Heb.
dreams.

10 ¹ 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.

¹ ver. 14.

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.

12 ¶ I spake also to ^m Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying, Bring your

⁵⁹⁸
^m ch. 28. 1.
& 38. 17.

7. "his son, and his son's son," i. e. some considerable time (comp. Deut. vi. 2.). It is not strictly true that Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by his son and grandson, for his son (ch. lii. 31.), Evil-Merodach, was murdered by Nergal-Sharezer, the Rab-mag (ch. xxxix. 3.), who married Nebuchadnezzar's daughter. This man reigned a few years, and was succeeded by his child who only reigned a few months.

"the very time of his land." Comp. ch. xxv. 26. Gen. xv. 16.

"serve themselves of him." See ch. xxv. 14.

8. "that nation will I punish." So overruling is the hand of God in the smallest political matters. Not a petty state or province, but is forced to submit to His will.

10. "they prophesy a lie." Let the reader remember that Jeremiah is here speaking of Gentile prophets. This verse shews us the excitement with which Nebuchadnezzar's advance was watched by the various tribes.

12—15. Summary of a prophecy addressed to Zedekiah, followed by a warning against false prophets.

12. "I spake also." Of this address we have only this summary remaining. It does not appear that a yoke was sent to Zedekiah.

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necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live.
 " Ezek. 18. 31. 13 " 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 ^o a lie unto you.
^o ch. 14. 14. & 23. 21. & 29. 8, 9.

15 For I have not sent them, saith the LORD, yet they prophesy ² a lie in my name; that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you.
² Heb. *in a lie, or, lyingly.*

16 Also I spake to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Harken not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you, saying, Behold, ^p the vessels of the LORD's house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you.
^p 2 Chron. 36. 7, 10. ch. 28. 3. Dan. 1. 2.

17 Harken 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 vessels which are left in the house of the LORD, and *in* the house of the king of Judah, and at Jerusalem, go not to Babylon.

19 For thus saith the LORD of hosts ^q concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning
^q 2 Kings 25. 13, &c. ch. 52. 17, 20, 21.

13. "Why will ye die." See Ezek. xviii. 31, 32. Observe how tenderly Jeremiah shews them the hopelessness of attempting to resist God's will.

"by the sword." See ver. 8.

14. "the words of the prophets." Comp. chs. xiv. 14; xxiii. 16, 21. 16—18. Jeremiah counsels the priests to submit.

16. "Behold, the vessels," &c. It was the prevailing impression at Jerusalem as well as at Babylon, that Nebuchadnezzar was about to restore the sacred vessels, and also Jehoiachin. Jeremiah's argument is that if these persons are prophets, they had better pray God to spare the vessels which still remain.

17. "Harken not," &c. Jeremiah uses almost the same words as the Rab-shakeh, Isa. xxxvi. 16—18.

19—22. Further words of warning addressed to the priests.

19. "the pillars." The two pillars and other ornaments are fully

JEREMIAH, XXVIII.

the bases, and concerning the residue of the vessels that remain in this city,

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20 which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took not, when he carried away ^r captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem ;

^r 2 Kings 24.
14, 15.
ch. 24. 1.

21 year, 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 ^s carried to Babylon, and there shall they be until the day that I ^t visit them, saith the LORD ; then ^u will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.

^s 2 Kin. 25. 13.
² Chr. 36. 18.
^t 2 Chr. 36. 21.
ch. 29. 10.
& 32. 5.
^u Ezra 1. 7.
& 7. 19.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1 Hananiah prophesieth falsely the return of the vessels, and of Jeconiah. 5 Jeremiah, wishing it to be true, sheweth that the event will declare who are true prophets. 10 Hananiah breaketh Jeremiah's yoke. 12 Jeremiah telleth of an iron yoke, 15 and foretelleth Hananiah's death.

AND ^a 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,

cir. 596.
^a ch. 27. 1.

described in 1 Kings vii. 15—37. The fate of them is described in ch. lii. 17—23.

20. "the nobles." Probably the same as the princes. The word "nobles" was used to designate some of the leading men in Samaria (1 Kings xxi. 8.). It should be remembered that in this year was sent to Babylon the weighty prophecy with which the book terminates in chapters l. li. (see ch. li. 59.), and that Zedekiah himself also went there.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The personal conflict of Jeremiah with a false prophet.

1—11. Hananiah prophesied the speedy return of the vessels and of Jehoiachin from Babylon. Jeremiah hopes that the prophecy may turn out true ; but upon expressing his doubts, Hananiah breaks off the yoke from his neck.

1. "Hananiah." Of his father Azur nothing is known. As, however, Hananiah lived at Gibeon, a priests' city (Josh. xxi. 17.), it has

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cir. 596.
b ch. 27. 12.

2 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken ^b the yoke of the king of Babylon.

c ch. 27. 16.
2 Heb. *two years of days.*

3 ^c Within ² 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 :

3 Heb.
captivity.

4 and I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the ³ 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 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,

d 1 Kin. 1. 36.

6 even the prophet Jeremiah said, ^d 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.

e Deut. 18. 22.

9 ^e The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when

been generally considered that he was a priest. If this was the case, he must have uttered this prophecy with the intention of confuting Jeremiah with his priestly authority.

2. "Thus speaketh," &c. Hananiah belongs to both the second and third class of prophets mentioned (ch. xxiii. 31, 32.).

"I have broken," i.e. I surely will break.

3. "two full years." Lit. two years, days. He means two years more or less. Having heard of the yokes being sent to the confederate princes (ch. xxvii. 3.), he calculated that in a little while Nebuchadnezzar's power would receive some check.

4. "Jeconiah." Thus contradicting Jeremiah (ch. xxii. 24—28.).

6. "Amen." Jeremiah's reply implies a wish that it might be as Hananiah foretold.

9. "The prophet . . . peace." Of course it was possible that a prophet should prophesy what he hoped might come true. Jeremiah abides by the law to which he had appealed (ch. xxvi. 12.). He is convinced

JEREMIAH, XXVIII.

the word of the prophet shall come to pass, *then* shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him. Before
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10 Then Hananiah the prophet took the ^fyoke ^fch. 27. 2. from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it.

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 ^gfrom the neck of all nations within the ^gch. 27. 7. 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; ^hI 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 ⁱI have given him the beasts of the field also. ^h Deut. 28. 48.
ch. 27. 7.
ⁱ ch. 27. 6.

15 Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but ^kthou makest this people to trust in a lie. ^k ch. 29. 31.
Ezek. 13. 22.

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 ^lrebellion against the LORD. ^l Deut. 13. 5.
ch. 21. 32.
² Heb. *revolt.*

that Hananiah's prophecy is not in accordance with those of other prophets.

10. "Then Hananiah." The meaning of this symbolic act is perfectly plain. The people who could not hear the words spoken would know what was taking place. See Lev. xxvi. 13.

12—17. Detection and punishment of Hananiah.

12. "Then the word of the Lord came." It appears that Jeremiah did not give an immediate reply to the false prophet. He waited with patience till God shewed him what to do.

13. "yokes of iron." The first part of this revelation gave him to understand that the iron yoke of Nebuchadnezzar must infallibly be borne by the nation. The second part is a personal prophecy respecting Hananiah.

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17 So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1 *Jeremiah sendeth a letter to the captives in Babylon, to be quiet there, 8 and not to believe the dreams of their prophets, 10 and that they shall return with grace after seventy years. 15 He foretelleth the destruction of the rest for their disobedience. 20 He sheweth the fearful end of Ahub and Zedekiah, two lying prophets. 24 Shemaiah writeth a letter against Jeremiah. 30 Jeremiah readeth his doom.*

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NOW 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 ;

a 2 Kings 24.
12, &c.
ch. 22. 26.
& 28. 4.
2 Or, *chamberlains.*

2 (after that ^a Jeconiah the king, and the queen, and the ² 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,

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 ;

b ver. 28.

5 ^b build ye houses, and dwell *in them* ; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them ;

17. "the seventh month." Within as many months as Hananiah had prophesied years.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1—23. Continued warnings against false prophets.

1. "the letter." This is the single instance in Scripture of an epistle written by a prophet. It was written with the object of annulling the expectation of a party at Babylon, that the captivity would shortly come to a close.

"elders," i.e. old people, as in ch. xxvi. 17.

2. "after that Jeconiah." This appears to ascribe the same date to the letter as the period of the discourse (chs. vii—x.).

4—7. Make up your minds to abide some time in Babylon.

5. "build ye houses." This would have been unnecessary if the duration of the captivity was to be only for a little while.

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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.

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7 And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, ^c and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

^c Ezra 6. 10,
1 Tim. 2. 2.

8 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that *be* in the midst of you, ^d deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.

^d ch. 14. 14.
& 23. 21.
& 27. 14, 15.
Eph. 5. 6.

9 ^e For they prophesy ² falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD.

^e ver. 31.
² Heb.
in a lie.
cir. 606.

10 ¶ For thus saith the LORD, That after ^f 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.

^f 2 Chron. 36.
21, 22.
Ezra 1. 1.
ch. 25. 12.
& 27. 22.
Dan. 9. 2.

11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an ³ expected end.

³ Heb. *end and expectation.*

12 Then shall ye ^g call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

^g Din. 9. 3,
&c.
^b Lev. 26. 30,
40, &c.
Deut. 30. 1,
&c.

13 And ^h ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me ⁱ with all your heart.

ⁱ ch. 24. 7.
^k Deut. 4. 7.
Ps. 32. 6.

14 And ^k I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and ^l I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the

& 46. 1.
Isai. 55. 6.
^l ch. 23. 3, 8.
& 30. 3.
& 32. 37.

7. "seek the peace," i.e. live according to the laws of Babylon. Respect the civil authorities.

8—14. Do not be deceived by false prophets. God will not let you return for seventy years.

10. "seventy years." See ch. xxv. 11.

"my good word." Referring to the symbolical prophecy (ch. xxiv. 5, 6.).

11. "thoughts of peace." Observe the strong antithesis. What looked less peacelike than the captivity, yet such it was in the mind of God (comp. 2 Kings xxii. 20; xxiii. 29.).

12. "Then shall ye call upon me." See Deut. xxx. 3—5, the whole of which chapter seems to have been in the prophet's mind as he wrote the letter.

JEREMIAH, XXIX.

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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.

15 ¶ Because ye have said, The 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 ^msword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like ⁿvile 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 ^owill deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, ²to be ^pa curse, and an astonishment, and an 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 ^qI 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 Israel, of Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and of Zedekiah the son

15—19. Do not trust in your false prophets in Babylon. Your king and brethren in Jerusalem will suffer captivity like yourselves.

15. "prophets in Babylon." Men, however, of the same character as Hananiah (ch. xxviii.). These prophets apparently raised the hopes of the people by reminding them that David's successor still reigned in Jerusalem, and that there was in contemplation a plan for casting off the allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar.

17. "upon them," i.e. the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

"vile figs." Comp. ch. xxiv. 8.

19. "ye would not hear." He quotes to the Jews in Babylon what he had so frequently preached in Jerusalem (ch. vii. 13, &c.).

20—23. The punishment of the two false prophets.

21. "Ahab . . . Zedekiah." Two false prophets of whom no further mention is made.

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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 ^r 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, ^s whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire;

23 because ^t 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 ² Nehelamite, saying, 198.

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, ^u and to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the priests, saying, ² Or, dreamer.

26 The LORD hath made thee priest in the stead of Jehoiada the priest, that ye should be ^x officers in the house of the LORD, for every man *that is* ^y mad, and maketh himself a prophet, that thou shouldst ^z put him in prison, and in the stocks. ^x ch. 20. 1.
^y 2 Kin. 9. 11.
Acts 26. 24.

27 Now therefore why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a prophet to you? ^z ch. 20. 2.

28 For therefore he sent unto us *in* Babylon, saying, This *captivity is long*: ^a build ye houses, ^a ver. 5.

22. "roasted in the fire." The fate of the three holy children (Dan. iii. 20.) seems to have been shared by others.

24—32. The conduct of Shemaiah and his punishment.

24. "Nehelamite." Probably so called from the name of the place where he lived. Shemaiah wrote a letter to Jerusalem in reply to Jeremiah's begging that such damaging prophecies might be suppressed.

26. "every man that is mad," or, frantic. The word is generally used of false prophets. Here Shemaiah, a false prophet, uses it in contempt to designate the true prophets.

"stocks." Some sort of chain is meant, according to some authorities a pillory for the hands.

28. "This . . . long." No doubt referring to the seventy years which Jeremiah foretold. The reader should observe that the words do not occur in the letter.

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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, ^b and I sent him not, and he caused you to trust in a lie:

b ch. 28. 15.

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; ^c because he hath taught ² rebellion against the LORD.

c ch. 28. 16.

² Heb. *revolt*.

CHAPTER XXX.

¹ God sheweth Jeremiah the return of the Jews. ⁴ After their trouble they shall have deliverance. ¹⁰ He comforteth Jacob. ¹⁸ Their return shall be gracious. ²⁰ Wrath shall fall on the wicked.

THE word that came to Jeremiah 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.

^a ver. 18.

ch. 32. 44.
Ezek. 39. 25.
Amos 9. 14,
15.

3 For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that ^a I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel

32. "I will punish Shemaiah." The consequence of Shemaiah's letter, so far as Jeremiah was concerned, seems to have been nothing whatever. Shemaiah suffered, however, for comforting the people by false hopes.

CHAPTER XXX.

This with the following three chapters is devoted to a prediction of the restoration of Israel, and of the glorious future mentioned (ch. xxix. 11.). This is enforced by a symbolic act on the part of Jeremiah.

1—3. Summary of the following prophecy.

2. "Write . . . in a book." Of course the unwillingness of the people to hear what Jeremiah had to say about the seventy years' captivity made it impossible for him to predict in words the return from it. Written in a book, however, it would be a test of his truthfulness as a prophet.

JEREMIAH, XXX.

and Judah, saith the LORD : ^b and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 606.
^b ch. 16. 15.

4 ¶ And these *are* the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah.

5 For thus saith the LORD ; We have heard a voice of trembling, ² of fear, and not of peace.

² Or, there is
*fear, and
not peace.*

6 Ask ye now, and see whether ³ a man doth travail with child ? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, ^c as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness ?

³ Heb.
a male.
^c ch. 4. 31.
& 6. 24.

7 ^d Alas ! for that day *is* great, ^e so that none *is* like it : it *is* even the time of Jacob's trouble ; but he shall be saved out of it.

^d Joel 2. 11,
31.
^e Amos 5. 18,
Zeph. 1. 14,
&c.

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 :

^e Dan. 12. 1.

9 but they shall serve the LORD their God, and ^f David their king, whom I will ^g raise up unto them.

^f Isai. 55. 3, 4.
Ezek. 34. 23,
& 37. 24.
Hos. 3. 5.
^g Luke 1. 69.
Acts 2. 30.
& 13. 23.

10 Therefore ^h fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD ; neither be dismayed, O Israel : for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed ⁱ from the

^h Isai. 41. 13,
& 43. 5,
& 44. 2.
ch. 46. 27, 28.
ⁱ ch. 3. 18.

4—11. Why are so many faces seen pale with terror ? Terrifying is the day of God's wrath, but deliverance is sent at the same time.

5. "trembling." The reference is to the advance of Cyrus on Babylon. The Jews, however, had nothing to fear from him. See Isa. xlv. 2.

6. "Ask ye now." See Isa. xxi. 3.

7. "that day." The day (see Isa. ii. 12.) in which God will punish Babylon.

"time of Jacob's trouble." He means that the Jews in captivity will not fail to be alarmed at the assault on the city. Comp. St. Matt. xxiv. 21, 22.

8. "break his yoke," i.e. the king of Babylon's sway. Comp. Isa. x. 27.

"serve themselves." See ch. xxv. 14.

9. "serve the Lord . . . and David." A wonderful prediction ! The great king who was to save Judah (ch. xxiii. 6.) was not only to be a descendant of David, He was to be Jehovah as well. On the second David see Hos. iii. 5. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24 ; xxxvii. 24, 25.

10. "fear thou not." It is obvious that Isa. xlv. 1, 2 was in the prophet's mind ; notice especially the alternation of Jacob and Israel in this verse.

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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: ^k though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, ^l yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee ^m in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.

12 For thus saith the LORD, ⁿ Thy bruise *is* incurable, *and* thy wound *is* grievous.

13 *There is* none to plead thy cause, ² that thou mayest be bound up: ^o thou hast no healing medicines.

14 ^p All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded thee with the wound ^q of an enemy, with the chastisement ^r of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity; ^s *because* thy sins were increased.

15 Why ^t 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.

16 Therefore all they that devour thee ^u shall be devoured; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that spoil

“be quiet,” i.e. live at peace. See ch. xlvi. 27.

11. “a full end.” See ch. iv. 27.

“in measure.” Comp. ch. x. 24.

“unpunished.” See Exod. xxxiv. 7.

12—17. At present thou art a mourner, for thy wounds seem to be incurable, but the Lord will heal thee.

12. “Thy bruise . . . wound.” See ch. x. 19. The prophet seems to pile up all expressions that he has made use of to shew the extreme misery of Jerusalem, so that the great deliverance of the Lord may prove the wonder of His love.

13. “There is none,” i.e. no ally.

“no healing medicine.” No plaster, as ch. xlvi. 11. Like a wounded man bleeding to death.

14. “All thy lovers,” i.e. the old allies, foremost of whom was Egypt. See ch. xxv. 19.

15. “Why criest thou.” Comp. Isa. xl. 1. Such is Divine consolation. It shews us that the cause of the chastisement lies in ourselves, and that God corrects us in measure (ver. 11.).

16. “Therefore all they,” &c. The same measure of God’s justice requires this retribution.

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thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey. Before
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17 ^x For I will restore health unto thee, and I will ^x heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, *saying*, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after. ch. 33. 6.

18 Thus saith the LORD; Behold, ^y I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and ^z have mercy on his dwellingplaces; and the city shall be builded upon her own ² heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof. f ver. 3.
ch. 33. 7. 11.
z Ps. 102. 13.
2 Or, little hill.

19 And ^a out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: ^b and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small. a Isai. 35. 10.
& 51. 11.
ch. 31. 4. 12.
13. & 33. 10.
11.
b Zech. 10. 8.

20 Their children also shall be ^c as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them. c Isai. 1. 26.

21 And their nobles shall be of themselves, ^d and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will ^e cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the LORD. d Gen. 49. 10.
e Num. 16. 5.

17. "I will restore." See ch. viii. 22.

"Outcast." See Zeph. iii. 19. He means that all who view Zion in her present misery fancy her to be uncared for by God and by man alike.

18—24. The captives shall return, the city shall be rebuilt, and the nation shall again become glorious.

18. "tents," as ch. iv. 20, or Isa. liv. 2. Used as a metaphor for houses.

"her own heap," i.e. city after city (Isa. lxiv. 10.) shall be rebuilt on its former site. See Deut. xiii. 16.

"after the manner thereof," i.e. each palace shall be rebuilt in a truly palatial style.

19. "out of them," i.e. from the returned exiles. See Isa. xxxv. 10.

"they shall not be small." Shall not be despised because they are so few in number.

20. "Their children," i.e. the inhabitants.

"congregation," i.e. population. Comp. 2 Sam. vii. 10.

21. "their nobles." The people shall be ruled by princes of their own, and not by foreigners.

"I will cause him," i.e. the nation. The whole of the glorious description in Exod. xix. 6 is now to be realized. The nation is a kingdom of priests, and in its priestly character shall draw near (Num. xvi. 5.) to God.

"for who is this," &c. This gives the reason of the preceding

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22 And ye shall be ^f my people, and I will be your God.

^f ch. 24. 7.
& 31. 1, 33.
& 32. 38.
Ezek. 11. 20.
& 36. 28.
& 37. 27.
^g ch. 23. 19, 20.
& 25. 32.
² Heb.
cutting.
³ Or, *remain.*
^h Gen. 49. 1.

23 Behold, the ^g whirlwind of the LORD goeth forth with fury, a ² continuing whirlwind: it shall ³ 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: ^h in the latter days ye shall consider it.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1 *The restoration of Israel.* 10 *The publication thereof.* 15 *Rahel mourning is comforted.* 18 *Ephraim repenting is brought home again.* 22 *Christ is promised.* 27 *His care over the church.* 31 *His new covenant.* 35 *The stability,* 38 *and amplitude of the church.*

^a ch. 30. 24.
^b ch. 30. 22.

AT ^a the same time, saith the LORD, ^b 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 wilder-

clause. No one could of himself approach God (Num. viii. 19.). He would risk his life by so doing. God alone can bring him near. This refers to the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, an abundant outpouring of which is characteristic of Messianic prophecies. The reader will notice that in this and the following chapter the prophet is speaking about the renewed character of the nation. This verse finds its counterpart in ch. xxxi. 38, 39.

22. "ye shall be my people." Such is the result of the nation being brought near to God. The presence of the Spirit (see ch. xxxi. 31—34.) accomplishes this.

23. "Behold, the whirlwind." See ch. xxiii. 19, 20. This tribulation must first come upon the land and sweep away false prophets, idolatrous priests and laity, and the like, which interfered with the purity of the people.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Closely connected with the preceding chapter, giving an account of the restoration of Israel; and of the spiritual growth of the community while under the new covenant.

1—6. Not only Judah, but all the families of Israel shall be partakers in the blessing of restoration. Israel shall be rebuilt, and the old hostility between the rival kingdoms shall disappear, for the men of Ephraim shall go up to Zion.

1. "At the same time," i.e. the Messianic days mentioned in ch. xxx. 24.

2. "The people . . . sword." Referring to the escape of Israel from Egypt. See Dent. xxxii. 10. Jeremiah is here repeating that most common figure of prophecy in which the deliverance from Egypt and

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ness; *even* Israel, when °I went to cause him to rest.

3 The LORD hath appeared ² of old unto me, *saying*, Yea, ^d I have loved thee with °an everlasting love: therefore ³ with lovingkindness have I ^f drawn thee.

4 Again ^g I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy ^h tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry.

5 ⁱ Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall ⁵ eat *them* as common things.

6 For there shall be a day, *that* the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, ^k Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God.

7 For thus saith the LORD; ¹ Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel.

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° Num. 10. 23.
Deut. 1. 33.
Ps. 95. 11.
Isai. 63. 14.
² Heb. *from afar.*
d Mal. 1. 2.
e Rom. 11. 28, 29.
³ Or, *have I extended lovingkindness unto thee.*
f Hos. 11. 4.
g ch. 33. 7.
h Ex. 15. 10.
Judg. 11. 34.
Ps. 149. 3.
i Or, *timbrels.*
j Isai. 65. 21.
Amos 9. 14.
⁵ Heb. *profane them,*
Deut. 20. 6. & 28. 30.
k Isai. 2. 3.
Micah 4. 2.
l Isai. 12. 5, 6.

the passage through the wilderness is made the type of a greater deliverance.

“when I went.” Lit. “let me go.” God is represented as saying this at the time of the exodus.

“to cause him to rest.” See Deut. xxviii. 65.

3. “of old.” Referring to the same time as the last verse. Israel expresses her faith that He Who has already vouchsafed her so glorious a deliverance from Egypt, will bring her back from Assyria. God’s love is everlasting, therefore she knows it cannot be otherwise.

4. “O virgin.” Her iniquity is now pardoned, she is no longer addressed as in ch. iii. 6, 8, 14.

5. “Thou shalt yet plant.” He is referring to the beautiful idea of the whole creation sympathising with the destiny of man. The desert places of Palestine will teem with new life when this blessed state of things shall arrive. See Isa. lxxv. 21.

“as common things.” Referring to Lev. xix. 23, 24. Deut. xx. 6. Lit. “to make common,” or, in other words, to turn to one’s own use.

6. “For there shall be a day.” The reader should observe how this prophecy is based upon the words of Hosea, by whom the promise was made to them subject to the condition of their return (Hos. iii. 5, &c.). The nation is once again united as in the days of David.

7—14. The whole world is summoned to rejoice at the deliverance of Israel, who is satisfied with abundance of joy.

7. “the chief of the nations.” Once more Israel holds her own as the head of the nations (Deut. xxvi. 19).

“O Lord, save thy people.” Ps. cxviii. 25. The prayer “Hosanna” (see St. Matt. xxi. 9.), which in the Messianic days will be fully realized.

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m ch. 3. 12, 18.
& 23. 8.
n Ezek. 20.
34. 41.
& 34. 13.

8 Behold, I will bring them ^m from the north country, and ⁿ gather them from the coasts of the earth, *and* with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither.

o Ps. 126. 5, 6.
ch. 50. 4.
2 Or, *favours*,
Zech. 12. 10.
p Isai. 35. 8.
& 43. 19. &
41. 10, 11.
q Ex. 4. 22.

9 ^o They shall come with weeping, and with ² supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk ^p 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 ^q firstborn.

r Isai. 40. 11.
Ezek. 34. 12,
13, 14.
s Isai. 44. 23.
& 48. 20.
t Isai. 49. 24,
25.

10 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare *it* in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel ^r will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd *doth* his flock.

u Ezek. 17. 23.
& 20. 40.
x Hos. 3. 5.

11 For ^s the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him ^t from the hand of *him that was* stronger than he.

y Isai. 58. 11.
z Isai. 35. 10.
& 65. 19.
Rev. 21. 4.

12 Therefore they shall come and sing in ^u the height of Zion, and shall flow together to ^x the goodness of the LORD, for 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 ^y watered garden; ^z 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 comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.

8. "Behold, I will bring," &c. The prophet wishes to express that no class of persons will be neglected, nothing can prevent their return.

9. "with weeping." Tears of joy, such as accompany repentance.

"rivers of waters." See Isa. xlvi. 21.

"Ephraim," i.e. Israel is to share equally with Judah in this great deliverance. The title of "firstborn" is more fully explained in ver. 20.

10. "the isles." Used as generally in the prophets to mean the coasts of the Mediterranean (see ch. ii. 10.). The passage which Jeremiah had in his mind was Isa. xxxv. 5—9.

12. "shall flow." See Isa. ii. 2. This verse speaks of the abundance of peace which shall mark the Messianic times. Such peace is now inward, the outward peace awaits its fulfilment in the future.

"a watered garden." Isa. lviii. 11.

13. "both young men," &c. They shall rejoice as they hear the women publishing this great triumph of the Lord. Ps. lxxviii. 11.

14 And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD. Before CHRIST
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15 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; ^a A voice was heard in ^b Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because ^c they were not. ^a Matt. 2. 17, 18.
^b Josh. 18. 25.
^c Gen. 42. 13.

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 ^d they shall come again from the land of the enemy. ^d ver. 4, 5.
Ezra 1. 5.
Hos. 1. 11.

17 And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border.

18 ¶ I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: ^e turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God. ^e Lam. 5. 21.

19 Surely ^f after that I was turned, I repented; ^g and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my

14. "the soul of the priests." Referring to the numerous thank-offerings that shall be presented.

15—22. But what is the present state of Palestine? The nation is bereaved, and laments for her lost children. But God will dry her tears after her repentance and conversion to Himself.

15. "A voice was heard in Ramah," i.e. Hark! there is heard in Ramah.

"lamentation," &c. Rachel as mother of Joseph, and therefore of the tribe of Ephraim, which she personifies, laments at Ramah, the place whence her cries can be heard most distinctly over the length and breadth of the two kingdoms (see ver. 18.). The repentance is now as open as was once the transgression (ch. iii. 6, 21.). This was a symbol of the sorrow that came upon some of the Jewish mothers (St. Matt. ii. 16.).

16. "Refrain thy voice." A glorious consolation. No sooner does the first sob shew that her heart is changed than God answers. With God an earnest cry is of more value than the most eloquent prayer.

"thy work," i.e. thy children. They shall return.

17. "in thine end." See ch. xxix. 11.

18. "I have surely heard." See Lev. xxvi. 40—45. The metaphor of the bullock comes from Deut. xxxii. 15. Hos. x. 11.

19. "Surely after that," &c. The supplicating cry of Ephraim is continued.

"I was instructed," though I had so often refused instruction or correction (ch. ii. 30.).

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thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear 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: ^gtherefore my bowels ²are troubled for him; ^hI will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD.

21 Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps: ⁱset thine heart toward the highway, *even* the way *which* thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities.

22 How long wilt thou ^kgo about, O thou ^lback-sliding daughter? for the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man.

23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, 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; ^mThe LORD bless thee, O habitation of justice, *and* ⁿmountain of holiness.

24 And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and ^oin all the cities thereof together, husbandmen, and they *that* go forth with flocks.

20. "Is Ephraim my dear son?" God at once acknowledges the poor prodigal on his return. The prophet can hardly find words to express the wonderful tenderness of God towards the penitent.

21. "Set thee up waymarks," i.e. make all preparations for thy return. Those who are described in ver. 8 would require assistance. Observe, however, that a portion of the work is reserved for themselves (Phil. ii. 12.).

22. "How long," &c. This difficult prophecy of the restoration of Israel is most easily understood by remembering Jeremiah's fondness for anything like alliteration, or a play on words. The word "back-sliding," "*shovevah*," sounds not unlike the word "*soverah*," which means "going about," "encompassing" (as Ps. xxvi. 6.), or, "attendant upon." Israel in this prophecy is regarded as "*the female*" who, contrary to all her previous customs, waits upon God, "*the male*." This change is especially ascribed to the work of God, and is called a new thing, for it is His grace and that alone which can convert the sin-hardened nation. Here, as in ch. xxx. 21, the Messianic idea, though not clearly expressed, is most distinctly implied.

23—26. After the return of Israel, Judah herself returns. The prophet has a short bright glimpse of restored Judah, and then the happy vision passes away.

23. "habitation of justice." The existing state of things shall be completely changed. See Isa. i. 21, 27.

24. "husbandmen." Of course this is not to be literally interpreted.

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25 For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.

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26 Upon this I awaked, and beheld; and my sleep was sweet unto me.

27 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast.

^p Ezek. 36.
9, 10, 11.
^q Hos. 2, 23.
Zech. 10, 9.

28 And it shall come to pass, *that* like as I have watched over them, ^r to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, ^s to build, and to plant, saith the LORD.

^q ch. 44, 27.
^r ch. 1, 10.
& 18, 7.
^s ch. 24, 6.

29 ^t In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge.

^t Ezek. 18, 2, 3.

30 ^u But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

^u Gal. 6, 5, 7.

31 ¶ Behold, the ^x days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

^x ch. 32, 40.
& 33, 14.
Ezek. 37, 26.
Heb. 8, 8, —12.
& 10, 16, 17.

32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the

^y Deut. 1, 31.

It refers to the peace which shall reign in the Messianic times. See above.

25. "I have satiated." A tense of the verb expressing promise.

26. "I awaked," i. e. the prophet. The vision was over, and he rejoiced in the comfort that it gave him. Not often does he speak of comfort.

27—30. The first promise: Fruitfulness, and new life of the restored nation.

27. "I will sow." He regards Israel and Judah as a fruitful field.

28. "I have watched." Referring to the vision of the almond rod in ch. i. 11, 12.

29. "The fathers have eaten," &c. See Ezek. xviii. 2, 3, &c. They will so clearly and correctly understand the righteousness of God that they will not have any occasion to repeat this proverb.

31—37. Second promise: The spiritual character of those who are restored.

31. "a new covenant." See Heb. viii. 8—12. The new covenant is purely spiritual. Through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit the Law of God appeals to the inner man through his conscience. It becomes a principle of life rather than a catalogue of forbidden acts. This is the subject of Isaiah's prophecy (ch. ii. 2—4. Ps. lxxviii. 16—19.).

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hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt ; which my covenant they brake, ² although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD :

² Or, *should I have continued an husband unto them ?*

33 ² but this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel ; After those days, saith the LORD, ^a I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts ; ^b and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

² ch. 32. 40.

^a Ps. 40. 8.
Ezek. 11. 19,
20. & 36. 26,
27. 2 Cor. 3. 3.

^b ch. 24. 7.
& 30. 22.
& 32. 33.

34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD : for ^c they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD : for ^d I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

^c Isai. 54. 13.
John 6. 45.
1 Cor. 2. 10.
1 John 2. 20.

^d ch. 33. 8.
& 50. 20.
Mic. 7. 18.
Acts 10. 43.
& 13. 39.
Rom. 11. 27.

^e Gen. 1. 16.
Ps. 72. 5, 17.
& 89. 2. 36,
37. & 119. 91.

^f Isai. 51. 15.
^g ch. 10. 16.

35 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, ^e 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 ^f the sea when the waves thereof roar ; ^g The LORD of hosts *is* his name :

^h Ps. 148. 6.
Is. 54. 9, 10.
ch. 33. 20.

36 ^h if those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, *then* the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

ⁱ ch. 33. 22.

37 Thus saith the LORD ; ⁱ 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.

^k Neh. 3. 1.
Zech. 14. 10.

38 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD ^k from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner.

^l Ezek. 40. 8.
Zech. 2. 1.

39 And ^l the measuring line shall yet go forth

32. "although I was an husband." St. Paul in Heb. viii. 9 follows the old Greek translation called the Septuagint. These words being immaterial to his argument were cited by him as they were popularly known. The meaning is the same as in ch. iii. 14.

34. "I will forgive." St. Paul shews (Rom. xi. 27. Heb. x. 16, 17.) that forgiveness lies at the root of the Gospel. See also St. Matt. i. 21.

35. "which giveth the sun." God confirms the promise of the new covenant with an oath.

36. "the seed of Israel shall cease." Babylonians, Medes, and others have vanished, or have been absorbed by other races. Israel, though scattered till this day, preserves her nationality.

38—40. Third promise: The new holy city.

38. "tower of Hananeel." At the N.E. corner of Jerusalem. The exact positions of "Goath" and "Gareb" are not known, but they are

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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 brook of Kidron, ^m unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, ⁿ shall be holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.

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^m 2 Chron.
23. 15.
ⁿ Neh. 3. 28.
ⁿ Joel 3. 17.

CHAPTER XXXII.

¹ Jeremiah, being imprisoned by Zedekiah for his prophecy, ⁶ buyeth Hanamer's field. ¹³ Baruch must preserve the evidences, as tokens of the people's return. ¹⁶ Jeremiah in his prayer complaineth to God. ²⁶ God confirmeth the captivity for their sins, ³⁶ and promiseth a gracious return.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD ^a in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which *was* the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar.

2 For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up ^b in the court of the prison, which *was* in the king of Judah's house.

3 For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus

cir. 590.
^a 2 Kings 25.
1. 2.
ch. 39. 1.

^b Neh. 3. 25.
ch. 33. 1. &
37. 21. &
38. 6. & 39. 14.

generally supposed to have been unclean places. By their being enclosed in the new city Jeremiah implies that the most unholy places will be changed in character. Observe also that Jeremiah makes no mention of any temple. See Rev. xxi. 22, 27.

40. "valley of the dead bodies," i.e. the valley of Hinnom.

"horse gate." See Neh. iii. 28.

"holy unto the Lord." See Exod. xxviii. 36.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A symbolical prophecy of the return from the captivity, followed by a prayer and a solemn assurance of deliverance.

1—15. The prophet purchases a field that was at Anathoth, and by giving the evidence to his friend Baruch, shews his faith in the promises of God made in the last chapter.

1. "in the tenth year." The siege had begun in the tenth month of the ninth year (ch. xxxix. 1.). It was raised for a short while on account of a demonstration made by the Egyptian troops (ch. xxxvii. 11.). Probably during this interval the transaction occurred which is here mentioned.

2. "Jeremiah was shut up." See ch. xxxvii. 15.

3. "Wherefore dost thou prophesy." The prophecy to which Zedekiah refers may either be that which is recorded in ch. xxi. 3—7, or else it might be the general teaching of the prophet during the siege,

Before
CHRIST
cir. 590.

c ch. 34. 2.

d ch. 34. 3.
& 38. 18, 23.
& 39. 5. &
52. 9.

e ch. 27. 22.

f ch. 21. 4.
& 33. 5.

g Lev. 25. 24,
25, 32.
Ruth 4. 4.

h Gen. 23. 16.
Zech. 11. 12.

² Or, *seven shekels and ten pieces of silver.*

³ Heb. *wrote in the book.*

saith the LORD, ^c 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 ^d 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 ^e until I visit him, saith the LORD: ^f though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper.

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 ^g 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 inheritance *is* thine, and the redemption *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 my uncle's son, that *was* in Anathoth, and ^h weighed him the money, *even* ² seventeen shekels of silver.

10 And I ³ subscribed the evidence, and sealed *it*,

such as chs. xxxiv. 3; xxxvii. 6—10, 17; xxxviii. 17—23. But we have no reason to assume that every utterance of Jeremiah has been preserved.

5. "until I visit him." Observe the double sense in which the word "visit" is used. God visits men both to deliver and to punish. See chs. xxv. 12; xxvii. 22.

6—12. The purchase of the land at Anathoth.

7. "the right of redemption." For the law which regulated the sale of land see Lev. xxv. 23—28.

8. "uncle's son." Lev. xxv. 49.

"Buy my field." Its position outside Anathoth is regulated by the Law (Num. xxxv. 5.).

9. "seventeen shekels." Either the unsettled state of Palestine or the near approach of the day of jubilee had reduced the price of the land.

10. "the evidence," i. e. the deed of purchase. He takes pains to

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and took witnesses, and weighed *him* the money in the balances.

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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 ⁱ Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's *son*, and in the presence of the ^k witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison.

ⁱ ch. 36. 4.

^k See Is. 8. 2.

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 the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and 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 ^l shall be possessed again in this land.

^l ver. 37, 43.

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, ^m thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, *and* ⁿ there is nothing ² too hard for thee :

^m 2 Kin. 19. 15.

ⁿ Gen. 18. 14. ver. 27.

Luke 1. 37.

² Or, *hid from thee.*

^o Ex. 20. 6.

& 34. 7. Deut. 5. 9, 10.

18 thou shewest ^o lovingkindness unto thousands,

shew us that all the legal formalities were strictly observed, witnesses to the transaction were present, and duplicate copies of the deeds were made.

12. "before all the Jews." Those who were imprisoned at the time, and were therefore eyewitnesses of the purchase being completed.

14. "in an earthen vessel." To preserve the deeds from decay during the approaching years of captivity.

15. "Houses . . . shall be possessed again." Implying of course the revival of trade and a busy population.

16—25. Jeremiah's prayer, praising God for past mercies, and asking for increased faith.

17. "thou hast made," &c. The references to the past history of the Jews are very striking. He commences with the creation, and finishes with the disobedience of Israel after the death of Joshua.

"too hard for thee." Gen. xviii. 14.

18. "unto thousands." Deut. vii. 9.

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and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the Great, ^p the Mighty God, ^q the LORD of hosts, *is* his name,

^r 19 ^r great in counsel, and mighty in ² work: for thine ^s eyes *are* open upon all the ways of the sons of men: ^t to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings:

^u 20 which hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, *even* unto this day, and in Israel, and among *other* men; and hast made thee ^u a name, as at this day;

^x 21 and ^x 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;

^y 22 and hast given them this land, which thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, ^y a land flowing with milk and honey;

^z 23 and they came in, and possessed it; but ^z they obeyed not thy voice, neither walked in thy law; they have done nothing of all that thou commandedst them to do: therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon them:

³ 24 behold the ³ mounts, they are come unto the city to take it; and the city ^a is given into the hand of the Chaldeans, that fight against it, because of ^b the sword, and of the famme, and of the pestilence: and what thou hast spoken is come to pass; and, behold, thou seest *it*.

⁴ 25 And thou hast said unto me, O Lord GOD, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses; ⁴ for ^c the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

^p Isai. 9. 6.
^q ch. 10. 16.

^r Isai. 28. 29.
² Heb. *doing*.
^s Job 34. 21.
³ Ps. 33. 13.
⁴ Prov. 5. 21.
^t ch. 16. 17.
^u ch. 17. 10.

^u Ex. 9. 16.
^v Chr. 17. 21.
^w Isai. 63. 12.
^x Dan. 9. 15.
^x Ex. 6. 6.
^y 2 Sam. 7. 23.
^y Chr. 17. 21.
^z Ps. 136. 11,
12.

^y Ex. 3. 8, 17.
^z ch. 11. 5.

^z Neh. 9. 23.
³ ch. 11. 8.
³ Dan. 9. 10,—
14.

³ Or. *engines of shot*,
³ ch. 33. 4.

^a ver. 25, 36.

^b ch. 14. 12.

⁴ Or, *though*.
^c ver. 24.

“the Mighty God.” Deut. x. 17.

19. “great in counsel.” Isa. xxviii. 29.

20. “signs and wonders.” Deut. iv. 34.

21. “and hast brought forth.” Deut. xxvi. 8, 9.

23. “and they came in,” &c. See Ps. cvi. 13.

24. “behold the mounts.” See ch. vi. 6.

“the city is given,” i. e. the surrender is a matter of certainty.

25. “And thou hast said.” The prophet hardly asks any question. His silence implies the patience of faith which is rewarded.

JEREMIAH, XXXII.

26 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, Before CHRIST
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27 Behold, I *am* the LORD, the ^d God of all flesh : ^d Num. 16. 22.
^e is there any thing too hard for me ? ^e ver. 17.

28 Therefore thus saith the LORD ; Behold, ^f I ^f ver. 3.
will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans,
and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Ba-
bylon, and he shall take it :

29 and the Chaldeans, that fight against this city,
shall come and ^g set fire on this city, and burn it ^g ch. 21. 10.
with the houses, ^h upon whose roofs they have ^g & 37. 8, 10,
offered incense unto Baal, and poured out drink ^g & 52. 13.
offerings unto other gods, to provoke me to anger. ^h ch. 19. 13.

30 For the children of Israel and the children of
Judah ⁱ have only done evil before me from their ⁱ ch. 2. 7.
youth : for the children of Israel have only pro- ⁱ & 3. 25. &
voked me to anger with the work of their hands, ⁱ 7. 22.—26.
saith the LORD. ⁱ & 22. 21. Ezek. 20. 28.

31 For this city hath been to me *as* ² a provo- ² Heb. for
cation of mine anger and of my fury from the day ² my anger.
that they built it even unto this day ; ^k that I ^k 2 Kings 23.
should remove it from before my face, ^k 27. & 24. 3.

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, ^l they, their kings, ^l Isai. 1. 4, 6.
their princes, their priests, and their prophets, and ^l Dan. 9. 8.
the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jeru-
salem.

33 And they have turned unto me the ³ ^m back, ³ Heb. neck.
and not the face : though I taught them, ⁿ rising up ^m ch. 2. 27.
early and teaching *them*, yet they have not hearkened ⁿ & 7. 24.
to receive instruction. ⁿ ch. 7. 13.

26—35. God's reply to Jeremiah. Nothing is too hard for Him. He will assuredly give Jerusalem over into the enemy's hands on account of her past sins.

27. "is there anything too hard." Repeating Jeremiah's words (ver. 17.).

29. "houses, upon whose roofs." Observe the exactness of the retribution. Comp. Deut. xiii. 12—18.

30. "from their youth," i. e. the wanderings in the wilderness. The nation was born according to the language of prophecy at the exodus. The catalogue of national sins that follows is repeated from different parts of the preceding to shew the continued history of the people's rebellion against God.

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o ch. 7. 30, 31.
& 23. 11.

Ezek. 8. 5, 6.

p ch. 7. 31.
& 19. 5.

q Lev. 18. 21.

1 Kin. 11. 33.

r ch. 7. 31.

* ver. 24.

t Deut. 30. 3.

ch. 23. 3.

& 29. 14.

& 31. 10.

Ezek. 37. 21.

u ch. 23. 6.

& 35. 16.

x ch. 24. 7.

& 30. 22.

& 31. 33.

y ch. 24. 7.

Ezek. 11. 19,

20.

² Heb.

all days.

^z Isai. 55. 3.

ch. 31. 31.

³ Heb. from

after them.

^a ch. 31. 33.

^b Deut. 30. 9.

Zeph. 3. 17.

^c ch. 24. 6.

& 31. 28.

Amos 9. 15.

⁴ Heb. in

truth, or,

stability.

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 p cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto q Molech ; r which I commanded them not, neither came it 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, s 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 t 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 u to dwell safely :

38 and they shall be x my people, and I will be their God :

39 and I will y give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me z for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them :

40 and a I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away b from them, to do them good ; but c I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

41 Yea, b I will rejoice over them to do them good, and c I will plant them in this land d assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.

34. "But they set their abominations." See ch. vii. 30, 31.

36—44. Judah will repent beneath the chastening hand of God, and will be brought back from her captivity.

36. "And now therefore." He contrasts the joy of the restoration with the misery which is in the more immediate prospect. "Therefore" refers back to ver. 28.

37. "I will gather them," i. e. the inhabitants of the city.

39. "one heart." Referring to ch. xxxi. 18—20.

"one way." The schism of Jeroboam will disappear for ever.

"for ever." See Deut. iv. 10.

"for the good of them." Deut. vi. 24.

40. "an everlasting covenant." A consequence of ch. xxxi. 33. God will never turn away from them, because His grace will prevent them from forsaking Him.

41. "assuredly." To be explained from the preceding verse to mean "permanently."

JEREMIAH, XXXIII.

42 For thus saith the LORD; ^d 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. Before CHRIST
cir. 590.
d ch. 31. 28.

43 And ^e fields shall be bought in this land, ^e whereof ye say, *It is desolate without man or beast*; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. e ver. 15.
f ch. 33. 10.

44 Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal *them*, and take witnesses in ^g the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in 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 ^h I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD. g ch. 17. 26.
h ch. 33. 7,
11, 26.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1 God promiseth to the captivity a gracious return, 9 a joyful state, 12 a settled government, 15 Christ the Branch of righteousness, 17 a continuance of kingdom and priesthood, 20 and a stability of a blessed seed.

MOREOVER the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the second time, while he was yet ^a shut up in the court of the prison, saying, cir. 590.
a ch. 32. 2, 3.
b Isai. 37. 26.

2 Thus saith the LORD the ^b maker thereof, the LORD that formed it, to establish it; ^{2c} the LORD is his name; 2 Or, JEHOVAH.
c Ex. 15. 3.
Amos 5. 8.
& 9. 6.

42. "Like as I have brought." See ch. xxxi. 28.

43. "And fields shall be bought." Corroborating ver. 15.

44. "Men shall buy fields." Jeremiah's purchase is to be an earnest of far more extensive transactions.

"land of Benjamin." In which Jerusalem was situated, and where the Babylonians seemed to be so firmly established.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

This chapter is obviously later than the preceding, but it expands the same thought, promising the return from captivity at a time when Jerusalem had nearly fallen into the enemy's hand.

1—9. The prophet is told to ask God to reveal the future to him. He is told that Jerusalem shall be destroyed, but that it shall be rebuilt, and both Israel and Judah shall return to dwell there.

2. "the maker thereof." Lit. who accomplishes it, i. e. who fulfils the words that he utters.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 590.

3 ^d Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and ²mighty things, which thou knowest not.

^d Ps. 91. 15.
ch. 29. 12.

² Or, *hidden*,
Isai. 45. 6.

^e ch. 32. 24.

^f ch. 32. 5.

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 ^ethe mounts, and by the sword;

5 ^fthey 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.

^g ch. 30. 17.

6 Behold, ^gI will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth.

^h ch. 30. 3.
& 32. 44.
ver. 11.

7 And ^hI will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, ⁱas at the first.

ⁱ Isai. 1. 26.
ch. 24. 6.
& 30. 20.
& 31. 4, 23.
& 42. 10.

^k Ezek. 36. 25.
Zech. 13. 1.
Heb. 9. 13,
14.

^l ch. 31. 34.
Mic. 7. 18.

^m Isai. 62. 7.
ch. 13. 11.

8 And I will ^kcleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will ^lpardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

ⁿ Isai. 60. 5.

9 ^mAnd 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 ⁿfear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.

10 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; Again there shall be

3. "and shew thee." Slightly altered from Isa. xlvi. 6. These things are mentioned (vv. 14—18.).

4. "houses . . . thrown down." This had been done to establish a line of defence against the approaches of the enemy. See Isa. xxii. 10.

5. "they come." No subject is expressed. The meaning is, "Men are going in (to their forts) to fight the Chaldeans, but the only issue of the conflict will be to fill their forts, which were once their houses, with dead bodies."

"I have hid my face." See Deut. xxxi. 18.

6. "Behold, I will bring it." God will rebuild all that is now being torn down.

8. "I will cleanse." See ch. xxxi. 34.

9. "And it shall be." Carrying on the sense from ver. 6.

"and they shall fear," i. e. the nations shall be amazed at the wonderful doings of God. See Isa. xix. 17. Rom. xi. 15.

10, 11. Joyous state of Jerusalem after the return.

JEREMIAH, XXXIII.

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 ° desolate, without man, and without inhabitant, and without beast,

Before
CHRIST
cir. 590.
° ch. 32. 43.

11 the ^p voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, ^q Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD *is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever: *and* of them that shall bring ^r the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For ^s I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD.

p ch. 7. 34.
& 16. 9.
& 25. 10.
Rev. 18. 23.
q 1 Chron. 16.
8. 34.
2 Chron. 5.
13. & 7. 3.
Ezra 3. 11.
Ps. 136. 1.
Isai. 12. 4.
r Lev. 7. 12.
Ps. 107. 22.
& 116. 17.

12 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; ^t Again in this place, which is desolate without man and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, shall be an habitation of shepherds causing *their* flocks to lie down.

s ver. 7.
t Isai. 65. 10.
ch. 31. 24.
& 50. 19.

13 ^u 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 ^x pass again under the hands of him that telleth *them*, saith the LORD.

u ch. 17. 26.
& 32. 44.

14 ^y Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that ^z I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.

y ch. 23. 5.
& 31. 27, 31.
z ch. 20. 10.

10. "which ye say." The land is already actually desolate in many places, it will soon become completely so. See ch. xxxii. 36, 43.

11. "the voice," &c. See ch. vii. 34.

"Praise the Lord." Probably Psalm cv., which Isaiah also cites (ch. xii. 4.).

"I will cause to return." See ch. xxix. 14.

12, 13. Joyous state of the land.

12. "an habitation of shepherds." The whole of the country is to be restored to its ancient fertility, and the flocks will feed undisturbed.

13. "In the cities," &c. Repeated from ch. xxxii. 44.

"him that telleth them," i. e. that counts them. By this is implied a considerable flock, one from which you could not detect the absence of a sheep without making a calculation.

14—18. Description of the king and priesthood in these glorious times.

14. "that good thing," i. e. God's promise (Deut. xxviii. 1—14.), or perhaps the promise to David (2 Sam. vii. 16.), which David frequently calls "God's word" (Ps. lvi. 4.).

Before
CHRIST
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15 ¶ In those days, and at that time, will I cause the ^aBranch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

^a Isai. 4. 2.
& 11. 1.
ch. 23. 5.

^b ch. 23. 6.

16 ^b In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, ²The LORD our righteousness.

² Heb.
Jehovah.
tsidkenu.

³ Heb. *There shall not be cut off from David.*

17 For thus saith the LORD; ³David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel;

^c 2 Sam. 7. 16.
¹ Kin. 2. 4.
Ps. 89. 29, 36.
Luke 1. 32,
33.

18 neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to ^doffer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.

^d Rom. 12. 1.
& 15. 16.
¹ Pet. 2. 5, 9.
Rev. 1. 6.

19 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, saying,

^e Ps. 89. 37.
Isai. 54. 9.
ch. 31. 36.
ver. 25.

20 Thus saith the LORD; ^eIf 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;

^f Ps. 81. 34.

21 *then* may also ^fmy 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.

15. "In those days." See ch. xxiii. 5, 6, with which the reader should carefully compare this passage. Observe that the city is now called by the same name as her Saviour. In the same way does the Name of Christ belong to His Church on account of His close union with her. See Eph. i. 22, 23.

17. "David shall never want a man." The promise made to David of an eternal monarchy was still true in spite of the captivity of Jehoniah, and the proximate downfall of Zedekiah, and in spite of the prophet's words (ch. xxii. 30.). The riddle was one not solved till shepherds in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem heard the heavenly declaration (St. Luke ii. 11.).

18. "neither shall the priests." In a similar way the Levitical priesthood and the perpetuity of it were only a symbol which a future generation should realize in Christ. See the Epistle to the Hebrews throughout.

19—26. The eternal character of the royalty and of the priesthood declared on a solemn promise by the Lord.

20. "If ye can break." The argument is similar to that which the prophet employed in ch. xxxi. 35. The unvarying law which God observes with regard to day and night, summer and winter, is a pledge that He will keep His other promises. See Ezek. xxxiv. 24, &c.

JEREMIAH, XXXIV.

22 As ^gthe host of heaven cannot 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.

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CHRIST
cir. 590.

g Gen. 13. 16.
& 15. 5.
& 22. 17.
ch. 31. 37.

23 Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

24 Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, ^hThe two families which the LORD hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them.

h ver. 21, 22.

25 Thus saith the LORD; If ⁱmy covenant be not with day and night, and *if* I have not ^kappointed the ordinances of heaven and earth;

i ver. 20.
Gen. 8. 22.
k Ps. 74. 16,
17. & 104. 19.
ch. 31. 35, 36.

26 ^lthen 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 ^mI will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.

l ch. 31. 37.

m ver. 7. 11.
Ezra 2. 1.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1 *Jeremiah prophesieth the captivity of Zedekiah and the city. 8 The princes and the people having dismissed their bondservants, contrary to the covenant of God, reassume them. 12 Jeremiah, for their disobedience, giveth them and Zedekiah into the hands of their enemies.*

cir. 591.

THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, ^awhen Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and ^ball the kingdoms of the earth

a 2 Kings 25.
1, &c.
ch. 39. 1.
& 52. 4.
b ch. 1. 15.

22. "As the host of heaven." See Gen. xv. 5. Isa. x. 22. Hos. i. 10.

24. "this people," i. e. Judah, who is sceptical as to God's power of restoring those whom He has rejected. The people seem to deny the possibility of their having any further existence as a nation.

25. "Thus saith the Lord." The same reply as in ver. 20.

26. "then will I cast away." No greater names in Jewish history occur than those of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. The "people" cannot be earnest in supposing that the promises made to them by God are likely to fail.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1—7. A further prophecy of the captivity of Zedekiah. This dates from the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem in the tenth year of Zedekiah, as is evident partly from the title in ver. 1, and partly from the manner in which the prophet addresses the king.

1. "all his army," &c. Jeremiah piles up all these words so as to

Before
CHRIST
cir. 591.

² 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, ^c I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and ^d he shall burn it with fire:

^e ch. 32. 4. 3 and ^e 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 ³ he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon.

³ Heb. his mouth shall speak to thy mouth. 4 Yet hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah; Thus saith the LORD of thee, Thou shalt not die by the sword:

^f See 2 Chron. 16. 14. & 21. 19. 5 *but* thou shalt die in peace: and with ^f the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, ^g so shall they burn *odours* for thee; and ^h they will lament thee, *saying*, Ah lord! for I have pronounced the word, saith the LORD.

^g Dan. 2. 46. 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:

give the reader some notion of the huge and motley character of the troops brought by the Babylonian monarch.

2. "Go and speak." We must suppose that Jeremiah was not as yet in close confinement, but under the same restraint as that described in ch. xxxiii. 1. The reader should notice that Jeremiah constantly harps upon two strings: (1) That Zedekiah should surrender at once. (2) That he should be a faithful subject to Nebuchadnezzar.

4. "by the sword." Zedekiah appears to have been a man of a cowardly disposition. The advice that he here receives is in every way adapted to his temper. He need not fight. He has only to surrender, and then as a vassal of Babylon he will be honoured with a magnificent funeral. As Zedekiah did not fulfil the conditions which God imposed by means of Jeremiah, we need not be surprised at the terrible fate of the captive king (ch. lii. 10, 11.).

6. "Then Jeremiah." Observe the pains taken by the prophet to let the reader understand when this was uttered. As yet the detached forts near Jerusalem, Lachish and Azekah, had not been taken. This shews that these verses are of an earlier date than ch. xxxii., and much more early than ch. xxxiii.

for these defenced cities remained of the cities of Judah.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 591.

8 ¶ *This is the word that came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which were at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty unto them;*

¹ 2 Kings 18.
13. & 19. 8.
² Chr. 11. 5, 9.
cir. 591.

9 ¹ that every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, *being* an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; ^m that none should serve himself of them, *to wit*, of a Jew his brother.

^k Ex. 21. 2.
Lev. 25. 10.
ver. 14.
^l Neh. 5. 11.

^m Lev. 25.
39,—46.

10 Now when all the princes, and all the people, which had entered into the covenant, heard that every one should let his manservant, and every one his maidservant, go free, that none should serve themselves of them any more, then they obeyed, and let *them* go.

11 But ⁿ afterward they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids.

cir. 590.
ⁿ See ver. 21.
ch. 37. 5.

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

8—22. An account of a politic move of Zedekiah's during the early period of the siege. The move is abandoned, and Jeremiah again, under different circumstances, foretells the capture of Jerusalem and Zedekiah.

8. "after that the king had made a covenant." For the Hebrew laws of slavery, see Exod. xxi. 1—6. Deut. xv. 12: it is highly probable that during the lawless reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah they had fallen into disuse. With a view of increasing the number of volunteers, who could be mustered in the defence of Jerusalem during the first siege, though ostensibly intending to keep the law of slavery, Zedekiah and the nobles allowed the slaves to be released. No sooner, however, was the siege of Jerusalem raised on account of the demonstration made by Pharaoh than Zedekiah and the nobles recalled the edict of liberation. To this they were no doubt led by the utterances of the false prophets.

"proclaim liberty." See Lev. xxv. 10. Isa. lxi. 1. As the slaves had to be set at liberty after six years' servitude it is needless to inquire whether this was a sabbatical year.

9. "serve himself of them." See ch. xxv. 14.

11. "they turned," i. e. they made the slaves come back to them. Notice that this step is not ascribed to Zedekiah. It was probably sanctioned by him at the instigation of the nobles, whose creature he was.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 591.

I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondmen, saying,

^o Ex. 21. 2.
& 23. 10.
Deut. 15. 12.
² Or, *hath sold himself.*

14 At the end of ^o seven years let ye go every man his brother an Hebrew, which ² 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.

³ Heb. *today.*

15 And ye were ³ now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had ^p made a covenant before me ^q in the house ⁴ which is called by my name:

^p So 2 Kings 23. 3.
Neh. 10. 29.
^q ch. 7. 10.
⁴ Heb. *whereupon my name is called.*

16 but ye turned and ^r 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.

^r Ex. 20. 7.
Lev. 19. 12.

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: ^s behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the LORD, ^t to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you ⁵ to be ^u removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.

^s Matt. 7. 2.
Gal. 6. 7.
Jam. 2. 13.
^t ch. 32. 24, 36.

⁵ Heb. *for a removing.*

^u Deut. 28. 25, 64.
ch. 29. 18.

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 ^x they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof,

^x See Gen. 15. 10, 17.

19 the princes of Judah, and the princes of Jeru-

13. "the house of bondmen," as in Deut. xv. 15, reminding the nobles of what their lot once had been in Egypt.

14. "At the end of seven years." The Hebrew idiom for "the sixth year," as is plain from the latter part of the verse.

15. "turned." See ver. 11.

17. "I proclaim a liberty for you," used in an ironical sense. Israel was, properly speaking, the slave or servant of Jehovah. He now sets them free to do as they please. How free were they when His slaves, what slaves when freed by Him!

18. "when they cut the calf." He refers to an ancient custom noticed in Gen. xv. 10. Some such ceremony had been performed by Zedekiah in the Temple, the "cutting" of the calf being equivalent to what we should call "making" a treaty.

19. "the princes," &c. Notice again that the king is not mentioned.

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saalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf ;

Before
CHRIST
cir. 590.

20 I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life : and their ^y dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth.

^y ch. 7. 33.
& 16. 4.
& 19. 7.

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 king of Babylon's army, ^z which are gone up from you.

^z See chap.
37. 5, 11.

22 ^a Behold, I will command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return to this city ; and they shall fight against it, ^b and take it, and burn it with fire : and ^c I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant.

^a ch. 37. 8, 10.

^b ch. 38. 3.
& 39. 1, 2, 8.
& 52. 7, 13.
^c ch. 9. 11.
& 44. 2, 6.

CHAPTER XXXV.

¹ *By the obedience of the Rechabites.* ¹² *Jeremiah condemneth the disobedience of the Jews.* ¹⁸ *God blesseth the Rechabites for their obedience.*

THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying,

cir. 607.

2 Go unto the house of the ^a Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of ^b the chambers, and give them wine to drink.

^a 2 Kin. 10. 15.
1 Chr. 2. 55.

^b 1 Kin. 6. 5.

21. "which are gone up from you." It appears from comparing this with ch. xxxvii. 6—10, that the siege had only been raised for a short time. Perhaps some of the prophets had given out that some miracle had occurred or might be anticipated (ch. xxi. 2.).

CHAPTER XXXV.

A symbolical lesson on obedience and its reward.

1—11. The firmness of the Rechabites to their ancestor's charge.

2. "the Rechabites." This remarkable "house" or family was descended from Hobab, brother-in-law of Moses, being of the Kenite tribe. According to Num. x. 29—32, the Kenites joined the Israelites in the wilderness, and migrated with them into Palestine. Here they settled (Judges i. 16 ; iv. 11.), escaping in the massacre of the Amalekites,

Before
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cir. 607.

3 Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habaziniyah, 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* above the chamber of

^c 2 Kin. 12. 9. Maaseiah the son of Shallum, ^c the keeper of the
& 25. 18. ² door :

1 Chron. 9. 18, 19.

² Heb. *threshold*,
or, *vessel*.

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
^d 2 Kin. 10. 15. ^d Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, *neither* ye, nor your sons for ever :

^e Ex. 20. 12.
Eph. 6. 2, 3.

7 neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have *any*: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; ^e that ye may live many days in the land where ye *be* strangers.

8 Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters ;

with whom they were closely connected (1 Sam. xv. 6.). They appear to have been supporters of the Northern kingdom (2 Kings x. 15.), but probably were opposed to the worship of Baal. Jonadab, or more fully Jehonadab, was evidently a man of well-known character in the days of Jehu. Probably with a view of checking his tribe from joining in the luxury which was gradually bringing the kingdom of Israel to ruin, he ordered them to continue their early nomad life, and to abstain from strong drink. It must have been nearly three hundred years since Jonadab had given this command. This chapter shews us how faithfully the Rechabites had adhered to it. Jeremiah contrasts their obedience with the disobedience of the Israelites.

3. "Jaazaniah." The name of this chief shews that the Rechabites were worshippers of Jehovah.

4. "into the chamber." It is not clear what these chambers were. They certainly were not the chambers which surrounded the Temple of Solomon on three sides (1 Kings vi. 5—10.).

"Hanan . . a man of God." Some prophet otherwise unknown to us. By his "sons" are meant his disciples.

"keeper of the door." See 1 Chron. ix. 19. Ch. lii. 24.

7. "in the land . . . strangers." Their ordinary dwelling-place was in the south of Judah (Judges i. 16.). It is unknown what induced them to migrate northwards in the time of Jehu.

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9 nor to build houses for us to dwell in : neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed :

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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 fear of the army of the Syrians : so 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 ^freceive instruction to hearken to my words ? saith the LORD. f ch. 22. 30.

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 : ^g notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, ^h rising early and speaking ; ^h but ye hearkened not unto me. g 2 Chr. 36. 15. h ch. 7. 19. & 25. 3.

15 ⁱ I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending *them*, saying, ^k Return ye now every man from his evil i ch. 7. 25. & 25. 4. k ch. 18. 11. & 25. 5, 6.

11. "Chaldeans . . . Syrians." It appears that after the battle of Carchemish, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar pursued his victorious march to Jerusalem, that Jehoiakim submitted for three years, that he then rebelled, and that an army, consisting of Chaldees, Syrians, and others, was sent against him. See 2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2, and notes. This occasioned the temporary settlement of the Rechabites in Jerusalem.

12—19. The contrast between the obedience of the Rechabites and the disobedience of Judah.

13. "Go and tell," &c. The ceremony just described must have been witnessed by many persons. Jeremiah is now ordered to go outside into the court of the Temple, and apply the lesson to the people.

"instruction." See ch. ii. 30.

14. "are performed unto this day." For nearly three hundred years they had obeyed their father's commandment.

15. "my servants the prophets." The Rechabites had no need of prophets to remind them of their duty. Affection to their ancestor kept them in a state of obedience.

"Return ye." A summary of the various warnings uttered by the prophets.

B fore
CHRIST
cir. 607.

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 :

¹ Prov. 1. 24.
Isai. 65. 12,
& 66. 4.
ch. 7. 13.

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 : ¹ because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard ; and I have called unto them, but they 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 all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you :

² Heb. *There shall not a man be cut off from Jonadab the son of Rechab to stand, &c.*
^m ch. 15. 19.

19 therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel ; ² Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to ^m stand before me for ever.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

¹ Jeremiah causeth Baruch to write his prophecy, 5 and publickly to read it. 11 The princes, having intelligence thereof by Michaiah, send

17. "all the evil that I have pronounced." Beginning at Micah iii. 12, and finishing with the prophecy in the next chapter, which was written shortly before this occurrence.

19. "to stand before me." See ch. vii. 10. The Rechabites shall continue servants of Jehovah. A Rechabite took part in the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. iii. 14.), which is the last notice of the family which is to be found in the Scriptures.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Jeremiah's great prophecy of the overthrow of Jerusalem.

1—8. The command to Jeremiah to write out his prophecies. Being unable himself to appear in the Temple, his friend Baruch goes there and reads the prophecy.

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Jehudi to fetch the roll, and read it. 19 They will Baruch to hide himself and Jeremiah. 20 The king Jehoiakim, being certified thereof, heareth part of it, and burneth the roll. 27 Jeremiah denounceth his judgment. 32 Baruch writeth a new copy.

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AND it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, *that* this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 Take thee a ^a roll of a book, and ^b write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against ^c all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of ^d Josiah, even unto this day.

^a Isai. 8. 1.
Ezek. 2. 9.
Zech. 5. 1.
^b ch. 30. 2.
^c ch. 25. 15,
&c.

^d ch. 25. 3.

3 ^e It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may ^f return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

^e ver. 7.
ch. 26. 3.

^f ch. 18. 8.
Jonah 3. 8.

4 Then Jeremiah ^g called Baruch the son of Neriah: and ^h 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.

^g ch. 32. 12.

^h See chap. 45. 1.

5 And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, *I am* shut up; I cannot 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 ⁱ the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities.

ⁱ Lev. 16. 29.
& 23. 27,—
32.
Acts 27. 9.

7 ^k It may be ² they will present 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.

^k ver. 3.
² Heb. *their supplication shall fall.*

8 And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.

2. "all the words," &c. This refers to a first edition of the first book of Jeremiah (comp. ver. 32.).

5. "I am shut up," i. e. "I am prevented from going," not "I am in prison." See 1 Sam. xxi. 7.

6. "the fasting day." It appears that the king or priest had a right to proclaim a fast day whenever it appeared necessary. This fast was most probably instituted in commemoration of the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (see ver. 9.). Jeremiah refers to it as an existing institution.

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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 people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem.

² Or, *door*.
¹ ch. 26. 10.

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 scribe, in the higher court, at the ²¹entry 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 thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read 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.

9—13. The prophecy is read to the people.

10. "**Gemariah**," one of Jeremiah's friends, and brother to Ahikam (ch. xxvi. 24.), who had already served the prophet so friendly a turn.

"**the higher court.**" The inner court, where it appears the scribe's chamber was. See ch. vii. 2.

12. "**the scribe's chamber.**" It is not clear what was the object of the meeting in the palace. From the fact that Gemariah was present, and that the princes were also sitting in council, it is probable that the subject under discussion was the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar. See ver. 29.

11. "**Michaiah . . . all the words.**" He gave an abstract of the threatening nature of Jeremiah's prophecy.

15. "**Sit down.**" Mark the respectful treatment. It was not till the

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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 mouth, and I wrote *them* with ink in the book.

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 ^m the winterhouse in the ninth month: and *there was a fire* on the hearth burning before him. ^m See Amos 3. 15.

23 And it came to pass, *that* when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and

time of Zedekiah that the princes turned against the prophets. See ch. xxvi. 7.

16. "they were afraid," &c. i. e. they exchanged terrified looks with each other.

"We will surely tell the king." Possibly the words of Jeremiah had some bearing upon the question which had been under discussion in the council.

17. "How didst thou write." They were perhaps struck at the foresight into political matters which they observed in the book.

19—26. The roll is read to king Jehoiakim.

19. "Go, hide thee." See note on ver. 15.

20. "they laid up the roll." Suspecting the fate with which the book actually met (ver. 23.) they gave the roll to some one to keep.

21. "which stood beside the king." The ordinary position of courtiers.

22. "winterhouse." It was the cold and rainy season in Palestine, so that the king would naturally be in this portion of the house. We read of the summer chamber, Judg. iii. 20.

23. "three or four leaves." Sections, or columns. Hebrew rolls are written on one side only, and the columns are written parallel to each other from right to left.

"with the penknife." The king took the knife that the scribe used

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cast *it* into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that *was* on the hearth.

ⁿ 2 Kin. 22. 11.
Isai. 36. 22.
& 37. 1.

24 Yet they were not afraid, nor ⁿrent their garments, *neither* the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

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.

² Or, of
the king.

26 But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son ² 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.

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27 Then the word of the LORD 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?

to mend his reeds and cut the parchment, which was too stout for him to tear.

25. "made intercession." The princes appear to have been well aware that there was ample need for a reformation. See 2 Kings xxii. 11.

26. "the Lord hid them," i. e. guided them into a place of hiding.

27—32. The prophecy is rewritten, and additional material is added to it.

28. "Take thee again another roll." The king had shewed his contempt for the Word of God, but his contempt recoiled on his own head. Persons will never be gainers by cutting out of God's word what they do not like. The Bible must be taken as a whole, just as it is, or not at all.

29. "The king of Babylon." A highly important notice of the contents of the lost book. See Introduction.

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30 Therefore thus saith the LORD of Jehoiakim king of Judah; ° He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be ^{Before CHRIST} ^{cir. 605.} ^{° ch. 22. 30.} ^{p ch. 22. 19.} cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost.

31 And I will ² 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. ^{2 Heb. visit upon, ch. 23. 34.}

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 ³ like words. ^{3 Heb. as they.}

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1 *The Egyptians having raised the siege of the Chaldeans, king Zedekiah sendeth to Jeremiah to pray for the people. 6 Jeremiah prophesieth the Chaldeans' certain return and victory. 11 He is taken for a fugitive, beaten, and put in prison. 16 He assureth Zedekiah of the captivity. 18 Intreating for his liberty, he obtaineth some favour.*

AND king ^a Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned ^{cir. 599.} ^{a 2 Kin. 24. 17.} ^{2 Chr. 36. 10.} ^{ch. 22. 24.} instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom

30. "He shall have none to sit." This prophecy was recast in a poetical form by Jeremiah in his address to Zedekiah (ch. xxii. 18, 19.). He was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin or Coniah, but his reign was of such short duration that it cannot be counted as a reign (2 Kings xxiv. 8—16.).

31. "the inhabitants of Jerusalem." That their guilt was considerable appears from ver. 31, where the tacit consent of the people to the iniquity of prophet and priests is justly condemned.

32. "many like words," or, about as many more. The roll here described is the second edition of Jeremiah's prophecy (chs. i.—xxiv. of our present copies).

Book III. chs. xxxvii.—xlv. The history of the fall of Jerusalem, accompanied by a short prophetic appendix respecting Baruch, Jeremiah's fellow-sufferer and principal friend.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Two missions sent to Jeremiah by Zedekiah.

1. "And king Zedekiah." It is not uncommon for a book to begin with "And," as the reader will see from Lev. i. 1. Num. i. 1. It

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Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah.

^b 2 Chron. 36.
12, 14.

2 ^b But neither he, nor his servants, nor the people of the land, did hearken unto the words of the LORD, which he spake ² by the prophet Jeremiah.

² Heb. *by the hand of the prophet.*

3 And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah and ^c Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Pray now unto the LORD our God for us.

^c ch. 21. 1, 2.
& 21. 25.
& 52. 24.
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4 Now Jeremiah came in and went out among the people: for they had not put him into prison.

^d See 2 Kings
24. 7.
Ezek. 17. 15.
^e ver. 11.
ch. 34. 21.

5 Then ^d Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt: ^e 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,

^f ch. 21. 2.

7 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, ^f that sent you unto me to enquire of me; Behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land.

^g ch. 34. 22.

8 ^g And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire.

^h Heb. *souls.*

9 Thus saith the LORD; Deceive not ^h yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart.

appears that at this time Zedekiah had not become hostile to the prophet. He simply neglected him.

2. "people of the land." See ch. i. 18.

3. "Jehucal." This man afterwards became a deadly enemy of Jeremiah. See ch. xxxviii. 1—4.

"Pray now unto the Lord." This ancient part of the office of the prophet had not yet ceased to exist (Gen. xx. 7.). This mission is distinct from that which is recorded (ch. xxi. 1.).

5. "Then Pharaoh's army." According to Josephus, Pharaoh suffered a serious defeat. See Ezek. xvii. 15—21.

6—10. The answer of God to Zedekiah's mission.

7. "Thus shall ye say." The answer is far from encouraging, less so than in ch. xxi. 4—7.

9. "Deceive not yourselves." It is reasonable to suppose that the false prophets had been making considerable efforts to induce the defenders of Jerusalem to make an attack upon the retreating Babylonians. See ch. xxix. 8.

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10 ^h For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained *but* ² wounded men among them, *yet* should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire.

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^h ch. 21. 4, 5.
² Heb. thrust
through.

11 ¶ ¹ And it came to pass, that when the army of the Chaldeans was ³ broken up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army,

¹ ver. 5.

³ Heb. made
to ascend.

12 then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin, ⁴ to separate himself thence in the midst of the people.

⁴ Or, to slip
away from
thence in
the midst of
the people.

13 And when he was in the gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward *was* there, whose name *was* Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans.

14 Then said Jeremiah, *It is* ⁵ false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans. But he hearkened not to him: so Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes.

⁵ Heb.
falschood,
or, a lie.

15 Wherefore the princes were wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, ^k and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe: for they had made that the prison.

^k ch. 38. 26.

10. "wounded men." So sure is Jeremiah of the ultimate success of the Babylonians that he declares that even a victory gained by Judah would be of no avail. The wounded Babylonians would arise and take the city.

11—15. Jeremiah arrested as a deserter.

12. "to separate himself thence." Lit. "to receive a portion from "thence." Meaning that he wished to obtain food or money to which he had a right from having his residence at Anathoth in Benjamin. That the prophet was doing this in no underhand way is evident from the words "in the midst of the people."

13. "a captain of the ward," i. e. of the guard.

"Thou fallest away." See ch. xxi. 9.

14. "But he hearkened not." No doubt the prophecies of Jeremiah during the reign of Jehoiakim had made him a suspected person. He seems to have been placed under surveillance more or less since the early years of Jehoiakim's reign. See chs. xxvi. 21, 24; xxxvi. 5.

15. "the princes were wroth." The reader must remember that sixteen years had elapsed since the events described in ch. xxxvi., and that the whole character of the princes had changed. Many of the best of them no doubt had been taken to Babylon.

"Jonathan the scribe." Successor to Gemariah (ch. xxxvi. 10.).

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¹ ch. 38. 6.

² Or, cells.
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16 ¶ When Jeremiah was entered into ¹the dungeon, and into the ²cabins, and 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 against thy servants, or against this people, that ye have put me in prison ?

19 Where *are* now your prophets which prophesied unto you, saying, The king of Babylon shall not come against you, nor against this land ?

³ Heb. *let my supplication fall.*

20 Therefore hear now, I pray thee, O my lord the king : ³let 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.

^m ch. 32. 2.
& 38. 13, 28.

ⁿ ch. 38. 9.
& 52. 6.

21 Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah ^minto the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread out of the bakers' street, ⁿuntil all the bread in the city were spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

whose house was used as a prison. The terrible squalor of the place is to be inferred from Jeremiah's language (ver. 20.).

16—21. Second mission to Jeremiah. Private interview with the king.

16. "dungeon . . . cabins." Two words used to imply the one idea of a subterranean prison. If it was like the place mentioned (ch. xxxviii. 6.) it must have been a sort of cess-pool.

17. "Is there any word." The word of God is unchangeable. The only answer that Zedekiah gets is that which he has already received (chs. xxxii. 4 ; xxxiv. 3.).

18. "What have I offended." Jeremiah asks for lenient treatment on the ground that (1) He has not brought in the invading army ; (2) the false prophets have not been punished as the law of God required (ch. xxvi. 16.).

21. "the court of the prison." Not the prison in the scribe's house, but in the palace (ch. xxxii. 2.). The reader should bear in mind that chs. xxx.—xxxiii. were written from this place.

¹ *Jeremiah, by a false suggestion, is put into the dungeon of Malchiah. 7 Ebed-melech, by suit, getteth him some enlargement. 14 Upon secret conference he counselleth the king by yielding to save his life. 24 By the king's instructions he concealeth the conference from the princes.*

THEN Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashur, and ^a Jucal the son of ^a ch. 37. 3. Shelemiah, and ^b Pashur the son of Malchiah, ^c heard ^b ch. 21. 1. ^c ch. 21. 8. the words that Jeremiah had spoken unto all the people, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD, ^d He that remaineth in ^d ch. 21. 9. this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, 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.

3 Thus saith the LORD, ^e This city shall surely be ^e ch. 21. 10. given into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, & ^{32.} 3. which shall take it.

4 Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, ^f let this man be put to death: for ^f See chap. 26. 11. 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 ² welfare of this people, but the ² Heb. *peace.* hurt.

5 Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he *is* in your hand: for the king *is* not *he that can do any thing against you.*

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Further conspiracy against Jeremiah. His martyrdom and deliverance by the black slave. Second private interview with the king.

1. "heard the words . . . spoken unto all the people." Referring to ch. xxi. 8, but the words had no doubt been frequently repeated by the prophet. Of these four princes Jucal, or Jehucal, and Pashur, son of Malchiah, alone are known. See chs. xxi. 1; xxxvii. 3.

2. "He that remaineth," &c. The words are nearly the same as ch. xxi. 9, 10.

4. "he weakeneth the hands." No doubt such language as ch. xxix. 7 was remembered against Jeremiah. But there is a certain amount of truth in the remark of the princes; for the prophecies of Jeremiah must have been far from inspiring.

5. "Behold, he is in your hand." The king is unable through his

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ε ch. 37. 21.

² Or, of
the king.

η ch. 33. 16.

³ Heb. he
will die.

⁴ Heb. in
thine hand.

6 ^ε Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son ^² of Hammelech, that *was* in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon *there was* no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire.

7 ^η Now when Ebed-melech the 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 dungeon; and ^³ he is like to die for 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 ^⁴ 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

moral cowardice to say one word in favour of Jeremiah, or to remind the princes that he did not prophesy in his own name.

6. "dungeon." See ch. xxxvii. 16. This place however did not belong to a private house, but to the portion of the palace occupied by the guard.

7—13. Deliverance of Jeremiah by the Ethiopian slave.

7. "Ebed-melech." Not a proper name, but simply a title, "king's slave." He is the first African who appears to have believed in Jehovah. See ch. xxxix. 15—18. Comp. Acts viii. 26—40.

9. "My lord the king." The forwardness of the slave is surprising. Slaves, however, had considerable influence with their masters (Acts viii. 27.), and the faith of this man enabled him to see that Jeremiah was what he professed to be. The speech of the eunuch is hardly intelligible to us on account of the excited feelings under which he uttered it. Zedekiah, however, understood it.

10. "thirty men." To guard against any sudden collision with the princes or their servants.

Jeremiah, Put now *these* old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so.

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13 ¹So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained ^kin the court of the prison.

¹ ver. 6.

^k ch. 37. 21.

14 ¶ Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took Jeremiah the prophet unto him into the ²third 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.

² Or,
principal.

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, ¹that made us this soul, I will not put thee to death, neither will I give thee into the hand of these men that seek thy life.

¹ Isai. 57. 16.

17 Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; If thou wilt assuredly ^mgo forth ⁿunto 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 thine house:

^m ² Kings 24.
12.
ⁿ ch. 39. 3.

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 ^othou shalt not escape out of their hand.

^o ch. 32. 4.
& 34. 3.
ver. 23.

12. "Put these . . . thine armholes." Notice the kind consideration of the negro. See Isa. lvi. 3—5.

14—28. Jeremiah's second private interview with the king.

14. "the third entry." Of course it is impossible to ascertain the position of this, as the path leading from the palace to the Temple is unknown. No doubt it was some secret passage.

15. "wilt thou not hearken." He means that Zedekiah will not believe him.

16. "that made us this soul." A very peculiar oath. He means by the God Who made us to be the living creatures we are (Gen. ii. 7. Comp. ch. xvi. 14, 15.).

17. "If thou wilt go forth." It appears as if the siege had been renewed during the time hinted at (ch. xxxvii. 21.).

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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 ^p mock me.

^p1 Sam. 31. 4.

20 But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the LORD, which I speak unto 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 shewed me:

² Heb. *Men of thy peace.*

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, ²Thy friends have set thee on, and have prevailed against thee: thy feet are sunk in the mire, and they are turned away back.

^q ch. 33. 6.
& 41. 10.
^r ver. 18.

23 So they shall bring out all thy wives and ^q thy children to the Chaldeans: and ^r thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon: and ³ thou shalt cause this city to be burned with fire.

³ Heb. *thou shalt burn, &c.*

24 Then said Zedekiah unto 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:

^s ch. 37. 20.

26 then thou shalt say unto them, ^s I presented my supplication before the king, that he would not

19. "I am afraid." The deserters would taunt him with his half-hearted policy. Why did he not surrender before and save from the pains of famine and sword multitudes of his subjects?

22. "behold, all the women." This is the alternative. If Zedekiah remains in Jerusalem, both he and his wives will be taken prisoners, and they will mock him for allowing the princes to force him into a policy of resistance.

"Thy friends," probably the fragment of some popular song. The meaning is, "your friends have led you into a quagmire, have seen you stick fast, and have gone off laughing at you."

23. "thou shalt cause." Zedekiah simply forces Nebuchadnezzar to burn the town.

24. "these words," i. e. this conversation.

25. "if the princes." Of course they had no right to ask any such questions, but Zedekiah knew the true character of his flatterers.

26. "I presented my supplication." Observe that this is literally

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cause me to return ^t to Jonathan's house, to die there. Before
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27 Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, and ^t asked him: and he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded. So ² they left ² off speaking with him; for the matter was not perceived. ^t ch. 37. 15.
² Heb. they were silent from him.

28 So ^u Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken: and he was *there* when Jerusalem was taken. ^u ch. 37. 21.
& 33. 14.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

1 Jerusalem is taken. 4 Zedekiah is made blind, and sent to Babylon. 8 The city ruined, 9 the people captivated. 11 Nebuchadrezzar's charge for the good usage of Jeremiah. 15 God's promise to Ebed-melech.

IN the ^a ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and they besieged it. 590.
^a 2 Kings 25.
1.—4.
ch. 52. 4,—7.

2 *And* in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth *day* of the month, the city was broken up. 588.

3 ^b And all the princes of the king of Babylon 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. ^b ch. 38. 17.

4 ^c And it came to pass, *that* when Zedekiah the king of Judah saw them, and all the men of war, ^c 2 Kings 25.
4, &c.
ch. 52. 7, &c.

true, though it does not convey to the princes a correct idea of the whole transaction.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Account of the capture of Jerusalem and Jeremiah's fate.

1. "In the ninth year." The student should read 2 Kings xxv. 1—12, and compare it with this chapter.

3. "all the princes." The names are partly surnames and partly names of offices.

"Rab-saris." Chief of the eunuchs, or chamberlain.

"Rab-mag." Perhaps chief of the magi. "Nergal-Sharezer" the Rab-mag was the most distinguished of these in after times. See note on ch. xxvii. 7.

4. "Zedekiah . . . saw them." He found that they had taken the

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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 ^d overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to ^e Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he ² gave judgment upon him.

^d ch. 32. 4. &
33. 18, 23.

^e 2 Kin. 23. 33.

² Heb. *spoke with him judgments,* ch. 4. 12.

6 Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah.

^f Ezek. 12. 13, compared with ch. 32. 4.

³ Heb. *with two brasen chains, or, fetters.*

² 2 Kin. 25. 9. ch. 38. 18. & 52. 13.

^h 2 Kings 25. 11, &c. ch. 12. 15, &c.

⁴ Or, *chief marshal.*

⁵ Heb. *chief of the executioners, or, slaughtermen:* and so ver. 10, 11, &c. *So* Gen. 37. 36.

⁶ Heb. *in that day.*

7 Moreover ^f he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him ³ with chains, to carry him to Babylon.

8 ^g And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem.

9 ^h Then Nebuzar-adan the ⁴ ⁵ captain 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 ⁶ at the same time.

11 ¶ Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah ⁷ to Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard, saying,

city, and escaped by some secret passage (see Isa. xxii. 11.). His object was to gain the other side of Jordan. For a poetical account of his capture, see Lam: iv. 20.

6. "Riblah." The head-quarters of Nebuchadnezzar, admirably adapted for such a purpose, the roads to Babylon, Egypt, Phœnicia, and North Syria, being all convergent to points close by.

7. "he put out Zedekiah's eyes." See ch. xxxiv. 3. Ezek. xii. 13.

9. "Then Nebuzar-adan." Four weeks had elapsed since the capture of Jerusalem (see 2 Kings xxv. 8.). This man seems to have been superior to the officers mentioned in ver. 3.

11. "gave charge." Jeremiah had been in the court of the prison (ch. xxxviii. 28.) for the space of a month. He was now relieved,

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12 Take him, and ²look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee.

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² H. b. set
thine eyes
upon him.

13 So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard sent, and Nebushasban, Rab-saris, and Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, and all the king of Babylon's princes;

14 even they sent, ⁱand took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and committed him ^kunto Gedaliah the son of ¹Ahikam the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people.

ⁱ ch. 38. 28.

^k ch. 40. 5.

¹ ch. 26. 24.

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 ^mEbed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, ⁿI will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and they shall be *accomplished* in that day before thee.

^m ch. 38. 7, 12.

ⁿ Dan. 9. 12.

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 ^othy life shall be for a prey unto thee: ^pbecause thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD.

^o ch. 21. 9.

& 43. 5.

^p 1 Chr. 5. 20.

Ps. 37. 40.

representations having been made to Nebuchadnezzar of the policy which he had always attempted to persuade Zedekiah to adopt.

14. "Gedaliah," who, being related to Gemariah the scribe, was no doubt a person of high position.

"among the people." He was no longer under any restraint.

15—18. Prophecy to the black slave.

16. "Go and speak." Jeremiah must have considered it strange to have to deliver such a promise to a Gentile; he is taught however that God is no respecter of persons (Acts x. 34.). This dates from after his release at Ebed-melech's intercession (ch. xxxviii. 12, 13.).

"before thee." The slave was unnerved by the prospect of the awful acts of bloodshed, which he knew would attend the capture of Jerusalem. He is here told that he shall see it, but that he shall not be hurt.

18. "a prey unto thee." See ch. xxi. 9.

1 *Jeremiah, being set free by Nebuzar-adan, goeth to Gedaliah. 7 The dispersed Jews repair unto him. 13 Johanan revealing Ishmael's conspiracy is not believed.*

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a ch. 39. 14.

² Or,
manicles.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, ^a after that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him being bound in ² chains among all that were carried away captive of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon.

b ch. 50. 7.

2 And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and ^b said unto him, The LORD thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place.

c Deut. 29.
24. 25.
Dan. 9. 11.

3 Now the LORD hath brought *it*, and done according as he hath said: ^c because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you.

³ Or, are
upon thine hand.

d ch. 39. 12.

⁴ Heb. *I will set mine eye upon thee.*

e Gen. 20. 15.

4 And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which ³ *were* upon thine hand. ^d If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come; and ⁴ I will look well unto thee: but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, ^e 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 said*,

CHAPTER XL.

Further account of Jeremiah. Jerusalem under a native governor.

1—7. Jeremiah is led to Ramah and liberated by Nebuzar-adan.

1. "The word that came." This appears to point to the unity of this and the four following chapters. They refer to what occurred after the fall of Jerusalem, and are arranged in chronological order.

"bound in chains." It seems that the people (ch. xxxix. 14.) remained in Jerusalem till Nebuchadnezzar sent directions as to what was to be done with the city, then the people were linked together by chains into batches, and amongst them was Jeremiah.

2. "The Lord thy God." Jeremiah gives the sense of Nebuzar-adan's words in his own language. The captain, however, had acquired an accurate notion of the nature of Jeremiah's prophecies.

4. "If it seem good unto thee." The reward of the prophet's faith.

5. "Now while he was not yet," &c. Apparently Jeremiah paused in making a reply, not expecting to have had such an offer made to him.

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Go back also to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, ^fwhom 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.

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^f 2 Kings 25.
22, &c.

6 ^gThen went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to ^hMizpah; and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

^g ch. 39. 14.

^h Judg. 20. 1.

7 ¶ ⁱNow 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 ^kthe poor of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to Babylon;

ⁱ 2 Kings 25.
23, &c.

^k ch. 39. 10.

8 then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, ^leven Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men.

^l ch. 41. 1.

9 And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan sware unto them and to their men, saying, Fear not ²to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.

² Heb.
*to stand
before:* and
so ver. 10.
Deut. 1. 38.

10 As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, to serve the Chaldeans, which will come unto us: but

“governor.” Lit. “a man set over.” See ch. i. 10.

“victuals.” Just a portion and no more.

6. “Mizpah.” The capital of Palestine now that Jerusalem was in ruins, about five miles north-west of Jerusalem.

7. “Now when all,” &c. See 2 Kings xxv. 23.

“in the fields,” i. e. in the open country. These were Jewish soldiers.

8. “Ishmael.” See ch. xli. 1. A man of noble family. The other persons mentioned are otherwise unknown.

9. “Fear not to serve the Chaldeans.” Gedaliah wisely adopted the policy of his friend Jeremiah. He lives at Mizpah.

“to serve the Chaldeans,” i. e. “to stand before them,” or to act as the mediator between the Jews and the Babylonians, who would perhaps visit him.

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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 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,

^m See chap.
41. 10.

² Heb. to
strike thee
in soul?

14 and said unto him, Dost thou certainly know that ^mBaalis the king of the Ammonites hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah ²to 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.

10. "wine, and summer fruits." As the winter was approaching he recommends them to get in their provisions.

12. "all the Jews returned." There appeared a rallying point in Gedaliah to all those who had been dispersed.

14. "Baalis." Only mentioned here. The old hostility between the surrounding tribes and Israel burst out with renewed fury now that the Jews were making an attempt to reorganise their government. Ishmael being of royal descent would no doubt feel jealous of the new governor, so that he was an useful tool in the hands of Baalis.

16. "thou speakest falsely." Gedaliah had some reason for putting great trust in Ishmael.

1 *Ishmael, treacherously killing Gedaliah and others, purposeth with the residue to flee unto the Ammonites.* 11 *Johanan recovereth the captives, and mindeth to flee into Egypt.*

NOW it came to pass in the seventh month, ^a that ^a 2 Kin. 25. 25. ch. 40. 6, 8.

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 ^b 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. ^b 2 Kin. 25. 25.

3 Ishmael also slew all the Jews 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, ^c having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to bring *them* to ^d the house of the LORD. ^c Lev. 19. 27, 28. ^d Dent. 14. 1. ^e Isai. 15. 2. ^f See 1 Sam. 1. 7. 2 Kings 25. 9.

6 And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, ² weeping all along as ² Heb. in going and weeping.

CHAPTER XLI.

The murder of Gedaliah, and the panic that ensued.

1—3. See 2 Kings xxv. 25. The date given at the heading of the chapter, compared with ch. lii. 12, makes the duration of Gedaliah's reign to be two months.

1. "princes of the king," i. e. nobles in the service of the king.

3. "all the Jews." Probably not the Jewish population, but the guard of Jewish soldiers.

4. "no man knew it." This secrecy was due to the fact that a large portion of the people were collecting stores for the winter, and were away from home.

5. "Shechem . . . Shiloh . . . Samaria." The fruits of Josiah's reforms. These men came up from the idolatrous kingdom of Israel, the capital of which was Samaria, to lament the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem. See Jer. xxxi. 18—21.

6. "weeping all along." So as to deceive them by his mock

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.

9 Now the pit wherein Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies of the men, whom he had slain ^{2 3} because of Gedaliah, was it ^e 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, ^f even the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, ^g 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 ^h the Ammonites.

11 But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all ⁱ 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 ^k by the great waters that are in Gibeon.

13 Now it came to pass, that when all the people

sympathy. He seems to have been made desperate by what he had done (ver. 3.). So one sin is committed to hide another.

“Come to Gedaliah.” Which they would naturally be inclined to do.

8. “treasures.” Lit. “secret stores.”

9. “the pit.” See 1 Kings xv. 22. These pits or cisterns were frequently of a considerable size.

“because of Gedaliah.” See margin; by means of Gedaliah, by using his name (ver. 6.).

12. “by the great waters.” A pond, probably the same that is mentioned (2 Sam. ii. 13.).

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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 east about and returned, and went unto Johanan the son of Kareah.

15 But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and 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 ¹Chimham, which is by Beth-lehem, to go to enter ¹2 Sam. 19. 37, 38. 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, ^m whom the king ^m ch. 40. 5. of Babylon made governor in the land.

CHAPTER XLII.

¹ Johanan desireth Jeremiah to enquire of God, promising obedience to his will. ⁷ Jeremiah assureth him of safety in Judea, ¹³ and destruction in Egypt. ¹⁹ He reproveh their hypocrisy, in requiring of the Lord that which they meant not.

THEN all the captains of the forces, ^a and Johanan ^a ch. 40. 8, 13. & 41. 11. the son of Kareah, and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least even unto the greatest, came near,

14. "cast about," i. e. turned round.

16. "whom he had recovered." Apparently several of Ishmael's followers were made prisoners, and the number of men fighting under him had increased since the time specified in ver. 2.

17. "habitation of Chimham." A guest's house, so called after the son of David's friend (2 Sam. xix. 37—40.).

CHAPTER XLII.

Further details relating to the Jews and Jeremiah.

1—6. Mission to Jeremiah.

1. "came near." The murder of the governor appointed by Ne-

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2 and said unto Jeremiah the prophet, ² Let, we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee, and ^b pray for us unto the LORD thy God, *even* for all this remnant; (for we are left *but* ^c a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us:)

^b I Sam. 7. 3.
& 12. 19.
Isai. 37. 4.
Jam. 5. 16.
^c Lev. 26. 22.
^d Ezra 8. 21.

3 that the LORD thy God may shew us ^d the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.

^e I Kin. 22. 14.
^f I Sam. 3. 18.
Acts 20. 20.

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* ^e whatsoever thing the LORD shall answer you, I will declare *it* unto you; I will ^f keep nothing back from you.

^g Gen. 31. 50.

5 Then they said to Jeremiah, ^g The LORD be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not even according to all things for the which the LORD thy God shall send thee to us.

^h Deut. 6. 3.
c. 7. 23.

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; ^h 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;

ⁱ ch. 24. 6.
& 31. 23.
& 32. 7.

10 if ye will still abide in this land, then ⁱ will I

buchadnezzar and the massacre of the Chaldee guards made them anxious. It was not likely that the foreigners would distinguish between the guilty and the innocent in such an affray.

2. "Let, we beseech thee." The hypocritical character of the query soon appears.

7—12. The reply. The king of Babylon will not hurt you.

7. "after ten days." The people were in an excited state, so that an answer was not given to them at once. When they were calm God would let them know what to do (comp. Ezek. iii. 15, 16.).

10. "then will I build you." The second part of Jeremiah's commission (ch. i. 10.) was now beginning. Hitherto he had only been pulling down and destroying.

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build you, and not pull *you* down, and I will plant you, and not pluck *you* up: for I ^krepent me of the evil that I have done unto you.

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^kDeut. 32. 36.
ch. 18. 8.

11 Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the LORD: ^lfor I *am* with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand.

^lIsai. 43. 5.
Rom. 8. 31.

12 And ^mI will shew mercies unto you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land.

^mPs. 106. 45,
46.

13 But if ⁿye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of the LORD your God,

ⁿch. 44. 16.

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 ^owholly set ^pyour faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there;

^oDeut. 17. 16.
ch. 44. 12,
13, 14.

^pLuke 9. 51.

16 then it shall come to pass, *that* the sword, ^qwhich ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, ²shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there ye shall die.

^qEzek. 11. 8.

²Heb.
*shall cleave
after you.*

17 ³So shall it be with all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there; they shall die ^rby the sword, by the famine, and by the

³Heb. *So
shall all the
men be.*

^rch. 24. 10.
ver. 22.

11. "Be not afraid." The fact that they were now at Bethlehem, the city of David, should have inspired them with courage.

12. "cause you to return." Most probably it means, "make you dwell." The words "dwell" and "return" are very nearly the same in Hebrew.

13—22. It is no use to think of returning to Egypt, you will be bitterly disappointed.

14. "we will go into Egypt." Jeremiah knew under what circumstances the people were to return into Egypt (Deut. xxviii. 68.).

"sound of the trumpet." See ch. iv. 5. They were wrong. See chs. xliii. 10; xlvi. 24—26.

15. "If ye wholly set your faces," i. e. make up your minds. See 2 Kings xii. 17.

17. "So shall it be." Egypt will be to them what Jerusalem was during the long siege. It was in vain to hope to escape from Jehovah by fleeing into Egypt. He was the Lord of all the earth (comp. ver. 18.).

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pestilence: and ^anone of them shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them.

^s See ch. 44.
14, 28.

18 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; As mine anger and my fury hath been ^tpoured forth upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt: and ^uye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more.

^t ch. 7. 20.

^u ch. 18. 16.
& 24. 9.
& 26. 6. &
29. 18. 22.
& 44. 12.
Zech. 8. 13.

19 The LORD hath said concerning you, O ye remnant of Judah; ^xGo ye not into Egypt: know certainly that I have ²admonished you this day.

^x Deut. 17. 16.

² Heb.
testified a-
gainst you.

20 For ³ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto the LORD your God, saying, ^yPray 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*.

³ Or, *ye have*
used deceit
against your
souls.

^y ver. 2.

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.

^z ver. 17.
Ezek. 6. 11.

22 Now therefore know certainly that ^zye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire ⁴to go *and* to sojourn.

⁴ Or, *to go*
to sojourn.

CHAPTER XLIII.

¹ *Johanan, discrediting Jeremiah's prophecy, carrieth Jeremiah and others into Egypt.* ⁸ *Jeremiah prophesieth by a type the conquest of Egypt by the Babylonians.*

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 had sent him to them, *even* all these words,

19. "The Lord hath said." He reminds them that this is the reply which God Himself gives to their inquiry (vv. 1—6.), and he points out the hypocritical spirit in which they had approached Him.

CHAPTER XLIII.

**Jeremiah and the Jews in Egypt, followed by a
symbolical prophecy against Egypt.**

1—7. The flight into Egypt.

2 ^a then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there:

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^a ch. 42. 1.

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 ^b all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations, whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah;

^b ch. 40. 11, 12.

6 *even* men, and women, and children, ^c and the king's daughters, ^d and every person that Nebuzardan 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.

^c ch. 41. 10.
^d ch. 39. 10. & 40. 7.

7 So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: thus came they *even* to ^e Tahpanhes.

^e ch. 2. 16. & 41. 1. called *Hanes*.
Isai. 30. 4.
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ending.

8 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying,

9 Take great stones in thine hand, and hide

2. "all the proud men," i. e. insolent.

3. "but Baruch setteth thee." On what grounds they brought this charge against Baruch it is hard to say. Wicked people often object to do what God tells them for no reason at all.

5. "that were returned from all nations." See ch. xl. 11.

8—13. Symbolic prophecy of the conquest of Egypt.

8. "Tahpanhes." See ch. ii. 16, *note*.

9. "Take great stones." These stones were placed to represent the throne of Nebuchadnezzar—the stone referring to the strength of the empire. The clay represents Egypt. Egypt now appears strong, and hides Babylon for the moment from the eyes of the fugitives, but soon the clay will vanish, and the hard stones, the Babylonian empire, will be set up in Egypt in the presence of these very men who are striving to escape from it.

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them in the clay in the brickkiln, which *is* at the entry of Pharaoh's house in 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, ^fmy servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them.

^f ch. 25, 9.
& 27, 6.
See Ezek.
20, 18, 20.

11 ^gAnd when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver ^hsuch as are for death to death; and such as are for captivity to captivity; and such as are for the sword to the sword.

^g ch. 44, 13.
& 46, 13.
^h ch. 15, 2.
Zech. 11, 9.

12 And I will kindle a fire in the houses of ⁱthe 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.

ⁱ ch. 46, 25.

13 He shall break also the ²images of ³Beth-shemesh, that *is* in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire.

² Heb.
statues, or,
standing
images.
³ Or, The
house of
the sun.

CHAPTER XLIV.

¹ Jeremiah expresseth the desolation of Judah for their idolatry. ¹¹ He prophesieth their destruction; who commit idolatry in Egypt. ¹⁵ The

10. "his pavilion." The word probably means something splendid, which might be a pavilion or canopy, or any other emblem of royalty.

11. "And when he cometh." See ch. xv. 2, 3.

12. "carry . . . captives." The gods of Egypt will be unable to save their worshippers. See Isa. xlvi. 1, 2.

"he shall array." It does not take much trouble for a shepherd to put on his cloak; quite as easily will Nebuchadnezzar take the whole of Egypt.

13. "The images." See Isa. xix. 19. Obelisks.

"Beth-shemesh." City of the Sun. In Greek "Heliopolis."

CHAPTER XLIV.

Jeremiah's sermon on the Queen of Heaven, and his last words.

1—6. You have seen the fate of Jerusalem. All happened to these sinners as it was foretold.

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obstinacy of the Jews. 20 Jeremiah threateneth them for the same, 23 and for a sign prophesieth the destruction of Egypt.

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THE word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, which dwell at ^aMigdol, and at ^bTahpanhes, and at ^cNoph, and in the country of Pathros, saying,

^a Ex. 14. 2.
ch. 46. 14.
^b ch. 43. 7.
^c Isai. 19. 13.

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 ^da desolation, and no man dwelleth therein,

^d ch. 9. 11.
& 34. 22.

3 because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went ^eto burn incense, and to ^fserve other gods, whom they knew not, *neither* they, ye, nor your fathers.

^e ch. 19. 4.
^f Deut. 13. 6.
& 32. 17.

4 Howbeit ^gI sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending *them*, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate.

^g 2 Chr. 36. 15.
ch. 7. 25.
& 25. 4. &
26. 5. & 29. 19.

5 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods.

6 Wherefore ^hmy fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as at this day.

^h ch. 42. 18.

7 Therefore now thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; Wherefore commit ye *this* great evil ⁱagainst your souls, to cut off from you

ⁱ Num. 16. 35.
ch. 7. 14.

1. "Migdol," near Pelusium.

"Tahpanhes . . . Noph." See ch. ii. 16.

"Pathros." See Isa. xi. 11. Some time must have elapsed since the flight into Egypt to enable the fugitives to establish themselves in all these places. See ch. xliii. 7.

3. "because of their wickedness." Comp. chs. xi. 17; xix. 4; xxxii. 32. He is obliged to repeat the old story of their guilt.

4. "Howbeit I sent." Comp. chs. vii. 25; xxv. 4. The old story of their ingratitude. Man cannot be too frequently reminded how sinful he is, and how much pains God has taken with him.

6. "was poured forth." See ch. xlii. 18.

7—10. Yet you persist in the same wickedness. Have you forgotten what has so recently happened? Is your heart still so far from humbled?

7. "Therefore now," i. e. see what is your conduct in spite of the warnings which you have had.

"your souls," or yourselves, as we should say. Soul and self are the same thing.

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man and woman, child and suckling, ² out of Judah, to leave you none to remain ;

² Heb. *out of the midst of Judah.*
k ch. 25, 6, 7.

8 in that ye ^k provoke me unto wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye be gone to dwell, that ye might cut yourselves off, and that ye might be ¹ a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth ?

l ch. 42, 18.
ver. 12.

³ Heb. *wickednesses, or, punishments, &c.*

9 Have ye forgotten the ³ wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem ?

⁴ Heb. *contrite.*
Ps. 51, 17.
^m Prov. 28, 14.

10 They are not ⁴ humbled *even* unto this day, neither have they ^m feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers.

ⁿ Lev. 17, 10. & 20, 5, 6, ch. 21, 10, Amos 9, 4.

11 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel ; Behold, ⁿ I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah.

^o ch. 42, 15, 16, 17, 22.

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 ^o 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 ^p they shall be an execration, *and* an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach.

p ch. 42, 18.

9. "their wives." Such as Solomon's many wives, or Athaliah alone, who may be regarded as the destroyer of the kingdom of Judah.

10. "not humbled." See Isa. lvii. 15. The prophet seems to turn his face away from them, saying, "they" and not "ye." He had said "ye" too often already.

11—14. Judah in Egypt shall fare no better than Judah in Jerusalem. The cause of punishment is the same.

11. "Therefore thus." Observe how the prophet thunders out this "therefore." "You have provoked God in Jerusalem, you have provoked Him in Egypt—therefore," &c.

"set my face." See ch. xlii. 17.

12. "And I will take." See how, by the repetition of the similar words "consumed," "fall," "die," Jeremiah tries to teach them the certainty of their fate.

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13 ¶ For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence :

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¶ ch. 43. 11.

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 ² have a desire to return to dwell there : for ¹ none shall return but such as shall escape.

² Heb. *lift up their soul.*
¹ ver. 28.

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 unto us in the name of the LORD, ³ we will not hearken unto thee.

³ So ch. 6. 16.

17 But we will certainly do ¹ whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the ³ ^u queen 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 ⁴ victuals, and were well, and saw no evil.

¹ Num. 30. 12.
Deut. 23. 23.
Judg. 11. 36.
See ver. 25.

³ Or, *frame of heaven.*

^u ch. 7. 18.

⁴ Heb. *bread.*

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 ^x And when we burned incense to the queen of ^x heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did

^x ch. 7. 18.

14. "as shall escape." The difficulty of Jeremiah's language seems to imply the difficulty of their return. They shall only return like men who have escaped in battle. In other words, they would suffer from the invasion predicted in ch. xliiii. 11—13.

15—19. The people defend themselves on a singular plea.

15. "Then all the men." Apparently a great religious ceremony was being held in honour of the Queen of Heaven (see note on ch. vii. 18.) at Pathros. The men distinctly refuse to listen to what Jeremiah tells them about Jehovah, simply upon the ground that as long as they had served the Queen of Heaven they had been well to do in the world.

18. "But since we left off." They connect their whole misfortune with Josiah's reformatations. This is the old fallacy, "Because such a thing happened and such a thing followed, therefore the first thing was the cause."

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² Or,
husbands?

we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our ² 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 of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land ^y a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, ^z as at this day.

^y ch. 25, 11,
18, 38.

^z ver. 6.

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; ^a therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day.

^a Dan. 9, 11,
12.

24 Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah ^b that *are* in the land of Egypt:

^b ch. 43, 7.
ver. 15.

25 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying; ^c Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our vows that

^c ver. 15, &c.

19. "without our men." The women thought that the fact of their husbands knowing what they were doing was a sufficient excuse. Adam threw the blame of his transgression on Eve, these women retort the charge.

20—23. Jeremiah's counter assertion.

21. "The incense that ye burned," &c. Jeremiah exposes their fallacy. Is night the cause of day, because night always comes before day? Just so your worship of the Queen of Heaven was not the cause of your prosperity when you worshipped her.

22. "the Lord could no longer bear." They had quite left God out of the question. They had forgotten that He existed, and trusted only to what their wicked senses taught them (see vv. 17, 18.).

23. "this evil," which they called their good. This was the limit of God's forbearance.

24—30. A prophecy against the Egyptian refugees.

24. "to all the women," who of course took a prominent part in this horrible worship.

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, ^dI ^dGen. 22. 16. have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that ^emy name shall no more be named in the mouth of ^eEzek. 20. 39. any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord GOD liveth.

27 ^fBehold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that *are* ^fch. 1. 10. & 31. 28. in the land of Egypt ^gshall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. ^gver. 12. ^gEzek. 7. 6.

28 Yet ^ha 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 ⁱwords shall stand, ²mine, or their's. ^hver. 14. ^hIsai. 27. 13. ⁱver. 17, 25, 26.

29 And this *shall be* a sign unto you, saith the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall ^ksurely stand against you for evil: ²Heb. ²from me, or them. ^kPs. 33. 11. 589.

30 thus saith the LORD; Behold, ¹I 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 ^mZedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life. ¹ch. 46. 25, 26. ¹Ezek. 29. 3. &c. & 30. 21, &c. ^mch. 39. 5.

25. "ye will surely accomplish." A piece of irony like that in ch. xvi. 13.

26. "shall no more be named." God rejects the people as He has already rejected their kings (ch. xxii. 10—30.).

27. "I will watch." See ch. i. 12. The almond rod blossoms out anew.

28. "a small number." The fate of these is unknown. There is reason to believe, however, that the Palestinian and Alexandrian Jewish schools had some mutual influence on each other.

29. "this shall be a sign." Some of those who were then living should witness the destruction of Egypt by the Eastern power. Further discoveries in the East are required to shew the fulfilment of this prophecy.

JEREMIAH, XLVI.

CHAPTER XLV.

B. fore
CHRIST
cir. 607.

cir. 607.
a ch. 36. 1,
4, 22.

1 *Baruch being dismayed, 4 Jeremiah instructeth and comforteth him.*

THE ^a 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, Woe is me now ! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow ; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.

b Isai. 5. 5.

4 Thus shalt thou say unto him, The LORD saith thus ; Behold, ^b that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this who'e land.

c ch. 25. 26.

d ch. 21. 9
& 38. 2.
& 39. 18.

5 And seekest thou great things for thyself ? seek *them* not : for, behold, ^c I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD : but thy life will I give unto thee ^d for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

CHAPTER XLVI.

1 *Jeremiah prophesieth the overthrow of Pharaoh's army at Euphrates, 13 and the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar. 27 He comforteth Jacob in their chastisement.*

cir. 607.
a ch. 25. 15,
&c.

THE word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet against ^a the Gentiles ;

CHAPTER XLV.

Personal prophecy to Baruch.

1. "when he had written." Lit. while writing. Baruch was no doubt terrified at the appalling contents of the last roll (ch. xxxvi. 2.).

3. "I fainted." Baruch, like others in distress, finds comfort in the Psalms. This comes from Psalm vi. 6.

4. "that which I have built." God reminds Baruch of His commission to Jeremiah (ch. i. 10.). It was Baruch's privilege to be one of God's ministers in helping to carry out this work.

5. "seekest thou great things." Expect no great reward for your task. You will escape with your life and nothing more. See ch. xxi. 9.

Book IV. chs. xlvi.—lii. Prophecies relating to the foreign nations followed by two appendices, the first by Jeremiah, relating to his great prophecy against Babylon, the second by a later writer, carrying the history down to the death of Coniah.

CHAPTER XLVI.

1. "The word of the Lord." A general title to the whole book.

JEREMIAH, XLVI.

2 against Egypt, ^b 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.

Before
CHRIST
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^b 2 Kin. 23. 29.
2 Chr. 35. 20.
Fulfilled
presently.

3 ^c Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle.

^c So chap. 51.
11, 12.
Nah. 2. 1.
& 3. 14.

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 ² beaten down, and are ³ fled apace, and look not back: *for* ^d fear was round about, saith the LORD.

² Heb.
*broken in
pieces.*

³ Heb. *fled
a flight.*

^d ch. 6. 25.
& 41. 23.

^e Dan. 11. 19.

6 Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; they shall ^e stumble, and fall toward the north by the river Euphrates.

7 Who *is* this *that* cometh up ^f as a flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers?

^f See Is. 8. 7, 8.
ch. 47. 2.
Dan. 11. 22.

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.

9 Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots;

2. "Pharaoh-necho." See 2 Kings xxiii. 29.

"Carchemish." See Isa. x. 9.

3—12. Description of the battle of Carchemish. First prophecy respecting Egypt.

3—6. The Egyptian advance.

3. "Order ye." Jeremiah hears the word of command given by the general. Notice the short sentences, like the words of a general, which imply the discipline of the Egyptian troops.

4. "brigandines," i. e. the soldier's armour.

5. "Wherefore have I seen." His amazement at the sudden repulse of Egypt.

6. "Let not the swift." No chance of escape! Their flight northwards is cut off by the river Euphrates, and the enemy are in their rear.

7—9. The Babylonian troops and the combat.

7. "Who is this." Hitherto he has not mentioned the enemy. He now answers the question (ver. 5). Nebuchadnezzar's troops are like a mighty river overflowing its banks.

8. "Egypt riseth up." Egypt's troops also are like a river. See Isa. viii. 7.

"the city." Used as in eh. viii. 16 to mean cities generally.

9. "Come up, ye horses." He hears the word of command. "Cavalry, advance! Chariots, forward! Infantry, up to the front!"

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CHRIST
cir. 607.

² Heb. *Cush*.

³ Heb. *Put*.

⁴ Isai. 66. 19.

^h Isai. 13. 6.

Joel 1. 15.

& 2. 1.

ⁱ Deut. 32. 42.

Isai. 34. 6.

^k Isai. 34. 6.

Zeph. 1. 7.

See Ezek.

39. 17.

^l ch. 8. 22.

& 51. 8.

^m Isai. 47. 1.

ⁿ Heb.

no cure

shall be

unto thee.

^o Ezek. 30. 21.

and let the mighty men come forth; ² the Ethiopians and ³ the Libyans, that handle the shield; and the Lydians, ⁴ that handle *and* bend the bow.

10 For this *is* ^h the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and ⁱ the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord God of hosts ^k hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.

11 ^l Go up into Gilead, and take balm, ^m O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for ⁿ thou 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* ^o smite the land of Egypt.

14 Declare ye in Egypt, and publish in Migdol, and publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes: say ye, ^p Stand fast, and prepare thee; for ^q the sword shall devour round about thee.

^o Isai. 19. 1.

ch. 43. 10, 11.

Ezek. 29, &

30, & 32.

Fulfilled

cir. 571.

^p ver. 3, 4.

^q ver. 10.

“the Ethiopians,” &c. The different allies are summoned to their places in the battle. See Gen. x. 13.

10—12. The cause of the overthrow of Egypt. Jeremiah’s sympathy.

10. “a day of vengeance.” It is God’s doing. His judgments at last overtake Egypt, and recompense her for all her treacherous dealings towards Judah.

“the sword.” Comp. Isa. xxxiv. 6.

11. “Go up into Gilead.” Comp. ch. viii. 22.

“in vain.” See ch. xxx. 13. The wound which Egypt has received is incurable.

12. “The nations.” The news of Egypt’s terrible defeat spreads rapidly through the world.

“mighty man against,” i. e. hero stumbles up against hero.

13—26. Second prophecy respecting Egypt. Nebuchadnezzar shall conquer her again.

13. “The word.” Comp. Ezekiel xxx.—xxxii. This prophecy is similar to that in ch. xliii. 8, but is of an earlier date, having been written after the battle of Carchemish.

14—16. The mighty men are summoned to arms.

14. “Declare ye in Egypt.” Comp. ch. iv. 5.

“Migdol,” ch. xlv. 1. “Noph . . . Tahpanhes,” ch. ii. 16.

“Stand fast.” The general’s order. Jeremiah imagines himself to

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15 Why are thy valiant *men* swept away? they stood not, because the LORD did drive them.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 607.

16 He ²made many to fall, yea, ¹one 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.

² Heb. *mutilj lied the faller.*
¹ Lev. 26. 37.

17 They did cry there, Pharaoh king of Egypt *is but* a noise; he hath passed the time appointed.

18 As I live, saith the King, ³whose name *is* the LORD of hosts, Surely as Tabor *is* among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea, *so* shall he come.

³ Isai. 47. 4. & 48. 2.
ch. 48. 15.

19 O ⁴thou daughter dwelling in Egypt, ³furnish thyself ²to go into captivity: for Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant.

⁴ See ch. 48. 18.
³ Heb. *make thee instruments of captivity.*

20 Egypt *is like* a very fair ²heifer, *but* destruction cometh; it cometh ¹out of the north.

² Isai. 20. 4.
¹ So Hos. 10. 11.

21 Also her hired men *are* in the midst of her like ⁴fatted bullocks; for they also are turned back, *and* are fled away together: they did not stand, because ²the day of their calamity was come upon them, *and* the time of their visitation.

⁷ ch. 1. 14. & 47. 2.
ver. 6. 10.
⁴ Heb. *bullocks of the stall.*
² Ps. 37. 13. ch. 50. 27.

22 ²The voice thereof shall go like a serpent; for

² See Is. 20. 4.

be on some lofty eminence, whence he can see and hear all that is taking place.

15. "Why are . . . swept away." Suddenly the hosts melt away. They are swept away as by magic in hopeless confusion. The LORD, Who is Nebuchadnezzar's master, drives them.

16. "and they said." The strangers living in Egypt, who were helping as mercenaries.

17—19. Pharaoh must yield before Nebuchadnezzar, even as other mountains yield in majesty to Tabor and Carmel.

17. "there," i. e. on the battle-field after their disgrace.

"a noise." See ch. xxv. 31. Here it means confusion or ruin.

"he hath passed," &c. Pharaoh has passed over the season appointed by God (see ver. 21.). After the battle of Carchemish possibly Pharaoh provoked Nebuchadnezzar still further.

20—23. The second part of the prophecy. Egypt is like a fair heifer, but something will come from the North which will make her soldiers flee. She is like a forest which cannot help itself from being cut down.

20. "a very fair heifer." An allusion to the god Apis.

"destruction." Probably "a gad-fly."

21. "fatted bullocks." They can no more abide the gad-fly or Nebuchadnezzar than their mother could. See Isa. vii. 18.

22. "The voice . . . serpent." She can do no more to stay Nebuchadnezzar than the hissing of a snake can detain the woodmen from clearing the forest.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 607.

they shall march with an army, and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood.

^b Isai. 10. 34. 23 They shall ^b cut down her forest, saith the LORD, though it cannot be searched; because they are more than ^c the grasshoppers, and are innumerable.

^c Judg. 6. 5. 24 The daughter of Egypt shall be confounded; she shall be delivered into the hand of ^d the people of the north.

25 The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saith; Behold, I will punish the ²³ multitude of ^e No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, ^f with their gods, and their kings; even Pharaoh, and *all* them that trust in him:

^g and I will deliver them into the hand of those that seek their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants: and ^h afterward it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old, saith the LORD.

ⁱ Isai. 41. 13, 14, & 43. 5, & 44. 2. ch. 30. 10, 11. 27 ¶ ⁱ 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 return, and be in rest and at ease, and none shall make *him* afraid.

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 ^k a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I ^l not leave thee wholly unpunished.

^k ch. 10. 24. & 30. 11.

^l Or, *not utterly cut thee off.*

23. "cannot be searched." He means that the number of troops in the Babylonian army cannot be counted (comp. 1 Kings vii. 47.).

24—26. Her destruction and desolation however shall be only temporary.

25. "the multitude of No," i. e. No-Ammon (see Nah. iii. 8.), the same as Thebes, the capital of Upper Egypt. Comp. Ezek. xxx. 14—16.

27, 28. Comfort to Israel.

27. "fear not." This and the next verse are almost the same as ch. xxx. 10, 11, where see *notes*.

JEREMIAH, XLVII.

CHAPTER XLVII.

The destruction of the Philistines.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 601.

THE word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet ^aagainst the Philistines, ^bbefore that Pharaoh smote ²Gaza.

2 Thus saith the LORD; Behold, ^cwaters rise up ^dout of the north, and shall be an overflowing flood, and shall overflow the land, and ³all that is therein; the city, and them that dwell therein: then the men shall cry, and all the inhabitants of the land shall howl.

3 At the ^enoise 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;

4 because of the day that cometh to spoil all the Philistines, and to cut off from ^fTyrus and Zidon every helper that remaineth: for the LORD will spoil the Philistines, ^gthe remnant of ⁴the country of ^hCaphtor.

5 ⁱBaldness ^jis come upon Gaza; ^kAshkelon is

cir. 600.
a ch. 25. 20.
Ezek. 25.
15, 16.
Zeph. 2. 4, 5.
b Amos 1. 6,
7, 8.
c Heb. *Azzah*.
d Isai. 8. 7.
ch. 46. 7, 8.
e ch. 1. 14.
& 4. 24.
f Heb.
the fulness thereof.
g ch. 8. 16.
Nub. 3. 2.
f ch. 25. 22.
g Ezek. 25. 16.
Amos 1. 8.
& 9. 7.
h Heb. *the isle*.
i Gen. 10. 14.
j Amos 1. 7.
Mic. 1. 16.
Zeph. 2. 4, 7.
Zech. 9. 5.
k ch. 25. 20.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Destruction of the Philistines.

1. "Pharaoh smote Gaza." Probably the event to which Jeremiah refers happened before the battle at the Euphrates, and before the death of Josiah, while Pharaoh was on his way to the war.

2—4. A flood pours in from the North terrifying the inhabitants. The rush of chariots and horses paralyses old and young with fear. It is the day of Philistia's doom.

2. "out of the north." From ch. i. 13, 14 it seems that this points to Chaldean troops. Gaza will shortly fall into Pharaoh's hands, but a greater invasion has to be expected from this Northern power.

3. "the fathers," &c. The children mutely appeal to their fathers for help, but they are unable to do anything.

4—7. For this reason the inhabitants of Gaza mourn as if for the dead.

4. "Tyrus . . . Zidon." The mention of these places is singular. The Philistines are the only tribe who could help Phœnicia in her trouble, and now they are unable to do so.

"Caphtor." The place whence the Philistines migrated. See Amos ix. 7. Deut. ii. 23.

5. "Baldness." See Deut. xiv. 1. The Philistines not being bound by the law may practise this mourning ceremony if they please.

JEREMIAH, XLVIII.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 600.

- ¹ ch. 16. 6.
& 41. 5.
& 48. 37.
^m Deut. 32. 41.
Ezek. 21. 3,
4, 5.
² Heb. *gather thyself*.
³ Heb. *How canst thou*.
ⁿ Ezek. 14. 17.
^o Mic. 6. 9.

cut off *with* the remnant of their valley: how long wilt thou ¹cut thyself?

6 O thou ^msword of the LORD, how long *will it be* ere thou be quiet? ²put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still.

7 ³How can it be quiet, seeing the LORD hath ⁿgiven it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the sea shore? there hath he ^oappointed it.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

¹ *The judgment of Moab, 7 for their pride, 11 for their security, 14 for their carnal confidence, 25 and for their contempt of God and his people. 47 The restoration of Moab.*

cir. 600.

- ^a Isai. 15. & 16.
ch. 25. 21.
& 27. 3.
Ezek. 25. 9.
Amos 2. 1, 2.
^b Num. 32. 38.
& 33. 47.
Isai. 15. 2.
^c Num. 32. 37.
² Or, *The high place*.
^d Isai. 16. 14.
^e Isai. 15. 4.

AGAINST ^aMoab thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Woe unto ^bNebo! for it is spoiled: ^cKiriathaim is confounded *and* taken: ²Misgab is confounded and dismayed.

2 ^d*There shall be* no more praise of Moab: in ^eHeshbon they have devised evil against it; come, and let us cut it off from *being* a nation. Also thou

“their valley,” i. e. the plain, as Josh. xvii. 16.

6. “O thou sword.” The words of the Philistine mourners. They at last acknowledge the Lord. See Isa. xiv. 32.

7. “How can it.” Jeremiah’s reply. God’s purpose must be fulfilled. “sea shore.” See Ezek. xxv. 16.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Prophecy against Moab.

This is perhaps the most highly finished, and certainly the most spirited production of Jeremiah’s. It is composed of seven distinct portions, the central one of which, as is frequently the case, gives the kernel of the whole poem. It is formed partly upon the model of Isaiah xv., xvi., and partly upon Balaam’s prophecy against Moab.

1—8. The chief cities of Moab are destroyed. Weeping and lamentation is heard on all sides. On comes the destroyer. Flee for your lives! No use! Flight is vain, you shall be overtaken.

1. “Nebo,” a city of the same name with the mountain (see Isa. xv. 2.). Kiriathaim and Nebo are the northern and southern extremities of the eastern range of the Moabite mountains, and form the “Misgab,” or high place.

2. “no more praise,” i. e. All Moab’s glory is gone.

“Heshbon.” Here is a play of words. The enemy are represented as holding their consultation (heshbon) in the Ammonite capital (ch. xlix. 3.) about the conduct of the war.

JEREMIAH, XLVIII.

shalt ² be cut down, O Madmen; the sword shall ³ pursue thee.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 600.

³ A voice of crying *shall be* from Horonaim, ² spoiling and great destruction.

² Or,
be brought
to silence,
Isai. 15. 1.

⁴ Moab is destroyed; her little ones have caused a cry to be heard.

³ Heb. go
after thee.

⁵ For in the going up of Luhith ⁴ continual weeping shall go up; for in the going down of Horonaim the enemies have heard a cry of destruction.

^f ver. 5.
^g Isai. 15. 5.
^h Heb. weep-
ing with
weeping.

⁶ ¶ ^b Flee, save your lives, and be like ⁵ the ⁱ heath in the wilderness.

^h ch. 51. 6.
⁵ Or, a
naked tree,
ⁱ ch. 17. 6.

⁷ For because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou shalt also be taken: and ^k Chemosh shall go forth into captivity *with* his ^l priests and his princes together.

^k Num. 21. 29.
Judg. 11. 24
See Is. 46. 1, 2.
ch. 43. 12.
^l ch. 49. 3.
^m ch. 6. 26.
ver. 18.

⁸ And ^m the spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape: the valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as the LORD hath spoken.

⁹ ⁿ Give wings unto Moab, that it may flee and get away: for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein.

ⁿ Ps. 55. 6.
ver. 28.

¹⁰ ^o Cursed *be* he that doeth the work of the LORD ⁶ deceitfully, and cursed *be* he that keepeth back his sword from blood.

^o See Judg.
5. 23.
¹ Sam. 15.
3. 9.
¹ Kin. 20. 42.
⁶ Or, negli-
gently.

“Madmen.” Nowhere else mentioned; the word means “place of stillness.” See Isa. xxv. 10 (margin).

4. “her little ones,” i. e. her poor helpless inhabitants.

5. “in the going up,” i. e. the rising slope. See Isa. xv. 5.

“the enemies.” Better translated, ‘They have heard a “distressing” cry of destruction.

6. “like the heath.” See ch. xvii. 6.

7. “thy works,” i. e. thine efforts to resist.

“Chemosh,” the Moabite god.

“go forth into captivity.” See ch. xliii. 12.

9—15. Let Moab fly with wings to escape destruction. She has lived securely for a long time fostering evil will against Israel. Now she shall be destroyed in spite of her god and her warriors.

9. “Give wings.” So sudden is the calamity that wings alone can enable her to escape.

10. “deceitfully,” i. e. negligently. It is called the “work of the LORD,” because “the sword” which destroys is His sword. See ch. xlvii. 6.

^{Before}
CHRIST
cir. 600.
1 Zeph. 1. 12.
2 Heb. *stood*.

11 ¶ Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he ^p hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste ² 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.

13 And Moab shall be ashamed of ^a Chemosh, as the house of Israel ^r was ashamed of ^s Beth-el their confidence.

^q Judg. 11. 24.
¹ Kin. 11. 7.
^r Hos. 10. 6.
^s 1 Kin. 12. 29.

14 ¶ How say ye, ^t We are mighty and strong men for the war?

^t Isai. 16. 6.

15 ^u Moab is spoiled, and gone up *out of* her cities, and ³ his chosen young men are ^x gone down to the slaughter, saith ^y the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.

^u ver. 8, 9, 18.
³ Heb. *the choice of*.
^x ch. 50. 27.
^y ch. 43. 18. & 51. 57.

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, ^z How is the strong staff broken, *and* the beautiful rod!

^z See Is. 9. 4. & 14. 4, 5.

11. "Moab hath been at ease," i. e. As good wine improves in strength by settling on the lees, so has Moab's hostile spirit against Israel increased. It is high time for the rakers to come, and rack this cask. Then will all the pitchers and bottles be broken, i. e. the whole country will become disorganized.

"gone into captivity." He lays aside the metaphor for a moment.

"his taste," i. e. national character.

12. "wanderers." Lit. persons to turn the cask over.

"cause him to wander." Lit. "turn him over" like a cask.

13. "Chemosh . . . Beth-el." Sargon's conquest of Samaria is a warning to Moab.

14. "How say ye." The question implies a negative answer. See ch. ii. 23.

15. "gone up out of her cities." Men climb up her fortresses, and throw the young soldiers down for slaughter.

16—25. And now, as destruction approaches nearer and nearer, the inhabitants take to flight.

16. "near to come." See Isa. xiii. 22. Unfortunately we know neither the time of the utterance of the prophecy, nor that of the invasion of Moab.

17. "All ye that are about him." The neighbouring tribes, partly in sympathy partly in mockery, bewail the fall of Moab.

"How is," &c. Comp. Isa. xiv. 29.

JEREMIAH, XLVIII.

18 ^aThou daughter that dost inhabit ^bDibon, come down from *thy* glory, and sit in thirst; for ^cthe spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, *and* he shall destroy thy strong holds.

19 O ²inhabitant of ^dAroer, ^estand 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 down: ^fhowl and cry; tell ye it in ^gArnon, that Moab is spoiled,

21 and judgment is come upon ^hthe 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 ⁱKerioth, and upon Bozrah, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far or near.

25 ^kThe horn of Moab is cut off, and his ^larm is broken, saith the LORD.

26 ¶ ^mMake 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 ⁿwas not Israel a derision unto thee? ^owas he found among thieves? for since thou spakest of him, thou ³skippedst for joy.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 600.

^a Isai. 47. 1.
ch. 46. 19.

^b Num. 21. 30.
Isai. 15. 2.

^c ver. 8.

² Heb.

inhabitant.
^d Deut. 2. 26.

^e I Sam. 4.
13. 16.

^f Isai. 16. 7.

^g See Num.
21. 13.

^h ver. 8.

ⁱ ver. 41.
Amos 2. 2.

^k Ps. 75. 10.
^l See Ezek.
30. 21.

cir. 600.
^m ch. 25. 15,
27.

ⁿ Zeph. 2. 8.
^o See ch. 2. 26.
³ Or,
*movedst
thyself.*

18. "Dibon." See Isa. xv. 2.

"in thirst," i. e. in the thirsty ground, or in the dust. See Isa. xlvii. 1—3.

19. "Aroer." This town was probably south of Arnon. The inhabitants ask a fugitive what has happened.

20. "Moab is confounded." The fugitive's reply.

"Arnon." The first stream that they would reach in flying southwards.

25. "The horn." Frequently used in Hebrew to mean "pride."

26—35. It is this pride and arrogance of Moab that has brought this affliction upon her. Pride has ruined her vineyards and harvests.

26. "Make ye him drunken." Moab now receives the cup (ch. xxv. 21.) from the hands of the persons mentioned (ver. 10.), and drains it to the dregs.

"Moab also." This figure of speech is intended to shew the depth and the strength of the draught.

27. "was not Israel," &c. i. e. "Was not Israel a laughing-stock to

Before
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p Ps. 55. 6, 7.
ver. 9.

q Cant. 2. 14.

r Isai. 16. 6,
&c.

s Isai. 16. 6.
ch. 50. 36.

2 Or, those
on whom
he stayeth
(Heb his
bars) do not
right.

t Isai. 15. 5.
& 16. 7, 11.

u Isai. 16. 8, 9.

x Isai. 16. 10.
Joel 1. 12.

y Isai. 15. 4,
5, 6.

z Isai. 15. 5, 6.
ver. 5.

3 Heb.
desolations.

28 O ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities, and dwell in the rock, and be like ^athe dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth.

29 We have heard the ^rpride of Moab, (he is exceeding 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*; ^s2 his lies shall not so effect *it*.

31 Therefore ^twill I howl for Moab, and I will cry out for all Moab; *mine heart* shall mourn for the men of Kir-heres.

32 ^uO vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer: thy plants are gone over the sea, they reach *even* to the sea of Jazer: the spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage.

33 And ^xjoy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to fail from the winepresses: none shall tread with shouting; *their shouting shall be no shouting*.

34 ^yFrom the cry of Heshbon *even* unto Elealeh, and *even* unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice, ^z2 from Zoar *even* unto Horonaim, as an heifer of three years old: for the waters also of Nimrim shall be ³desolate.

“Moab when she was carried captive? Was she not mocked like a detected thief? For as often as thou didst speak of her didst thou not wag thine head?” He refers to the endless bickerings between Moab and Israel, culminating at the captivity, when they uttered some derisive cries like those described (Ps. cxxxvii. 7.).

29. “We have heard.” This and the next three verses are found in Isa. xvi. 6—8. The Jews are supposed to join with the prophet in this exclamation.

30. “it shall not be so.” Most probably a noun. “I know his wrath and the good-for-nothing character of his lies; they have done what was good for nothing.”

31. “Therefore will I howl.” Jeremiah laments for Moab, and goes on to speak of the desolation. Isaiah's thoughts run in the opposite current.

32. “with the weeping of Jazer.” Lit. “more than Jazer weeps for thee.”

“the sea of Jazer.” Some pools now represent what was once the lake known to Jeremiah.

33. “their shouting,” i. e. the vintagers' cry has ceased.

34. “From the cry.” See Isa. xv. 4.

35 Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, saith the LORD, ^a him that offereth in the high places, and him that burneth incense to his gods.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 600.

^a Isai. 15. 2.
& 16. 12.
^b Isai. 15. 5.
& 16. 11.

36 Therefore ^b mine heart shall sound for Moab like pipes, and mine heart shall sound like pipes for the men of Kir-heres: because ^c the riches *that* he hath gotten are perished.

^c Isai. 15. 7.

37 For ^d every head *shall be* bald, and every beard ^e clipped: upon all the hands *shall be* cuttings, and ^e upon the loins sackcloth.

^d Isai. 15. 2, 3.
ch. 47. 5.

^e Heb.
diminished.
^e Gen. 37. 34.

38 *There shall be* lamentation generally upon all the housetops of Moab, and in the streets thereof: for I have broken Moab like ^f a vessel wherein is no pleasure, saith the LORD.

^f ch. 22. 28.

39 They shall howl, *saying*, How is it broken down! how hath Moab turned the ^g back with shame! so shall Moab be a derision and a dismaying to all them about him.

^g Heb. *neck.*

40 For thus saith the LORD; Behold, ^h he shall fly as an eagle, and shall ^h spread his wings over Moab.

^h Deut. 28. 49.
ch. 49. 22.
Dan. 7. 4.
Hos. 8. 1.
Hab. 1. 8.

41 ⁱ ^k Kerioth is taken, and the strong holds are surprised, and ^k the mighty men's hearts in Moab at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

^h Isai. 8. 8.
ⁱ ver. 24.

^k Or,
The cities.

^k Isai. 13. 8.
& 21. 3.
ch. 30. 6.
& 49. 22, 24.
& 50. 45.
& 51. 30.
Mic. 4. 9.

42 And Moab shall be destroyed ^l from *being* a people, because he hath magnified *himself* against the LORD.

^l Ps. 83. 4.
Isai. 7. 8.

43 ^m Fear, and the pit, and the snare, *shall be* upon thee, O inhabitant of Moab, saith the LORD.

^m Isai. 24. 17,
18.

44 He that fleeth from the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that getteth up out of the pit shall be

36—39. Therefore the prophet weeps in sympathy with them, and the people raise their lamentations with him.

36. "Therefore mine heart." Comp. Isa. xv. 7; xvi. 11.

37. "every head." Isa. xv. 2, 3.

38. "like a vessel." See ch. xxii. 28.

39. "How is it broken down." They hardly like to use the word "Moab," and leave the subject of the verb indefinite.

40—44. Still further sufferings are in store.

40. "he shall fly." Here as frequently in prophecy we get the indefinite subject, "some one shall fly." Comp. Isa. xlvi. 11.

41. "Kerioth," i. e. cities.

42. "Fear, and the pit." See Isa. xxiv. 17, 18.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 600.

taken in the snare: for ⁿ I will bring upon it, *even* upon Moab, the year of their visitation, saith the LORD.

ⁿ See ch. 11.
23.

^o Num. 21. 28. Heshbon because of the force: but ^o a fire shall come forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon, and ^p shall devour the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the ² tumultuous ones.

^p Num. 24. 17.

² Heb.
*children
of noise.*

^q Num. 21. 23.

³ Heb. in
captivity.

46 ^q Woe be unto thee, O Moab! the people of Chemosh perisheth: for thy sons are taken ³ captives, and thy daughters captives.

47 Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab ^r in the latter days, saith the LORD. Thus far is the judgment of Moab.

^r ch. 49. 6, 39.

CHAPTER XLIX.

¹ *The judgment of the Ammonites.* ⁶ *Their restoration.* ⁷ *The judgment of Edom.* ²³ *of Damascus.* ²⁸ *of Kedar.* ³⁰ *of Hazor.* ³⁴ *and of Elam.* ³⁹ *The restoration of Elam.*

² Or, *Against.*

^a Ezek. 21. 23.
& 25. 2.

Amos 1. 13.
Zeph. 2. 8, 9.

CONCERNING ² ^a the Ammonites, thus saith the LORD; Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir?

45—47. They that have fled to Heshbon for safety are miserably deceived. Another Sihon appears (i. e. Nebuchadnezzar) and carries away sons and daughters.

45. "Heshbon." The prophecy returns to the place whence it had started. The Moabites take refuge in the Ammonite fortress, but in vain. Balaam's old prophecy (Num. xxiv. 17.) is fulfilled. Comp. Num. xxi. 28.

"because of the force." Properly, "powerless." The Ammonites can give them no help, as explained in the next chapter.

46. "Woe be unto thee." See Num. xxi. 29.

47. "Yet will I bring again." Comp. chs. xlvi. 26; xlix. 6, 39.

"Thus far." The note of the editor, as ch. li. 64. As to the fulfilment of this prophecy little can be said. Josephus says that Nebuchadnezzar attacked Moab in the fifth year of the captivity (*Ant.* x. 9, 7.). After the captivity the Moabites are only mentioned in Ezra ix. 1, and Neh. xiii. 1—3.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Five distinct prophecies occur in this chapter, the only indications of date being found in vv. 28, 34.

Ammon.

This prophecy is remarkable from its being the only one directed against the heathen nations in which they are charged with having done any wrong to Israel.

why *then* doth ² their king inherit ^b Gad, and his people dwell in his cities?

Before
CHRIST
cir. 600.

² Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in ^c Rabbah of the Ammonites; and it shall be a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burned with fire: then shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, saith the LORD.

² Or, *Melcom*.
^b Amos 1. 13.

^c Ezek. 25. 5.
Amos 1. 14.

³ Howl, O Heshbon, for Ai is spoiled: cry, ye daughters of Rabbah, ^d gird you with sackcloth; lament, and run to and fro by the hedges; for ³ their king shall go into captivity, and his ^e priests and his princes together.

^d Isai. 22. 11.
ch. 4. 8.
& 6. 26.

³ Or, *Melcom*,
1 Kin. 11. 5,
33.

^e ch. 48. 7.
Amos 1. 15.

⁴ Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys, ⁴ thy flowing valley, O ^f backsliding daughter? that trusted in her treasures, ^g saying, Who shall come unto me?

⁴ Or,
thy valley floweth away.

^f ch. 3. 14.
& 7. 24.

^g ch. 21. 13.

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 man right forth; and none shall gather up him that wandereth.

⁶ And ^h afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the LORD.

^h So ver. 31.
& ch. 48. 47.

7 ¶ ⁱ Concerning Edom, thus saith the LORD of

ⁱ Ezek. 25. 12.
Amos 1. 11.

1—2. Ammon is charged with having taken possession of the inheritance of Gad, therefore he must be rooted out, and his cities destroyed, so that Israel may have his own inheritance.

1. "why doth their king." Probably after the invasion by Tiglath-Pileser the Ammonites had seized this territory. See Amos i. 13—15. See ver. 3.

2. "Rabbah." The capital of the Ammonites.

"her daughters," i. e. cities (ver. 3.). Let Ammon weep now that she and her king go into captivity.

3. "Ai." Otherwise unknown as an Ammonite city.

"hedges." Probably walls.

"their king." Here no doubt, as in ver. 1, there is a reference to the god Milcom who stood in the same relation to the Ammonites as Chemosh did to the Moabites.

4—6. All his glory is gone, but in the end, like his kinsman Moab, he shall be restored.

4. "thy flowing valley," i. e. richness of thy valley.

5. "every man right forth." Without making the slightest resistance (see Josh. vi. 5.). Such was all that Ammon gained by her pride.

"shall gather." No one will be able to unite the fugitives.

Edom.

7—13. The wisdom of Teman shall not protect Edom from the

Before
CHRIST
cir. 600.

^k Obad. 8.
^l See Isa. 19. 11.
^m ver. 30.
ⁿ Or, *they are turned back.*
^o ch. 25. 23.
^p Obad. 5.
^q Heb, *their sufficiency.*
^r Mal. 1. 3.

hosts; ^k *Is* wisdom no more in Teman? ^l *is* counsel perished from the prudent? *is* their wisdom vanished?

8 ^m Flee ye, ⁿ turn back, dwell deep, O inhabitants of ^o Dedan; for I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him, the time *that* I will visit him.

9 If ^p grapegatherers come to thee, would they not leave *some* gleaning grapes? if thieves by night, they will destroy ^q till they have enough.

10 ^r 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 ^s 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, ^t they whose judgment *was* not to drink of the cup 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 ^u I have sworn by myself, saith the LORD, that ^v 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 ^w rumour from the LORD, and

destruction that threatens her. This desolation shall most assuredly come.

7. "Is wisdom," &c. The question implies a negative answer. Comp. Obad. 8, upon which short book this prophecy is modelled.

"Teman." See Gen. xxxvi. 11.

8. "Dedan." See Isa. xxi. 13. They are told to hide if they would escape being destroyed with Edom.

9. "If grapegatherers." See Obad. 5. The invaders are compared to vintagers and thieves, who always take as much as they can get.

10. "Esau bare." Obad. 6, 7. All the fortresses of Edom are laid waste and he has no hiding place left. In other words, he cannot escape.

11. "Leave thy . . . children." The men are dead: but Jehovah, though the Edomites did not believe in Him, will protect the widows and orphans.

12. "they whose judgment," i. e. if Israel suffers how can Edom expect to escape? See 1 St. Pet. iv. 17.

13. "Bozrah." See Isa. xxxiv. 6; lxiii. 1.

14—18. Other nations shall fight against Edom and weaken him, and in spite of the lofty clefts in which he dwells, he shall be brought down and become a laughing-stock.

14. "a rumour," or, a report. The news of the advance of the enemy. See Isa. xxxvii. 7. Obad. 1.

^q I. ai. 17. 14.

^r ch. 25. 29.
Obad. 16.

^s Gen. 22. 16.
Isai. 45. 23.
Amos 6. 8.
^t Isai. 34. 6.
& 63. 1.

^u Obad. 1, 2, 3.

an ambassador is sent unto the heathen, *saying*, Gather ye together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle. Before
CHRIST
cir. 600.

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 thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: * though thou shouldest make thy ^y nest as high as the eagle, ^z I will bring thee down from thence, saith the LORD.

17 Also Edom shall be a desolation: ^a every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.

18 ^b As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour *cities* thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.

19 ^c Behold, he shall come up like a lion from ^d the swelling of Jordan against the habitation 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 ^e who *is* like me? and who will ^z appoint me the time? and ^f who *is* that shepherd that will stand before me?

“an ambassador,” or, messengers.

15. “I will make thee small.” A great contrast with Edom’s present proud condition, described in the next verse.

16. “Thy terribleness.” This is the cause of the destruction of Edom. He is not reprov’d for his animosity towards Israel, nor for breaking a law which he had never known, but simply for his pride. See Obad. 3, 4. Num. xxiv. 21.

17. “a desolation.” They rejoiced at the humiliation of Judah, now the same fate shall overtake them (see ch. xviii. 16.).

18. “neighbour cities.” See Deut. xxix. 23. Hos. xi. 8.

19—22. As a lion comes up from the thickets of Jordan, and attacks a herd, so will the Lord drag the Edomites from their habitations in the rocks; the earth shall tremble at their fall, and the heart of the mighty men of Edom shall faint.

19. “he shall come.” See ch. iv. 7.

“swelling of Jordan.” See ch. xii. 5.

“habitation of the strong.” Probably the evergreen pastures on the banks of the Jordan.

“make him,” i. e. make Edom forsake his pastures.

“who is a chosen man.” Nebuchadnezzar is pointed out as the instrument in God’s hand by which Edom shall be chastised (ch. xxv. 9.).

Before
CHRIST
cir. 600.

g ch. 50. 45.

20 ^g 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.

h ch. 50. 46.

21 ^h The earth is moved at the noise of their fall, at the cry the noise thereof was heard in the ² Red sea.

² Heb.
Weedy sea.
i ch. 4. 13.
& 48. 40, 41.
cir. 600.

22 Behold, ⁱ 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.

k Isai. 17. 1.
& 37. 13.
Amos 1. 3.
Zech. 9. 1, 2.
³ Heb.
melteâ.

23 ¶ ^k Concerning Damascus. Hamath is confounded, and Arpad: for they have heard evil tidings: they are ³ fainthearted; ¹ *there is sorrow* ⁴ on the sea; it cannot be quiet.

¹ Isai. 57. 20.
⁴ Or, *as on the sea.*

24 Damascus is waxed feeble, and turneth herself to flee, and fear hath seized on *her*: ^m anguish and sorrows have taken her, as a woman in travail.

m Isai. 13. 8.
ch. 4. 31. &
6. 24. & 30. 6.
& 48. 41.
ver. 22.

25 How is ⁿ the city of praise not left, the city of my joy!

n ch. 33. 9.
& 51. 41.
o ch. 50. 30.
& 51. 4.

26 ^o Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD of hosts.

p Amos 1. 4.

27 And I will kindle a ^p fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall consume the palaces of Ben-hadad.

20. "the least of the flock." The object of the verb "they shall drag them out."

"he shall make . . . desolate," or, "make their pastures astonished at them." "He" refers to Nebuchadnezzar; "they" to his soldiers. See ch. l. 44—46.

Damascus.

23—27. Damascus and her dependent cities shall be seized with panic; they shall turn to flee and forsake the city which Jeremiah so dearly loved. The warriors young and old perish in the strife, and the palaces of Ben-hadad are burnt to the ground.

23. "Hamath . . . Arpad." See Isa. x. 9.

"on the sea." Using language of Isaiah (ch. lvii. 20.), he compares the feelings of these cities to the restless motions of the sea.

25. "the city of my joy." The beauty of Damascus is well known (2 Kings v. 12.). Observe Jeremiah's love for beautiful sights in nature, as in ch. xlviii. 31—34.

27. "And I will kindle." See Amos i. 4.

"Ben-hadad." Probably the hereditary name of the kings of Syria (comp. Isa. xvii. 1—11.).

JEREMIAH, XLIX.

28 ¶^a Concerning Kedar, and concerning the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon shall smite, thus saith the LORD; Arise ye, go up to Kedar, and spoil ^rthe men of the east.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 600.

cir. 600.
q Isai. 21. 13.
r Judg. 6. 3.
Job 1. 3.

29 Their ^stents and their flocks shall they take away: they shall take to themselves their curtains, and all their vessels, and their camels; and they shall cry unto them, ^tFear is on every side.

s Ps. 129. 5.

t ch. 6. 25.
& 46. 5.

30 ¶^u Flee, ²get 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 purpose against you.

u ver. 8.
2 Heb. *flit greatly*.

31 Arise, get you up unto ^xthe ³wealthy nation, that dwelleth without care, saith the LORD, which have neither gates nor bars, *which* ^ydwell alone.

x Ezek. 38. 11.
3 Or, *that is at ease*.

32 And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of their cattle a spoil: and I will ^zscatter into all winds ^athem *that are* ⁴in the utmost corners; and I will bring their calamity from all sides thereof, saith the LORD.

y Num. 23. 9.
Deut. 33. 28.
Mic. 7. 14.

z ver. 36.
Ezek. 5. 10.
a ch. 9. 26.
& 25. 23.

4 Heb. *cut off into corners, or, that have the corners of their hair polled*.

33 And Hazor ^bshall be a dwelling for dragons, and a desolation for ever: ^cthere shall no man abide there, nor *any* son of man dwell in it.

b ch. 9. 11.
& 10. 22.
Mal. 1. 3.
c ver. 18.

34 ¶ The word of the LORD that came to Jere-

Kedar.

28, 29. An order is given to an unnamed person to attack Kedar, and to utter Jeremiah's watch-word, "Magor-missabib," to warn them.

28. "Kedar." See ch. ii. 10. Here used in a general way to mean Arabia.

"Hazor." A district in Arabia.

29. "their curtains," i. e. tents, as ch. iv. 20.

"Fear is on every side." See ch. vi. 25.

30—33. Let them flee, for it is Nebuchadnezzar: he will totally destroy their land; no hope of mercy can be entertained.

30. "dwell deep." See ver. 8.

"taken counsel." See ver. 20.

31. "wealthy nation." See margin. The words are an address to the Babylonians to attack the people of Kedar while dwelling at ease.

32. "utmost corners." See ch. ix. 26.

33. "dragons," i. e. jackals (ch. x. 22.).

Before
CHRIST
cir. 609.
d ch. 25. 25.
598.
e See Isaiah
22. 6.

miah the prophet against ^d Elam in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying,

35 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will break ^e the bow of Elam, the chief of their might.

f ver. 32.

36 And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and ^f will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come.

g ch. 9. 16.
& 48. 2.

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; ^g and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them:

h See chap.
43. 10.

38 and I will ^h set my throne in Elam, and will destroy from thence the king and the princes, saith the LORD.

i ch. 43. 47.
ver. 6.

39 But it shall come to pass ⁱ in the latter days, *that* I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.

CHAPTER L.

1, 9, 21, 35 *The judgment of Babylon.* 4, 17, 33 *The redemption of Israel.*

595.

^a Isai. 13. 1.
& 21. 1.
& 47. 1.
² Heb. *by the hand of Jeremiah.*

THE word that the LORD spake ^a against Babylon *and* against the land of the Chaldeans ² by Jeremiah the prophet.

Elam.

34—39. The military power of Elam is to be destroyed, and the population scattered to the four winds of heaven. God will judge Elam, and destroy both kings and priests; however in the last days the captivity shall be turned.

34. "Elam." To the east of Babylonia, better known as Susiana.

35. "the bow." Their chief strength (see Isa. xxii. 6.).

38. "set my throne." Comp. chs. i. 15; xliii. 10.

CHAPTERS L—LI. 58.

The great prophecy against Babylon.

These two chapters form the last prophecy against the Gentiles. They obviously form a whole, which however naturally falls into three sections, each of them being capable of further sub-division.

JEREMIAH, I.

2 Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and ²set up a standard; publish, *and* conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, ^bBel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; ^cher idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces.

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² Heb. *lift up*.

^b Isai. 46. 1.

ch. 51. 44.

^c See chap.

43. 12, 13.

^d ch. 51. 48.

^e Isai. 13. 17,

18, 20.

ver. 33, 40.

3 ^dFor out of the north there cometh up ^ea 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 the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, ^fthey and the children of Judah together, ^ggoing and weeping: they shall go, ^hand seek the LORD their God.

^f Hos. 1. 11.

^g Ezra 3. 12, 13.

Ps. 126. 5, 6.

ch. 31. 9.

Zech. 12. 10.

^h Hos. 3. 5.

5 They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, *saying*, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in ⁱa perpetual covenant *that* shall not be forgotten.

ⁱ ch. 31. 31.

&c. & 32. 40.

6 My people hath been ^klost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away *on* ^lthe mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their ^mrestingplace.

^k Isai. 53. 6.

ver. 17.

1 Pet. 2. 25.

^l ch. 2. 20.

& 3. 6, 23.

^m Heb.

place to lie

down in.

ⁿ Ps. 79. 7.

7 All that found them have ⁿdevoured them:

Section I. 1. 2—28. Necessity of the deliverance of Israel.

2—5. Babylon is destroyed and Israel returns to Zion.

2. "Declare ye." Comp. ch. iv. 5, 6.

"a standard," i. e. a beacon.

"Bel." See Isa. xlvi. 1.

"Merodach." A Babylonian deity whom Nebuchadnezzar addresses in his inscriptions as the "Great Lord," &c.

3. "the north." See ver. 9, and comp. ch. i. 14.

4. "In those days." Observe the indefinite character of the prophecy, and also the references to the Messianic prophecy (Isa. xi. 12—13.). That the whole has not yet been completely fulfilled is evident from the use of this chapter made by St. John in the Apocalypse. A "Babylon" has yet to be destroyed.

6—13. Israel has suffered under Babylon, now Babylon shall suffer from the God of Israel.

6. "lost sheep." Lost in exile, helpless as a flock of sheep to return.

"shepherds." See ch. ii. 8, &c.

7. "All that found them." Referring to the many assaults on Israel and Judah from Tiglath-Pileser till Nebuchadnezzar. See below, ver. 17.

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n ch. 49. 2, 3.
Zech. 11. 5.

o See ch. 2. 3.

Dan. 9. 16.

p Ps. 90. 1.
& 91. 1.

q Ps. 22. 4.

r Isai. 48. 20.
ch. 51. 6, 45.

Zech. 2. 6, 7.
Rev. 18. 4.

s ch. 15. 14.
& 51. 27.

ver. 3, 41.

t ver. 14, 29.

u Or,
destroyer.
u 2 Sam. 1. 22.

x Rev. 17. 16.

y Isai. 47. 6.

z Heb.
*big, or,
corpulent.*

z Hos. 10. 11.

4 Or, *neigh
as steeds.*

a ch. 25. 12.

b ch. 49. 17.

c ver. 9.
ch. 51. 2.

d ch. 49. 35.
ver. 29.

and ⁿ their adversaries said, ^o We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, ^p the habitation of justice, even the LORD, ^q the hope of their fathers.

8 ^r 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 ¶ ^s For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall ^t set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows *shall be* as of a mighty ^u expert man; ^v none shall return in vain.

10 And Chaldea shall be a spoil: ^x all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the LORD.

11 ^y Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage, because ye are grown ^z fat ^z as the heifer at grass, and ⁴ bellow as bulls;

12 your mother shall be sore confounded; she that bare you shall be 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, ^a but it shall be wholly desolate: ^b every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.

14 ^c Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye ^d that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD.

“We offend not.” See ch. ii. 3. The Babylonians are supposed to acknowledge that they were God’s instruments. Comp. Isa. xxxvi. 10.

8. “Remove.” An address repeated (ch. li. 6, 45.).

“as the he goats.” Israel is to be the first of the exiled nations to depart from Babylon.

9. “their arrows.” See Isa. xli. 2.

“none shall return,” i. e. each warrior shall do deadly execution.

11. “Because ye were glad.” The cause of the fall of Babylon was her pride and cruelty.

12. “your mother,” i. e. Babylon, represented as already devastated.

13. “it shall be wholly desolate.” See chs. xix. 8; xlix. 17.

14—16. The day of the Lord’s vengeance.

14. “for . . . sinned.” Refuting the assertion in ver. 7, “she hath given her hand,” i. e. she makes a signal of surrender. See Lam. v. 6.

JEREMIAH, L.

15 Shout against her round about: she hath ^e given her hand: her foundations are fallen, ^f her walls are thrown down: for ^g it is the vengeance of the LORD: take vengeance upon her; ^h as she hath done, do unto her.

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1 Chr. 29. 24.
2 Chr. 30. 8.
Lam. 5. 6.
Ezek. 17. 18.
f ch. 51. 58.
g ch. 51. 6, 11.
h Ps. 137. 8.
ver. 21.
Rev. 18. 6.
2 Or, *scythe*.
i Isai. 13. 14.
ch. 51. 9.

16 Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the ² sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword ⁱ they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land.

17 ¶ Israel is ^k a scattered sheep; ^l the lions have driven *him* away: first ^m the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this ⁿ Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones.

k ver. 6.
l ch. 2. 15.
m 2 Kin. 17. 6.
n 2 Kings 24.
10, 14.

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 ^o And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Ephraim and Gilead.

o Isai. 65. 10.
ch. 33. 12.
Ezek. 34. 13,
14.

20 In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, ^p 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 ^q whom I reserve.

p ch. 31. 34.
q Isai. 1. 9.

21 ¶ Go up against the land ³ of Merathaim, *even* ³ Or, *of the rebels*.

15. "as she hath done." See Ps. cxxxvii. 8.

16. "the oppressing sword." See ch. xxv. 38.

17—20. The iniquity of Israel is pardoned, and his punishment is over.

17. "a scattered sheep." The prophet returns to the subject of ver. 6.

"lions." See ch. ii. 15.

"hath devoured . . . broken his bones." The ruin of Samaria completed by Esarhaddon had not entirely destroyed God's kingdom. The dry bones of the house of Judah still remained for Nebuchadnezzar to crush.

19. "habitation," i. e. pasture. He is still thinking of the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

20. "iniquity . . . sins." See ch. xxxi. 34.

21—23. The crushing of the hammer of the earth.

21. "Merathaim." Lit. "Double Rebellion." An enigmatic name

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against it, and against the inhabitants of ^r ² Pekod : waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the LORD, and do ^s according to all that I have commanded thee.

^r Ezek. 23. 23.

² Or,
Visitation.

^s See 2 Sam. 16. 11.

² Kin. 18. 25.

² Chr. 36. 23.

Isai. 10. 6.

& 44. 28.

& 48. 14.

ch. 34. 22.

^t ch. 51. 54.

^u Isai. 14. 6.

ch. 51. 20.

^x ch. 51. 8.

31, 34, 57.

Dan. 5. 30,

31.

22 ^t A sound of battle *is* in the land, and of great destruction.

23 How is "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, ^x and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD.

^v Isai. 13. 5.

25 The LORD hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth ^v the weapons of his indignation: for this *is* the work of the Lord GOD of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans.

³ Heb. *from the end.*

⁴ Or,
tread her.

^z Ps. 22. 12.

Isai. 34. 7.

ch. 46. 21.

^a ch. 48. 44.

ver. 31.

^b ch. 51. 10,

11.

26 Come against her ³ from the utmost border, open her storehouses: ⁴ cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left.

27 Slay all her ^z bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of ^a their visitation.

28 The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, ^b to declare in Zion the

implying the rebellious spirit of Babylon. She was of old rebellious against Assyria, and is so now against God (see ver. 24.).

"Pekod." Known to us from Sennacherib's records as being in the neighbourhood of Nabathæa. That the word is used enigmatically cannot be doubted. See margin.

23. "hammer." See ch. xxiii. 29.

24—28. The sudden character of the destruction of Babylon, and of the release of Israel.

24. "a snare." See Isa. xlv. 1, referring to the surprise effected by Cyrus.

"and thou wast not aware," i. e. without knowing it.

25. "his armoury." God is spoken of here as the God of armies, sending forth His different weapons against the doomed city. See Ps. vii. 12, 13.

26. "open her storehouses." See Isa. xlv. 3.

27. "her bullocks." See Isa. xxxiv. 6, 7. He means of course the Babylonian heroes.

"their day . . . the time." See ch. xlvi. 21.

28. "The voice of them." Lit. "Hark! men fly," &c. These are the persons whom Isaiah sees speeding over the mountains towards Zion (Isa. lii. 7.).

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vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of his temple. Before
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29 Call together the archers against Babylon: ^c all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape: ^d recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: ^e for she hath been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel.

30 ^f 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* ² most proud, saith the Lord GOD of hosts: for ^g thy day is come, the time *that* I will visit thee.

32 And ³ the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and ^h I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him.

33 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts; 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 ⁱ Their Redeemer *is* strong; ^k 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.

“vengeance.” Comp. ver. 15; ch. li. 11.

Section II. 29—li. 11. The contrast between Israel and Babylon, and God's dealings with each.

29—32. The pride of Babylon the cause of her fall.

29. “Call together,” &c. Repeated with slight additions from vv. 14, 15, 24.

30. “her young men.” See ch. xlix. 26.

31. “O thou most proud.” See margin. Pride is personified in this as well as in the mystic Babylon of the Apocalypse.

32. “him . . . his.” All refer to Babylon.

33—40. Further enlargement on the fall of Babylon. God redeems His people.

33. “The children of Israel.” See Isa. xlix. 24, 25.

34. “Their Redeemer.” See Isa. xlviii. 17.

“rest to the land,” i. e. the whole earth, as Isaiah explains (ch. xiv. 7, 8.).

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35 ¶ A sword *is* upon the Chaldeans, saith the LORD, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and ¹ upon her princes, and upon ^m her wise *men*.

36 A sword *is* ⁿ upon the ²³ liars; and they shall dote: a sword *is* upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed.

37 A sword *is* upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all ^o the mingled people that *are* in the midst of her; and ^p they shall become as women: a sword *is* upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed.

38 ^a A drought *is* upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it *is* the land of ^r graven images, and they are mad upon *their* idols.

39 ^s Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell *there*, and the owls shall dwell therein: ^t and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.

40 ^u 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 ^x Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

42 ^y They shall hold the bow and the lance: ^z they *are* cruel, and will not shew mercy: ^a 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: ^b anguish took hold of him, *and* pangs as of a woman in travail.

35. "A sword." These are all the different weapons which God summons from His opened armoury (ver. 25.). He assigns to each its respective duty.

36. "liars." False prophets, astrologers, and the like.

37. "mingled people." See ch. xxv. 20.

39. "the wild beasts," &c. See Isa. xiii. 20, 21.

40. "As God overthrew." See ch. xlix. 18.

41—46. The fate of Jerusalem and Edom awaits Babylon.

41. "Behold, a people . . . in travail." Repeated from ch. vi. 22—24.

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44 ° 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 ²appoint me the time? and ^dwho *is* that shepherd that will stand before me?

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c ch. 43. 19,
&c.

2 Or, *convent
me to plead?*
d Job 41. 10.
ch. 43. 19.

45 Therefore hear ye ° 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.

e Isai. 14. 24,
&c.
ch. 51. 11.

46 † At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.

† Rev. 18. 9.

CHAPTER LI.

1 The severe judgment of God against Babylon in revenge of Israel. 59 Jeremiah delivereth the book of this prophecy to Seraiah, to be cast into Euphrates, in token of the perpetual sinking of Babylon.

THUS saith the LORD; Behold, I will raise up against Babylon, and against them that dwell in the ²midst of them that rise up against me, ^aa destroying wind;

2 Heb. *heart*.

a 2 Kin. 19. 7.
ch. 4. 11.

2 and will send unto Babylon ^bfanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land: ^cfor in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about.

b ch. 15. 7.

c ch. 50. 14.

3 Against *him that bendeth* ^dlet the archer bend his bow, and against *him that lifteth himself up* in his brigandine: and spare ye not her young men; ^edestroy ye utterly all her host.

d ch. 50. 14.

e ch. 50. 21.

44. "Behold, he shall come up." Repeated from ch. xlix. 19—21. In each case the word Babylon is substituted for Edom or Jerusalem, and the reference to the Red Sea is omitted for obvious reasons.

CHAPTER LI.

1—6. From the troubles imminent on Babylon let Israel flee. She has not been forgotten.

1. "midst of them . . . me." See note on ch. xxv. 26.

2. "fanners." See ch. iv. 11, 12.

3. "him that bendeth," i.e. him that bends his bow in defence of Babylon.

"his brigandine." See ch. xlvi. 4.

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f ch. 49, 23.
& 50, 30, 37.

4 Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, ^f and *they that are thrust through* in her streets.

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.

g ch. 50, 8.
Rev. 18, 4.

6 ^g Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for ^h this is the time of the LORD's vengeance; ⁱ he will render unto her a recompence.

h ch. 50, 15,
28.

i ch. 23, 14.

k Rev. 17, 4.

7 ^k Babylon *hath been* a golden cup in the LORD's hand, that made all the earth drunken: ^l the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations ^m are mad.

l Rev. 14, 8.

m ch. 25, 16.

n Isai. 21, 9.
Rev. 14, 8.
& 18, 2.

o ch. 48, 20.
Rev. 18, 9,
11, 19.

p ch. 46, 11.

q Isai. 13, 14.

r Rev. 18, 5.

8 Babylon is suddenly ⁿ fallen and destroyed: ^o howl for her; ^p 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 ^q let us go every one into his own country: ^r for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up *even* to the skies.

s Ps. 37, 6.

t ch. 50, 28.

10 The LORD hath ^s brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us ^t declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God.

u ch. 46, 4.

v Heb. *pure*.

11 ^u Make ^v bright the arrows; gather the shields:

5. "forsaken," i.e. widows. See ch. iii. 14. Isa. l. 1.

"sin." Translated "offend" in ch. ii. 3. The word implies an act which incurs guilt.

"Holy One of Israel." A title of God frequently used by Isaiah, used here and in ch. l. 29 only by Jeremiah.

7—11. The breaking of the golden cup by the Medes.

7. "a golden cup." See ch. xxv. 15, 16. Rev. xvii. 4. The gold represents the outward wealthy appearance of Babylon. This cannot avail her.

8. "Babylon . . . is fallen." Isa. xxi. 9. Rev. xiv. 8; xviii. 2.

"howl for her." The prophet is on the verge of expressing his sympathy for the fall of Babylon, as he does for Moab (ch. xlviii. 36.), but he checks himself, remembering the warnings she has received (ver. 9.) and her persistence in covetousness (ver. 13.).

9. "let us go," &c. See Isa. xiii. 14.

10. "our righteousness," i.e. our pardon. The destruction of Babylon was the seal of Israel's forgiveness; so the overthrow of sin in the Christian's heart, and the forgiveness that follows is his "righteousness."

11. "Make bright," i.e. sharpen.

"gather the shields." Lit. "fill the shields with men."

^x the LORD hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: ^y for his device *is* against Babylon, to destroy it; because it *is* ^z the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of his temple.

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^x Isai. 13. 17.

ver. 28.

^y ch. 50. 45.

^z ch. 50. 28.

^a Nah. 2. 1.

& 3. 14.

² Heb. *liers*

in wait.

12 ^a Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon, make the watch strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the ² ambushes: for the LORD hath both devised and done that which he spake against the inhabitants of Babylon.

^b Rev. 17. 1,

15.

13 ^b O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, *and* the measure of thy covetousness.

14 ^c The LORD of hosts hath sworn ³ by himself, saying, Surely I will fill thee with men, ^d as with caterpillers; and they shall ⁴ lift ^e up a shout against thee.

^c ch. 49. 13.

Amos 6. 8.

³ Heb. *by*

his soul.

^d Nah. 3. 15.

⁴ Heb. *utter.*

^e ch. 50. 15.

^f Gen. 1. 1, 6.

ch. 10. 12,

&c.

^g Job 9. 8.

Ps. 104. 2.

Isai. 40. 22.

^h ch. 10. 13.

⁵ Or, *noise.*

ⁱ P's. 135. 7.

15 ^f He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and ^g hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding.

16 ^h When he uttereth *his* voice, *there is* a ⁵ multitude of waters in the heavens; and ⁱ 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 ^k Every man ⁶ is brutish by *his* knowledge; every founder is confounded by the graven image:

^k ch. 10. 14.

⁶ Or, *is more*

brutish than

to know.

“the Lord hath raised up.” See Isa. xiii. 17.

Section III. 12—58. Jehovah the avenger of His people in the fall of Babylon.

12—14. Make the attack, hasten the end of Babylon.

12. “upon the walls,” i.e. against the walls. The standard is the point at which the besiegers are to rally for their final assault.

“hath both devised.” See Isa. xviii. 14.

13. “many waters.” Referring to the numerous canals by which the Babylonian commerce was maintained. See Isa. viii. 7.

“the measure,” &c., i.e. there must be some limit to it, and now that limit has arrived.

14. “a shout.” The vintagers’ cry (see ch. xxv. 30 notes). Babylon is the winepress, and the hordes of Medes are the vintagers. Comp. Rev. xiv. 20.

15—19. The power of God contrasted with the helplessness of the idols.

15. “He hath made,” &c. The whole of this is repeated from ch. x. 12—16, where see notes.

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¹ for his molten image *is* falsehood, and *there is* no breath in them.

¹ ch. 50. 2.
^m ch. 10. 15.

18 ^m They *are* vanity, the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish.

ⁿ ch. 10. 16.

19 ⁿ 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.

^o Is. 10. 5, 15,
ch. 50. 23.
² Or, *in thee,*
or, *by thee.*

20 ^o Thou *art* my battle ax *and* weapons of war: for ² with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms;

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;

^p So 2 Chron.
36. 17.

22 with thee also will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces ^p 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.

^q ch. 50. 15,
29.

24 ^q 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.

^r Isai. 13. 2.
Zech. 4. 7.

25 Behold, I *am* against thee, ^r O destroying mountain, saith the LORD, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, ^s and will make thee a burnt mountain.

^s Rev. 8. 8.

20—24. The crushing of the battle-axe.

20. "Thou art my battle ax." The figure is nearly the same as in ch. l. 23. Babylon is the instrument with which God has broken in pieces kingdoms, &c., but now (ver. 24.) Babylon's own turn to be broken has come. The passage is most easily understood by leaving out the word "will" in verses 20—23.

25, 26. The overthrow of the destroying mountain.

25. "destroying mountain." See 2 Kings xxiii. 13, where the same words are translated "mount of corruption." The mountain in the prophet's mind was the large artificial mountain erected by Nebuchadnezzar to form his famous hanging gardens.

"a burnt mountain." It seems as if the prophet regards this mound as a volcano which has become extinct and can do no more mischief.

26 And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be ²desolate for ever, saith the LORD.

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^t ch. 50. 40.
² Heb.
*everlasting
desolations.*
^u Isai. 13. 2.
^x ch. 25. 14.
^y ch. 50. 41.

27 ^uSet ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, ^xprepare the nations against her, call together against her ^ythe kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillers.

28 Prepare against her the nations with ^zthe kings ^zver. 11. 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: for every purpose of the LORD shall be performed against Babylon, ^ato make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant.

^a ch. 50. 13,
39, 40.
ver. 43.

30 The mighty men of Babylon have forborn to fight, they have remained in *their* holds: their might hath failed; ^bthey became as women: they have burned her dwellingplaces; ^cher bars are broken.

^b Isai. 19. 16.
ch. 48. 41.
& 50. 37.
^c Lam. 2. 9.
Amos 1. 5.
Nah. 3. 13.
d ch. 50. 24.

31 ^dOne post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at *one* end,

32 and that ^ethe passages are stopped, and the reeds ^ech. 50. 38.

26. "a stone for foundations." Babylon though admirably fitted to become a commercial city has never become such since this great overthrow.

27—33. Babylon is compared to the threshing-floor upon which the prostrate sheaves are beaten out when harvest time is come.

27. "Set ye up a standard." See ver. 12.

"Ararat," &c., are names of three Armenian tribes.

"rough caterpillers." See ver. 14.

28. "Prepare," i.e. consecrate. See note on ch. i. 5.

29. "And the land shall tremble." Lit. "so the earth trembled," &c. See Ps. xviii. 7. The prophet looks upon the destruction as already past.

30. "have forborn," i.e. they can fight no more.

"they have burned," i.e. the invaders have burned all the houses in Babylon.

"her bars," i.e. the defences of Babylon. See Isa. xlv. 2.

31. "One post." Couriers run from various points of the fortresses and meet as they go to tell the king that the city is taken.

32. "passages." Implying the bridge, the tunnel, and the ferries.

"the reeds," i.e. the marshes which formed part of the defences of Babylon.

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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 ^flike a threshing-floor, ^g² it is time to thresh her: yet a little while, ^h and the time of her harvest shall come.

34 Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath ⁱdevoured 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 delicates, he hath cast me out.

35 ³The violence done to me and to my ⁴flesh be upon Babylon, shall the ⁵inhabitant of Zion say; and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say.

36 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, ^kI will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; ^land I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.

37 ^mAnd Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, ⁿan astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant.

38 They shall roar together like lions: they shall ⁶yell as lions' whelps.

39 In their heat I will make their feasts, and ^oI will make them drunken, 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 slaughter, like rams with he goats.

41 How is ^pSheshach taken! and how is ^qthe

^f Isai. 21. 10.

Amos 1. 3.

Mic. 4. 13.

^g Isai. 41. 15.

Hab. 3. 12.

^h Or, in the time that he thresheth her.

ⁱ Is. 17. 5, &c.

Hos. 6. 11.

Joel 3. 13.

Rev. 14. 15,

18.

^j ch. 50. 17.

^k Heb. My violence.

^l Or, remainder.

^m Heb. inhabitress.

ⁿ ch. 50. 34.

^o ch. 50. 38.

^p Isai. 13. 22.

ch. 50. 39.

Rev. 18. 2.

^q ch. 25. 9, 18.

^r Or, shake themselves.

^s ver. 57.

^t ch. 25. 26.

^u Isai. 13. 19.

ch. 49. 25.

Dan. 4. 30.

33. "it is time." The marginal version gives the best sense.

34—40. God hears Judah's cry for vengeance on Babylon.

34. "hath devoured me." See ch. l. 7.

"an empty vessel." Such was the state of Palestine at this time.

35. "The violence done to me." Lit. "My wrong." See Gen. xvi. 5.

36. "her sea." See Isa. xxi. 1. The whole plain of Babylon, intersected with canals and dikes.

39. "In their heat," i.e. while heated with wine.

"sleep." See Ps. lxxvi. 5.

40. "I will bring them down." See Isa. xxxiv. 6, 7.

41—46. The overthrow of Babylon and the freedom of the captives.

41. "Sheshach." See note on ch. xxv. 26.

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praise of the whole earth surprised! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations!

42 ^rThe sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof.

43 ^sHer cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth *any* son of man pass thereby.

44 ^tAnd 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, ^uthe wall of Babylon shall fall.

45 ^xMy 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 ^ylest your heart faint, and ye fear ^zfor the rumour that shall be heard 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 ^zI will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon: and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her.

48 Then ^athe heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for Babylon: ^bfor the spoilers shall come unto her from the north, saith the LORD.

49 ^cAs Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel

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^r See Isaiah
8, 7, 8.

^s ch. 50. 39,
40, ver. 29.

^t Isai. 46. 1.
ch. 50. 2.

^u ver. 58.

^x ver. 6,
ch. 50. 8.
Rev. 18. 4.

^z Or, *let not*.
^y 2 Kin. 19. 7.

^z ch. 50. 2.
ver. 52.

³ Heb.
visit upon.

^a Isai. 44. 23,
& 49. 13.
Rev. 18. 20.

^b ch. 50. 3, 41.
⁴ Or, *Both
Babylon is
to fall, O
ye slain of
Israel: and
with Baby-
lon, &c.*

“praise.” See ch. xlviii. 2.

42. “The sea.” Invading armies as Ps. xlvi. 3, 6.

44. “I will bring forth.” Bel shall give up all that he has unjustly gained, whether spoil or slaves.

“shall not flow.” The contrast between the “mount of corruption” (ver. 25.) and mount Zion (Isa. ii. 2.).

45. “go ye out,” &c. Reminding us of Lot’s deliverance.

46. “a rumour.” See ch. xlix. 14, *note*. They are not to fear (St. Matt. xxiv. 6.); the times will be troublous, full of home and foreign intrigues.

47—52. The joy occasioned by the fall of Babylon.

47. “Therefore.” The sign has been given (ver. 46.), “therefore” you will know when the end is nigh.

48. “the heaven and the earth.” Nature herself feels relief in the fall of Babylon. See Isa. xiv. 7, 8.

49. “As Babylon,” &c. The exact measure of the retribution.

- ^{B: fore}
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- ² Or, *the country.*
c ch. 44. 23.
- ^d Ps. 44. 15,
16. & 79. 4.
- ^e ver. 47.
- ^f ch. 49. 16,
Amos 9. 2,
Obad. 4.
- ^g ch. 50. 22.
- ^h Ps. 94. 1,
ch. 50. 29,
ver. 24.
- ⁱ ver. 33.
- to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all ²the earth.
- 50 ^c Ye that have escaped the sword, go away, stand not still: remember the LORD afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.
- 51 ^d 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, ^ethat I will do judgment upon her graven images: and through all her land the wounded shall groan.
- 53 ^fThough Babylon shall mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, *yet* from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the LORD.
- 54 ^g A sound of a cry *cometh* from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans:
- 55 because the LORD hath spoiled 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: ^hfor the LORD God of recompences shall surely requite.
- 57 ⁱAnd I will make drunk her princes, and her

“all the earth,” i.e. all the region of Babylonia.

50. “stand not still.” A reference to Lot's wife. Comp. Isa. lii. 11.

51. “We are confounded.” They cannot believe the prophet's report. How can God suffer His temple to lie waste? See Ps. lxxix. 1—7.

52. “her graven images.” The fall of the idols will be the proof that Jehovah is God.

53—58. The strength of the walls of Babylon cannot prevent the purpose of God from being accomplished.

53. “the height of her strength.” The walls of Babylon are said to have been fifty cubits in width, and two hundred in height; they enclosed a space larger than that which is occupied by London.

54. “A sound,” &c., i.e. “Hark! a cry.” See ch. xlvi. 3.

55. “the great voice.” No doubt the busy hum of men engaged in commerce.

“her waves.” See Isa. li. 15.

57. “And I will make drunk.” Such is the fulfilment of the pro-

wise *men*, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith ^k the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.

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^k ch. 46. 18.
& 48. 15.

58 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; ²¹ The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly ³ broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and ^m the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.

² Or,
*The walls
of broad
Babylon.*

¹ ver. 44.

³ Or, *made
naked.*

^m Hab. 2. 13.

59 ¶ The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, when he went ⁴ with Zedekiah the king of Judah into Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And *this* Seraiah was a ⁵ quiet prince.

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⁴ Or, *on the
behalf of.*

⁵ Or, *prince
of Menecha,
or, chief
chamber-
lain.*

60 So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, *even* 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 ⁿ none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be ⁶ desolate for ever.

ⁿ ch. 50. 3,
39. ver. 24.

⁶ Heb.
desolations.

63 And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, ^o that thou shalt bind

^o See Rev.
18. 21.

phcy (ch. xxv. 26, 27.). The king of Babylon is now in the prophet's mind among the things of the past.

58. "the people." See Hab. ii. 13.

"shall be." These futures should be taken as presents. All the labours of the people who have worked at the walls of Babylon are to no purpose.

"in the fire." All their work has been executed *for* the fire to consume.

First Appendix.

59—64. In the fourth year of Zedekiah the prophecy against Babylon was read in that city by Seraiah, and was thrown into the Euphrates.

59. "Seraiah." Brother of Baruch. See ch. xxxii. 12.

"the fourth year." See ch. xxviii. 1. The occasion of Zedekiah's journey was his oath of allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar (2 Chron. xxxvi. 13.).

"a quiet prince." Lit. prince of the resting-place, either chamberlain, or quarter-master.

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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: ^p and they shall be weary. Thus far *are* the words of Jeremiah.

^p ver. 58.

CHAPTER LII.

1 *Zedekiah rebelleth.* 4 *Jerusalem is besieged and taken.* 8 *Zedekiah's sons killed, and his own eyes put out.* 12 *Nebuzar-adan burneth and spoileth the city.* 24 *He carrieth away the captives.* 31 *Evil-merodach advanceth Jehoiachin.*

599.
^a 2 Kin. 24. 18.
² Heb.
reigned.

ZEDEKIAH *was* ^a one and twenty years old when he ² 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.

590.
^b 2 Kings 25.
1.—27.
ch. 30. 1.
Zech. 8. 19.

4 ¶ And it came to pass in the ^b ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it round about.

63. "cast it into the midst." A symbolical act intended to shew the certainty of the fulfilment of the prophecy. Comp. Rev. xviii. 21.

64. "they shall be weary." Repeated from ver. 58 by the editor of the prophecies to shew that they were the last words of Jeremiah. The writer of chs. li. 29—lii. 34, must always be unknown to us. That he was not Jeremiah is thought to be evident from the care with which he writes "Thus far," &c.

CHAPTER LII.

Second Appendix.

1—34. Summary of the principal events that occurred from the accession of Zedekiah to the death of Jehoiachin, based upon some larger work now lost.

1—11. The taking of Jerusalem.

The whole of this should be carefully compared with the parallel passages (2 Kings xxiv. 18—xxv. 30. Jer. xxxix. 1—10.).

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5 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

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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; (now the Chaldeans *were* by the city round about:) and they went by the way of the plain.

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 ^c 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.

^c ch. 32. 4.

10 ^d And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah.

^d Ezek. 12.13.

11 Then he ² put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in ³ chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in ⁴ prison till the day of his death.

² Heb. blinded.

³ Or, fetters.

⁴ Heb. house of the wards.

12 ¶ ^e Now in the fifth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, ^f which *was* the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, ^g came Nebuzar-adan, ^{5,6} captain of the guard, *which* ⁷ served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem,

^e Zech. 7. 5. & 8. 19.

^f See ver. 21.

^g ch. 39. 9.

⁵ Or, chief marshal.

⁶ Heb. chief of the executioners, or, slaughter-men. And so ver. 14, &c.

⁷ Heb. stood before.

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 *were* with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about.

15 ^h Then Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard

^h ch. 33. 9.

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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 vinedressers and for husbandmen.

¹ ch. 27. 19.
^k See 1 Kings
7. 15, 23, 27,
50.

17 ⁱ Also the ^k pillars of brass that *were* in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brasen sea that *was* in the house of the LORD, the Chal-deans brake, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon.

¹ Ex. 27. 3.
² Kings 25.
14, 15, 16.

18 ¹ The caldrons also, and the ² shovels, and the snuffers, and the ³ bowls, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away.

² Or, in-
struments
to remove
the ashes.

³ Or, basons.

⁴ Or, censers.

19 And the basons, and the ⁴ firepans, and the bowls, and the caldrons, and the candlesticks, 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.

20 The two pillars, one sea, and twelve brasen bulls that *were* under the bases, which king Solomon had made in the house of the LORD: ^m ⁵ the brass of all these vessels was without weight.

^m 1 Kin. 7. 47.

⁵ Heb.
their brass.

21 And *concerning* the ⁿ pillars, the height of one pillar *was* eighteen cubits; and a ⁶ fillet of twelve cubits did compass it; and the thickness thereof *was* four fingers: *it was* hollow.

ⁿ 1 Kin. 7. 15.
² Kin. 25. 17.
² Chr. 3. 15.

⁶ Heb.
thread.

22 And a chapter of brass *was* upon it; and the height of one chapter *was* five cubits, with network 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 ^o all the pomegranates upon the network *were* an hundred round about.

^o See 1 Kings
7. 20.

24 ¶ And ^p the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, ^q and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the ^r door:

^p 2 Kin. 25. 18.

^q ch. 21. 1.
& 21. 25.

^r Heb.
threshold.

17—23. The vessels of the Temple carried away.

24—30. Punishment of the principal offenders.

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25 he took also out of the city an eunuch, which had the charge of the men of war; and seven men of them that ²were near the king's person, which were found in the city; and the ³principal scribe of the host, who mustered the people of the land; and threescore men of the people of the land, that were found in the midst of the city.

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² Heb. saw the face of the king.

³ Or, scribe of the captain of the host.

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 captive out of his own land.

28 ^rThis is the people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried away captive: in the ^sseventh year ^tthree thousand Jews and three and twenty:

^r 2 Kin. 24. 2. 600.

^s See 2 Kings 24. 12.

^t See 2 Kings 21. 14.

590.

^u See ver. 12. ch. 39. 9.

⁴ Heb. souls. 585.

29 ^uin the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two ⁴persons:

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.

31 ¶ ^xAnd it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon in the first year of his reign ^ylifted up

562.

^x 2 Kin. 25. 27, 28, 29, 30.

^y Gen. 40. 13, 20.

28. "This is the people." Peculiar to this account. According to this there were three captivities, one in Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year, a second in his eighth, and a third in his twenty-third year. The seventh year corresponds with the reign of Jehoiachin (Jer. xxv. 1. 2 Kings xxiii. 36.), when was fulfilled the prophecy (ch. xxii. 28.), though the number of prisoners disagrees with that which is given in 2 Kings xxiv. 12, 14, 17. The second captivity is that which followed the capture of Jerusalem, and is the same as that which is mentioned in verse 12, though a different chronology is followed. The captivity in the twenty-third year is otherwise unknown to us.

31—34. The fate of the last king of the house of Judah.

31. Evil-merodach. See ch. xxvii. 7.

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the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison,

² Heb.
*good things
with him.*

32 and spake ² kindly unto him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that *were* with him in Babylon,

² 2 Sam. 9. 13.

33 and changed his prison garments: ² and he did continually eat bread before him all the days of his life.

³ Heb.
*the matter
of the day
in his day.*

34 And *for* his diet, there was a continual diet given him of the king of Babylon, ³ every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

THE
LAMENTATIONS

OF JEREMIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

THE book of Lamentations has been known by this name for many years both by Jewish and Christian writers. It consists of five elegies on the destruction of Jerusalem, and thence derives its name. The author is most probably the prophet Jeremiah, as may be inferred from the same forms of expression occurring which may be noticed in the prophet's writings, and also from the writer reproducing Scripture in precisely the same way as Jeremiah is observed to reproduce it. No indication is given of the date of composition of the book, but it seems to have been written at a time when the siege and the attending horrors of famine and pestilence were still fresh in the memory of the writer.

One striking peculiarity of the book must not be passed over unnoticed. In structure it is the most artificial of the books of the Bible. The first four chapters are written alphabetically, the verses beginning with the different letters of the alphabet taken in order, with the exception of two letters the orders of which in chs. ii.—iv. are inverted. The third chapter has another peculiarity, which is that it is written in triplets, each verse of which follows the alphabetical arrangement. In the fifth chapter the number of verses is the same as the number of letters in the alphabet, but the order is not alphabetical.

As is frequently the case in Hebrew poetry (see *note* on Jer. xlviii. 1.) the kernel of the whole book is to be found in the central section, ch. iii. 22—42, in which the prophet teaches all sufferers the true light in which they should regard their affliction.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 588.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The miserable estate of Jerusalem by reason of her sin.* 12 *She complaineth of her grief,* 18 *and confesseth God's judgment to be righteous.*

HOW doth the city sit solitary, *that was full of* ^a people! ^a *how* is she become as a widow! she *that* ^b *was* great among the nations, *and* ^b *princess* among the provinces, *how* is she become tributary!

2 She ^c weepeth sore in the ^d night, and her tears *are* on her cheeks: ^e among all her lovers ^f she hath none to comfort *her*: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies.

3 ^g Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and ² because of great servitude: ^h she dwelleth among the heathen, 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 ⁱ are the chief, her enemies prosper; for the LORD hath afflicted her ^k for the multitude of her transgressions: her ^l children are gone into captivity before the enemy.

^a Isai. 47. 7, 8.
^b Ezra 4. 20.
^c Jer. 13. 17.
^d Job 7. 3.
^e Ps. 6. 6.
^f Jer. 4. 30.
& 30. 14.
^g Jer. 52. 17.
^h Heb. for
the great-
ness of ser-
vitude.
ⁱ Deut. 28.
64, 65.
ch. 2. 9.
^j Deut. 28.
43, 44.
^k Jer. 30. 14,
15. Dan. 9.
7, 16.
^l Jer. 52. 28.

CHAPTER I.

1—11. Lamentations of the prophet on the fall of Jerusalem.

1. "How." See Isa. i. 21.

"sit." The position of grief, as Isa. xlvii. 1.

"a widow." Comp. Isa. liv. 4. Jer. iii. 14.

"tributary," or, subject to forced labour, as appears from ver. 3.

2. "her lovers." See Jer. iv. 30; below, ver. 19. They now shew how heartless their love was.

3. "because of affliction," i. e. to escape from it. As many of the inhabitants of Judah had fled as were able to do so.

"she dwelleth." Thus is fulfilled Deut. xxviii. 64.

"the straits," i. e. narrow places where the fugitives had endeavoured to hide.

4. "The ways of Zion," i. e. the roads leading to Jerusalem, for which Zion is placed as equivalent, are all filled with mourners, as Jer. xli. 5, 6.

"her priests." They now see the result of their opposition to the counsels of Jeremiah, and to the will of God.

5. "are the chief." Lit. "have become the head." See Deut. xxviii. 44. Jer. xliii. 21.

"prosper." Lit. "rest." They have no further object in view.

LAMENTATIONS, I.

6 And from the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed: her princes are become like harts *that* find no pasture, and they are gone without strength before the pursuer.

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7 Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her ²pleasant 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.

² Or,
desirable,
ver. 10.

8 ^mJerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she ³is removed: all that honoured her despise her, because ⁿthey have seen her nakedness: yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward.

^m 1 Kin. 8. 46.

9 Her filthiness *is* in her skirts; she ^oremembereth not her last end; therefore she came down wonderfully: ^pshe had no comforter. O LORD, behold my affliction: for the enemy hath magnified *himself*.

³ Heb. *is become a removing, or, wandering.*
ⁿ Jer. 13. 22, 26.
Ezek. 16. 37.
& 23. 24.
Hos. 2. 10.

10 The adversary hath spread out his hand upon ^qall her ⁴pleasant things: for she hath seen *that* ^rthe heathen entered into her sanctuary, whom thou didst command *that* ^sthey should not enter into thy congregation.

^o Deut. 32. 29.
Isai. 47. 7.
^p ver. 2, 17, 21.
^q ver. 7.

11 All her people sigh, ^tthey seek bread; they have given their pleasant things for meat ⁵to relieve the soul: see, O LORD, and consider; for I am become vile.

^r Jer. 51. 51.
^s Deut. 23. 3.
Neh. 13. 1.
^t Jer. 38. 9.
& 52. 6.
ch. 2. 12.
& 4. 4.
⁵ Or, *to make the soul to come again.*

6. "beauty." See Ps. xcvi. 9.

7. "days of old." Such as the times of David and Solomon.

"mock." The invaders and the neighbouring tribes mocked at the destruction of the Temple, thinking that the God of Israel was destroyed as well.

"at her sabbaths," i. e. while she keeps her Sabbaths (Lev. xxvi. 34.). 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.

8. "become removed." More probably, "unclean" (see ver. 17.).

9. "her skirts." See Jer. xiii. 22. To touch the skirts of an unclean person was to contract defilement (see Lev. v. 3.).

"her last end." The prophecy (Jer. v. 31.) is now fulfilled (comp. Isa. xlvii. 7.).

"came down." See Isa. xlvii. 1.

"O Lord." Jerusalem interrupts with this prayer the meditation of Jeremiah. She looks upon Babylon as typified by Egypt, and prays God to help her now as He did then. Exod. iii. 7.

10. "her pleasant things," i. e. the precious treasures of Jerusalem. Jeremiah resumes his meditation in this verse.

"whom thou didst command." See Deut. xxiii. 3.

11. "see, O Lord." Jerusalem briefly continues the strain of her prayer in ver. 9.

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12 ¶² *Is it* nothing to you, all ye that ³ pass by? behold, and see ⁴ 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.

² Or, It is nothing.

³ Heb. *pass by the way?*

⁴ Dan. 9. 12.

^x Ezek. 12. 13. & 17. 20.

13 From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaieth against them: he hath ^x spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back: he hath made me desolate *and* faint all the day.

^y Deut. 28. 48.

14 ^y 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.

^z Isai. 63. 3. Rev. 14. 19. 20. & 19. 15.

⁴ Or, *the wine-press of the virgin, &c.*

^a Jer. 13. 17. & 14. 17. ch. 2. 18.

^b ver. 2, 9.

⁵ Heb. *bring back.*

^c Jer. 4. 31.

^d ver. 2, 9.

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: ^z the Lord hath trodden ⁴ the virgin, the daughter of Judah, *as* in a winepress.

16 For these *things* I weep; ^a mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because ^b the comforter that should ⁵ relieve my soul is far from me: my children are desolate, because the enemy prevailed.

17 ^c Zion spreadeth forth her hands, *and* ^d *there is* none to comfort her: the LORD hath commanded concerning Jacob, *that* his adversaries *should be*

12—22. The complaint of Jerusalem.

12. "Is it nothing to you." Lit. "not to you," or "not on your account." There is no question. The meaning is "weep not for yourselves all ye that pass by, but weep for me." See our Saviour's application of the text (St. Luke xxiii. 28.).

13. "From above," i. e. from heaven.

14. "The yoke," &c., i. e. transgression is punished with a heavy yoke so fast tied around the neck that it cannot be thrown off.

"the Lord." Observe that the name Jehovah or the Lord is frequently dropped in Lamentations in favour of the other word Lord, which means "Master." It seems as if the prophet considered God's covenant at an end, and no longer dared to address God by the name under which He revealed Himself.

15. "hath trodden down," i. e. has slighted.

"an assembly." A religious festival like the convocation mentioned in Lev. xxiii. 2. At this feast the young of Jerusalem are trampled as in a winepress.

17. "Zion spreadeth forth," i. e. in prayer, as in Isa. i. 15. This verse is a meditation of Jeremiah's; in the next verse Jerusalem resumes her supplication.

LAMENTATIONS, II.

round about him : Jerusalem is as a menstruous woman among them.

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18 ¶ The LORD is ^e righteous ; for I have ^f rebelled against his ² commandment : hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow : my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.

^e Neh. 9. 33.
Dan. 9. 7. 14.
^f 1 Sam. 12.
14, 15.
² Heb. *mouth*.

19 I called for my lovers, *but* ^g they deceived me : my priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city, ^h while they sought their meat to relieve their souls.

^g ver. 2.
Jer. 30. 14.

^h ver. 11.

20 Behold, O LORD ; for I *am* in distress : my ⁱ bowels are troubled ; mine heart is turned within me ; for I have grievously rebelled : ^k abroad the sword bereaveth, at home *there is* as death.

ⁱ Job 30. 27.
Isai. 16. 11.
Jer. 4. 19.
& 48. 36.
ch. 2. 11.
Hos. 11. 8.

21 They have heard that I sigh : ^l *there is* none to comfort me : all mine enemies have heard of my trouble ; they are glad that thou hast done *it* : thou wilt bring ^m the day *that* thou hast ³ called, and they shall be like unto me.

^k Deut. 32. 25.
Ezek. 7. 15.
^l ver. 2.

^m Isai. 13. &c.
Jer. 46. &c.

22 ⁿ 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 ^o my heart *is* faint.

³ Or, *pro-claimed*.
ⁿ Ps. 109. 15.

^o ch. 5. 17.

CHAPTER II.

1 *Jeremiah lamenteth the misery of Jerusalem.* 20 *He complaineth thereof to God.*

HOW hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, ^a *and* cast down ^a Matt. 11. 23.

18. "The Lord is righteous." Jerusalem now confesses her guilt. See Jer. xxii. 23.

19. "my lovers." See ver. 2.

20. "Behold, O Lord." This verse rests upon Jer. vi. 11 ; xviii. 21. Deut xxxii. 25.

21. "there is none." The enemies have heard of the comfortless state of Jerusalem.

"thou hast called," or, hast proclaimed. See Jer. xxv. 18—26.

22. "as thou hast done unto me." Thou hast fulfilled Thy prophecy respecting the destruction of Jerusalem (Mic. iii. 12.), wilt Thou not fulfil the other prophecies ?

CHAPTER II.

1—10. The judgments which have fallen upon Zion are described.

1. "covered," i. e. overclouded. She was like a star (Num. xxiv. 17.), now none can see her "beauty." See Isa. lxiv. 11.

LAMENTATIONS, II.

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from heaven unto the earth ^b the beauty of Israel, and remembered not ^c his footstool in the day of his anger!

b 2 Sam. I. 19.

c 1 Chr. 23. 2.
Ps. 99. 5.
& 132. 7.

d ver. 17, 21,
ch. 3. 43.

² Heb. *made to touch.*

e Ps. 89. 33.

2 The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, ^d and hath not pitied: he hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of the daughter of Judah; he hath ² brought *them* down to the ground: ^e he hath polluted the kingdom and the princes thereof.

f Ps. 74. 11.

g Ps. 89. 46.

3 He hath cut off in *his* fierce anger all the horn of Israel: ^f he hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy, ^g and he burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, *which* devoureth round about.

h Isai. 63. 10.
ver. 5.

i Heb. *all the desirable of the eye.*

j Ezek. 24. 25.

4 ^h He hath bent his bow like an enemy: he stood with his right hand as an adversary, and slew ³ⁱ all *that were* pleasant to the eye in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion: he poured out his fury like fire.

k ver. 4.

Jer. 30. 14.

l 2 Kin. 25. 9.
Jer. 52. 13.

5 ^k The Lord was as an enemy: he hath swallowed up Israel, ^l he hath swallowed up all her palaces: he hath destroyed his strong holds, and hath increased in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation.

m Ps. 89. 12.
& 89. 40.

Isai. 5. 5.

n Or, *hedge.*

6 And he hath violently ^m taken away his ⁴ taber-

“footstool.” The Ark or the Mercy-seat, where God’s special Presence was.

2. “not pitied;” but dealt with her in just the reverse manner. A favourite figure with Jeremiah.

“polluted.” See Ps. lxxxix. 39.

3. “all the horn,” i. e. all power of further resistance. See Jer. xlviii. 25.

“his right hand.” This which used to gain them such glorious victories has now become their enemy. See Isa. lxiii. 10.

4. “all that were.” The marginal version is preferable.

“tabernacle.” Used here of the houses in Jerusalem, as in Isa. liv. 2.

“poured out.” See Ps. lxxix. 6. Jerusalem suffers as Jeremiah had foretold (ch. ix. 25, 26.) the fate of those who were false to God.

5. “an enemy.” See last verse.

“his strong holds.” He uses the masculine because the population of Israel is intended.

“mourning and lamentation.” See Isa. xxix. 2.

6. “he hath violently,” &c. The meaning of this verse depends upon the sense in which we take the word tabernacle. The Authorised Version

LAMENTATIONS, II.

nacle, ^a as *if it were of* a garden: he hath destroyed his places of the assembly: ^o the LORD hath caused the solemn feasts and sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion, and hath despised in the indignation of his anger the king and the priest.

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ⁿ Isai. 1. 8.
^o ch. 1. 4.
Zeph. 3. 18.

7 The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary, he hath ² given up into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces; ^p they have made a noise in the house of the LORD, as in the day of a solemn feast.

² Heb.
shut up.
^p Ps. 74. 4.

8 The LORD hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion: ^q he hath stretched out a line, he hath not withdrawn his hand from ³ destroying: therefore he made the rampart and the wall to lament; they languished together.

^q 2 Kin. 21. 13.
Isai. 34. 11.
³ Heb. *sweat-*
lowing up.

9 Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and ^r broken her bars: ^s her king and her princes *are* among the Gentiles: ^t the law *is* no more; her ^u prophets also find no vision from the LORD.

^r Jer. 51. 20.
^s Deut. 28. 36.
² Kin. 24. 15.
& 25. 7.
ch. 1. 3.
& 4. 20.

10 The elders of the daughter of Zion ^x sit upon the ground, *and* keep silence: they have ^y cast up dust upon their heads; they have ^z girded themselves with sackcloth: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground.

^t 2 Chr. 15. 3.
^u Ps. 74. 9.
Ezek. 7. 26.
^x Job 2. 13.
Isai. 3. 26.
ch. 3. 28.
^y Job 2. 12.
^z Isai. 15. 3.
Ezek. 7. 18.
& 27. 31.

11 ^a Mine eyes do fail with tears, ^b my bowels are troubled, ^c my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people;

^a Ps. 6. 7.
ch. 3. 48, &c.
^b ch. 1. 20.
^c Job 16. 13.
Ps. 22. 14.

apparently refers to Isa. i. 8, and looks upon Jerusalem as a solitary shed left in a garden with which God has dealt more hardly than He should. It is better to take the word to mean "an enclosure," and therefore as God's enclosure, Judah would be meant. God has treated Judah not as if she had been specially dedicated to Him, but as a common garden.

7. "made a noise," i. e. a shout of triumph.

8. "a line." God punishes by measure the sins which man commits without measure. For the metaphor see Isa. xxxiv. 11.

"languished together," i. e. the rampart and the wall sympathize with each other on their approaching destruction.

9. "the law." Lit. without any revelation. This describes the condition of Judah in Babylon. Yet a glowing hope has been held out to them for the future. Jer. iii. 16; xxxi. 31—34.

11—14. No human comfort can be discovered.

11. "my liver." See Prov. vii. 23. The loss of the liver implies the loss of all joy whatever.

"the destruction," &c. See Jer. vi. 14.

LAMENTATIONS, II.

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d ver. 19.
ch. 4, 4.
2 Or, faint.

because ^d the children and the sucklings ² 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 mothers' bosom.

13 What thing shall I take to witness for thee? ^e what thing shall I liken to thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? what shall I equal to 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 ^f prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee: and they have not ^g discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment.

15 ^h All that pass ³ by ⁱ clap *their* hands at thee; they hiss ^k and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, *saying*, *Is* this the city that *men* call ^l The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?

16 ^m All thine enemies have opened their mouth against thee: they hiss and gnash the teeth: they say, ⁿ We have swallowed *her* up: certainly this *is* the day that we looked for; we have found, ^o we have seen *it*.

17 The LORD hath done *that* which he had ^p devised; he hath fulfilled his word that he had commanded in the days of old: ^q he hath thrown down, and hath not pitied: and he hath caused *thine*

e ch. 1, 12.
Dan, 9, 12.

f Jer. 2, 8. &
5, 31. & 14,
14. & 23, 16.
& 27, 14. &
29, 8, 9.
Ezek. 13, 2.
g Isai. 58, 1.

h 1 Kin. 9, 8.
Jer. 18, 16.
Nah. 3, 19.

i Heb. *by
the ways.*
j Ezek. 25, 6.
k 2 Kin. 19, 21.
Ps. 44, 14.

l Ps. 48, 2.
& 50, 2.
m Job 16, 9, 10.
Ps. 22, 13.
ch. 3, 46.
n Ps. 56, 2.
o Ps. 35, 21.

p Lev. 26, 16,
&c. Deut.
28, 15, &c.

q ver. 2.

12. "soul poured out," i. e. as the poor children die on their mothers' laps.

13. "take to witness," i. e. what comfort can I promise to you?

"liken," what similar case occurs?

"who can heal thee?" Comp. Jer. xxx. 12.

14. "false burdens." Prophecies, such as those in Jer xxiii. 36.

15, 16. The mockings of the enemy.

15. "hiss." See Jer. xix. 8.

"wag their head." Ps. xxii. 7.

16. "have opened their mouth," i. e. in triumph.

17—19. The prophet addresses Jerusalem and tries to comfort her by turning her thoughts to God.

17. "The Lord hath done." This is worked out more fully in ch. iii. 22—40. Here he directs her to God as the only comforter.

"days of old." Such prophecies as those in Lev. xxvi. Deut. xxviii., which had been so frequently cited by Jeremiah.

LAMENTATIONS, III.

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 thine 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 thou hast done this. Shall the women eat their fruit, and children 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 nor remained: those that I have swaddled and brought up hath mine enemy consumed.

Before
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r Ps. 38. 16.
& 89. 42.
s ver. 8.

t Jer. 14. 17.
ch. 1. 16.

u Ps. 119. 147.

x Ps. 62. 8.

y ver. 11.

z Isai. 51. 20.
ch. 4. 1.
Nah. 3. 10.

a Lev. 26. 29.
Deut. 28. 53.
Jer. 19. 9.
ch. 4. 10.
Ezek. 5. 10.

b Or, swaddled with their hands?

b ch. 4. 13, 16.

c 2 Chr. 36. 17.

d ch. 3. 43.

e Ps. 31. 13.
Jer. 6. 25.
& 46. 5.

f Hos. 9. 12, 13.

CHAPTER III.

1 The faithful bewail their calamities. 22 By the mercies of God they nourish their hope. 37 They acknowledge God's justice. 55 They pray for deliverance, 64 and vengeance on their enemies.

I AM the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath.

18. "Their heart," i. e. of the men of Jerusalem. Though calling them to prayer, he looks upon his orders as already obeyed.

"O wall," i. e. the persons standing upon the wall, as Isa. xiv. 31.

19. "lift up thy hands," i. e. in prayer.

20—22. The prayer of the people reminding God who they are to whom He has awarded so awful a portion.

20. "to whom," i. e. we are Thy people to whom Thou didst make Thy promises. Comp. Jer. xix. 9. Deut. xxviii. 57.

22. "my terrors," &c., i. e. Magor-missabib, as Jer. xx. 3. It seems a feast-day for fire, sword, and famine, now that they prey on Jerusalem.

CHAPTER III.

1—18. A Man laments the bitter affliction under which he is suffering.

1. "the man." This "man" speaks of himself in the plural (vv. 22,

LAMENTATIONS, III.

Before
CHRIST
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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.

^a Job 16. 8.

^b Ps. 51. 8.

Isai. 38. 13.

Jer. 50. 17.

4 ^a My flesh and my skin hath he made old ; he hath ^b broken my bones.

5 He hath builded against me, and compassed *me* with gall and travel.

^c Ps. 88. 5, 6.
& 143. 3.

6 ^c He hath set me in dark places, as *they that be* dead of old.

^d Job 3. 23.

& 19. 8.

Hos. 2. 6.

7 ^d He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out : he hath made my chain heavy.

^e Job 30. 20.

Ps. 22. 2.

8 Also ^e when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer.

9 He hath inclosed my ways with hewn stone, he hath made my paths crooked.

^f Job 10. 16.

Isai. 38. 13.

Hos. 5. 14.

& 13. 7, 8.

^g Hos. 6. 1.

10 ^f 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 ^g pulled me in pieces : he hath made me desolate.

^h Job 7. 20.

& 16. 12.

Ps. 38. 2.

12 He hath bent his bow, and ^h set me as a mark for the arrow.

ⁱ Job 6. 4.

² Heb. *sons*.

13 He hath caused ⁱ the ² arrows of his quiver to enter into my reins.

and 40—47.). It is the prophet who speaks, looking upon himself as the representative of the Jewish people.

“his wrath,” i. e. God’s anger, as appears from ver. 19.

2. “not into light.” He has experienced the awful character of “the day of the Lord.” Amos v. 18.

4. “broken my bones.” See Isa. xxxviii. 13.

5. “builded against me.” He compares himself to a besieged city.

“gall.” See Jer. viii. 14.

6. “dark places.” See Ps. cxliii. 3.

7. “I cannot get out.” See Ps. lxxxviii. 8.

8. “he shutteth out.” This is the most painful part of his affliction. When he prays he seems to receive no answer. Notice the answer that he receives in the quieting thoughts (vv. 22—41.).

9. “hewn stone.” It seems to him as if, so far from hearing him, God had placed all manner of difficulties in his way.

10. “bear . . . lion.” Frequent epithets of enemies. God seems to have turned against him.

12. “his bow.” See Ps. vii. 12.

“a mark.” Comp. Job vii. 20 ; xvi. 12. Note the frequent reminiscences of Job.

LAMENTATIONS, III.

- 14 I was a ^kderision to all my people; and ^ltheir song all the day.
- 15 ^mHe hath filled me with ²bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.
- 16 He hath also broken my teeth ⁿwith gravel stones, he hath ³covered me with ashes.
- 17 And thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgot ⁴prosperity.
- 18 ^oAnd I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD:
- 19 ⁵remembering mine affliction and my misery, ^pthe wormwood and the gall.
- 20 My soul hath *them* still in remembrance, and is ⁶humbled in me.
- 21 This I ⁷recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.
- 22 ¶ ^q*It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.*
- 23 *They are new* ^revery morning: great is thy faithfulness. ^rIsai. 33. 2.
- 24 The LORD *is* my ^sportion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. ^sPs. 16. 5. & 73. 26. & 119. 57. Jer. 10. 16.
- 25 The LORD *is* good unto them that ^twait for him, to the soul *that* seeketh him. ^tPs. 130. 6. Isai. 30. 18. Mic. 7. 7.
- 26 *It is good that a man* should both hope ^uand quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD. ^uPs. 37. 7.

-
14. "derision." See Jer. xx. 7.
16. "broken . . . gravel." Entirely metaphorical. God seems to be giving him stones instead of bread (Ps. cii. 9. St. Matt. vii. 9.).
17. "thou hast removed." Ps. lxxxix. 34.
18. "I said," i. e. I thought that I had nothing more to hope for from God. Observe he uses the word LORD.
- 19—39. Not discouraged by his affliction he utters a short prayer to God, and meditates on His infinite mercy and might.
19. "remembering." It is better to translate this "remember." His humility leads him to utter this short prayer, and the relief which prayer offers to his feelings leads him to hope.
22. "It is of the Lord's mercies," i. e. it is a proof of His mercy that we are not, &c.
23. "They are new," i. e. fresh proofs of mercy appear every morning.
24. "my portion." Ps. xvi. 5.
25. "them that wait." Patient expectation is one condition of help.
26. "quietly wait." See Ps. lxii. 1, 2, 5—8, 11, 12.

Before
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^k Jer. 20. 7.

^l Job 30. 9.

Ps. 61. 12.

ver. 63.

^m Jer. 9. 15.

² Heb. bitter-
nesses.

ⁿ Prov. 20. 17.

³ Or, rolled
me in the
ashes.

⁴ Heb. good.

^o Ps. 31. 22.

⁵ Or,

Remember.

^p Jer. 9. 15.

⁶ Heb. bowed.

⁷ Heb. make
to return to
my heart.

^q Mal. 3. 6.

^r Isai. 33. 2.

^s Ps. 16. 5.
& 73. 26.
& 119. 57.

Jer. 10. 16.

^t Ps. 130. 6.

Isai. 30. 18.

Mic. 7. 7.

^u Ps. 37. 7.

LAMENTATIONS, III.

- Before
CHRIST
cir. 588.
- 27 ^x *It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.*
- ^x Ps. 94. 12. & 119. 71. 28 ^y *He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him.*
- ^y Jer. 15. 17. ch. 2. 10. 29 ^z *He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.*
- ^z Job 42. 6.
- ^a Isai. 50. 6. Matt. 5. 39. 30 ^a *He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach.*
- ^b Ps. 94. 14. 31 ^b *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.*
- ^c Ezek. 33. 11. Heb. 12. 10. 33 ^c *For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.*
- ² Heb. from his heart. 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 ³ the most High,*
- ³ Or, a superior. ^d Hab. 1. 13. 36 *to subvert a man in his cause, ^d the Lord ⁴ approveth not.*
- ⁴ Or, seeth not.
- ^e Ps. 33. 9. 37 ¶ *Who is he ^e that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?*
- ^f Job 2. 10. Isai. 45. 7. Amos 3. 6. 38 *Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not ^f evil and good?*

27. "for a man." Lit. for "the" man, i. e. the man spoken of in ver. 1, i. e. Jeremiah himself, who now profits by the correction which he received in his younger days (see Jer. xv. 10; xx. 7—18.). His trials are now far greater than they were at that time, and though he complains, he is now guilty of no impatience.

28. "He sitteth alone." This and the next two verses shew man the right way to bear trouble. He should sit apart, &c.

"he hath borne it," i. e. God has put the burden upon him.

29. "He putteth," i. e. let him bow his face to the ground beneath God's burden.

"if so be," i. e. perhaps there is hope.

30. "his cheek." Comp. Job xvi. 10. Isa. 1. 6. He must behave as a servant of God.

31. "will not cast off." See Ps. lxxvii. 7.

33. "willingly." See margin. If God's heart is love, then of course affliction must be a mark of His love, for everything, as is argued (ver. 38.), comes from Him whether it appear good or bad.

34. "To crush." The verb is placed for emphasis at the end of ver. 36.

36. "to subvert," i. e. to pervert justice.

"approveth not." Lit. "does not look upon" with approval.

37. "Who is he?" See Ps. xxxiii. 9.

38. "evil and good." See Isa. xlv. 7. Amos iii. 6. The mystery

LAMENTATIONS, III.

- 39 ^g Wherefore doth a living man ² complain,
^h a man for the punishment of his sins? Before
CHRIST
cir. 588.
- 40 Let us search and try our ways, and turn ^g again to the LORD. Prov. 19. 3.
2 Or,
murmur.
- 41 ⁱ Let us lift up our heart with *our* hands unto God in the heavens. h Mic. 7. 9.
i Ps. 86. 4.
- 42 ^k We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned. k Dan. 9. 5.
- 43 Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: ^l thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied. l ch. 2. 2, 17,
21.
- 44 Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, ^m that *our* prayer should not pass through. m ver. 8.
- 45 Thou hast made us *as* the ⁿ offscouring and refuse in the midst of the people. n 1 Cor. 4. 13.
- 46 ^o All our enemies have opened their mouths against us. o ch. 2. 16.
- 47 ^p Fear and a snare is come upon us, ^q desolation and destruction. p Isai. 24. 17.
Jer. 48. 43.
q Isai. 51. 19.
- 48 ^r Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people. r Jer. 4. 19.
& 9. 1. &
14. 17.
ch. 2. 11.
- 49 ^s Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission, s Ps. 77. 2.
ch. 1. 16.
- 50 till the LORD ^t look down, and behold from heaven. t Isai. 63. 15.
- 51 Mine eye affecteth ³ mine heart ⁴ because of all the daughters of my city. 3 Heb.
my soul.
4 Or, more
than all.

of the origin of evil is unsolved in Scripture. The Bible tells us how evil came into this world, but nothing more. This is implied by Jeremiah in ver. 39.

39. "his sins." If the fault is man's own, why should he complain?

40—54. Acknowledgment of sin, and complaint against the excessive bitterness of the enemy.

40. "to the Lord," i. e. Let us not cease from turning to Him till we find Him. See ver. 21.

41. "with our hands." Lit. "to our hands," i. e. while our hands are stretched up in prayer let our hearts be there as well.

42. "hast not pardoned." The sufferings of the present being a punishment for the sins of the past shew that the pardon is not complete (see Isa. xl. 1, 2.).

43. "Thou hast covered," i. e. Thou hast hid Thyself in Thine anger.

45. "offscouring . . . people." Implying the dispersion of Israel among the Gentiles.

46. "opened their mouths." See ch. ii. 16. Ps. xxxv. 21.

47. "Fear." Jer. xlviii. 43.

48. "daughter of my people." See ch. ii. 11.

51. "affecteth mine heart." His tears are so far from relieving his heart that they actually pain it.

LAMENTATIONS, III.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 588.

- 52 Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird,
without cause.
- 53 They have cut off my life ^x in the dungeon,
and ^y cast a stone upon me.
- 54 ^z Waters flowed over mine head; *then* ^a I said,
I am cut off.
- 55 ¶ ^b I called upon thy name, O LORD, out of
the low dungeon.
- 56 ^c Thou hast heard my voice: hide not thine
ear at my breathing, at my cry.
- 57 Thou ^d drewest near in the day *that* I called
upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.
- 58 O Lord, thou hast ^e pleaded the causes of my
soul; ^f thou hast redeemed my life.
- 59 O LORD, thou hast seen my wrong: ^g judge
thou my cause.
- 60 Thou hast seen all their vengeance *and* all
their ^h 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 ⁱ sitting down, and their rising
up; ^k I *am* their musick.
- u Ps. 35, 7, 19, & 63, 4, & 104, 3, & 119, 161.
x Jer. 37, 16, & 38, 6, 9, 10.
y Dan. 6, 17.
z Ps. 69, 2, & 124, 4, 5.
a Ps. 31, 22, Is. 38, 10, 11, ver. 18.
b Ps. 130, 1, Jonah 2, 2.
c Ps. 3, 4, & 6, 8, & 18, 6, & 66, 19, & 116, 1.
d Jam. 4, 8.
e Ps. 35, 1, Jer. 51, 36.
f Ps. 71, 23.
g Ps. 9, 4, & 35, 23.
h Jer. 11, 19.
i Ps. 139, 2.
k ver. 14.

52. "like a bird." Jeremiah speaks of the sufferings of the people as his own. What intense sympathy!

53. "They have cut off," i. e. they tried to cut off my life. What the "stone" refers to is unknown. It has been conjectured that after Jeremiah was thrown into the pit (Jer. xxxviii. 6.), they rolled a large stone over the opening, so that he might perish by starvation and suffocation.

54. "Waters flowed." Metaphorical for trouble (Ps. lxxix. 1, 2.). There was no water in the pit where Jeremiah was imprisoned.

"I am cut off." Isa. liii. 8.

55—66. Expression of hope, and prayer for deliverance.

55. "out of the low dungeon." See Ps. cxxx. 1. Jeremiah's prayer was answered, as he says (ver. 56.), by the kindness of Ebed-Melech. He makes this deliverance the ground for asking for a further share of God's inexhaustible mercies.

57. "Fear not." He remembered the promises made to him in the commencement of his ministry (Jer. i. 8, 17.).

58. "thou hast pleaded." See Ps. xxxv. 1.

59. "thou hast seen." What better ground for prayer than God's knowledge? If He did not know, what use would it be to pray to Him?

62. "the lips," i. e. the utterances of their lips.

63. "their musick," i. e. I am the object of their songs.

LAMENTATIONS, IV.

64 ¹Render unto them a recompence, O LORD, according to the work of their hands.

65 Give them ²sorrow of heart, thy curse unto them.

66 Persecute and destroy them in anger ^mfrom under the ⁿheavens of the LORD.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 588.
¹ Ps. 28. 4.
See Jer.
11. 20.
² Tim. 4. 14.
² Or,
*obstinacy
of heart.*
^m Deut. 25. 19.
Jer. 10. 11.
ⁿ Ps. 8. 3.

CHAPTER IV.

1 Zion bewaileth her pitiful estate. 13 She confesseth her sins. 21 Edom is threatened. 22 Zion is comforted.

HOW is the gold become dim! *how* is the most fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out ^ain the top of every street.

2 The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed ^bas earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!

3 Even the ²sea monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones: the daughter of my people *is become* cruel, ^clike the ostriches in the wilderness.

4 ^dThe tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: ^ethe 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 ^fembrace dunghills.

^a ch. 2. 19.

^b Isai. 39. 14.
Jer. 19. 11.
² Cor. 4. 7.

² Or, *sea
calves.*

^c Job 39. 14,
16.

^d Ps. 22. 15.

^e See chap.
2. 11, 12.

^f Job 24. 8.

64. "Render," &c. See Ps. xxviii. 4.

65. "sorrow of heart." Lit. perverseness.

66. "Persecute . . . them," &c. This passage must be explained upon the same principle as the so-called vindictive Psalms.

CHAPTER IV.

1—11. It is the great guilt of Judah which has brought upon her so severe a punishment.

1. "How is the gold." Metaphorical as in Isa. i. 22.

"stones of the sanctuary," or, the holy stones, referring to the precious stones in the High-priest's breast-plate. These are taken as a figure of the children of the priestly nation. Exod. xix. 6.

2. "sons of Zion." Explaining the metaphor in the last verse.

"esteemed," i. e. comparable.

"the potter." The prophet realizes his words (Jer. xix. 10, 11.).

3. "sea monsters." Most probably jackals. On the cruelty of the "ostrich" see Job xxxix. 13—17.

4. "the sucking child." He describes all the horrors of the famine during the second siege by Nebuchadnezzar (see ch. ii. 11, 12.).

LAMENTATIONS, IV.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 588.
Or,
iniquity.
Gen. 19. 25.

6 For the ² punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was ⁵ 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:

³ Heb.
darker than
blackness.
^h ch. 5. 10.
Joel 2. 6.
Nah. 2. 10.
ⁱ Ps. 102. 5.

8 their visage is ³ ^h blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: ⁱ their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.

⁴ Heb.
flow out.

9 *They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger*: for these ⁴ pine away, stricken through for *want of* the fruits of the field.

^k ch. 2. 20.
^l Isai. 49. 15.
^m Deut. 28. 57.
2 Kin. 6. 29.

10 ^k The hands of the ^l pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their ^m meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.

ⁿ Jer. 7. 20.
^o Deut. 32. 22.
Jer. 21. 14.

11 The LORD hath accomplished his fury; ⁿ he hath poured out his fierce anger, and ^o 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.

6. "punishment . . . greater." Because the guilt was greater, as was implied (Jer. v. 1.).

"in a moment." No lingering famine tortured those guilty cities; they were swallowed up in a moment by the fire from heaven.

"stayed." Lit. "moved round in a circle," i. e. no siege was laid to Sodom by human hands.

7. "Her Nazarites." This class of persons has not been heard of since (Amos ii. 11, 12.). There is no need to suppose that by this title the prophet intends "princes."

"polishing." Lit. that which is cut, i. e. their shape.

8. "skin cleaveth," i. e. you can see their bones through their skin.

10. "The hands." See ch. ii. 20.

11. "hath accomplished." He confesses that now all God's prophecies respecting the destruction of the rebellious city have been fulfilled. See Deut. xxxii. 22.

12—16. The guilt of the priests and prophets has been the cause.

12. "The kings of the earth." See Ps. xlviii. 1—5. The natural position of Jerusalem was exceedingly strong. The works were strengthened by David, Solomon, and Uzziah. That the fortress was considered impregnable is evident from the obstinate manner in which the city held out against Nebuchadnezzar.

LAMENTATIONS, IV.

13 ^p For the sins of her prophets, *and* the iniquities of her priests, ^q that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her,

14 they have wandered *as blind men* in the streets, ^r they have polluted themselves with blood, ² ^s so that men could not touch their garments.

15 They cried unto them, Depart ye; ³ *it is* ^t unclean; depart, depart, touch not: when they fled away and wandered, they said among the heathen, They shall no more sojourn *there*.

16 The ⁴ anger of the LORD hath divided them; he will no more regard them: ^u they respected not the persons of the priests, they favoured not the elders.

17 As for us, ^x our eyes as yet failed for our vain help: in our watching we have watched for a nation *that could not save us*.

18 ^y They hunt our steps, that we cannot go in our streets: our end is near, our days are fulfilled; for ^z our end is come.

19 Our persecutors are ^a swifter than the eagles of the heaven: they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 588.

p Jer. 5. 31.
& 6. 13. &
14. 14. &
23. 11, 21.
Ezek. 22. 26,
28.
Zeph. 3. 4.
q Matt. 23.
31, 37.
r Jer. 2. 34.
2 Or,
*in that they
could not
but touch.*
s Num. 19. 16.
2 Or, *ye
polluted.*
t Lev. 13. 45.
4 Or, *face.*
u ch. 5. 12.
x 2 Kin. 24. 7.
Isai. 29. 5.
& 30. 6, 7.
Jer. 37. 7.
Ezek. 21. 16.
y 2 Kings 25.
4, 5.
z Ezek. 7. 2,
3, 6.
Amos 8. 2.
a Deut. 28. 49.
Jer. 4. 13.

13. "the sins." See Jer. xxvi. 7—24, and notice his frequent denunciations of both prophets and priests (Jer. vi. 13—15.).

14. "they have wandered." Lit. they stagger, they are drunk with blood (Rev. xvii. 6.).

"polluted." See Isa. lix. 3.

"touch their garments." See note on ch. i. 9.

15. "They cried," i. e. men cried out to these murderous priests in the language of the leper (Lev. xiii. 45.), insinuating that their murders had made them as unclean as if they were leprous.

"they fled away." Apparently the meaning is that the priests and prophets fled from Jerusalem and wandered about in search of a residence, but even the heathen said "They shall no more," &c. (see Deut. xxviii. 65.).

16. "divided them," i. e. scattered them (see Deut. xxviii. 50.). The Lord is here identified with His instruments.

17—21. The people sinned also in trusting too much in man.

17. "our eyes . . . failed." See Ps. lxxix. 3. They failed from watching for their vain help.

"a nation." He refers to the hopes which were entertained in Jerusalem that Egypt would help them.

18. "They hunt," i. e. in spite of our hopes men follow us about.

19. "eagles." See Jer. iv. 13. It appears that vv. 18, 19, refer to various unsuccessful attempts made by people to escape from the blockade.

LAMENTATIONS, V.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 588.

^b Gen. 2. 7.
ch. 2. 9.

^c Jer. 52. 9.
Ezek. 12. 13.
& 19. 4, 8.

^d Like Eccles.
11. 9.

^e Jer. 25. 15,
16, 21.
Obad. 10.

^f Isa. 40. 2.

² Or, *Thine
iniquity.*

^g Ps. 137. 7.

³ Or, *carry
these captive
for thy sins.*

20 The ^b breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, ^c was taken in their pits, of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen.

21 ¶ ^d Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz; ^e the cup also shall pass through unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked.

22 ^f ² The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion; he will no more carry thee away into captivity: ^g he will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom; he will ³ discover thy sins.

CHAPTER V.

A pitiful complaint of Zion in prayer unto God.

^a Ps. 89. 50,
51.

^b Ps. 79. 4.
ch. 2. 15.

^c Ps. 79. 1.

^a REMEMBER, O LORD, what is come upon us: consider, and behold ^b our reproach.

2 ^c Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens.

3 We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows.

20. "The breath," &c. Their last hope was in their king. Was not the promise made to David? How can God break His oath?

"pits," i. e. pit-falls.

21, 22. For these sins Israel suffers now, hereafter her adversaries shall suffer.

21. "Rejoice," &c. Spoken in bitter mockery of the insulting Edomites (see Ps. cxxxvii. 7.).

"the cup." See Jer. xxv. 20, 21.

"naked," i. e. become completely disgraced.

22. "is accomplished." See Isa. xl. 2. He means that the time is close at hand. Observe the Messianic character of the passage (comp. Jer. l. 20.).

"he will visit thine iniquity." It is impossible to explain these words literally. As in the first clause of this verse he is speaking of Messianic times, so here we must suppose the overthrow of Edom to be the same as that mentioned in Isa. lxiii. 1—6, i. e. spiritual Edom.

CHAPTER V.

Prayer of Judah asking for restoration.

1. "our reproach." More fully explained below.

2—8. The reproach of Zion, the bitterness of servitude.

2. "inheritance," i. e. our territory is inhabited by foreigners. Probably strangers were brought to colonise Jerusalem, in the same way as the king of Assyria brought settlers to Samaria (2 Kings xvii. 24.).

3. "We are orphans," i. e. we are like orphans.

LAMENTATIONS, V.

- 4 We have drunken our water for money; our wood ² is sold unto us. Before
CHRIST
cir. 588.
- 5 ^{d 3} Our necks *are* under persecution: we labour, *and* have no rest. ² Heb.
*cometh for
price.*
- 6 ^e We have given the hand ^f to the Egyptians, *and* to the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread. ^d Deut. 28, 48.
Jer. 28, 14.
- 7 ^g Our fathers have sinned, *and* ^h are not; and we have borne their iniquities. ³ Heb. *On
our necks
are we per-
secuted.*
- 8 ⁱ Servants have ruled over us: *there is* none that doth deliver *us* out of their hand. ^e Gen. 24, 2.
Jer. 50, 15.
^f Hos. 12, 1.
^g Jer. 31, 21.
Ezek. 18, 2.
- 9 We gat our bread with *the peril of* our lives because of the sword of the wilderness. ^h Gen. 42, 13.
Zech. 1, 5.
- 10 Our ^k skin was black like an oven because of the ⁴ terrible famine. ⁱ Neh. 5, 15.
^k Job 20, 30.
Ps. 119, 83.
ch. 4, 8.
- 11 ¹ They ravished the women in Zion, *and* the maids in the cities of Judah. ⁴ Or, *terrors,
or, storms.*
- 12 Princes are hanged up by their hand: ^m the faces of elders were not honoured. ¹ Isai. 13, 16.
Zech. 14, 2.
^m Isai. 47, 6.
ch. 4, 16.
- 13 They took the young men ⁿ to grind, and the children fell under the wood. ⁿ Judg. 16, 21.
- 14 The elders have ceased from the gate, the young men from their musick.

4. "water . . . wood." We have got nothing that we can call our own, not even the simplest articles necessary for our daily life.

5. "Our necks." Lit. "we are persecuted upon the neck." "Upon the neck" implies subjugation, as in Josh. x. 24; and "persecute" implies the continued and forced hurry to which they were subject.

6. "given the hand," i. e. we have submitted (see Jer. l. 15.). Jeremiah compares the present servitude with the past.

7. "Our fathers," i. e. Manasseh, as appears from Jer. xv. 4.

8. "Servants," i. e. slaves of the conquerors are set over us.

9. "none that doth deliver." See Ps. vii. 3. A very interesting example of the way in which the prophet makes another's writing his own.

9—16. The misery which preceded their present state of servitude.

9. "We gat our bread." Such was the difficulty of obtaining food during Nebuchadnezzar's siege, that many were slain in their efforts.

10. "Our skin." See Deut. xxxii. 24, and above, ch. iv. 8.

12. "Princes." See Deut. xxi. 22, 23. They appear to have murdered them first and then maltreated their dead bodies.

13. "fell." Lit. stumbled, so great was the weight forced upon them. This was the state of Jerusalem immediately after the capture.

14. "The elders." See Lev. xix. 32.

"from the gate." All the cheery gossip of the old men seated at the city gate, as well as the music of the young has ceased.

"the young men." These had the heavy drudgery of a slave forced upon them.

LAMENTATIONS, V.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 588.

^o Job 19. 9.
Ps. 89. 39.

² Heb.

*The crown
of our head
is fallen.*

P ch. 1. 22.

^q Ps. 6. 7.

ch. 2. 11.

^r Ps. 9. 7. &

10. 16. & 29.

10. & 90. 2.

& 102. 12.

26. 27. &

145. 13.

Hab. 1. 12.

^s Ps. 45. 6.

^t Ps. 13. 1.

³ Heb.

*for length
of days?*

^u Ps. 80. 3.

7. 19.

Jer. 31. 18.

⁴ Or, *For wilt thou utterly reject us?*

15 The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning.

16 ^{o 2} The crown is fallen *from* our head: woe unto us, that we have sinned!

17 For this ^p our heart is faint; ^q 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, ^r remainest for ever; ^s thy throne from generation to generation.

20 ^t Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, *and* forsake us ³ so long time?

21 ^u Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.

22 ⁴ But thou hast utterly rejected us; thou art very wroth against us.

15. "The joy." See Jer. vii. 34.

16. "The crown." Alluding to the princely character of the nation. Gen. xlix. 10.

"we have sinned." See ver. 7.

17—18. The present state of Zion is a punishment for our sin.

17. "For this," i. e. on account of this punishment.

18. "Zion," taken as it is frequently to mean all Jerusalem. This is so desolate that the jackals prowl about without hindrance.

19—22. Prayer for deliverance.

19. "Thou, O Lord." See Ps. cii. 12. The eternity of God like His omniscience is a ground of prayer for deliverance. If He is eternal how can His kingdom cease?

20. "Wherefore dost thou," &c. See Ps. xiii. 1.

21. "Turn thou us." See Jer. xxxi. 18.

22. "But thou hast." See margin. Comp. Jer. xiv. 19.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

EZEKIEL.

INTRODUCTION.

JEREMIAH and Ezekiel were both of them priests as well as prophets ; and they both had the same prophetic burden to deliver,—the overthrow of the Levitical Covenant and the introduction of a higher Dispensation. As might be expected, there are numerous points of resemblance (some of a minute verbal kind) between their writings.¹

Yet the two prophets are strongly contrasted with each other in many ways.

Jeremiah resided at Jerusalem, from the thirteenth year of Josiah (B.C. 629) down to the bitter end (B.C. 588). During the whole of that time he knew, and proclaimed, that Jerusalem's doom was irrevocably decided ; yet the generation, which was to witness the terrible catastrophe, persisted in disbelieving his message. One warning after another was disregarded. The death of Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 26—30), the capture of Jerusalem in B.C. 606 (when Daniel was carried away captive), and its second capture in B.C. 599 (when Jeconiah with 10,000 of the principal citizens, Ezekiel among them, was carried away), made no impression on those who remained in the city. In their eyes Jeremiah was a timorous, unpatriotic, man ;—one, who had lost his faith in the promises made to David, and his reverence for “the Temple of the Lord” (Jer. vii. 4). The prophet continued in his work, upheld by Divine grace (ch. i. 18, 19) ; but never ceased to mourn with tenderest sympathy over “the wound of “the daughter of his people.” He stands before us almost as an impersonation of the Divine compassion.

With Ezekiel the case was very different. Familiar from his childhood with the sentence pronounced on Jerusalem by Jeremiah, he was carried away into Babylonia at the age of 25 (see on ch. i. 1). Thence he could turn his thoughts towards Jerusalem, and review its history with greater freedom from national and personal bias. After four years of such training (in B.C. 595) he received his call to the prophetic office. His character was one that was exactly fitted for the wants of that time. In the previous year (B.C. 596) the false prophet Hananiah had publicly foretold the downfall of Nebuchadnezzar's power, and a restoration of Jeconiah from Babylon (Jer. xxviii. 1—4), in direct contradiction to the words

¹ Compare, especially, Ezek. i. 4 with Jer. i. 14, iv. 6, vi. 1.

“ ii. 6, 7	“ i. 8, 17.
“ iii. 9	“ i. 18, vi. 27, xv. 20.
“ xi. 3 (xxiv. 2)	“ i. 13.
“ xi. 19, 20	“ xxiv. 27, xxx. 22, xxxii. 29.
“ xiii. 2	“ xiv. 14, xxiii. 16.
“ xiii. 10	“ vi. 14, xxviii. 9.
“ xvii. 17	“ xxxvii. 5—7.
“ xviii. 2	“ xxxi. 29.
“ xxiii. 35	“ ii. 32, iii. 21, xiii. 25.
“ xxxiv. 2, &c.	“ xxiii. 1, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

of Jeremiah. Ezekiel is now raised up to confront the hardened race as with "a face of adamant" (ch. iii. 8, 9). He is strengthened against weak human relentings by "visions of God:" which send him forth as "son of man" (cp. on ch. ii. 1), the envoy of One Whom he has seen wearing the likeness of man, but Who is enthroned above the universe, and rules all things in heaven and earth. Thus commissioned, he reports fearlessly what he has seen and heard. He softens nothing of the ruggedness, seeks to harmonize none of the seeming discordances, of his mysterious visions. He shrinks from no actions, however strange, which are enjoined him; from no parables, however painfully truthful, which are put into his mouth. He reproves the people's sins, not in his own, but in God's, words. He "judges" the nation; but it is God, Who pleads, and Who passes sentence, by his mouth.¹ He exposes the sins of Israel in all their naked deformity. He re-iterates their terrible doom; not without excruciating pain (ch. xxi. 6), yet with inflexibly stern fidelity. If the "desire of his eyes,"—beloved wife, or still more beloved Temple,—be taken away at a stroke, he puts on no sign of mourning. On two occasions only (ch. ix. 8, xi. 13) does he use words of a deprecatory kind; and then it is under the fear of Israel's entire destruction;—a fear which is allayed by an assurance (xi. 16) that the safety of the faithful remnant has been already provided for.

This consolatory assurance is enlarged upon in the later part of the book.

Israel, "in whom all nations were to be blessed," had fallen away, and had been driven out from Canaan,—as Adam was from Paradise. For awhile death seemed to reign triumphantly over the whole race. The world was one vast grave-yard. There were Egypt and Asshur, Elam and Meshach and Tubal (ch. xxxii);—and there too was Israel (ch. xxxvii). "All had sinned"—whether Jew or Gentile—"and come short of the glory of God." But God's word is immutable. His covenant stands firm for ever. His glory shall revisit the earth. His Spirit shall "breathe on the slain, and they shall stand up a great multitude" (ch. xxxvii. 10). He will appoint them a true Shepherd: and they shall have "a new heart and a new spirit" given them. The ancient enemy of God's people should be utterly overthrown (ch. xxxviii. 17—22). A new state, a new city and temple shall be established, in which prince, people, and priests shall all be righteous: and forth from the Temple shall issue a stream of life-giving water, which shall bring back the fruitfulness of Paradise to a curse-stricken world.

These prophecies, however enigmatic, were amply sufficient to comfort the faithful Israelite, and to sustain his hopes during the weary years of exile.²

¹ The expression, "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah," occurs in this book 122 times: "saith the Lord Jehovah," 80 times: "the word of the Lord came unto me," 49 times.

² A thoughtful writer (Rev. T. R. Birks) has pointed out three "aphorisms of spiritual wisdom," which flow from the histories contained in the Old and New Testaments. These aphorisms are here reproduced, as they form an excellent summary of the teaching of Ezekiel's prophetic book, in particular:—

1. All evil, while it lasts and seems to

prevail, is controlled by the counsel of

"One who is perfect in wisdom.

"2. Evil, too strong and too stubbornly evil to listen to the authority of holiness and the persuasions of heavenly grace, will be judged and sentenced by One who is perfect in righteousness.

"3. All evil that owns its shame and looks up for Divine help in its weakness, danger, and misery, shall be lost and swallowed up in a vast flood of Divine goodness and spiritual blessing." (*Faith and Free Thought*, p. 122.)

INTRODUCTION.

The Dates of the Prophecies.

(It is important to note these ; as we nowhere meet with more circumstantial predictions than in this book :—see, for instance, the description of Zedekiah's flight in ch. xii. 12—14.)

I. The *First Group* (iii. 16—xxiv) were delivered in B. C. 595—590.

II. The *Second* (xxv—xxxii) in B. C. 590—587 ; with the exception of xxix. 17—xxx. 19, which belongs to B. C. 572.

III. The *Third* (xxxiii—xxxix) in B. C. 587.

IV. The *Fourth* (xl—xlviii) in B. C. 574.

The First, Second, and Third groups, however, run into one another ; since ch. xxv is of the same date as ch. xxiv, and ch. xxxiii. 1—20 of the same date as ch. xxxii. 17—32.¹

¹ Among the passages of this book, which illustrate, and are illustrated by, the New Testament, the following are especially to be noted :—

ch. i. 5—28	} . . . Rev. iv. 2—8, i. 9—17.
x. 12—20	} . . . Rev. iv. 2—8, i. 9—17.
i. 26—28	. . . . . St. John iii. 31.
ii. 8—iii. 3	. . . . . Rev. x. 2—10.
iii. 18, 19	. . . . . St. John viii. 21—24.
ix. 4—6	. . . . . Rev. vii. 3, ix. 4.
ix. 6	. . . . . 1 St. Pet. iv. 17.
xi. 19, xxxvi. 26	. . . . . 2 Cor. iii. 3.
xiii. 11—14	. . . . . St. Matt. vii. 27.
xv. 4	. . . . . St. Matt. iii. 10.
xvi. 15, &c.	} Rev. xvii. 1—16.
xxxiii. 5, &c.	} Rev. xvii. 1—16.
— 48	. . . . . St. Matt. x. 15, xi. 24.
— 52	. . . . . Rom. ii. 1—11.
— 63	. . . . . Rom. iii. 19.
xx. 47	. . . . . St. Luke xxiii. 31.
xxi. 26	. . . . . St. Luke i. 52.

ch. xxii. 25	. . . . . 1 St. Pet. v. 8.
xxvii. 3, &c.	. . . . . Rev. xviii. 3, &c.
xxviii. 2	. . . . . 2 Thess. ii. 4.
xxxiii. 8	. . . . . Acts xx. 26, Heb. xiii. 17.
xxxiv. 16	. . . . . St. Luke xix. 10.
— 23	. . . . . Heb. xiii. 20.
xxxvi. 25	. . . . . Heb. x. 22.
xxxvii. 4	. . . . . St. John v. 24—27.
— 26—28	. . . . . Rev. xxi. 3.
xxxviii. 2, &c.	. . . . . Rev. xx. 8, &c.
xl. 2	. . . . . Rev. xxi. 10.
— 3, &c.	. . . . . Rev. xi. 1, 2.
xlii. 20	. . . . . Rev. xxi. 16.
xliii. 2	. . . . . Rev. xviii. 2.
— 12	. . . . . Rev. xxi. 2, 27.
xliv. 6	. . . . . 1 St. Pet. iv. 3.
xlvii. 1—5	. . . . . { St. John vii. 38, 39.
— 7—12	. . . . . { Rev. xxii. 1.
— 22	. . . . . Gal. iii. 28, 29.

TO THE READER.

s. v. a., means, "The Hebrew word in the text is the same as in the following passages."

Before
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cir. 595.

CHAPTER I.

² Heb.
captivity.
^a ver. 3.
ch. 3, 15, 23,
& 10, 15, 20,
22, & 43, 3.
¹ So Matt.
3, 16.
Acts 7, 56.
& 10, 11.
Rev. 13, 11.
^c ch. 8, 3.

¹ *The time of Ezekiel's prophecy at Chebar.* ⁴ *His vision of four cherubims, 15 of the four wheels, 26 and of the glory of God.*

NOW it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the ² captives ^a by the river of Chebar, that ^b the heavens were opened, and I saw ^c visions of God.

CHAPTER I.

The grandeur of the Vision here presented to Ezekiel corresponds to the importance of his mission; which was, to proclaim the termination of the Legal Dispensation established almost nine centuries before.

The imagery of the Vision reminds us of what occurred at Sinai, when the covenant with Israel was first ratified. Moses and a chosen few beheld "the God of Israel," and "underneath His feet was as a pavement of sapphire, and as the very heaven for clearness." But "the glory of the Lord" was screened by a cloud, so that to the eyes of the people below it was "as devouring fire" (Exod. xxiv. 9—17). This terror-inspiring manifestation was afterwards withdrawn; and the "Glory" took up its abode in the secret "Holy of Holies," over the Mercy-Seat. For 900 years the Ark of the Covenant had continued a sign and a pledge that the terrors of Sinai were put in abeyance. Now they must no longer be so. The impenitent nation has sinned away its day of grace. Therefore the Law must be permitted to rise out of its Ark, and demand vengeance on the transgressors.

Yet the Divine purpose in the election of Israel shall not miscarry. He, Who withdraws His symbolic glory from the Temple, is seated above all heavens; and He will make Israel's banishment to be a means of preparing for the revelation of His glory to all mankind. Even in executing judgment, He has the "Rainbow," the symbol of mercy, surrounding the fiery manifestation of His presence (ver. 28). Judgment on fallen Israel shall issue in mercy to them and to mankind.

Obs. This chapter is used by the Jews as their *Haftarah* (or, *Prophetic Lesson*) on the First Day of Pentecost.

1. The "thirtieth" year is taken by some to date from Josiah's great Passover (B.C. 624). But, as the *chronological* date is given in ver. 2, it seems better to understand the "thirtieth year" as indicating Ezekiel's age at this time. If Ezekiel had remained at home, he would have now entered upon his priestly ministry (cp. Num. iv. 3, 23, 30, 47). But a higher work, a nobler ministry, has been reserved for the lonely exile. He is sent to make preparation for the building of Christ's Universal Temple.

Obs. Our Lord was in His "thirtieth" year, when, on the banks of the Jordan, He *saw the heavens opened* (St. Matt. iii. 16), and was consecrated to the work which He had to do as "Son of man."

"the captives," or, "the captivity." We gather from ch. iii. 11, 15 that Ezekiel was at this time living apart from his countrymen.

EZEKIEL, I.

2 In the fifth *day* of the month, which *was* the fifth year of ^dking Jehoiachin's captivity,

3 the word of the LORD came expressly unto ^dEzekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land ^eof the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and ^ethe hand of the LORD was there upon him.

4 ¶ And I looked, and, behold, ^fa whirlwind came ^gout of the north, a great cloud, and a fire ^hin-
folding itself, and a brightness *was* about it, and

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d 2 Kin. 24.
12, 15.
e 2 Heb.
Jehezkel.
e1 Kin. 18, 46.
2 Kin. 3, 15.
ch. 3, 14, 22.
& 8, 1, &
40, 1.
f Jer. 23, 19.
& 25, 32.
g Jer. 1, 14, &
4, 6, & 6, 1.
h 3 Heb. catching itself.

Since we read in ch. iii. 16, "at the end of seven days," it has been inferred, that the vision was granted to Ezekiel on a Sabbath-day. In like manner the exile of Patmos had his vision of the Son of Man and the throne in heaven (Rev. i. 10) on a "Lord's day."

"by the river Chebar;" taken to be the Syriac form of *Habor*¹ (2 Kings xvii. 6). Anyhow, it was in Mesopotamia. There "the God of glory" (Acts vii. 2) had appeared to Abraham. There, when the Abrahamic promise seemed to be failing, the same "glory" is manifested to Ezekiel. A new, and greater, cycle of sacred history is about to begin.

Obs. Daniel also had visions by the side of rivers (Dan. viii. 2 : x. 4). We know that the Jews in foreign lands prayed on the Sabbath-day by river sides (Acts xvi. 13).

"the heavens were opened." So "a door was opened in heaven," when St. John beheld the Lord seated on a throne, which was surrounded by "a rainbow" (Rev. iv. 1—3).

"visions of God;"—a real (though symbolical) revelation from God: wholly different from the "visions of men's own hearts," that were put forth by the false prophets (Jer. xxiii. 16; ch. xiii. 7, 16).

2. The years of the Captivity correspond with those of Zedekiah's reign, which began in B. C. 599.

3. "the hand of the Lord." Cp. iii. 14, viii. 1; Rev. i. 17. That Hand prepared him (cp. Isa. viii. 11, 2 Kings iii. 15) for receiving the outward revelation of the Vision and the Word.

"there"—away from the Holy Land. "All the earth" was now to be filled with "the glory of the Lord" (Isa. vi. 3).

vv. 4—14. The First Part of the Vision.

4. The "whirlwind" (or, storm-wind; *s. w. a.* Ps. cxlviii. 8) represents God's indignation, which is advancing against Judah; (see ch. xiii. 11, 13; cp. Jer. xxiii. 19, Mal. i. 3). It came from the "North" because the Chaldean armies entered Palestine from the north (ch. xxvi. 7, Jer. i. 14).

"a fire infolding itself," *s. w. a.* Exod. ix. 24 ("mingled"). The fire

¹ This name "Chebar" occurs only in connexion with the vision of Divine Glory (ch. iii. 15, 23; x. 15, 22). Since the word means "as the Son," there may be a latent allusion to the great subject of the Vision, in ver. 26. In the vision of Dan. vii. 13 we

read, "Behold, one like the Son (*che-Jar*) "of Man." The word "Bar" is used in Ps. ii. 12, of the "Son," who was enthroned on the heavenly Zion, far above the reach of tumultuous nations.

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^h Rev. 4. 6,
&c.
ⁱ ch. 10. 8, &c.
^k ver. 10.
ch. 10. 14, 21.

out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

5 ^h Also out of the midst thereof *came* the likeness of four living creatures. And ⁱ this *was* their appearance; they had ^k the likeness of a man.

6 And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.

² Heb. *a*
straight foot.

7 And their feet *were* ² straight feet; and the sole of their feet *was* like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled ¹ like the colour of burnished brass.

¹ Dan. 10. 6.
Rev. 1. 15.
^m ch. 10. 8, 21.

8 ^m And *they had* the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings.

ⁿ ver. 11.
^o ver. 12.
ch. 10. 11.

9 ⁿ Their wings *were* joined one to another; ^o they

darted to and fro incessantly; as in some tropical lands flashes of lightning (cp. verses 13, 14) will light up a dense mass of clouds almost uninterruptedly for several minutes together.

"amber," or, "electrum," a brilliant metal of four parts gold and one silver. In ver. 27 and in ch. viii. 2 this brilliant colour is attributed to the person of Him Who sate on the throne. Even the cloud of judicial righteousness has the light of holy love radiating from it.

5. "The likeness." So in vv. 10, 13, 16, 22, 26, 28. Throughout the vision objects are presented only in dim outline. The men, whose imaginations had been in bondage to idol-worship, must be trained by means of symbols to receive high and spiritual truth.

"four living creatures." Identified in ch. x. 20 with *Cherubim*;—the retinue of the living God; employed by Him in His government of the universe. The storm-cloud now marching towards Jerusalem was not the product of natural forces wielded by Destiny. It was inhabited by living creatures, who were intelligent and moral beings; in their general character resembling "Man," the creature who was made in God's likeness; yet of very different texture, for they are able to live in the midst of that supernatural fire.

The storm-cloud, replete with this living agency, would sweep away the dead idols (with their spiritually dead worshippers), which now corrupted the city of the living God (vi. 13). Then Israel's true life of communion with God should be restored.

6—8. The description is evidently *symbolical*; its several parts suggesting *ideas* that have to be combined in thought.

With "four faces" they look abroad, with "four wings" they move, alike freely in every direction. The "straight feet," with firm but elastic soles, sparkling like polished brass, show the directness, steadiness, and energy of their advance. The "human hands," hidden "under" their wings, represent the admirable skill with which they execute their commissions, though their work be (ordinarily) out of sight.

9. Two wings of each were looped on to those on the right and the left; so that the four creatures formed a composite unity, and moved,

EZEKIEL, I.

turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward. Before
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10 As for ^pthe likeness of their faces, they four ^p See Rev.
4. 7.
^q had the face of a man, ^r and the face of a lion, on ^q Num. 2. 10.
the right side: ^s and they four had the face of an ^r Num. 2. 3.
ox on the left side; ^t they four also had the face of ^s Num. 2. 18.
an eagle. t Num. 2. 25.

11 Thus *were* their faces: and their wings *were*
² stretched upward; two *wings* of every one *were* 2 Or, divided
above.
joined one to another, and ^u two covered their bodies. u Isai. 6. 2.

12 And ^x they went every one straight forward: ^x ver. 9.
^y whither the spirit was to go, they went; and ^z they ch. 10. 22.
turned not when they went. y ver. 20.
z ver. 9, 17.

13 As for the likeness of the living creatures,
their appearance *was* like burning coals of fire,
^a and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and a Rev. 4. 5.
down among the living creatures; and the fire was
bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.

14 And the living creatures ^b ran and returned b Zech. 4. 10.
^c as the appearance of a flash of lightning. c Matt. 21. 27.

without any change of arrangement, forward or backward or laterally, straight to their aim, "whither the Spirit was to go" (ver. 12). It was a living Tabernacle, in which Divine Power was enshrined.

10. Since the cloud moved from the North, the man's face was on the South side, the lion's on the East, the eagle's on the North, and the ox's on the West (compare ch. x. 14). The patient toil of the ox, the mighty energy of the lion, the soaring power of the eagle, were combined with the rational intelligence and spiritual insight of man.

Obs. 1. He, Whose human nature was a Tabernacle of the Godhead, eminently exhibited these three typical forms of power;—in His *ministry and death*, unwearied toil ending in sacrifice; in His *Resurrection*, energy that was victorious over all enemies (cp. Rev. v. 5); in His *Ascension*, power to soar above the heavens.

Obs. 2. In all these the Church of Christ is to share: dying with Christ in His death; rising in His resurrection; "seeking the things "that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

11. Two of their wings were stretched out upward, but wide apart, as ready for flight; two covered their bodies, in testimony of the unworthiness which adheres to the creature.

12. "The Spirit" which animated them was the Spirit of life (ver. 21), "the Breath" of God (cp. xxxvii. 9). So it was with the Apostolic Church. Its motions were ruled by the Spirit which descended at Pentecost (Acts xiii. 2, 4; xvi. 7).

13. "burning coals." Such as accompanied the manifestation of God's Presence, of which Ps. xviii. 12 speaks, (cp. Exod. xix. 18):—such as were hurled over Jerusalem, ch. x. 2.

"lightning." Ready to fulfil God's sentence (cp. on xxi. 10).

^{Before}
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cir. 595.
d ch. 10. 9.

15 ¶ Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold
d one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures,
with his four faces.

e ch. 10. 9, 10.

16 e The appearance of the wheels and their work
f Dan. 10. 6. was f like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four
had one likeness: and their appearance and their work
was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.

17 When they went, they went upon their four
sides: g and they turned not when they went.

18 As for their rings, they were so high that they
were dreadful; and their 2 rings were h full of eyes
round about them four.

19 And i when the living creatures went, the
wheels went by them: and when the living crea-
tures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels
were lifted up.

15—21. The Second Part of the Vision.

The living creatures were seen in the fiery cloud, high above the earth. But they were accompanied by a vast system of machinery, which operated on earth in sympathy with them; moving, indeed, in orderly rotation, yet not as parts of the "wheel of Nature" (St. James iii. 6), for they too are "full of eyes" (ver. 18). By them, as secondary agencies, "the word of the Lord runs and is glorified" (2 Thess. iii. 1; cp. Ps. cxlvii. 15).

15. "one wheel." One of the four (ver. 16; ch. x. 9). Each wheel had "four faces;" one wheel being set, it would seem, *transversely* inside another (cp. ver. 16).

"beryl." Of a sea-green colour.

16. "their work." Or, "workmanship;"—their whole structure.

18. The revolutions, which occur in the history of nations, do not come of blind chance or fate. Each of them, and every part of each, is ruled and guided by those "eyes of the Lord, which move to and fro throughout "the whole earth" (2 Chron. xvi. 9). The contemplation of these vast cycles of Providence must stir up a feeling of reverential awe in every thoughtful mind.

One such cycle was now about to be presented to Ezekiel's mental eye,—the history of God's dealings with Israel. Who could view that unmoved, or without something of dread?

19. "by them." At their side. When the living creatures moved, as in ordinary times, on the earth, then the revolving wheels did so too. When the living creatures were lifted up, as at special crises, then there was a break in the outward course of events. The true causes of a nation's prosperity or suffering are in the spiritual world:—a truth, which was set forth of old in the history of Joshua's victory at Rephidim (Exod. xvii. 11). It was also symbolically represented in the "chariots and horses" which encompassed Elijah and Elisha (2 Kings ii. 11, 12; vi. 17).

EZEKIEL, I.

20 ^k Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither *was their* spirit to go; and the wheels were lifted up over against them: ¹ for the spirit ² of the living creature *was* in the wheels.

21 ^m When those went, *these* went; and when those stood, *these* stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit ³ of the living creature *was* in the wheels.

22 ⁿ And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature *was* as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above.

23 And under the firmament *were* their wings straight, the one toward the other: every one had two, which covered on this side, and every one had two, which covered on that side, their bodies.

24 ^o And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, ^p like the noise of great waters, as ^q the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings.

25 And there was a voice from the firmament that *was* over their heads, when they stood, *and* had let down their wings.

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^k ver. 12.

¹ ch. 10. 17.

² Or, of life.

^m ver. 13, 20.

ch. 10. 17.

³ Or, of life.

ⁿ ch. 10. 1.

^o ch. 10. 5.

^p ch. 43. 2.

Dan. 10. 6.

Rev. 1. 15.

^q Job 37. 4, 5.

Ps. 29. 3, 4.

& 68. 33.

20. "was to go." Or, "was bent on going."

21. The rhythm of the verse recalls that of Numb. ix. 17—20.

22—28. The Third Part of the Vision.

The secr's eye had first rested on the cloud, and then descended to earth. It now re-ascends to gaze on what was above the cloud.

22. "And the likeness." Rather, "And a likeness was over the heads" (ver. 26) of the living creature, a firmament, as the look of the terrible "crystal" (or, ice). Above the created universe was a firmament, like a vast expanse of ice; of crystalline clearness, but forming an impassable limit between the universe and Him Who sate above on the throne. No creature could penetrate that awful barrier; though "He Who is 'above all' may, if He see fit, make His loving Presence descend to the level of the creature (St. John iii. 31).

23. The outstretched upper wings also helped to cover the body.

24. "voice of speech." Rather, "noise of a tumult." The words occur elsewhere only in Jer. xi. 16 (cp. Dan. x. 6).

25. The onward motion of the living creatures is followed by a period of quiet expectancy; during which a "VOICE" is heard. It is the voice which once shook Mount Sinai, and now was about to shake the dispensation that had been established at Sinai (cp. Heb. xii. 25—27).

EZEKIEL, I.

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^r ch. 10. 1.
^s Ex. 24. 10.

26 ¶^r And above the firmament that *was* over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, ^s as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne *was* the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.

^t ch. 8. 2.

27 ^t And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.

^u Rev. 4. 3.
& 10. 1.

28 ^u As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so *was* the appearance of the brightness round about. ^x This *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.

^x ch. 3. 23.
& 8. 4.

^y ch. 3. 23.
Dan. 8. 17.
Acts 9. 4.
Rev. 1. 17.

And when I saw *it*, ^y I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

26. "sapphire." Of azure-blue; symbolizing the heaven, which is God's "throne" (Isa. lxvi. 1).

"of a man." Heb. ADAM (cp. Dan. vii. 13; x. 16). "As the appearance of a man" upon the throne that was high above the universe! Strange vision! which had to wait long for its full interpretation;—until the day when the incarnate Son of God "ascended up far above all heavens" (Eph. iv. 10, 1 St. Pet. iii. 22). In the meantime, however, it supplied deepest comfort to the faithful. What though Israel had failed to achieve blessing for mankind? God's purpose yet stood firm. He Who had "*sworn by Himself*" (Gen. xxii. 16), would Himself carry His promise into effect. This vision was a pledge that He would do so. The Covenant with Israel as a nation was ready to disappear; but it should re-appear, in its substantial character, as a Covenant of blessing to all mankind.

Observe how the prophetic word, in beginning to unveil the mystery of the Incarnation (in vv. 26—28), guards it carefully from abuse by employing the qualifying terms, "as," "likeness," "appearance." So, in this verse, upon "*the likeness of a throne*" was "*the likeness as of the appearance of a man:*" and in ver. 28, "*the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.*"

27. "*the appearance of fire.*" Such as in old time had been seen by night in the pillar of cloud (Num. ix. 15, 16). This vision is to give light to the pilgrim Church during the long, dark, night of the Captivity. The "Ark of the Covenant" was no longer with it; but God's Presence was.

28. "*the bow;*"—the sign of mercy triumphing over judgment. As the judgment which passed upon the old world was followed by a better covenant, so should the judgment on Jerusalem be (Isa. liv. 8—10; cp. Rev. iv. 3). The "day of clouds and thick darkness" (ch. xxxiv. 12, Joel ii. 1, 2), which swept away the legal economy, should be a step towards fulfilling the promise made to Abraham. He, Who was seated on the

EZEKIEL, II.

CHAPTER II.

Before
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1 *Ezekiel's commission.* 6 *His instruction.* 9 *The roll of his heavy prophecy.*

AND he said unto me, Son of man, ^a stand upon ^a Dan. 10. 11. thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.

throne, will Himself be the Mediator of a new Covenant. He will be the reality of which Noah was a type,—the Restorer and Second Head of mankind : as it is written, “the *Second Man* is the *LORD from heaven*” (1 Cor. xv. 47).

Obs. If many of the details of the vision described in this chapter are indistinct, they are not on that account the less suitable for suggesting right ideas. Precise and definite conceptions on such subjects “are not “permitted to man” (2 Cor. xii. 4) in his present condition. But the general purport of the vision is most plain. It represents to us the truth, that the cycles of events, which take place in the visible world, are dependent on the operation of spiritual agents; who are all of them obedient to the same Divine Spirit and subject to the same Divine Lord. This supreme Ruler of the Universe, Who is separated from it by an impassable barrier, and from Whose person the effulgence of Divine glory issues, is yet seen bearing “the likeness of the appearance of a man.”

What a marvellous advance was thus made towards the mystery of the Incarnation! We seem here to have “heaven opened,” and to catch a glimpse, six centuries beforehand, of Him Who is “the brightness of “God’s glory,” and “upholds all things by the word of His power” (Heb. i. 3): yet Who “is not ashamed to call” mankind “His brethren.”

CHAPTER II.

The Prophet’s mission to denounce Woe on the Rebellious.

He, Whom Ezekiel had seen in that wondrous vision, now speaks to him, addressing him by the title “son of man;” a title which is given to no other person except Daniel (once only, Dan. viii. 17). Daniel also had beheld in vision “One like unto the Son of man” (Dan. vii. 13, 14); and he, too, like Ezekiel, was an exile in Babylonia. This title (which is given to Ezekiel 89 times) points to the nature of his office. He was to be the instrument of the Lord of Glory, Whom he had seen having “the appearance of a man.” He was to render Him the same prompt obedience which the cherubic forms did (cp. on ver. 2). He—the “son “of man”—must have the endurance of the ox, the boldness of the lion, the upward flight of the eagle. His speech (as was said of St. Basil) must be as thunder; his life as lightning. God has pronounced sentence on the Holy City: Ezekiel must go as His representative and “destroy it” (ch. xliii. 3). Ezekiel must obey Him that sits on the throne, as Moses obeyed Him Whose Presence was in the cloud and on the cherubim of glory, and as Joshua obeyed “the Captain of the Lord’s Host.” He must tell Israel that they are no longer “children of the Most High” (Ps. lxxxii. 6). Their special privileges are at an end, and they must “perish like men”—upon the ground of the Adamic covenant, which said, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (ch. iii. 18; xxxiii. 8, 14).

EZEKIEL, II.

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^b ch. 3. 24.

2 And ^b the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.

² Heb. nations,
^c Jer. 3. 25, ch. 20. 18, 21, 30.

3 And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious ² nation that hath rebelled against me: ^c they and their fathers have transgressed against me, *even* unto this very day.

^d ch. 3. 7.
³ Heb. *hard of face*.

4 ^d For *they are* ³ impudent children and stiff-hearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God.

^e ch. 3. 11, 23, 27.

5 ^e And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they *are* a rebellious house,) yet ^f shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

^f ch. 33. 33.

^g Jer. 1. 8, 17, Luke 12. 4.

6 And thou, son of man, ^g be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though ⁴ ^h briers and thorns *be* with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: ⁱ be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, ^k though they *be* a rebellious house.

⁴ Or, *rebels*.

^h Isai. 9. 18.

ⁱ Jer. 6. 28.

^j Mic. 7. 4.

^k ch. 3. 9.

^l 1 Pet. 3. 14.

^m ch. 3. 9, 26, 27.

Yet he shall also foretell the approach of a time when God Himself will gather His scattered children, and make *man-kind* His flock (see on ch. xxxiv. 31; xxxvi. 37, 38).

A clear view of the relation in which Ezekiel as "son of man" stands to the King of Glory, is essential to a right interpretation of this book; throughout which the prophet represents in feeble miniature outlines (by word or act) what the Lord of heaven and earth has determined to do (cp. iii. 7, xxxvii. 17, 19).

2. "the Spirit." The Spirit of life, which animated the living creatures (ch. i. 20).

"set me." Enabling him to obey the command of ver. 1.

3. "a rebellious nation, that hath." Rather, "rebellious nations, that have." Israel and Judah had made themselves no better than heathen nations. Nay, they were guiltier than the heathen (xvi. 47).

"rebelled;" *s. w. a.* Numb. xiv. 9: cp. Deut. ix. 34.

4. "For they are impudent children," or, "and the children are of hard face;" resembling their fathers, Isa. xlvi. 4; cp. ch. xx. 21.

"the Lord God;" ADONAI JEHOVAH:—the absolute, alone self-existent, Lord.—He it was, therefore, Who had been seen as in "the appearance of a man." Cp. St. John v. 26, 27.

5. "a rebellious house." God's *household*; yet refusing to obey Him (cp. Isa. xxx. 9) and desecrating His temple (xliv. 6, 7).

"yet shall know." If Israel refuse to hear, yet the word shall not be without effect. It will stand as evidence of the patient loving-kindness of God.—He had "no pleasure" in their ruin (xviii. 23, 32).

6. The "briers" are the men among whom he dwelt (cp. Mic. vii. 4). Their pride and unbelief pierced him like thorns, stung him like scorpions.

EZEKIEL, III.

7 ¹And thou shalt speak my words unto them, ^m whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they *are* ²most rebellious.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 595.

¹ Jer. 1. 7, 17.
^m ver. 5.

² Heb.
rebellion.

8 ¶ But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and ⁿ eat that I give thee.

ⁿ Rev. 10. 9.

9 And when I looked, behold, ^o an hand *was* sent unto me; and, lo, ^p a roll of a book *was* therein;

^o ch. 8. 3.
^p r. 1. 9.

^p ch. 3. 1.

10 and he spread it before me; and it *was* written within and without: and *there was* written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.

CHAPTER III.

1 Ezekiel eateth the roll. 4 God encourageth him. 15 God sheweth him the rule of prophecy. 22 God shutteth and openeth the prophet's mouth.

MOREOVER he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; ^a eat this roll, and go speak ^a unto the house of Israel.

^a ch. 2. 8, 9.

2 So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll.

3 And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that

8. "Be not thou rebellious." Be like that "Servant of the Lord," who in the prospect of suffering and insult was "not rebellious," but "set his face like a flint" (Isa. 1. 5, 7).

"eat that I give thee." Eat it, that it may become thy life-blood, and be "the rejoicing of thy heart" (Jer. xv. 16). Cp. St. John iv. 31—34, Rev. x. 9, 10.

9. "was sent." Rather, "put forth" (as in viii. 3).

10. "within and without." On *both* sides of the scroll. So numerous were the woes recorded upon it.

Obs. Ezekiel, while pronouncing the inexorable sentence on the guilty nation, will yet wail and "lament" over it (ch. xix. 1, 14); even as the "Son of man" afterwards "wept over" Jerusalem, when uttering its doom (St. Luke xix. 41).—Miserable infatuation of man! which "clothes" "the heaven with mourning" (cp. xxxii. 7, 8); which "grieves" the heart of God Himself (Gen. vi. 6).

CHAPTER III.

vv. 1—14. Ezekiel accepts the mission and is strengthened by God.

3. God's righteous judgments cannot but be "sweet" to the faithful (cp. Mic. ii. 7), though deadly bitter (like the ordeal water of Num. v. 21—27) to the unfaithful.

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I give thee. Then did I ^beat it; and it was in my mouth ^cas honey for sweetness.

^b Rev. 10. 9.
^c Jer. 15.
16.

^c Ps. 19. 10.
& 119. 103.

² Heb. *deep of lip, and heavy of tongue*; and so ver. 6.

³ Heb. *deep of lip, and heavy of language*.

⁴ Or. *If I had sent thee, &c. would they not have hearkened unto thee?*

^d Matt. 11. 21, 23.

^e John 15. 20.

^f ch. 2. 4.

⁵ Heb. *stiff of forehead, and hard of heart*.

^g Isai. 50. 7.
Jer. 1. 18.
& 15. 20.

Micah 3. 8.

^h Jer. 1. 8, 17.
ch. 2. 6.

4 ¶ And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them.

5 For thou *art* not sent to a people ²of a strange speech and of an hard language, *but* to the house of Israel;

6 not to many people ³of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. ⁴Surely, ^dhad I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee.

7 But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; ^efor they will not hearken unto me: ^ffor all the house of Israel *are* ⁵impudent and hardhearted.

8 Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads.

9 ^gAs an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: ^hfear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they *be* a rebellious house.

10 Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears.

11 And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, ⁱThus saith the Lord God; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

12 Then ^kthe spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, *saying*, Blessed *be* the glory of the LORD from his place.

ⁱ ch. 2. 5, 7.
ver. 27.

^k ver. 14.
ch. 8. 3.
See 1 Kings
18. 12.
2 Kin. 2. 16.
Acts 8. 39.

6. The fair speeches and self-righteous arguments of impenitent Israel were far harder to deal with than the harsh tones or difficult idioms of a foreign language.

“they would have hearkened.” Cp. Acts xxviii. 28: “Be it known unto you that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles; and that *they will hear.*”

Obs. Already, eight years before Ezekiel’s call (in B. C. 603), Nebuchadnezzar had “hearkened” to the exposition of God’s will given by Daniel, and had paid great deference to him, young as he was.

9. “an adamant,” or, “diamond.” It was said of St. Athanasius that he was “a magnet to those who dissented from him; but to those *who struck him adamant.*”

12. “a great rushing,” as of the chariot wheels of angelic hosts (*s. v. a.*)

EZEKIEL, III.

13 *I heard* also the noise of the wings of the living creatures that ² touched one another, and the noise of the wheels over against them, and a noise of ² a great rushing.

14 So ¹ the spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went ³ in bitterness, in the ⁴ heat of my spirit; but ^m the hand of the LORD was strong upon me.

Before
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² Heb. *kissed*.

¹ ver. 12.
ch. 8. 3.

³ Heb. *bitter*.

⁴ Heb.

hot anger.

m2 Kin. 3. 15.

ch. 1. 3. &

8. 1. & 37. 1.

15 ¶ Then I came to them of the captivity at Tel-abib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and ⁿ I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days.

ⁿ Job 2. 13.

Ps. 137. 1.

16 And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

17 ° Son of man, I have made thee ^p a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

° ch. 33. 7.

8. 9.

^p Isai. 52. 8.

& 56. 10.

& 62. 6.

Jer. 6. 17.

18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely

Nah. iii. 2 "rattling"). The noise was "behind him;" coming upon him in a mysterious and unexpected way; (cp. Gen. xxii. 13, Rev. i. 10).

"from his place," or, "(that cometh) out of its place" (cp. Isa. xxvi. 21, Mic. i. 3). The Glory was coming out of the sanctuary to punish Israel (cp. viii. 4), and to forsake Jerusalem; but at the same time to spread itself over the earth.

13. "touched." Lit. "kissed." Though their power was so vast, their motions were adjusted with the nicest delicacy.

14. The word had been sweet in his mouth (ver. 3): yet it stirred in him conflicting feelings; bitterness, or sadness, at Israel's calamity (cp. Ruth i. 20), yet, at the same time, sympathy with God's indignation against sin (cp. Jer. vi. 11; xv. 16, 17). Still he went forward; for "the hand of the Lord was strong upon him:" sustaining him under his grief, and keeping him firm in the path of duty (cp. Isa. viii. 11).

vv. 15—27. The nature of the Prophet's ministry explained.

15. "where they sat;" engaged, perhaps, in an act of public mourning. Ezekiel sat down among them, "astonied" (cp. Ezra ix. 3, 4); overwhelmed with a sense of the difficulty and the magnitude of the work that was committed to him.

"seven days." From the 5th to the 12th of the fourth month. In the same week six years later the city was "broken up" (Jer. xxxix. 1).

17. "a watchman." The word denotes one who is set on an eminence to observe what is going on around, and to give warning of danger. The danger here was that which arises from sin. Comp. Acts xx. 31.

18—21. The whole tone of the passage leads us to take the "life" and "death" here spoken of to be the same as those of which Moses spoke in his last exhortation to Israel (Deut. xxx. 15—20): where he tells them

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⁹ ch. 33, 6.
John 8, 21,
24.

die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked *man* ⁹ shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

^r Isai. 47, 4, 5.
Acts 20, 26.

19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; ^r but thou hast delivered thy soul.

^s ch. 18, 24.
& 33, 12, 13.
² Heb. *right-*
eousnesses.

20 Again, When a ^s righteous *man* doth turn from his ² righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

21 Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous *man*, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.

^t ver. 14.
ch. 1, 3.

22 ¶ ^t And the hand of the LORD was there upon

that he set before them "life and good, death and evil," and that their life consisted in "cleaving to the Lord," Who was Himself their life. Right views on this point were of the utmost moment at a time when national calamity was drawing so near. All were to be well assured that, as regarded the true "life," none should "die," unless he "died in his sin;" (compare chs. xviii and xxxiii).

18. "Thou shalt surely die." As in Gen. ii. 17; cp. ch. xviii. 13. Disobedience severs the soul from God; with Whom alone is "the fountain of life" (Ps. xxxvi. 9).

"to save his life." Or, "to quicken him;" to raise him out of spiritual death (Ps. cxix. 93).

"in his iniquity;" *in* it, as the cause of his death (ch. xviii. 26). Cp. St. John viii. 21, 24.

"require at thy hand." A like awful responsibility is assigned in Heb. xiii. 17 to the pastors of Christ's flock.

19. "delivered thy soul." Compare Acts xviii. 6; xx. 26.

20. "from his righteousness;" from his obedience to "the holy commandment" (2 St. Pet. ii. 21),—"unto folly" (Ps. lxxxv. 8). Only by abiding in his "faith" and steadfastness "shall the just man live" (Hab. ii. 4). Compare Heb. iii. 6, x. 38, 39.

"a stumbling-block." An object (person, thing, or event), which is fitted to draw out a man's character, and so may prove an *occasion of falling* (cp. Jer. vi. 21). The *cause* of his fall, however, is inward (ch. xiv. 2, 3, xviii. 30; Ps. cxix. 165; 1 St. John ii. 10).

21. "sin not." *He* "sins not," who *hates* sin, and in God's strength fights against it (1 St. John ii. 1; iii. 9).

me; and he said unto me, Arise, go forth ^u into the plain, and I will there talk with thee. Before
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23 Then I arose, and went forth into the plain: ^u ch. 8. 4. and, behold, ^x the glory of the LORD stood there, as ^x ch. 1. 28. the glory which I ^y saw by the river of Chebar: ^y ch. 1. 1. ^z and I fell on my face. ^z ch. 1. 28.

24 Then ^a the spirit entered into me, and set me ^a ch. 2. 2. upon my feet, and spake with me, and said unto me, Go, shut thyself within thine house.

25 But thou, O son of man, behold, ^b they shall ^b ch. 4. 8. put bands upon thee, and shall bind thee with them, and thou shalt not go out among them:

26 and ^c I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof ^c ch. 24. 27. of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt ^c Luke 1. 20, 22. not be to them ² a reprovor: ^d for they *are* a rebel- ² Heb. a man reproving. lious house. ^d ch. 2. 5, 6, 7.

27 ^e But when I speak with thee, I will open thy ^e ch. 24. 27. mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, ^f Thus saith ^f ver. 11. the Lord GOD; He that heareth, let him hear; and

22. "the plain," or, "the broad valley" (*s. v. a.* ch. xxxvii. 1): in contrast with the *hill* of Tel-abib, ver. 15. It is the word used in Gen. xi. 2 of the plain of Babylon. The sequence of events in vv. 22—24 is the same as in ch. i. 3, 28, ii. 2.

24. "within thine house." It appears from ch. viii. 1, xiv. 1, xx. 1, xxxiii. 31, that the prophet did actually remain in his house. The people came to him; he did not go to them. Cp. Jer. xv. 19.

25. "they shall put." Lit. "they have put." The people's unbelief and sin had cast bonds around him:—even as the same sin and unbelief had so long restrained the working of God's mercy towards them, and made Him to *withdraw* from them (Hos. v. 15).

26. As the imprisonment of ver. 25, so the "dumbness" of this verse, is moral, not physical. The word put into Ezekiel's mouth is not one of *expostulation*;—the time of the end is fully come, and can admit of no further respite. His message is one, against which they are steeled; for they will not believe the destruction of Jerusalem to be possible. He speaks to them (ch. xi. 25); but "to them" he is as a man "in whose mouth are no *reproofs*" (Ps. xxxviii. 13, 14),—no words that carry conviction. Much of his communication is in 'dumb show';—still more of it in parables and allegories, which are to them of no more practical moment than an unsolved enigma (xx. 46) or a piece of music (ch. xxxiii. 32). And what as regards himself? On the banks of the Chebar, he is not allowed to "sit down and weep" (ch. xxiv. 16). He must forget his tender affection for Jerusalem, and pronounce over her incessant anathemas and dirges. Was this not enough to make "his tongue cleave "to the roof of his mouth?" (Ps. cxxxvii. 6.)

27. The prophet was in bonds; "but the word of God was not bound" (2 Tim. ii. 9). The majestic movement of the cherubic cloud is unim-

he that forbeareth, let him forbear: ⁸ for they *are* a rebellious house.

⁸ ver. 9, 26.
ch. 12. 2, 3.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Under the type of a siege is shewed the time from the defection of Jeroboam to the captivity. 9 By the provision of the siege, is shewed the hardness of the famine.*

THOU also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and pourtray upon it the city, *even* Jerusalem:

2 and lay siege against it, and build a fort against

peded. He, of Whom the prophet was an earthly representative, had "kept long silence;" but He would at length "reprove" effectively (Ps. l. 3, 21). Then the prophet's mouth, too, would be opened (ch. xxiv. 27, xxxiii. 22); the consciences of his hearers would be roused; and they would recognize him as a prophet (ch. xxxiii. 33). He might then speak boldly to them of the new dispensation (as in chs. xxxiv—xxxvii).

Obs. The worst of all signs for a Church or a nation is, when its unbelief restrains or silences those who are commissioned to deliver to it the word of God. But even such enforced silence shall be made in the end to bear witness on God's behalf.

CHAPTER IV.

The Prophet is bidden to represent, by symbolic actions, the siege of Jerusalem and the exile of its people.

The chapter consists of two parts. In the first (vv. 1—7) the prophet is directed to do symbolically what God will do in act;—he is to lay siege to Jerusalem. In the second (vv. 9—17) he is to represent the grievousness of the people's sin, and the sore punishment which awaited it.

The commands were given and received in vision (see ch. iii. 22—24); and so are throughout as allegorical as the command to eat the scroll was (ch. ii. 8).

As regards the paltry, or even offensive, character of the actions here prescribed, it should be observed that in relation to Him, "before whom" "all nations are as nothing" (Isa. xl. 17), Jerusalem was an incomparably smaller thing than the tile could be to Ezekiel: and that to Him, "in whose sight the heavens are not clean" (Job xv. 15, xxv. 5), the abominations of Israel's idolatry were immeasurably more offensive than the foulest ordure could be to a man. Only the vilest images *could* set forth the direness of Israel's spiritual degradation.

1. "a tile." Tiles or bricks (about 14in. long by 12in. broad) were used in Babylonia for writing purposes.

"pourtray." Whether with a graving tool, or with ink, or paint; (*s. v. a.* ch. xxiii. 14, "graven," Isa. xlix. 16, "pourtrayed").

2. "lay siege." As God Himself would lay siege against Jerusalem (Isa. xxix. 3).

"a fort," or, "siege-lines;" (Jer. lii. 4). The "mount" is the earth-mound, which was piled up against a city wall for the storming party to ascend by.

EZEKIEL, IV.

it, and cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set ²*battering* rams against it round about.

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3 Moreover take thou unto thee ³ an iron pan, and set it *for* a wall of iron between thee and the city: and set thy face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. ^a This shall be a sign to the house of Israel.

² Or, chief leaders, ch. 21. 22.

³ Or, a flat plate, or, slice.

^a ch. 12. 6, 11. & 24. 24, 27.

4 Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: *according* to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity.

5 For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: ^b so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.

cir. 975.

Beginning from 1 Kings

12. 23.

Ending

cir. 585.

^b Num. 14. 34.

6 And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee ⁴ each day for a year.

⁴ Heb. a day for a year, a day for a year.

“rams.” See Layard’s *Nin. and Bab.*, p. 149.

3. “iron pan,” or, “iron-plate;” such as was used in baking (Lev. ii. 5). It represented the inflexible character of the sentence that was now interposed between God and the apostate city (cp. Jer. i. 18. Lam. iii. 44).

“set thy face against it.” In Jer. xxi. 10 God says: “I have set my face against this city for evil.”

4—8. We see from ver. 7 that the prophet is to be viewed throughout as representing God (as he plainly does in ch. v also). The task appointed him is manifestly beyond the power of human endurance. He is to lie, as one who is asleep, for 430 days, “bearing the iniquity” of the people. Then he is to stretch out his naked arm (cp. Isa. lii. 10), as ready for action against Jerusalem.

So for 430 years God allowed His indignation to slumber. Then it “awoke” (ch. vii. 6). The year of Jerusalem’s destruction (B.C. 588) was the 430th from that in which “the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel” (2 Sam. xxiv. 1). The Destroying Angel’s sword was at that time put in its sheath: it is now drawn forth. Compare on ch. xxi. 3.

The forty years of more special guilt in “the house of Judah” may correspond to the period of Jeremiah’s ministry; which dated from B.C. 629. (Cp. Jer. v. 11, xi. 10, 17, xii. 14, xxxvi. 3.)

4. “bear their iniquity.” Cp. Num. xiv. 34. Israel had “borne its guilt” forty years in the wilderness; “consumed by God’s anger” (Ps. xc. 7). But during the 430 years’ duration of the altar on Moriah (see on ch. xxi. 3) God had left Israel unpunished; transferring their guilt, as it were, to Himself:—His “forbearance” being due to the great “pro-pitiation” which He Himself would afterwards make (Rom. iii. 25).

Before
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7 Therefore thou shalt set thy face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and thine arm *shall be* uncovered, and thou shalt prophesy against it.

c ch. 3. 25.

8 ^c And, behold, I will lay bands upon thee, and thou shalt not turn thee ² from one side to another, till thou hast ended the days of thy siege.

² Heb. *from thy side to thy side.*

9 Take thou also unto thee wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentiles, and millet, and ³ fitches, and put them in one vessel, and make thee bread thereof, *according* to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon thy side, three hundred and ninety days shalt thou eat thereof.

³ Or, *spelt.*

10 And thy meat which thou shalt eat *shall be* by weight, twenty shekels a day: from time to time shalt thou eat it.

11 Thou shalt drink also water by measure, the sixth part of an hin: from time to time shalt thou drink.

12 And thou shalt eat it *as* barley cakes, and thou shalt bake it with dung that cometh out of man, in their sight.

^d Hos. 9. 3.

13 And the LORD said, Even thus ^d shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, whither I will drive them.

7. "Therefore." Rather, "and."

8. "I will lay." Lit. "I have laid." Strong constraint was needed to compel him to carry on the siege without intermission. The constraining power was the necessity of punishing the sins of the impenitent people.

"They" really supplied the "bands," which made the continuance of the siege obligatory.

9—12. The mixture of divers kinds of grain appears to correspond to the various forms of idolatrous sacrifices, with which they polluted the "bread of God" (Lev. xxi. 17). It was as if they had substituted those heterogeneous materials for the "fine flour" of the minchah (Lev. vi. 15), and, after baking them on "man's dung" (see on ver. 12), had placed them on God's altar.

10, 11. "from time to time." As Israel "from time to time" (1 Chron. ix. 25) had offered their polluted bread to God.

12. "with dung" as fuel. The name, which is commonly given by Ezekiel to *idols* (see on ch. vi. 4), is closely connected with the word here used. Idols, the foul product of man's corrupt imagination, must be unspeakably detestable (ver. 11) to the All-Holy.

13. "Even thus." As they had polluted the Lord's altar with their heathenism, they should be driven away from "the Lord's land" into heathendom, and there should eat "unclean things" (Hos. ix. 3, 4).

EZEKIEL, V.

14 Then said I, ° Ah Lord GOD! behold, my soul hath not been polluted: for from my youth up even till now have I not eaten of † that which dieth of itself, or is torn in pieces; neither came there ° abominable flesh into my mouth.

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° Acts 10. 14.
† Ex. 22. 31.
Lev. 11. 40.
& 17. 15.
‡ Deut. 14. 3.
Isai. 65. 4.

15 Then he said unto me, Lo, I have given thee cow's dung for man's dung, and thou shalt prepare thy bread therewith.

16 Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, behold, I will break the † staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall † eat bread by weight, and with care; and they shall † drink water by measure, and with astonishment:

h Lev. 26. 26.
Ps. 105. 16.
Isai. 3. 1.
ch. 5. 16.
& 14. 13.

17 that they may want bread and water, and be astonished one with another, and † consume away for their iniquity.

i ver. 10.
ch. 12. 19.
k ver. 11.
l Lev. 26. 39.
ch. 24. 23.

CHAPTER V.

1 Under the type of hair, 5 is shewed the judgment of Jerusalem for their rebellion, 12 by famine, sword, and dispersion.

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AND thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber's razor, ° and cause it to pass

° See Lev. 21. 5.
Isai. 7. 20.
ch. 44. 20.

14, 15. The prophet's soul revolts against the loathsome thing. He asks for a mitigation of the command, and his request is granted¹. Human purity could not endure that which was a faint symbol of the horrible abominations, which the All-Holy had so long borne with.

16. "care," or, "anxiety." The reference (as in ver. 13) is to their sufferings in exile (comp. ch. xiii. 18, 19). The curses of the Law should take effect on the men of Jerusalem. The "staff of bread" should be broken (Lev. xxvi. 26); and they should "pine away in their iniquity" (ib. 39; the word there rendered "pine away" being the same that is here rendered "consume away:" cp. ch. xxxiii. 10).

Their souls, also, would "pine away" for lack of the bread of life.

They would deal out the Word of God "by weight and measure;" finding in it cause of "care," and alarm, and "astonishment."

Obs. So long as God's providential mercies are continued to a nation, they may think lightly of the spiritual sins of worldliness, superstition, or unbelief. But when at length the time of forbearance is past, and ungodliness is suffered to show its genuine results, it is seen to be as a wasting disease, beneath which men "pine away."

CHAPTER V.

A further symbolic prediction of the Siege and its consequences.

The threatenings of Lev. xxvi and Deut. xxviii, xxxii, must now be accomplished (see marg. refs. on vv. 10, 12—17).

1. "knife," or, "sword;" s. w. a. in vv. 2, 12; xxi. 14—16: so

¹ Dried cow's-dung is a common article | cleaning the floors of cottages; being of fuel in India. It is also used there in | reckoned both pure and wholesome.

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^b ver. 12.

^c ch. 4. 1.

^d ch. 4. 8, 9.

^e Jer. 40. 6.

& 52. 16.

^f Heb. *wings*.

^g Jer. 41. 1, 2,

&c. & 41. 14.

upon thine head and upon thy beard: then take three balances to weigh, and divide the *hair*.

2 ^b Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of ^c the city, when ^d the days of the siege are fulfilled: and thou shalt take a third part, and smite about it with a knife: and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them.

3 ^e Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy ^f skirts.

4 Then take of them again, and ^g cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; for thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel.

5 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries *that are* round about her.

6 And she hath changed my judgments into

that the purport of the allegory is intimated, before the actual allegory has commenced.

As a priest, Ezekiel was forbidden to shave his head or his beard (Lev. xxi. 5; cp. ch. xlv. 20). Now he is directed to dishonour his head;—as a sign of the degradation, which was soon to come upon the once priestly nation (cp. Isa. vii. 20).

“balances.” Implying the exact care with which judgment would be dealt out to the nation.

2. “with fire,” or, “in the furnace.” The flames are here pestilence and famine (ver. 12). Cp. Lam. v. 10.

“will draw out . . .” The words of Lev. xxvi. 33.

3, 4. The small remnant, which is reserved, corresponds to the little community that was brought back from Babylon. These were subjected to the heavy sufferings of the Maccabean period, and afterwards to the horrors of the Roman wars (cp. Isa. vi. 13).

“thereof,” or, “therefrom.” Their sin in rejecting Christ was like a fire, which spread over the whole nation (cp. Isa. ix. 18).

5. “This”—this head, which is to be shaven.

“I have set . . .” Rather, “I set her in the midst of the nations, and “round about her were the countries.” Palestine was fitted by its situation to be a focus of religious influence to the world. It lay between the two greatest of ancient empires, Egypt, which dominated Africa, and Babylon, which ruled over Western Asia; yet it was fenced in, by desert and mountains, from both. On its confines it had Tyre, the mistress of the Mediterranean, Damascus and Petra, on the line of Arabian commerce, and Elath, the port for the Indian Ocean. She might have been (what the Temple of God hereafter should be, ch. xlvii. 1—12) a fountain of spiritual life to the world.

6. “She changed . . .” or, “She rebelled against my judgments, to do

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wickedness more than the nations, and my statutes more than the countries that *are* round about her: for they have refused my judgments and my statutes, they have not walked in them.

7 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because ye multiplied more than the nations that *are* round about you, *and* have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, ^gneither have done according to the judgments of the nations that *are* round about you;

^g Jer. 2. 10, 11.
ch. 16. 47.

8 therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, *am* against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations.

9 ^hAnd I will do in thee that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the like, because of all thine abominations.

^h Lam. 4. 6.
Dan. 9. 12.
Amos 3. 2.
ⁱ Lev. 26. 29.
Deut. 28. 53.
2 Kin. 6. 29.
Jer. 19. 9.
Lam. 2. 20.
& 4. 10.

10 Therefore the fathers ⁱshall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I ^kscatter into all the winds.

^k Lev. 26. 33.
Deut. 28. 64.
ver. 12.
ch. 12. 14.
Zech. 2. 6.

“wickedness more than the nations, and against . . .” (see 2 Kings xxi. 9, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14—16). It is a well-known proverb: “The better a thing is in itself, the worse it becomes, if it be spoilt.” How often has this sorrowful confession, “*Corruptio optimi fit pessima*,” been wrung from the Church’s lips by the misconduct of her children.

“refused,” or, “despised:” as in Lev. xxvi. 43.

7. “ye multiplied more than,” or, “your tumult is greater than that of . . .” The “tumult” was that of unrestrained worldliness.

“the judgments . . .” Heathen nations did at least hold fast by their traditions, customs, and institutions. Israel deliberately set aside the clearest provisions of God’s Law (cp. Jer. ii. 10, 11); and, in so doing, fell of necessity into the wildest moral disorder. Israel *could not* descend merely to the level of paganism. In descending *towards* that level, it acquired a downward momentum which carried it to a much lower state of degradation. The certain consequence of its “doing after the manners of the nations” (ch. xi. 12) was, that it became “corrupted more than they” (ch. xvi. 47).

8. “execute judgments.” Cp. ch. v. 15; xi. 9; xvi. 41. So at the Exodus God said: “Upon all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment” (Exod. xii. 12). Jerusalem is now “spiritually” Egypt (Rev. xi. 8). The “Destroyer,” therefore, shall advance against her (ch. v. 16, ix. 1); in order that the true Church may be emancipated from this house of bondage (ch. xx. 33, xxxiv. 27).

“in the sight of . . .” Proving thereby that the God of Israel will not tolerate iniquity in His people (cp. ch. xx. 41).

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¹ 2 Chr. 36. 14.
ch. 7. 20.
& 8. 5, &c.
& 23. 38.

^m ch. 11. 21.
ⁿ ch. 7. 4, 9.
& 8. 18. &
9. 10.

^o See ver. 2.
Jer. 15. 2.
& 21. 9.
ch. 6. 12.

^p Jer. 9. 16.
ver. 2, 10.
ch. 6. 8.

^q Lev. 26. 33.
ver. 2.
ch. 12. 14.

^r Lam. 4. 11.
ch. 6. 12.
& 7. 8.

^s ch. 21. 17.
^t Deut. 32. 36.
Isai. 1. 24.

^u ch. 36. 6.
& 38. 19.

^x Lev. 26. 31,
32.
Neh. 2. 17.

^y Deut. 28. 37.
¹ Kin. 9. 7.
Ps. 79. 4.
Jer. 24. 9.
Lam. 2. 15.

^z ch. 25. 17.

^a Deut. 32.
23, 24.

11 Wherefore, *as* I live, saith the Lord God; Surely, because thou hast ¹defiled my sanctuary with all thy ^mdetestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish *thee*; ⁿneither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity.

12 ^oA third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee: and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and ^pI will scatter a third part into all the winds, and ^qI will draw out a sword after them.

13 Thus shall mine anger ^rbe accomplished, and I will ^scause my fury to rest upon them, ^tand I will be comforted: ^uand they shall know that I the LORD have spoken *it* in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them.

14 Moreover ^xI will make thee waste, and a reproach among the nations that *are* round about thee, in the sight of all that pass by.

15 So it shall be a ^yreproach and a taunt, an instruction and an astonishment unto the nations that *are* round about thee, when I shall execute judgments in thee in anger and in fury and in ^zfurious rebukes. I the LORD have spoken *it*.

16 When I shall ^asend upon them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for *their* destruction, and

11. "diminish thee." Lit. "withdraw,"—My support (cp. ch. xvi. 27), or, My favour (Job xxxvi. 7).

"spare . . . pity." For it was a case of flagrant apostasy, such as forbade pity; see Deut. xiii. 8. For nine long centuries that Fatherly Eye had "spared" (ch. xx. 17). Now the Father's Hand must deal out unrelenting punishment.

13. "be accomplished," or, "come to an end;"—as having effected its purpose (Isa. x. 25).

"cause . . . upon them," or, "bring my anger against them to rest" (cp. ch. xvi. 42, xxi. 17). Until its work was done, it could not rest (cp. Jer. xlvii. 6, 7).

"be comforted." Because relieved from its long-continued and vehement self-restraint (cp. Isa. i. 24).

"zeal," or, "jealousy:"—the jealousy of holy love (Song of Songs viii. 6). Cp. ch. xvi. 38.

15. "an instruction." For the admonition of all nations (1 Cor. x. 11).

16. "shall be for *their* destruction," or, "are ready for destruc-

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which I will send to destroy you: and I will increase the famine upon you, and will break your ^bstaff of bread:

17 so will I send upon you famine and ^cevil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and ^dpestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the LORD have spoken it.

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^b Lev. 26. 26.
ch. 4. 16.
& 14. 13.
^c Lev. 26. 22.
Deut. 32. 24.
ch. 14. 21.
& 33. 27.
& 34. 25.
^d ch. 38. 22.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *The judgment of Israel for their idolatry. 8 A remnant shall be blessed.*

11 *The faithful are exhorted to lament their calamities.*

AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
2 Son of man, ^aset thy face toward the ^bmountains of Israel, and prophesy against them,

3 and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the

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^a ch. 20. 46.
& 21. 2.
& 25. 2.
^b ch. 36. 1.

"tion" (*s. w. a.* Exod. xii. 13, where the *marg.* is "for a destruction"); ready to do the work of the Destroying Angel (*cp.* on verse 8).

17. "have spoken it." Not now for the first time. He had said it long ago by the mouth of Moses (Deut. xxxii. 23): "I will spend my "arrows upon them," &c.

Obs. It seems strange that Israel, with so many warnings respecting the consequences of sin, should have fallen away from its covenant with God. Stranger still is it that Christian nations, with the Gospel in their hands, should have receded so far from the Law of Christ, as (it is to be feared) they have done.

CHAPTER VI.

God's Judgment on the Idols of Israel, and on their worshippers.

The design of this severe discipline is now declared. It was that Israel might thereby gain a practical knowledge of God, as the one, self-existent, ever true and faithful, Jehovah.

The expression, "shall know that I am the Lord," occurs seven times in this and the following chapter (ch. vi. 7, 10, 13, 14, vii. 4, 9, 27). Altogether it is found in Ezekiel sixty-five times; in Isaiah *once* (ch. xlv. 3); in Jeremiah *once* (ch. ix. 24); in Joel *once* (ch. iv. 17); in the other Prophets not at all. The other books of Scripture, in which it occurs, are Exodus (ten times), Deuteronomy (*once*, ch. xxix. 5), and 1 Kings (twice, ch. xx. 13, 28).

Obs. The purpose of the "judgments executed" on Egypt (*cp.* on ch. v. 8) was to manifest this same fundamental truth; Exod. vi. 7, vii. 5, 17, viii. 22, x. 2, xiv. 4, 18.

2. "the mountains." On which they had built shrines in imitation of the sun-temples of the old Canaanite races (Deut. xii. 2, 3).

3. "rivers," or, "torrent-beds;" (in the *marg.* of ch. xxxvi. 4

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valleys; Behold, I, *even* I, will bring a sword upon you, and ^c I will destroy your high places.

^c Lev. 26. 30.

4 And your altars shall be desolate, and your ² images shall be broken: and ^d I will cast down your slain *men* before your idols.

² Or, *sun*
images, and
so ver. 6.

^d Lev. 26. 30.

³ Heb. *give*.

5 And I will ³ lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols; and I will scatter your bones round about your altars.

6 In all your dwellingplaces the city shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate; that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, and your idols may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down, and your works may be abolished.

^e ver. 13,
ch. 7. 4, 9,
& 11. 10, 12,
& 12. 15.

7 And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and ^e ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

^f Jer. 44. 28,
ch. 5. 2, 12,
& 12. 16,
& 14. 22.

8 ¶ ^f Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have *some* that shall escape the sword among the

“bottoms,” or, “dales”); cp. Isa. lvii. 5, where the same word is rendered “valleys.” The whole of that goodly land, “hills and valleys” alike (Deut. viii. 7), had been covered with the pollution of idolatry.

“I will destroy . . .” Quoted from Lev. xxvi. 30 (which is also referred to in vv. 4, 5).

4. “before your idols,”—in the place, where they had so debased themselves. The word, here (as in Lev. xxvi. 30) rendered “idols,” occurs in Ezekiel thirty-nine times; in the rest of the Bible only nine times. In the marg. of Deut. xxix. 17 it is rendered “dungy gods” (comp. on ch. iv. 12). That it has the idea of “defilement” specially associated with it, is plain from ch. xx. 7, 15, 31, xxii. 3, 4, xxxvi. 25.

5. “dead carcasses.” Compare Lev. xxvi. 30: “I will cast your “carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols.” Long ago dead spiritually, they are now cast in literal death upon the dead things which they had worshipped.

“your bones.” Cp. Jer. viii. 1, 2.

6. “your dwelling places” (ch. vi. 14, xxxvii. 23)—the inhabited parts of your land (cp. Num. xv. 2).

“abolished.” Swept away, as by a deluge. Yet, strongly denunciatory as the word was, it had comfort in it too: for it is used of washing away a cause of defilement; as (1) in Gen. vi. 7, of the men who corrupted the earth; and (2) in Ps. li. 3, 11, Isa. xliii. 25, of sin. Cp. Isa. xxvii. 9.

Obs. In order that God’s spiritual creation may be fruitful in holiness, man’s confidence in his own “works” must be first swept away. He must even “count them as dung” (Phil. iii. 8). Cp. Isa. lvii. 12, 19; Jer. xlviii. 7.

8. “Yet will I.” Rather, “and I will.” This also was part of the proof that He was Jehovah, the Unchangeable (Mal. iii. 6).

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nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries.

9 And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because ^aI am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and ^bwith their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and ⁱthey shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.

^g Ps. 78. 40.
ⁱ Isai. 7. 13.
& 43. 24.
& 63. 10.
^h Num. 15. 37.
ch. 20. 7, 24.
ⁱ Lev. 26. 39.
Job 12. 6.
ch. 20. 43.
& 26. 31.

10 And they shall know that I *am* the LORD, and that I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them.

11 ¶ Thus saith the Lord God; Smite ^kwith thine ^kch. 21. 14.
hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! ⁱfor ⁱch. 5. 12.
they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.

12 He that is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword; and he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the famine: ^mthus will I accomplish my fury upon ^mch. 5. 13.
them.

13 Then ⁿshall ye know that I *am* the LORD, ⁿver. 7.
when their slain *men* shall be among their idols round about their altars, ^oupon every high hill, ^pin all the tops of the mountains, and ^qunder every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols.

^o Jer. 2. 20.
^p Hos. 4. 13.
^q Isai. 57. 5.

9. "remember me." Ch. xvi. 61, xx. 43. The origin of their apostasy had been in forgetting God (Deut. viii. 14, 18).

"because . . ." or, "how that I am broken;" like one who had been humiliated and deeply grieved by the unchastity of a wife.—Idolatry sprang from the loss of heart-chastity, which is the true love of God (Ps. lxxiii. 1, 27, 28). The cleansing from idolatry could be effected only through the bestowal of "a new heart" (ch. xxxvi. 25, 26).

10. "not . . . in vain." Not without a good and adequate end in view (cp. ch. xiv. 23).

12. He that has got away from the city, shall be overtaken by the pestilence. The sword shall snatch up him that is just making his escape. He that is inside the walls shall die of famine.

13. "sweet savour." Fragrant incense;—presented to those foul idols! Offering and deity alike abominable!

Obs. It is evident that there was no lack of (what men have called) the "sentiment of religion" among the Israelites, who yet were entirely

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r Isai. 5. 25.
2 Or, *desolate*
from the
wilderness.
s Num. 33. 46.
Jer. 43. 22.

14 So will I ^rstretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, yea, ²more desolate than the wilderness toward ^sDiblath, in all their habitations: and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *The final desolation of Israel.* 16 *The mournful repentance of them that escape.* 20 *The enemies defile the sanctuary because of the Israelites' abominations.* 23 *Under the type of a chain is shewed their miserable captivity.*

MOREOVER the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

a ver. 3. 6.
Amos 8. 2.
Matt. 24. 6,
13, 14.

2 Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD unto the land of Israel; ^aAn end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land.

b ver. 8. 9.

² Heb. *give.*

3 Now *is* the end *come* upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and ^bwill judge thee according to thy ways, and will ²recompense upon thee all thine abominations.

c ver. 9.
ch. 5. 11.
& 8. 18.
& 9. 10.

4 And ^cmine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: ^dand ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

d ver. 27.
ch. 6. 7.
& 12. 20.

5 Thus saith the Lord GOD; An evil, an only evil, behold, is come.

alienated from God. They would offer fragrant incense on altars erected amidst the most charming scenes of nature; but they would not bring to the Holy One the offering of a penitent heart.

CHAPTER VII.

THE END, THE INEXORABLE END, IS COME. Mercy, which has long held Justice back, now (in very pity) permits him to advance:— for how else, but by the demolition of their idols, can Israel be induced to return to the God of mercy?

The oft-recurring words, “The end is come,” take us back to the announcement in Gen. vi. 13: “The end of all flesh is come before me” (cp. on ch. vi. 6). The words had already been used by Amos (Amos viii. 2; cp. on ch. xx. 46).

2. “An end.” Rather, “An end!” Israel’s probationary period has reached its furthest allowable limit. Compare on ch. xx. 46 and xxi. 25, 29.

3. “now is the end upon thee;”—rushing on thee with overpowering force (cp. the phrase in Judg. xvi. 20).

4. “shall be in the midst of thee.” They have long been so secretly, but not recognised as “abominations;” now they shall be seen openly in their true character, eating away thy very life.

5. “an only evil.” One and final;—needing no second to follow (cp. Nah. i. 9).

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6 An end is come, the end is come: it ² watcheth for thee; behold, it is come. Before
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7 ^eThe morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: ^fthe time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the ³sounding again of the mountains. ² Heb. awaketh against thee.
^e ver. 10.
^f ver. 12.
Zeph. 1. 14, 15.
³ Or, echo.
^g ch. 20. 8, 21.
^h ver. 3.

8 Now will I shortly ⁵pour out my fury upon thee, and accomplish mine anger upon thee: ^hand I will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense thee for all thine abominations.

9 And ⁱmine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense ⁴thee according to thy ways and thine abominations *that* are in the midst of thee; ^kand ye shall know that I *am* the LORD that smiteth. i ver. 4.
⁴ Heb. upon thee.
^k ver. 4.

10 Behold the day, behold, it is come: ¹the morning is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded. i ver. 7.

11 ^mViolence is risen up into a rod of wickedness: none of them *shall remain*, nor of their ⁵multitude, nor of any of ⁶their's: ⁿneither *shall there be* wailing for them. m Jer. 6. 7.
⁵ Or, tumult.
⁶ Or, their tumultuous persons.
ⁿ Jer. 16. 5, 6, ch. 24. 16, 22.

6. "watcheth for thee." Rather, "hath awaked against thee,"—out of its seeming slumber. Cp. 2 St. Pet. ii. 3.

7. "The morning" (ver. 10): or, "the crowning time;" when Israel's rebellion should receive its due reward,—a diadem of shame and woe.

"the day of trouble . . ." or, "the day is near, (a day) of trouble" (Isa. xxii. 5), and of no joyous shout from the mountains;—no echoing of the shouts of vintage-gatherers (Jer. xlviii. 33). A very different wine-press is now trodden.

9. "that are." Rather, "shall be" (as in ver. 4).

"that I am . . ." or, "that I the Lord do smite;"—I, the righteous God; not fate or chance.

10, 11. The "pride" and "violence" here spoken of are commonly taken to be Zedekiah's. It seems better to refer them to the King of Babylon (cp. "I am against thee, O pride, saith the Lord God of Hosts; for thy day is come;" Jer. 1. 31).

Sin receives a retribution in kind. Judah sinned by pride and violence (Jer. xiii. 9, ch. viii. 17). A sceptre of yet greater pride and violence shall chastise them. It is already prepared. "Violence is risen up" (*s. v. a. Num. xxiv. 17*), so as to be "a sceptre of wickedness" and oppression (Ps. cxxv. 3). Whence is it risen? The answer is suggested by the second part of ver. 11, which may be thus rendered:—"Not from them, nor from their multitude" (*they* are its victims, vv. 12—14), "nor from their noisy ones; neither of any beauty among them."

They had thought to rule with "a sceptre of wickedness;" such a

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o ver. 7.

12 ° The time is come, the day draweth near: let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn: for wrath *is* upon all the multitude thereof.

² Heb. though their life were yet among the living.

13 For the seller shall not return to that which is sold, ² although they were yet alive: for the vision *is* touching the whole multitude thereof, *which* shall not return; neither shall any strengthen himself ³ in ⁴ the iniquity of his life.

³ Or, whose life is in his iniquity.

⁴ Heb. his iniquity.

14 They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready; but none goeth to the battle: for my wrath *is* upon all the multitude thereof.

p Deut. 32. 25.
Lam. 1. 20.
ch. 5. 12.

15 p The sword *is* without, and the pestilence and the famine within: he that *is* in the field shall die with the sword; and he that *is* in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.

q ch. 6. 8.

16 But ^q they that escape of them shall escape, and shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity.

r Isai. 13. 7.
Jer. 6. 24.
ch. 21. 7.

17 All ^r hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall ⁵ be weak as water.

⁵ Heb. go into water.

s Isai. 3. 24.
& 15. 2, 3.
Jer. 48. 37.
Amos 8. 10.

18 They shall also ^s gird themselves with sackcloth, and ^t horror shall cover them; and shame *shall* be upon all faces, and baldness upon all their heads.

t Ps. 55. 5.

u Heb. for a separation, or, uncleanness.

v Prov. 11. 4.
Zeph. 1. 18.

19 They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be ⁶ removed: their ^u silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the

sceptre should stand up, but neither from among themselves nor for their aggrandizement.

12. One, who has been forced by poverty to sell his land, need not mourn; he and the buyer shall both of them be carried off by the invader.

Obs. So in regard to the great invader, Death, it is said: "*The time is short*; it remaineth that . . . they that weep be as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they bought not . . . for the fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor. vii. 29—31).

13. "although." Rather, "though his soul be still in life." Though he be alive at the jubile-year, he shall not "return unto his possession" (Lev. xxv. 27); for he is still in exile. It is to be a long captivity.

16. A semicolon is needed after the word, "mourning," since it refers to the doves (cp. Isa. lix. 11, Jer. xlvi. 28). The last clause should be, "every one in his iniquity."

19. Their gold and silver—whether idols (ch. xvi. 17, Isa. ii. 20), or riches,—could not "profit in the day of wrath" (Prov. xi. 4).

"be removed," or, "be as an unclean thing" (see ver. 20, marg.).

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day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: ² because it is ^x the stumblingblock of their iniquity.

20 As for the beauty of his ornament, he set it in majesty: ^y but they made the images of their abominations *and* of their detestable things therein: therefore have I ³ set it far from them.

21 And I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a prey, and to the wicked of the earth for a spoil; and they shall pollute it.

22 My face will I turn also from them, and they shall pollute my secret *place*: for the ⁴ robbers shall enter into it, and defile it.

23 ¶ Make a chain: for ^z the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence.

24 Wherefore I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses: I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease; and ⁵ their holy places shall be defiled.

25 ⁶ Destruction cometh; and they shall seek peace, and *there shall be none*.

26 ^a Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour; ^b then shall they seek a vision

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² Or, because their iniquity is their stumblingblock.

^x ch. 14. 3, 4. & 44. 12.

^y Jer. 7. 30.

³ Or, made it unto them an unclean thing.

⁴ Or, burglars.

^z 2 Kin. 21. 16. ch. 9. 9. & 11. 6.

⁵ Or, they shall inherit their holy places.

⁶ Heb. Cutting off.

^a Deut. 32. 23. Jer. 4. 20.

^b Ps. 74. 9. Lam. 2. 9. ch. 20. 1, 3.

“it is the stumblingblock . . .” Their iniquity has made their wealth to be to them an “occasion of falling;”—of sin and consequent ruin (see on ch. xiv. 2, xviii. 30). Compare 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

20. “the beauty of . . .” The Temple (cp. xxiv. 21); the fairest jewel in the crown of Judah. They profaned it by their idolatry (2 Chron. xxxiii. 4, 5, xxxvi. 14).

“set it far . . .” Rather (as marg.), “made it unto them as an unclean “thing” (ver. 19; Lam. i. 17); a thing to be thrown away (2 Chron. xxix. 5, where the same word is rendered “filthiness”).

21. “the strangers,” whose gods they had worshipped. The city was heathenized: let it then be made over to the heathen.

22. “my secret place.” The Holy of Holies; which guarded that most precious of treasures, the Ark of the Covenant.

23. “make a chain,” or, “fasten on the chains” (Nah. iii. 10). Sentence has been passed on the criminals;—rivet on their fetters.

24. “the pomp (or, pride) of the strong.” An allusion to Lev. xxvi. 19; which is also referred to in ch. xxiv. 21, xxx. 6, 18, xxxiii. 28; cp. Isa. xiii. 11.

“their holy places.” Theirs; no longer God’s. Comp. St. Matt. xxiii. 38: “Your house is left unto you desolate.”

25. “shall be.” Rather, “is.” No peace for the wicked! (Isa. lvii. 21). Cp. Isa. lix. 11.

of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients.

27 The king shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled: I will do unto them after their way, and ² according to their deserts will I judge them; ^c and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

² Heb.
with their
judgments.
^c ver. 4.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *Ezekiel, in a vision of God at Jerusalem, 5 is shewed the image of jealousy, 7 the chambers of imagery, 13 the mourners for Tammuz, 15 the worshippers towards the sun. 18 God's wrath for their idolatry.*

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^a ch. 14. 1.
& 20. 1.
& 33. 31.

AND it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and ^a the elders of Judah sat before

26. "shall perish;" in spite of the boastful words uttered by the men of Judah in Jer. xviii. 18.

Obs. Amidst all their idolatry, the citizens of Jerusalem prided themselves on their Temple and its Levitical service and the Davidic covenant: all of them, as they thought, established for ever. Yet in this solemn chapter Ezekiel proclaims with the utmost definiteness the arrival of "the End." So shall it be at the close of the present Dispensation; when men have persuaded themselves that the laws of nature are unchangeable. Then shall "the end of all" (1 St. Pet. iv. 7) arrive. Cp. 2 St. Pet. iii. 4.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Idolatries, open and secret, which prevailed in Jerusalem.

Chapters viii—xi contain a vision, in which the prophet is shewn, first, the deep interior corruption which had spread through all classes of people in Jerusalem, and then, God's deliberate abandonment of the Temple and city.

The people of Jerusalem, instead of being reformed by the captures of their city in B.C. 606 and 599, had plunged into wild excesses of infidelity and idolatry. They adopted with avidity every form of superstition, Egyptian (ver. 10), Phœnician (ver. 14), and Babylonian (ver. 16); these being so many outward exponents of that deep-seated idolatry which reigned in their hearts (see on ver. 12).

This vision was communicated by Ezekiel to the captive Jews (ch. xi. 24, 25); to whose state of mind, indeed, it was well adapted. The men of Jerusalem looked on them as outcasts (ch. xi. 15). This vision told them that Jerusalem was doomed; and that, consequently, they must seek for comfort, not in the hope of returning to the Holy Land, but in the assurance that God's own gracious Presence would be with them in their exile (ch. xi. 16).

1. "of Judah." Of the captives, who belonged to Judah. So in ch. xiv. 1 we have, "the elders of Israel."

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me, that ^b the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me.

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2 ^c Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire : from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire ; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, ^d as the colour of

^b ch. 1. 3.
& 3. 22.
^c ch. 1. 16, 27.

^d ch. 1. 4.

amber.
3 And he ^e put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head ; and ^f the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and ^g brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north ; ^h where *was* the seat of the image of jealousy, which ⁱ provoketh to jealousy.

^e Dan. 5. 5.

^f ch. 3. 14.

^g ch. 11. 1, 24.
& 40. 2.

^h Jer. 7. 30.
& 32. 34.
ch. 5. 11.

ⁱ Deut. 32. 16,
21.

4 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel *was* there, according to the vision that I ^k saw in the plain.

^k ch. 1. 28.
& 3. 22, 23.

5 ¶ Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold northward at the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry.

6 He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? *even* the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn

2. "brightness." The Hebrew word occurs elsewhere only in Dan. xii. 3: "The brightness of the firmament."

3. "visions of God;" presented to him in a state of ecstasy: giving him an insight into the condition of things that prevailed in Jerusalem.

The digging into the crypt (ver. 8), the "chambers of imagery" in each man's heart (ver. 12), and the marking of the foreheads of the faithful (ch. ix. 4), can scarcely be understood otherwise than symbolically. The other descriptions in this chapter may, therefore, also be taken as allegorical representations of the spiritual state of Judah.

"the inner gate;" to the north of the brazen altar (ver. 5). Just outside the doorway ("in the entry," ver. 5) was the "seat," or throne, of some idol-god (perhaps, Thammuz, ver. 14). From its position, it was, more than any ordinary idol, an "image of jealousy;" since it appeared to say to the frequenters of the Temple, "Fall down and worship me *first*; after that you may enter and do what you list." Cp. 2 Kings xxi. 4—14, xxiii. 7.

4. "was there;" having left its "resting-place," the Holy of Holies (ch. iii. 12).

6. "that I should." Rather, "to get them far from my sanctuary."

thee yet again, *and* thou shalt see greater abominations.

7 ¶ And he brought me to the door of the court ; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall.

8 Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall : and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door.

9 And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.

10 So I went in and saw ; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about.

11 And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand ; and a thick cloud of incense went up.

Their way of drawing near was such as put them in fact at an infinite distance. Cp. Jer. ii. 5, Isa. xxix. 13, Ps. lxxiii. 27.

7—9. Beneath the Court of the People, hidden away from observation, was a crypt ; in which Israel's ungodliness developed itself without restraint. The overt rites of the prevalent semi-paganism were (we may suppose) fairly decorous : but down below the surface there was a mass of vile and degrading corruption, which had atheism at its centre (ver. 12).

10. "creeping things . . ." or, "abominable reptiles and beasts ;" such as the Egyptians worshipped in their underground temples, *e. g.* crocodiles, serpents, and cats. The hearts of God's people had become dens of Egyptian idolatry. When Zedekiah and his princes relied on Egypt for deliverance, what was that but to do homage to the gods of Egypt as superior to Israel's God ?

11. "ancients," or, "elders," (as in Exod. xxiv. 1). After the ratification of the Covenant at Sinai, *seventy elders* had accompanied Moses a certain distance up the Mount, and had gazed on the glorious vision of "the God of Israel." Now all is changed. Israel's elders go down into subterranean chambers to violate the covenant ; dreaming that God does not see them.

"Jaazaniah ;" whose name, signifying, "The Lord giveth ear," was a standing protest against the delusions of infidelity.

"Shaphan." A person of this name had assisted Josiah (2 Kings xxii. 3, 11). A son of Shaphan, named Ahikam, had protected Jeremiah (Jer. xxvi. 24).

"incense," the symbol of holy prayer. Prayer to those foul images ! Compare vi. 13.

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12 Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, ¹The LORD seeth us not; the LORD ¹ hath forsaken the earth.

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¹ ch. 9. 9.

13 ¶ He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do.

14 Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD's house which *was* toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.

15 ¶ Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen *this*, O son of man? turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these.

16 And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, ^m between the porch and the altar, ⁿ were about five and twenty men, ^o with their backs

^m Joel 2. 17.
ⁿ ch. 11. 1.
^o Jer. 2. 27.
& 32. 33.

12. "every man in . . ." This gives a key to the interpretation of the vision. The "chambers of imagery" must be their own idolatrous hearts (ch. xiv. 3; cp. Prov. xx. 27). See "*Christian Year*," 17th Sunday after Trinity.

"in the dark." For "they had become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Rom. i. 21, Eph. iv. 17, 18).

"the earth," or, "the land;" (and so in ch. ix. 9). Undoubtedly God had withdrawn His protecting favour from the land (ch. vii. 22, Jer. xii. 7); but that was because *they* had "forsaken" Him (Jer. i. 16, v. 19, xxii. 9). To use this withdrawal as a plea for yet more determined heathenism was to add enormously to their guilt. It was, in effect, to deny that He was God. Had He power over them, when His Presence was "near at hand," and not when it had removed "afar off"? "Could any hide themselves in secret places that He, who fills heaven and earth, should not see them?" (Jer. xxiii. 23, 24.)

14. "Tammuz." So called by the Phœnicians;—in Greek fable named Adonis. The story was that Adonis, the favourite of Venus, was killed by a wild boar, but afterwards restored to life. The women, who were present at the recital, wept over the piteous tale, and fancied that their sentimental grief had in it religious merit; although it was commonly associated with licentious orgies.

15, 16. Not only the people and their elders, and the women, but the priests also, had desecrated God's Temple; the last, indeed, in a more formal and precise way than the others.

"Twenty-five" men (perhaps, the heads of the twenty-four courses,

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toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped ^pthe sun toward the east.

^p Deut. 4. 19.
² Kings 23.
5. 11.

Joh 31. 26.
Jer. 44. 17.

² Or, *Is there any thing lighter than to commit.*

^q ch. 9. 9.

^r ch. 5. 13.
& 10. 42.
& 24. 13.

^s ch. 5. 11.
& 7. 4. 9.
& 9. 5. 10.

^t Prov. 1. 28.
Isai. 1. 15.

Jer. 11. 11.
& 14. 12.

17 Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen *this*, O son of man? ² Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have ³ filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose.

18 ^r Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine ^s eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they ^t cry in mine ears with a loud voice, *yet* will I not hear them.

Mic. 3. 4. Zech. 7. 13.

with the High-priest as leader) stood "between the porch and the "(brazen) altar,"—the very place where they ought to have been interceding for the people's sin (Joel ii. 17). Instead of praying with their faces to the Holy Place, they have turned their backs upon it, and are making obeisance to the rising sun. This was a most express act of apostasy. By their attitude (cp. Jer. ii. 27, xxxii. 33, 2 Chron. xxix. 6) they signified that they had determined not to believe the promise which God had made to Israel, 1 Kings viii. 44, ix. 3. Thenceforward they would worship what they could see. An invisible God was for them no God. The sun was, at any rate, a glorious reality.

17. Thus, then, they have broken both the Tables of the Law. After "filling the land with violence" (cp. ch. vii. 23), as the antediluvians had done (Gen. vi. 13), they have now rejected the very idea of God. In doing this they add a final expression of their disdain:—

"they put the branch to their nose." The word rendered "branch" is in Num. xiii. 23, Nah. ii. 2 (3), (and probably always,) a "vine-branch." This may have been like the thyrsus (or, narthex) which was carried by frenzied Bacchanalian devotees. From ver. 18 ("I also will deal in fury") it would seem that this action of theirs was meant to represent scornful anger.

18. "I also." In retribution. So in ch. v. 11, Prov. i. 26, Isa. lxvi. 4; (cp. on ch. v. 11).

Obs. The most surprising circumstance in this revelation of the people's sin is, that these enormities were committed in, or under the shadow of, the Temple. A profession of adherence to the God of Israel was kept up, while men were at heart the slaves of degrading passions or impious maxims;—practically, "without God in the world." Truly, man's "heart is deceitful above all things" (Jer. xvii. 9).

O LORD, we beseech Thee, let Thy continual pity cleanse and defend Thy Church; that we may withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds may follow Thee the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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CHAPTER IX.

1 A vision, whereby is shewed the preservation of some, 5 and the destruction of the rest. 8 God cannot be intreated for them.

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HE cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man *with* his destroying weapon in his hand.

2 And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, ² which lieth toward the north, and every man ³ a slaughter weapon in his hand; ^a and one man among them *was* clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn ⁴ by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar.

² Heb. which is turned.

³ Heb. a weapon of his braking in pieces.

^a Lev. 16. 4. ch. 10. 2, 6, 7. Rev. 15. 6.

⁴ Heb. upon his loins.

^b See ch. 3. 23. & 8. 4. & 10. 4, 18. & 11. 22, 23.

3 And ^b the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which *had* the writer's inkhorn by his side;

CHAPTER IX.

Judgment begins at the House of God; but all who mourned over the nation's guilt are delivered.

The threatening of ch. viii. 18 is forthwith executed. The people's loud cry for mercy is drowned in the much louder proclamation made by Divine justice (ver. 1).

1. "Cause them . . ." Or, "They that have charge over the city "are come near." They are angelic agents, who are about to hold "visitation" (as the same word is rendered in Hos. ix. 7) upon the city. Their weapons are the armies of Nebuchadnezzar. Since we have *six* general officers of the Chaldeans mentioned in Jer. xxxix. 3, it is as though each of the six angels wielded a division of the besiegers' army.

"destroying weapon." Since each of them is a "destroying angel;" (cp. on ch. v. 16).

2. "the higher gate;" 2 Kings xv. 35. It is the same that was mentioned in ch. viii. 3; for the *inner* court was *higher* than the outer.

"among them." Or, "in the midst of them;" so that there were seven in all; (cp. Rev. viii. 2).

"clothed in linen." Cp. Dan. x. 5, xii. 6, 7. Linen robes were worn by the High-priest on the Day of Atonement (Lev. xvi. 4, 23). Is not He, Who here puts the sign of salvation upon the faithful in this time of vengeance, the very same with Him, around Whom the rainbow of mercy had been seen in the cloudy and dark day? (ch. i. 28.)

"beside the brasen altar;" near to which the priest-elders were still standing (ch. ix. 6, viii. 16). For them "there remained no more "sacrifice for sin" (Heb. x. 26; cp. on ch. x. 2).

3. The Glory, which had gone to take cognizance of the "image of

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4 and the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and ²set ^ea mark upon the foreheads of the men ^dthat sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.

5 And to the others he said in ³mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: ^elet not your eye spare, neither have ye pity:

6 ^fslay ⁴utterly old *and* young, both maids, and little children, and women: but ^gcome not near any man upon whom *is* the mark; and ^hbegin at my sanctuary.

^c Ex. 12. 7. ^d Heb. *mark a mark.* ^e Rev. 7. 3. & 9. 4. & 13. 16, 17. & 20. 4. ^f Ps. 119. 53, 136. ^g Jer. 13. 17. ^h 2 Cor. 12. 21. ⁱ 2 Pet. 2. 8. ^j Heb. *mine ears.* ^k ver. 10. ^l ch. 5. 11. ^m 2 Chr. 35. 17. ⁿ Heb. *to destruction.* ^o Rev. 9. 4. ^p Jer. 25. 29. ^q 1 Pet. 4. 17.

“jealousy” (ch. viii. 4), afterwards came back to the threshold of the Holy Place, (cp. ch. x. 4, 18); but not to re-enter it.

4. “a mark upon the foreheads.” This mark was to be to each individual what the Passover blood, sprinkled on the lintel, was to each household,—a safeguard against the Destroyer (Exod. xii. 13). It sealed him as “holy to the Lord:” as one who shared the consecration which belonged to the High-priest (Exod. xxviii. 38, St. John xvii. 19). Compare Rev. vii. 3.

The word rendered “mark” is, TAV; which is also the name of the last letter of the Hebrew Alphabet. In old Phœnician (as in Greek and Latin) the form of this letter is a cross (T). Hence many have seen in this mark an anticipative allusion to the Cross, on which “Christ, our “Passover, was sacrificed for us.”

Origen tells us that the Jews of his day took the “Tav” here to represent the word, “Torah,” which means “the Law:” as signifying that the men who were sealed to life were those “in whose heart God’s “law was” (Isa. li. 7).

Each of these views is interesting; but neither of them is convincing. In any case, the general sense of “mark” covers (as we have seen) both the ideas that are suggested by these theories,—namely, those of atonement and sanctification.

Obs. The symbolic cross marked on the forehead at Baptism includes in its significance the same two fundamental ideas. Through the “blood of the Cross” (Col. i. 20) the Christian is “saved from wrath” (Rom. v. 9). By the same Cross he is “crucified to the world,” and consecrated to God; and this, in order that “the righteousness of the “law may be fulfilled in him” (Gal. vi. 14, Rom. viii. 4).

“sigh . . . cry.” Sighing in inward grief: crying out in prayer.

6. “come not near.” The avenging sword of justice fell on *none* who were marked. If any such died in the siege, death was to them only a happy release from suffering. Yet outward deliverance, too, was in some cases given as a reward of faithfulness (Jer. xxxix. 17, 18, xlv. 3, 5).

“begin at my sanctuary.” The core of all the sin, which brought ruin on the nation, was, disregard of God’s holiness: and this was displayed most visibly in the desecration of His Temple. There, accordingly, the work of vengeance must commence. Compare 1 St. Peter iv. 17.

EZEKIEL, IX.

¹Then they began at the ancient men which *were* before the house.

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7 And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain: go ye forth. And they went forth, and slew in the city.

¹ ch. 8, 11, 12,
16.

8 ¶ And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I ^kfell upon my face, and cried, and said, ¹Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem?

^k Num. 14. 5.
& 16. 4, 22, 45.
Josh. 7. 6.
¹ ch. 11. 13.

9 Then said he unto me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah *is* exceeding great, and ^mthe land is ²full of blood, and the city full of ³perverseness: for they say, "The LORD hath forsaken the earth, and ^othe LORD seeth not.

^m 2 Kin. 21. 16.
ch. 8. 17.

² Heb.
filled with.

³ Or,
wresting of judgment.

^o ch. 8. 12.

^o Ps. 10. 11.
Isai. 29. 15.

^p ch. 5. 11. &
7. 4. & 8. 18.

^q ch. 11. 21.

10 And as for me also, mine ^peye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, *but* ^qI will recompense their way upon their head.

⁴ Heb.
returned the word.

11 And, behold, the man clothed with linen, which *had* the inkhorn by his side, ⁴reported the matter, saying, I have done as thou hast commanded me.

"the ancient men." The twenty-five mentioned in ch. viii. 16.

7. "Defile . . ." Defile outwardly that which has been so long spiritually defiled. Comp. 1 Cor. iii. 17.

8. "the residue." The faithful have been already cared for (ver. 11). The rest are too far gone for anything but strict justice.

9. "perverseness." Rather, "wresting (of judgment)" (as marg.); or, "perversion of right" (Deut. xxvii. 19, Amos v. 12).

"the Lord seeth not." In ch. viii. 10 infidelity had led to violations of the First Table of the Law; here it has issued in violations of the Second Table.

10. "mine eye,"—which they charge with blindness.

"their way." Turning a deaf ear to *their* entreaties; but fulfilling the supplication of the godly. At the dedication of the Temple Solomon had prayed that God would "condemn the wicked, bringing his way upon his head" (1 Kings viii. 32). Compare ch. xi. 21, xvi. 43, xxii. 31.

11. "as thou hast commanded." So the Great High-Priest said: "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do . . . Those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition" (St. John xvii. 4, 12). Cp. above on ver. 2.

1 *The vision of the coals of fire, to be scattered over the city.* 8 *The vision of the cherubims.*

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a ch. i. 22, 26.

THEN I looked, and, behold, in the ^a firmament that was above the head of the cherubims there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne.

b ch. 9. 2, 3.

2 ^b And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, *even* under the cherub, and fill ² thine hand with ^c coals of fire from between the cherubims, and ^d scatter *them* over the city. And he went in in my sight.

² Heb. *the hollow of thine hand.*

c ch. i. 13.

^d See Rev. 8. 5.

CHAPTER X.

The Glory of the Lord preparing to leave the Temple; while coals of fire are scattered over Jerusalem.

The prophet had been stricken with dismay at the scene which was spread out before him (ch. ix. 8). To restore his calmness, it is shewn him that the glory, which had left the Mercy-seat and was executing judgment on Jerusalem, is the same as that, which he had seen at Chebar (vv. 15, 20, 22). Yes:—all is still under the direction of infinite wisdom and perfect equity. No mistake, no injustice, is possible. The “coals of fire,” which are to be scattered over the city, are taken from the midst of the living creatures (ver. 2), which are “full of eyes round about” (ver. 12), discerning all the inner relations of events. The lightning-flash, which sets the Temple on fire, will only remove what sensual-minded men have turned into a fetiche. The Ark of the Covenant and the Cherubim of glory, which are about to be swept away for ever, what were they but weak symbols of abiding realities? The constitution given at Sinai is tottering to its fall; the everlasting throne is unshaken (Lam. v. 19; cp. Heb. xii. 26—28).

1. “cherubim.” So in vv. 15, 16, 18—20. No mention of cherubim was made in ch. i. The use of the name here implies (what is afterwards stated in ver. 15) that the beings symbolized by the cherubim of the Temple were identical with those whom the “living creatures” of ch. i. represented. A flood of light is thus thrown on the meaning of the Tabernacle arrangements.

2. He, Who had provided for the safety of the “mourners in Zion,” Himself sprinkles the fire, which is to destroy the guilty city; (cp. 2 Thess. i. 7—9.)

“the wheels;” or, “the whirling mass.” The word is the same as in ver. 13, “O wheel;” but *not* the same as in vv. 10, 12, 16, 19, and ch. i. 15—21. It implies that the rapidly revolving wheels are parts of one harmonious mechanism.

“scatter;” or, “sprinkle.” It is the word used in Exod. xxiv. 8; where Moses sprinkles the people with the “blood of the Covenant.” The men who have despised that Covenant, bring down “fiery indignation” on themselves (cp. Heb. x. 26—31).

EZEKIEL, X.

3 Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court. Before
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4 ^o Then the glory of the LORD ² went up from the cherub, *and stood* over the threshold of the house; and ^f the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD's glory.

5 And the ^g sound of the cherubims' wings was heard *even* to the outer court, as ^h the voice of the Almighty God when he speaketh.

6 And it came to pass, *that* when he had commanded the man clothed with linen, saying, Take fire from between the wheels; from between the cherubims; then he went in, and stood beside the wheels.

7 And *one* cherub ³ stretched forth his hand from between the cherubims unto the fire that *was* between the cherubims, and took *thereof*, and put it into the hands of *him that was* clothed with linen: who took it, and went out.

8 ¶ ⁱ And there appeared in the cherubims the form of a man's hand under their wings. i ch. 1. 8.
ver. 21.

9 ^k And when I looked, behold the four wheels by the cherubims, one wheel by one cherub, and another wheel by another cherub: and the appearance of the wheels *was* as the colour of a ^l beryl stone. k ch. 1. 15.

l ch. 1. 16.

10 And *as for* their appearances, they four had one likeness, as if a wheel had been in the midst of a wheel.

11 ^m When they went, they went upon their four sides; they turned not as they went, but to the m ch. 1. 17.

3. "the right side;" that is, the south (ch. xlvii. 1). In ch. ix. 2 the avengers came in from the north and stood by the Brazen Altar. The altar fire is now extinguished; (cp. on ch. ix. 2.) In its stead are the "coals of fire" inside the wheels:—the coals of Divine jealousy, "which have a most vehement flame" (Song of Songs viii. 6).

"the cloud." Corresponding to the "storm-cloud" of ch. i. 4. The "inner court" is that in which the Brazen Altar stood.

4. The Temple was filled with the cloud of judgment (cp. Rev. xv. 8), while the court was full of the brightness of the Divine glory. Though the Temple be given up to ruin, God's glory shall suffer no diminution.

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- ² Heb. *flesh*. place whither the head looked they followed it; they turned not as they went.
- ⁿ ch. 1. 18. ¹² And their whole ² body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and ⁿ the wheels, *were* full of eyes round about, *even* the wheels that they four had.
- ³ Or, *they were called in my hearing, wheel, or, galgal.* ¹³ As for the wheels, ³ it was cried unto them in my hearing, O wheel.
- ^o ch. 1. 6, 10. ¹⁴ ^o And every one had four faces: the first face *was* the face of a cherub, and the second face *was* the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.
- ^p ch. 1. 5. ¹⁵ And the cherubims were lifted up. This is ^p the living creature that I saw by the river of Chebar.
- ^q ch. 1. 13. ¹⁶ ^q And when the cherubims went, the wheels went by them: and when the cherubims lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also turned not from beside them.
- ^r ch. 1. 12, 20, 21. ¹⁷ ^r When they stood, *these* stood; and when they were lifted up, *these* lifted up themselves *also*: for the spirit ⁴ of the living creature *was* in them.
- ^s ver. 4. ¹⁸ Then ^s the glory of the LORD ^t departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims.
- ^u ch. 11. 22. ¹⁹ And ^u the cherubims lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight: when they went out, the wheels also *were* beside them, and *every one* stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD'S

11. "the head." That became at each time the "head," which was on the side towards which the Spirit impelled the cherubim.

12. In ch. i. 18 the prophet had seen that the feloes of the wheels were "full of eyes." Now he perceives that every part of the cherubim was so. Compare Rev. iv. 8.

13. "O wheel!" "O whirling mass!" (see on ver. 2). The address was itself a command. They were to move forward with that steady, irresistible, energy, which would overthrow one earthly polity after another; in order that the kingdom of Heaven might be introduced, and established immovably.

14. "a cherub." The corresponding face in ch. i. 10 is that of the ox, which symbolized patient endurance and sacrificial atonement. The time for expiation being now gone, the place of the ox is filled by a "cherub"—the living vehicle of Divine power (Ps. xviii. 10).

19. "the east gate." This must be the Eastern Gate of the Temple-Court.

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house; and the glory of the God of Israel *was* over them above. Before
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20 ^xThis *is* the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel ^yby the river of Chebar; and I knew that they *were* the cherubims. x ch. 1. 22.
ver. 15.
y ch. 1. 1.

21 ^zEvery one had four faces apiece, and every one four wings; ^aand the likeness of the hands of a man *was* under their wings. z ch. 1. 6.
ver. 14
a ch. 1. 8.
ver. 8.

22 And ^bthe likeness of their faces *was* the same faces which I saw by the river of Chebar, their appearances and themselves: ^cthey went every one straight forward. b ch. 1. 10.
c ch. 1. 12.

CHAPTER XI.

1 The presumption of the princes. 4 Their sin and judgment. 13 Ezekiel complaining, God sheweth him his purpose in saving a remnant, 21 and punishing the wicked. 22 The glory of God leaveth the city. 24 Ezekiel is returned to the captivity.

MOREOVER ^athe spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto ^bthe east gate of the LORD's house, which looketh eastward: and behold ^cat the door of the gate five and twenty men; among whom a ch. 3. 12,
14. & 8. 3.
ver. 24.
b ch. 10. 19.
c See ch. 8. 16.

Obs. For 400 years God had dwelt in the Temple as of old in Paradise; permitting Israel to hold communion with Him, as of old He permitted Adam. During this long period the cherubim had witnessed to that mystery of grace, which was as a "Tree of Life" to such as embraced it. Now that Israel has transgressed fatally, choosing "death and evil" rather than "life and good," he must be driven out from communion with the Blessed One: while (as of old) the cherubim move eastward (Gen. iii. 24), and wield their "flaming sword" (cp. on ch. xxi. 3) in token of God's wrath against disobedience.

"Chebar." The repetition of the word (vv. 15, 20, 22) is noticeable. It seems to proclaim, that the hour was coming, when He, Who had so long been specially worshipped at Jerusalem, would manifest His glory over the wide world: taking "the heathen to His inheritance," Ps. ii. 8; (cp. on ch. i. 1.)

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The glory had halted at the Eastern Gate (ch. x. 19), as though unwilling to take its final departure. But at this very spot a company of Zedekiah's princes are heard scoffing at Jeremiah's prophecy (ver. 3). The last hope of their repenting being now gone, the Glory retires to Olivet (ver. 23).

vv. 1—12. The avowed Infidelity of the Princes.

1. "twenty-five." Since they claim to represent all Israel (vv. 5, 15), there may have been two for each tribe with a president.

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I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people.

2 Then said he unto me, Son of man, these *are* the men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel in this city :

² Or, It is *not* for us to *build houses* near. ³ which say, ²*It is not* ⁴near; let us build houses: ⁵this *city is* the caldron, and we *be* the flesh.

^d ch. 12. 22, 27. ^e this *city is* the caldron, and we *be* the flesh. ⁴ Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man.

² Pet. 3. 4.
^e See Jer. 1. 13.
ch. 24. 3, &c.
^f ch. 2. 2.
& 3. 24.

5 ¶ And ^fthe Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the LORD; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, *every one of* them.

^g ch. 7. 23.
& 22. 3, 4.

6 ^g Ye have multiplied your slain in this city, and ye have filled the streets thereof with the slain.

^h ch. 24. 3,
6, 10, 11.
Mic. 3. 3.

7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; ^hYour slain whom ye have laid in the midst of it, they *are* the flesh, and this *city is* the caldron: ⁱbut I will bring you forth out of the midst of it.

ⁱ ver. 9.

“Jaazaniah the son of Azur.” The false prophet, Hananiah, whose death was foretold by Jeremiah (ch. xxviii. 1, 16, 17), was also a son of Azur.—For the character of the princes of Judah at this time, compare Jer. xxxiv. 18—20.

3. In B.C. 629 Jeremiah had seen in vision a “pot,” or caldron, with a fierce flame under it (ch. i. 13); representing Jerusalem besieged by the Chaldeans (cp. ch. xxiv. 3—5). Again, thirty years later (in B.C. 599) Jeremiah wrote to the exiles, telling them not to look for any speedy restoration, but to settle down contentedly in Babylonia and “build houses” (ch. xxix. 5, 28).

The scoffers refer to both these passages of Jeremiah:—“The time is not near for building houses;—this is the pot and we be the flesh.” As much as to say:—“The exiles may, if they will, act on Jeremiah’s advice. To us it seems there is no urgent need for doing so. The prophet’s words are not apt to move very rapidly to their fulfilment. A whole generation ago the good man spoke of Jeru-salem as a seething pot. Well: here we are still. The caldron appears to be pretty safe and sound, and the flesh is yet in fair, wholesome, condition.” The same scornful unbelief appears below in ch. xii. 22.

5. “O house of Israel.” Ye, who claim to be residuary heirs of the promises made to Israel. Compare ch. v. 15, xxxiii. 24.

“come into,” lit. “mount up into (or, upon) your hearts” (cp. ch. xx. 32, Jer. li. 50).—Their predominant thoughts and desires.

7. The scoffers (as is usual with men that scoff) did not understand that which they derided. The figure employed in Jeremiah’s vision was no new one. It had been used, almost a century before, by the prophet Micah; when he denounced the sins of the “heads of Jacob”

8 Ye have feared the sword; and I will bring a sword upon you, saith the LORD GOD. Before
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9 And I will bring you out of the midst thereof, and deliver you into the hands of strangers, and ^k will execute judgments among you.

10 ^l Ye shall fall by the sword; I will judge you in ^m the border of Israel; ⁿ and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

11 ^o This *city* shall not be your caldron, neither shall ye be the flesh in the midst thereof; *but* I will judge you in the border of Israel:

12 and ^p ye shall know that I *am* the LORD: ^q for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but ^r have done after the manners of the heathen that *are* round about you.

13 ¶ And it came to pass, when I prophesied, that ^r Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then ^s fell I down upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, Ah LORD GOD! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?

14 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

^k ch. 5. 8.
^l 2 Kin. 25. 19, 20, 21. Jer. 39. 6. & 52. 10.
^m 1 Kin. 8. 65. 2 Kin. 14. 25.
ⁿ Ps. 9. 16. ch. 6. 7. & 13. 9, 14, 21, 23.
^o See ver. 3. p ver. 10.
^p Or, *which have not walked.*
^q Lev. 18. 3, 24, &c. Deut. 12. 30, 31. ch. 8. 10, 14, 16.
^r ver. 1. Acts 5. 5.
^s ch. 9. 8.

and the "princes of the house of Israel," "who hate the good and love the evil," "who have eaten the flesh of My people and flayed their skin from off them, and broken their bones; and have chopped them in pieces, as that which is in the pot and as flesh within the caldron" (Mic. iii. 1—3). So then, *they*, by their deeds of violence, had turned Jerusalem into a caldron. As for their jest about being safe inside the caldron, that sorry conceit should turn out to be as untrue as it was profane. They should be taken out from the city and "judged" in a remote corner of the land (ver. 10).

8. "Ye have feared . . ." Through fear of the Chaldean's sword they had committed that breach of faith, which brought his sword upon them (ch. xvii. 15—18). Cp. Jer. xlii. 16.

10. "in the border . . ." At Riblah, "in the land of Hamath," on the northern confines of Israel, Nebuchadnezzar not only "gave judgment on Zedekiah," but slew his two sons and "the princes of Judah" (Jer. lii. 9—11).

vv. 13—21. Ezekiel's alarm quieted.

13. "Pelatiah," which means, "The Lord's remnant." His sudden death (shewn to the prophet in vision) seemed to portend the excision of the whole remnant of Judah (cp. ch. ix. 8). This fear is dispelled by the assurances given in vv. 14—21.

"a full end." Compare Jer. iv. 29; v. 10, 18.

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15 Son of man, thy brethren, *even* thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and all the house of Israel wholly, *are* they unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get you far from the LORD: unto us is this land given in possession.

16 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, ^t yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.

^t Ps. 90. 1.
& 91. 9.
Isai. 8. 14.

^u Jer. 24. 5.
ch. 23. 25.
& 34. 13.
& 36. 24.

17 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God; ^u I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.

^x ch. 37. 23.

^y Jer. 32. 39.
ch. 36. 26, 27.
See Zeph. 3. 9.

^z Ps. 51. 10.
Jer. 31. 33.
& 32. 31.
ch. 18. 31.

18 And they shall come thither, and ^x they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence.

^a Zech. 7. 12.

19 And ^y I will give them one heart, and I will put ^z a new spirit within you; and I will take ^a the

15. The men who remained at Jerusalem looked on the exiles as *disinherited*. Ezekiel is taught to feel towards them as still brothers—"brothers evermore."

"of thy kindred." Lit. "of thy redemption:"—whose lost inheritance he, as a kinsman, must desire to recover for them. As "son of man," too, he must wish this; since He, of Whom he was the earthly exponent, called Himself Israel's Redeemer (Isa. xlix. 7, 26, liv. 5, 8).

16. "be to them . . ." Rather, "be unto them a sanctuary for a little while;"—for the brief moment of indignation, during which they were cast away (cp. Isa. xxvi. 20, liv. 7, 8). To Him, as their sanctuary (Isa. viii. 14), they might resort at all times for forgiveness and for protection (Ps. xxvii. 5), even while the Temple was lying in ruin.

17. "people;" "peoples." The promise in vv. 17—20 had, no doubt, a *partial* (however inadequate) fulfilment in the Jews who returned from Babylon. They were, at least, wholly purified from the taint of outward idolatry. But the spiritual change depicted in ver. 19 was not accomplished until "the Israel of God" (Gal. vi. 16) had been created by the power of Christ's redeeming work. The commencement of *this* re-gathering was made at Pentecost (Acts ii. 5).

The prophecy of this verse is resumed and expanded in ch. xx. 34—38. Compare ch. xxxvi. 24.

19. "one heart;" "singleness of heart" (Acts ii. 46); so that they should no longer wander with "divided heart" (Hos. x. 2) after idols (cp. Ps. lxxxvi. 11).

This oneness of heart towards God would certainly lead to union with their brethren (Acts iv. 32); though this does not appear to be what is primarily referred to in the text. Compare Jer. xxxii. 39.

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stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh :

20 ^b that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them : ^c and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

21 But *as for them* whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, ^d I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord God.

22 ¶ Then did the cherubims ^e lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them ; and the glory of the God of Israel *was* over them above.

23 And ^f the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood ^g upon the mountain ^h which *is* on the east side of the city.

24 ¶ Afterwards ⁱ the spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity. So the vision that I had seen went up from me.

25 Then I spake unto them of the captivity all the things that the LORD had shewed me.

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^b Ps. 105. 45.
^c Jer. 24. 7.
ch. 14. 11.
& 36. 28.
& 37. 27.

^d ch. 9. 10.
& 22. 31.

^e ch. 1. 10.
& 10. 13.

^f ch. 8. 4. &
9. 3. & 10. 4.
18. & 43. 4.
^g See Zech.
14. 4.
^h ch. 43. 2.

ⁱ ch. 8. 3.

“stony heart.” “Hard as adamant” against obedience to God’s commands (Zech. vii. 12).

“of flesh.” Compare 2 Cor. iii. 3; and see on ch. xxxvi. 26.

20. “my people.” Serving me with entire loyalty.

21. “walketh after the heart of . . . ;” longing for their favour, and earnestly labouring to gain it.

“recompense.” They went after “lying vanities :” therefore “vanity should be their recompense” (Job xv. 31).

vv. 22—24. The Glory leaves the City; and the Vision is at an end.

23. “the mountain.” The Mount of Olives. From thence, after the veil of the Temple had been “rent in twain,” the King of Glory ascended (Acts i. 12).

Obs. When our Lord went into Heaven, the Temple at Jerusalem was “left desolate” (St. Matt. xxiii. 38). Thenceforward all “in every place” (1 Tim. ii. 8), whose hearts were “purified through faith” (Acts xv. 9), might have access to the true sanctuary, and “find grace to help “in time of need” (Heb. iv. 16).

1 *The type of Ezekiel's removing.* 8 *It shewed the captivity of Zedekiah.* 17 *Ezekiel's trembling sheweth the Jews' desolation.* 21 *The Jews' presumptuous proverb is reproved.* 26 *The speediness of the vision.*

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THE word of the LORD also came unto me, saying,
2 Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of
^a a rebellious house, which ^b have eyes to see, and see
not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: ^c for they
are a rebellious house.

^a ch. 2. 3,
6, 7, 8, &
3. 26, 27.

^b Isai. 6. 9,
& 42. 20.
Jer. 5. 21.
Matt. 13. 13,
14.

^c ch. 2. 5.

² Or, in-
struments.

3 Therefore, thou son of man, prepare thee ² stuff
for removing, and remove by day in their sight; and
thou shalt remove from thy place to another place
in their sight: it may be they will consider, though
they *be* a rebellious house.

4 Then shalt thou bring forth thy stuff by day
in their sight, as stuff for removing: and thou shalt

CHAPTER XII.

The exiles still refused to believe that Jerusalem was to be overthrown. Ezekiel is therefore directed to perform a strange symbolical action before them, representing the attempt Zedekiah would make to escape from the city at the end of the siege. The singularity of the prophet's proceedings was fitted to rouse men's attention;—for, who could forget Ezekiel's digging through the side of his cottage-walls?—while the minute particularity of his predictions proved that he did not speak “out of his own heart” (ch. xiii. 2).

Obs. 1. The prediction was five years anterior to the event.

Obs. 2. According to Josephus (*Ant.* x. 7, 8), Zedekiah noticed the seeming discrepancy between ver. 13 of this chapter and the prophecy which Jeremiah delivered three years later (*Jer.* xxxii. 4), and inferred that both prophecies were false. The event, however (*Jer.* lii. 10), proved that both were true. He was brought before the king of Babylon, and “beheld his eyes;” yet, when taken to Babylon, he did not “see it with his eyes.”

vv. 1—16. Zedekiah's capture foretold.

2. “a rebellious.” Rather, “the rebellious,” (as in ver. 9).

“hear not.” So it had been from the first; *Deut.* ix. 21, xxix. 4. This stubbornness was very conspicuous in Zedekiah; see *Jer.* xxxiv. 2—6; xxxvii. 9, 10, 17; xxxviii. 19—23.

3. “prepare thee stuff...” Such things as men need on a long journey,—scrip and staff, cooking vessels, coarse cloths, &c. (vv. 4, 7). In *Jer.* xlvi. 19 the same words are rendered, “Furnish thyself to go into captivity.”

“in their sight”—before those eyes, which saw and would not see. So in vv. 4—6.

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go forth at even in their sight, ²as they that go forth into captivity. Before
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5 ³Dig thou through the wall in their sight, and carry out thereby. ² Heb. as the goings forth of captivity.

6 In their sight shalt thou bear *it* upon *thy* shoulders, and carry *it* forth in the twilight: thou shalt cover thy face, that thou see not the ground: ^dfor I have set thee *for* a sign unto the house of Israel. ³ Heb. Dig for thee.
^d Isai. 8. 18. ch. 4. 3. & 24. 24. ver. 11.

7 And I did so as I was commanded: I brought forth my stuff by day, as stuff for captivity, and in the even I ⁴digged through the wall with mine hand; I brought *it* forth in the twilight, and I bare *it* upon *my* shoulder in their sight. ⁴ Heb. digged for me.

8 ¶ And in the morning came the word of the LORD unto me, saying,

9 Son of man, hath not the house of Israel, ^ethe rebellious house, said unto thee, ^fWhat doest thou? ^e ch. 2. 5.
^f ch. 17. 12. & 24. 19.

10 Say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; This ^gburden *concerneth* the prince in Jerusalem, and all the house of Israel that *are* among them. ^g Mal. 1. 1.

11 Say, ^hI *am* your sign: like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them: ⁵*they* shall remove and go into captivity. ^h ver. 6.
⁵ Heb. by removing go into captivity.

12 And ^kthe prince that *is* among them shall bear upon *his* shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth: they shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby: he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with *his* eyes. ⁱ 2 Kin. 25. 4, 5, 7.
^k Jer. 33. 4.

13 My ¹net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and ^mI will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there. ¹ Job 19. 6. Jer. 52. 9. Lam. 1. 13. ch. 17. 20.
^m 2 Kin. 25. 7. Jer. 52. 11. ch. 17. 16.

4. "as they that go . . ." Both the prophet and his hearers knew well the shame and misery of such an exodus.

6. "the twilight" (vv. 7, 12). Rather, "the darkness."

"see not the ground." To prevent recognition, his face would be muffled so closely that he himself could not see the ground.

"a sign," or, "a wonder." His strange action would stamp itself on their memories, and so, when the event arrived, would supply clear evidence that he was a true prophet.

13. "net . . . snare." The fisherman's, or fowler's, net; the hunter's

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14 And ⁿI will scatter toward every wind all that *are* about him to help him, and all his bands; and ^oI will draw out the sword after them.

ⁿ2Kin.25.4,5.
ch. 5. 10.
^o ch. 5. 2. 12.

15 ^pAnd they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I shall scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries.

^p Ps. 9. 16.
ch. 6. 7. 14.
& 11. 10.
ver. 16, 20.
^q ch. 6. 8, 9,
10.

^q Heb. *men*
of number.

16 ^aBut I will leave ²a few men of them from the sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence; that they may declare all their abominations among the heathen whither they come; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

17 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

^r ch. 4. 16.

18 Son of man, ^reat thy bread with quaking, and drink thy water with trembling and with carefulness;

19 and say unto the people of the land, Thus saith the Lord GOD of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, *and* of the land of Israel; They shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may ^sbe desolate from ³all that is therein, ^tbecause of the violence of all them that dwell therein.

^s Zech. 7. 11.

³ Heb
the fulness
thereof.

^t Ps. 107. 34.

20 And the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall be desolate; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

21 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

22 Son of man, what *is* that proverb *that* ye have in the land of Israel, saying, ^u"The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth?"

^u ver. 27.
ch. 11. 3.
Amos 6. 3.
2 Pet. 3. 4.

snare; (ch. xvii. 20, Lam. i. 3.) The figure points to the *suddenness* of his capture.

16. "may declare." The very books which they carried everywhere with them in their wanderings,—their histories, psalms, and prophecies,—told men of their guilt.

vv. 17—28. The desolation of the land to be deferred
no longer.

19. "from all." So that it is left utterly bare and empty.

22. "every vision." It was 164 years since Isaiah had foretold that the land should be desolated (ch. vi. 11). Compare on ch. xi. 3.

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23 Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord God; I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; but say unto them, ^xThe days are at hand, and the effect of every vision.

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^x Joel 2. 1.
Zeph. 1. 14.

24 For ^ythere shall be no more any ^zvain vision nor flattering divination within the house of Israel.

^y ch. 13. 23.
^z Lam. 2. 14.

25 For I *am* the LORD: I will speak, and ^athe word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord God.

^a Isai. 53. 11.
ver. 28.
Dan. 9. 12.
Luke 21. 33.

26 ¶ Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

27 ^bSon of man, behold, *they of* the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth *is* ^cfor many days *to come*, and he prophesieth of the times *that are far off*.

^b ver. 22.
^c 2 Pet. 3. 4.

28 ^dTherefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord God.

^d ver. 23, 25.

CHAPTER XIII.

*1 The reproof of lying prophets, 10 and their untempered mortar.
17 Of prophetesses and their pillows.*

AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
2 Son of man, prophesy against the prophets

23. "the effect of," or, "the purport of:"—that which each vision asserted or described.

25—28. "prolonged," or, deferred.

Obs. The length of time, during which "the long-suffering of God waits" (1 St. Pet. iii. 20) for man's repentance, is made by ungodly men the ground of an inductive argument, which is supposed to prove that no day of Divine retribution need be looked for (2 St. Pet. iii. 1—4). The true inference is, "How great, then, the guilt of those, who set at nought so much forbearance!"

CHAPTER XIII.

God's sentence on the Prophets that see lying visions of peace, and on the Daughters of Israel that promise life to the wicked.

This chapter is an expansion of ch. xii. 24; "There shall be no more any *vain vision* nor *flattering divination*." Compare vv. 6—9, 16, 23.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel had to contend not only with idolatry and

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a ver. 17.

² Heb. *them that are prophets out of their own hearts.*

^b Jer. 14. 14. & 23. 16, 26.

³ Heb. *walk after.*

⁴ Or, *and things which they have not seen.*

^c Cant. 2. 15. ^d Ps. 106. 23, 30. ch. 22. 30. ⁵ Or, *breaches.* ⁶ Heb. *hedged the hedge.*

of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto ^{a 2} them that prophesy out of their own ^b hearts, Hear ye the word of the LORD ;

3 thus saith the Lord GOD ; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that ³ follow their own spirit, ⁴ and have seen nothing !

4 O Israel, thy prophets are ^c like the foxes in the deserts.

5 Ye ^d have not gone up into the ⁵ gaps, neither ⁶ made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the LORD.

infidelity, but also with false prophets, who professed to speak in God's name. Such were found both in Jerusalem (Jer. v. 31, xiv. 13, xxiii. 16, xxviii. 2—4), and among the exiles (Jer. xxix. 8, 9, 21).

2. "out of their own hearts," "by the will of man" (2 St. Pet. i. 21); influenced, some, by national vanity or fanatical pride (ver. 16), others, by the love of gain (ver. 19). The objective character of Ezekiel's visions was evinced (among other things) by the marked contrast they presented to the smooth sayings of these deceivers. Who can doubt that one, who was so uncompromising in his resistance to the whole current of the nation's mind and will, so uniform in his "love of righteousness" and hatred of iniquity," was indeed (as he professed to be) entrusted with "the word of the Lord?"

3. "foolish." The word is used of the "ungodly" in Ps. xiv. 1. Conduct like that of Hananiah (Jer. xxviii. 2, 11) implied practical atheism.

"follow," or, "go after,"—in the way of religious devotion (cp. Hos. ii. 5). They deified their own spirit; (ch. xxxiii. 31, Jer. iii. 17, cp. Ps. xxxvi. 1, 2.)

"and have seen nothing," or, "yea, so that they cannot see." So blinded are they by self-will, that they cannot discern the plainest indications of God's will.

4. "O Israel!" Still so named; but how unlike God's people! Compare Hos. x. 9, xiii. 9; Amos iv. 12.

"thy prophets." Thine own; who have gotten their inspiration from thee.

"in the deserts." Rather, "in ruinous places" (cp. Lam. v. 18). The fence of the vineyard had been broken down: so much the better for them; they would burrow among the ruins.

5. The wrathful "day of the Lord" (ch. vii. 19) was advancing against the rebellious people; and no preparation was made for it. None "went up into the gap" (as Moses had done, Ps. cvi. 23) with fervent intercession. None sought to repair the "fence" of the law (as Phinehas had done, Ps. cvi. 30) by acts of wholesome discipline. Compare ch. xxii. 30.

"to stand." Or, "that they may stand." When God's justice came up "to battle," they only would be able to "stand" (Mal. iii. 2), who had "made peace with Him" by laying hold of His covenant (Isa. xxvii. 4, 5).

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6 °They have seen vanity and lying divination, saying, The LORD saith: and the LORD hath not sent them: and they have made *others* to hope that they would confirm the word.

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° ver. 23.
ch. 12. 24.
& 22. 28.

7 Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The LORD saith *it*; albeit I have not spoken?

8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I *am* against you, saith the Lord GOD.

9 And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies: they shall not be in the ²assembly of my people, ¹neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, ¹neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; ²and ye shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

² Or, *secret*,
or, *council*.
¹ Ezra 2. 59,
62.
Neh. 7. 5.
P's. 61. 28.
² ch. 20. 38.
² ch. 11. 10,
12.

10 ¶ Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, ¹Peace; and *there was* no peace; and one built up ³a wall, and, lo, others ^kdaubed it with untempered *morter*:

¹ Jer. 6. 14.
& 8. 11.
³ Or, *a*
slight wall.
^k ch. 22. 28.

11 say unto them which daub *it* with untempered *morter*, that it shall fall: ¹there shall be

¹ ch. 38. 22.

6. "made others." Rather, "have hoped to establish (or, make "good) the word." They came at last to believe in their own fictions. Compare 2 Thess. ii. 11.

9. "my hand." The hand of the witness was to be first upon any who had led the people into apostasy (Deut. xiii. 9, xvii. 7). Here God Himself is the witness.

"assembly," or, "secret council;" those whom God admits to confidential intercourse; (cp. Ps. xxv. 14.)

"the writing," the Register-book of Life; cp. Isa. iv. 3, Ezra ii. 62.

10. "Because, even because." A solemn asseveration, found elsewhere only in Lev. xxvi. 43.

"seduced," or, "led astray;" persuading them that God was at "peace" with them; that there was no "battle" (ver. 5) impending.

"no peace." Isa. xlvi. 22; Jer. vi. 14.

"and one . . ." Or, "And it (the people) built a wall, and they (the prophets) daubed it." The national policy (at once fanatical and worldly, infidel and paganizing) was the wall. The prophets plastered it over with a coating of stucco,—their bright "visions of peace."

"untempered mortar." The same word is rendered "foolish things" in Lam. ii. 14 ("Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee"); and the corresponding noun is rendered "folly" in Jer. xxiii. 13: "I have seen *folly* in the prophets." This establishes the meaning of the allegory.

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an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend *it*.

12 Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where *is* the daubing wherewith ye have daubed *it*?

13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even rend *it* with a stormy wind in my fury; and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in *my* fury to consume *it*.

14 So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered *morter*, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered, and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof: ^mand ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

^m ver. 9, 21,
23. ch. 14, 8.

15 Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered *morter*, and will say unto you, The wall *is* no *more*, neither they that daubed it;

ⁿ Jer. 6. 14.
& 23. 9.

16 *to wit*, the prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and which ⁿsee visions of peace for her, and *there is* no peace, saith the Lord GOD.

^o ch. 20. 46.
& 21. 2.
^p ver. 2.

17 ¶ Likewise, thou son of man, ^oset thy face against the daughters of thy people, ^pwhich prophesy out of their own heart; and prophesy thou against them,

11. "an overflowing shower" (ch. xxxviii. 22), or, "a flooding rain;" rain that causes an inundation. Similarly, on the house of the "foolish man," in St. Matt. vii. 27, "the rains descended, and the rivers came, and the winds blew."

Obs. In St. Matt. vii. 15 there had been a warning against "false prophets."

"great hailstones" out of the "storm-cloud" from the north (ch. i. 4). Compare on ch. i. 22.

14. "discovered," or, "laid bare." All might then see the wretchedness of the foundation, which these men had chosen in preference to God's "tried, precious, corner-stone" (Isa. xxviii. 16).

With this verse compare Lam. ii. 2; "He hath *broken down* (see on "ch. xvi. 39) in His wrath the strongholds of the daughter of Judah; He hath *brought them down to the ground.*"

16. There was "no peace" for impenitent Jerusalem, though she was named after "peace," (Jerusalem meaning, "foundation of peace.")

17 "daughters of thy people." Generally taken to be "prophetesses;" though nowhere so styled. It is more probable that this section,

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18 and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Woe to the *women* that sew pillows to all ² armholes, and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature ² Before
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Or, *elbows.*

like the preceding, is allegorical; and that the title "daughters of thy people" refers to priestly communities; (cp. "daughters of Judah," in Ps. xlviii. 11.) The whole tone of the section favours this. False prophetesses (had there been such at this time) might have won power over individuals or coteries: but these "daughters" stand in a marked relation to God's people. "Will ye hunt the souls of My people?" (ver. 18.) "Will ye profane Me unto My people . . . by your lying unto My people?" (ver. 19.) "I will deliver My people out of your hands" (vv. 21, 23; cp. ch. xxxiv. 10):—language which applies with fulness of propriety to those, of whom it was said, "They shall teach My people" (xliv. 17; cp. Lev. ix. 7, 22, xvi. 24).

It would, indeed, be surprising, if in this chapter, which is so intimately connected with Jer. xxiii. 9—40, no allusions whatever were made to the priests. For in that passage the "priest" is three times coupled with the "prophet" (vv. 11, 33, 34). Elsewhere, too, Jeremiah frequently speaks of the "priests and prophets" as joint-authors of the people's ruin (ch. ii. 26, vi. 13, viii. 10, xviii. 18, xxxii. 32). It is also observable that in the only two places in the first thirty-nine chapters of Ezekiel, where the priests are directly mentioned (ch. vii. 26, xxii. 25—30), they are placed alongside the prophets; and that in the latter of these passages, while the charge of "daubing with untempered mortar" is brought as here against the prophets (ver. 28), the charge which is brought against the priests is the same, which is here urged against the "daughters." Compare ch. xxii. 26, "And I am profaned in the midst of them," with ch. xiii. 19, "Will ye profane Me (it is the same word) unto My people?"¹ (Cp. also on ch. xxii. 28.)

18. The "pillows," or cushions, and the "kerchiefs," or mantles,—not less figurative than the "wall" and "mortar" of the previous section,—represent means which were employed for lulling men's consciences into a state of security. The soft cushions were for the (not "armholes" but) "elbows" to rest upon. The mantles were to hang over the eyes, to hide away the approach of danger. All "of every stature" (of every age or rank, comp. ch. ix. 6), were under the influence of these soporific charms. The righteous few, who resisted the seducers, were subjected to censure and persecution; and their hearts were "made sad" (ver. 22), so that they "wept and cried for the abominations" which surrounded them (ch. ix. 4).

An ancient paraphrast makes the reference here to be to "phylacteries:"—"Woe to the women that make phylacteries and hang them on their arms, and place them upon the head of every age to pervert souls." This reference is highly probable. The practice of tying certain texts of Scripture, as charms, on "the forehead," and on the inside of "the left elbow" (that they might be near the heart, and so

¹ Notice, too, that the "pieces of bread," moment, has considerable weight, when in ver. 19, recall the sentence passed on Eli's line in 1 Sam. ii. 36: ("put me into Zadok's line for Eli's occupies a prominent place in Ezekiel's Temple vision; "one of the priests' offices, to eat a piece of bread.") This, in itself, perhaps, of slight (see on ch. xl. 46.)

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12 Pet. 2. 14.

r See Prov.
28. 21.
Mic. 3. 5.

to hunt souls! Will ye ^a hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive *that come* unto you?

19 And will ye pollute me among my people ^r for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your lying to my people that hear *your* lies?

20 Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against your pillows, wherewith ye there hunt the souls ² to make *them* fly, and I will tear them from your arms, and will let the souls go, *even* the souls that ye hunt to make *them* fly.

21 Your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no

² Or, *into*
gardens.

fulfil Deut. xi. 18) seems to have been at least as old as the return from Babylon. It may have begun long before. Eventually, when the grosser sorts of idolatry vanished, this subtler kind—the idolatry of forms and formulæ—took its place¹.

“to hunt souls,” or, “to snare souls” (cp. ch. xxii. 25). So in Prov. vi. 26 the adulterous woman (representative of the corrupt Church, comp. ch. xvi and xxiii) is said to “hunt (or snare) the precious “soul” (cp. Prov. vii. 23). In Eccl. vii. 26 the woman “more bitter “than death” has “her heart as snares and nets,” and her “hands as “bands.”

Obs. In Prov. vi. 20—24 the preservative against the “strange woman,”—the real and genuine phylactery—is, that a man “bind the law upon “his heart.”

“save the souls . . .,” or, “save alive souls for yourselves,”—after your own will (cp. ch. xlv. 8); setting at nought the way by which God has appointed that a man “shall save his soul alive” (ch. xviii. 27). The word here rendered “save alive” is that for which “promising him “life” stands in ver. 22.

19. “to slay” (so far as your anathemas go) “the souls” of the righteous, of whom God has said that “they shall not die”; and “to “save alive” (so far as your vain promises go) “the souls of the “wicked,” who assuredly “shall not live” (ch. xviii. 17, 21). Compare ver. 22.

Obs. However widely the two classes of persons censured in this chapter might differ in other respects, in one thing they entirely agreed—the *result* of their teaching was, to encourage men in carnal security. This is the aim alike of infidelity and of superstition. The two are constantly found working together in opposition to vital godliness.

¹ The use of texts (or books) of Scripture as charms, or amulets, crept into the Christian Church in the 4th century. The Council of Laodicea called them *prisons of the souls* (in which poor, hunted, souls were caged). There were not wanting some, who defended the use of amulets on the ground that it was a way of invoking God's help; but St. Chrysostom replied: “Though they should urge ten thousand specious arguments, *the thing is “idolatry.”* (Hom. 8, in Coloss.)

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more in your hand to be hunted; ^a and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

22 Because with lies ye have made the heart of ^s the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and ^t strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, ²³ by promising him life:

23 therefore ^u ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations: for I will deliver my people out of your hand: ^x and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

CHAPTER XIV.

¹ God answereth idolaters according to their own heart. ⁶ They are exhorted to repent, for fear of judgments, by means of seduced prophets. ¹² God's irrevocable sentence of famine, ¹⁵ of noisome beasts, ¹⁷ of the sword, ¹⁹ and of pestilence. ²² A remnant shall be preserved for example of others.

THEN ^a came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me.

2 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

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^s ver. 9.

^t Jer. 23. 14.

² Or, that I should save his life.

³ Heb. by quickening him.

^u ver. 6, &c. ch. 12. 24. Mic. 3. 6.

^x ver. 9. ch. 11. 8. & 15. 7.

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^a ch. 8. 1. & 20. 1. & 33. 31.

CHAPTER XIV.

No reversal of God's sentence to be obtained either by means of prophets, or through the intercession of righteous men.

Sentence having been passed in ch. xiii on the prophets, "who prophesied out of their own hearts," ch. xiv deals with those, who come to consult a prophet (whether true or false, vv. 4, 7, 9), while their hearts are pre-occupied with "idols"—their own worldly desires and imaginations. Such men shall have an answer befitting their character. If it be a true prophet who is consulted, he will sternly reject their overtures, bidding them first of all to "repent." Or, if they consult one on whom, in retribution for his lies, God has sent a spirit of delusion, his flattering responses shall lead both himself and them into misery; that, learning by experience how evil a thing transgression is, they may be willing to return to their God. In either case God's purpose is to bring His people to repentance and abiding happiness (vv. 6, 11). As for Israel's corporate privileges (on which the false prophets took their stand, Mic. iii. 11), these could avail them nothing in the approaching crisis. The national doom was fixed. Not the greatest of saints could avert it. There was but one way of safety,—that of personal righteousness.

1. "of Israel." In ch. viii. 1 it was "of Judah." Ezekiel prophesied to Israel as well as Judah. See chs. xvi, xx, xxiii.

"sat before me;" as God's people (ch. xxxiii. 31), who had a claim to His favour;—not, as penitents.

2. He is instructed to give them an answer before they have put their

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b ch. 7. 19.
ver. 4, 7.
c 2 Kin. 3. 13.

3 Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put ^b the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: ^c should I be enquired of at all by them?

4 Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the LORD GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols;

5 that I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols.

inquiry to him;—as, in the Gospels, our Lord frequently answered the “thoughts” of men.

The latter part of this chapter leads us to suppose that the elders had intended to ask Ezekiel, in what way the tide of national calamity might be turned back. Perhaps they had also meant to engage him to intercede for them. But this was no more permitted to Ezekiel than it had been to Jeremiah; (see Jer. vii. 16, xi. 14.)

3. “set up . . .” Lit. “caused to mount up into (or, upon) their hearts” (cp. on ch. xi. 5). These “idols” were (as the Septuagint has it) their “fancies,” “reasonings,” “practices;” (cp. ch. xiii. 3.)

“before their face”—in full view; as the objects of their affiance and adoration. Upon their brow is the phylactery (ch. xiii. 18), containing the words, “The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and thou shalt love the “Lord thy God with all thy heart” (Deut. vi. 4, 5);—and right in front of them they have set up “the stumbling-block of their iniquity,” the idol which has made them stumble out of the way of godliness, and is leading them to ruin; (cp. ch. vii. 19.)

Even so, when Solomon had built the Temple of God on Mount Moriah, he built “full in front of it” (1 Kings xi. 7) a high place to Chemosh and Molech; which was the prime cause of Jerusalem’s being “ruined” (Isa. iii. 8). Compare on ch. xx. 29.

“I will not be inquired of;” I cannot allow it to be supposed possible that *they* should have a favourable answer.

4. “the prophet.” Rather, as in ver. 7, “a prophet;” whether faithful (vv. 4—8), or false (vv. 9, 10).

“will answer . . .” or, “have given answer to him thereon, touching the multitude of his idols.” No *new* oracle is needed, or is possible. God’s decree is patent to all; is unambiguous; is unchangeable. It runs thus: “If your heart be fixed on idols, go serve your idols:” (cp. ch. xx. 39; Josh. xxiv. 15.)

They, who would obtain direction from God, must seek Him with their “whole heart” (Jer. xxix. 13).

5. “may take,” as in a snare (*s. w. a.* ch. xii. 13). Their own perverse heart is the snare. The penalty, indeed, is of God’s ordaining; but the sin is of their own choosing. Compare Ps. lxxxi. 11—13.

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6 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn ² *yourselves* from your idols; and turn away your faces from all ² your abominations.

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Or, others.

7 For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself:

8 and ^d I will set my face against that man, and will make him a ^e sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; ^f and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

d Lev. 17. 10.
& 20. 3, 5, 6.
Jer. 44. 11.
ch. 15. 7.
e Num. 26. 10.
Deut. 28. 37.
ch. 5. 15.
f ch. 6. 7.

9 And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD ^g have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.

g 1 Kin. 22. 23.
Job 12. 16.
Jer. 4. 10.
2 Thes. 2. 11.

10 And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity: the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh *unto him*;

6. "Therefore"—since God's rule of action cannot be reversed. He cannot turn; therefore let *them* turn. The invitation proved that, if His justice was unchanging, His love was not less so.

"Repent, and turn yourselves" (ch. xviii. 30); or, "Turn ye (from "your estrangement, Isa. xxxi. 6, Jer. iii. 14), and turn away from your "idols; yea, turn away," &c. The "turn ye" refers to the initial act of repentance in abandoning evil; the "turn away" to their habitually resisting the solicitations addressed to them by their "idols," and turning more and more firmly to God.

7. "separateth himself," as by a religious vow; *dedicating* himself to other objects than God (as in Hos. ix. 10).

"will answer . . .," or, "do give answer to him concerning myself;" (cp. on ver. 4.) The answer, as ver. 8 implies, is one that is given in act, not by words.

9. "the prophet." Rather, "a prophet" (vv. 4, 7).

"deceived," led to entertain vain hopes; as Balaam was, when he "loved the wages of unrighteousness" (2 St. Pet. ii. 15).

"have deceived," "sending" on him "a strong delusion;" "that they who received not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. "might be condemned" (2 Thess. ii. 12). Compare 1 Kings xxii. 19, f.

"my hand." Compare on ch. xiii. 9.

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h 2 Pet. 2. 15.
ch. 11. 20.
& 37. 27.

11 that the house of Israel may ^h go no more astray from me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions; ⁱ but that they may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord God.

12 ¶ The word of the LORD came again to me, saying,

13 Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the ^k staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it:

k Lev. 26. 26.
Isai. 3. 1.
ch. 4. 16.
& 5. 16.

^l Jer. 15. 1.
ver. 16, 18, 20.
See Jer. 7.
16. & 11. 14.
& 14. 11.

14 ^l though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver *but* their own souls ^m by their righteousness, saith the Lord God.

m Prov. 11. 4.
n Lev. 26. 22.
ch. 5. 17.

15 If I cause ⁿ noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they ^o spoil it, so that it be desolate,

^o Or, *behave*.

11. This penal blindness was permitted in order that sin, having had time to produce its bitter fruit, might be for ever expelled from the heart. Compare Jer. ii. 19.

13. "the land." Rather, "a land;" the cases in vv. 13—20 being put hypothetically.

"then will I . . ." Rather, "and I stretch out . . . and send," &c.

"trespassing grievously." The phrase recurs in ch. xv. 8, xvii. 20, xx. 27. It denotes flagrant and obstinate disloyalty; (cp. Josh. xii. 16, 31; 2 Chron. xii. 2, xxx. 7.)

14. A similar announcement was made to Jeremiah (ch. xv. 1); but with a noticeable variation in the persons named. To Jeremiah, at Jerusalem and tenderly sympathising with Israel, Moses and Samuel are mentioned, who had specially interceded on Israel's behalf (Ps. xcix. 6). To Ezekiel, in Babylonia, prophesying as "son of man," Noah, Daniel, and Job are mentioned: the first, the parent of the post-diluvian world; the second, the chief minister of the two earlier world-empires (the Babylonian and the Persian); the last, the representative of tempted and suffering man. Widely as these three differed in outward respects, they had several points of fundamental likeness. All were eminently godly; all overtaken, but not overwhelmed, by calamity; all raised out of humiliation to high dignity. But the point chiefly to be noted is, that all were instrumental in delivering others from imminent danger; Noah being allowed to save his family (Gen. vi. 18, vii. 1); Daniel, the college of the Chaldean wise men (Dan. ii. 24); and Job his three friends (Job xlii. 10) ¹.

¹ Daniel was carried into exile in B.C. province of Babylon, his name would 606, about twelve years before the date already have become a household word of this prophecy. As he had been now, throughout the empire. Compare ch. probably, nine years at the head of the xxviii. 3.

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that no man may pass through because of the beasts :

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16 ^o *though* these three men *were* ² in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters ; they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate.

^o ver. 14, 18, 20.
² Il. b. in the midst of it.

17 Or *if* ^p I bring a sword upon that land, and say, Sword, go through the land ; so that I ^q cut off man and beast from it :

^p Lev. 26. 25. ch. 5. 12. & 21. 3, 4. & 23. 8. & 38. 21.

18 ^r *though* these three men *were* in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, but they only shall be delivered themselves.

^q ch. 25. 13. Zeph. 1. 3.
^r ver. 14.

19 Or *if* I send ^s a pestilence into that land, and ^t pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast :

^s 2 Sam. 24. 15. ch. 38. 22.
^t ch. 7. 8.

20 ^u *though* Noah, Daniel, and Job *were* in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter ; they shall *but* deliver their own souls by their righteousness.

^u ver. 14.

21 For thus saith the Lord God ; ³ How much more when ^x I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast ?

³ Or, Also when.
^x ch. 5. 17. & 33. 27.

22 ^y Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, *both* sons and daughters : behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ^z ye shall see their way and their doings : and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, *even* concerning all that I have brought upon it.

^y ch. 6. 8.

^z ch. 20. 43.

19. "in blood;" the disease reaching to the seat of life. "Pestilence" and "blood" are joined together in ch. v. 17, xxviii. 23, xxxviii. 22.

21. In the foregoing cases a land was supposed to be visited with a single plague, whereas Jerusalem's many and heinous crimes have called down on her four plagues³ at once (ch. v. 17).

22. The remnant, who are here sentenced to be "not slain," but "scattered abroad" (Ps. lix. 11), would serve to explain and justify God's severity. When the elder exiles saw the ungodly "ways and doings" (ch. xx. 43, 44, xxxvi. 19) of the younger generation, they would be "comforted;"—relieved of the painful doubts which they had been tempted to entertain regarding the equity of God's dealings. They

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a Jer. 22, 8, 9.

23 And they shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings: and ye shall know that I have not done ^a without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord GOD.

CHAPTER XV.

1 *By the unfitness of the vine branch for any work 6 is shewed the rejection of Jerusalem.*

cir. 594. **A**ND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
2 Son of man, What is the vine tree more than any tree, or *than* a branch which is among the trees of the forest?
3 Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work?

would understand that God had throughout been faithful to His Covenant; and that His judgments had fallen on those who violated His Covenant. They might therefore securely rely on His covenanted promises to the penitent.

CHAPTER XV.

Of what worth is the unfruitful vine?

The two preceding chapters exposed the self-flattery of prophets, priests, and people; who took their stand on God's promises, while they disregarded His commands. This self-deceit will be further exposed in ch. xvi; but first of all it is here rebuked in a short parable. Israel was God's vine (Isa. v. 2—6); far inferior in grandeur to the trees of the forest and yielding no timber of any value, yet cheering men with its fruit. What, however, if this vine should become ambitious of taking rank among the forest-trees (as Israel of taking rank among the heathen nations), and so should cease to bear fruit? For what would it then be fit, except for fuel?

Obs. A golden vine, with bunches of grapes on it, was placed over the gateway of the Herodian temple (Josephus, *J. W.*, v. 5. 4), at the very time when the nation at large was overrun with secularity, and was about to be cut down for its unfruitfulness.

2. "what is . . .," or, "What is the vine-tree more than any tree,—the vine-slip (Isa. xvii. 10), which is (or, has taken its place) among the forest-trees?" Of what worth is Israel, if she enter into competition with the empires of the world, as a merely human society?

A vine, if left to itself, will climb up the loftiest tree, and spread its foliage over it:—but it is, in such a case, useless; producing neither wine nor timber.

3. "to do," or, "to make." Vine-wood is too coarse, crooked, and fragile to be of use in making tools, furniture, or ornamental work. Neither could Israel compare with Babylon, Tyre, or Egypt in regard to commerce, arts, and military power. Its calling was to bear spiritual fruit,—that good fruit which would glorify God (St. John xv. 8) and refresh the souls of weary nations.

or will *men* take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon?

4 Behold, ^a it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned. ² Is it meet for *any* work?

5 Behold, when it was whole, it was ³ meet for no work: how much less shall it be meet yet for *any* work, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned?

6 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

7 And ^b I will set my face against them; ^c they shall go out from *one* fire, and *another* fire shall devour them; ^d and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I set my face against them.

8 And I will make the land desolate, because they have ⁴ committed a trespass, saith the Lord GOD.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 594.

^a John 15. 6.

² Heb. Will
it prosper?

³ Heb.
made fit.

^b Lev. 17. 10.
ch. 14. 8.

^c Isai. 24. 18.

^d ch. 6. 7.

& 7. 4.

& 11. 10. &

20. 38, 42, 44.

⁴ Heb.
trespassed
a trespass.

“pin . . . vessel.” Compare the allegory in Isa. xxii. 23—25.

4. “devoureth.” Rather, “hath devoured.” The allegory becomes almost history. The vine-branch, which has rejected the rich sap of the vine-root and is become unfruitful, has already been scorched by the fire of Divine wrath. The two ends (Samaria and the cities of Judah) have been burned: and now its middle part is charred; for Jerusalem has been twice in the hands of the Chaldeans, and the best part of its citizens have been carried into exile.

“Is it meet for,” or (as marg.), “Shall it prosper in;” (*s. w. a.* ch. xvi. 13, xvii. 9, 10, 15, Jer. xiii. 7, 10).

5. “when it was whole.” The vine-disease showed itself even under Solomon. The consequences of his worldliness were, that in the next reign his kingdom was dismembered, and Jerusalem itself was captured by a king of Egypt.

6. One after another, the nations had been subjected to the fire of providential retribution. How then should secularised Israel (2 Kings xvii. 15)—more worthless than they, and far guiltier—hope to escape?

7. “shall go out.” Rather, “have gone forth.” Having survived two Chaldean invasions, they think themselves safe (ch. xi. 15). They shall be undeceived.

8. “committed a trespass;” the phrase that occurred in ch. xiv. 13: so that it binds chs. xiv and xv together. (Cp. *Introd.* to ch. xvii.) It also prepares for the allegory of ch. xvi; since it is the phrase which is used of the adulteress in Num. v. 12, 27. (Cp. on ch. xx. 27, 28.)

Obs. This chapter contains a solemn warning against the error (so prevalent in our own day) of prizing religion chiefly for its power to promote the well-being of nations or societies. The Church has, it is

1 *Under the similitude of a wretched infant is shewed the natural state of Jerusalem. 6 God's extraordinary love towards her. 15 Her monstrous whoredom. 35 Her grievous judgment. 44 Her sin, matching her mother, and exceeding her sisters, Sodom and Samaria, calleth for judgments. 60 Mercy is promised her in the end.*

AGAIN the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, ^acause Jerusalem to know her abominations,

3 and say, Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem; Thy ²birth ^b and thy nativity *is* of the land

^a ch. 20. 4.
& 22. 2. &
33. 7, 8, 9.

² Heb. *cutting out, or, habitation.*
^b ch. 21. 30.

most true, been the world's benefactress in this respect; but she has been so *only* when she herself "brought forth fruit unto God," seeking, "first of all, the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

CHAPTER XVI.

Jerusalem's unfaithfulness to the Covenant of her God.

The prophet is bidden to recite the crimes of Jerusalem (vv. 2—34), and then to declare the sentence passed on her as an adulteress and a child-murderer (vv. 35—52). A hope of restoration is afterwards given (vv. 53—59), and at last a promise of mercy (vv. 60—63).

It is evident from ver. 46 that Jerusalem here represents (not Israel, but) Judah. The betrothal, therefore, refers to the Davidic, not to the Sinaitic, Covenant. In fact, the sin at Horeb resulted in throwing Israel back into a state of comparative distance (Exod. xxxiii. 1—7); which continued up to the time when the great Abrahamic promise was renewed and confirmed to David; (cp. Gen. xxii. 18, Ps. lxxii. 17). The outward sign and seal of this restoration of privilege was the Temple, which David designed and Solomon built.

Jerusalem, then, as the head and representative of the Davidic kingdom, is the subject of this allegory.

Some of the images employed in the present chapter are such as excite feelings of deepest shame. They were intended to do so: that men might be led to reflect, how immeasurably more shameful the spiritual sins are, which are thus symbolised. If the preference of sensual lust to wedded love be a shocking thing, how incomparably more so is it to love and honour the creature above the ever-blessed Creator (which is the essence of idolatry, Rom. i. 25).

2. "cause . . . to know." As in a judicial process (ch. xx. 4, xxii. 2). Jerusalem is standing at the bar of Divine justice.

3. Jerusalem, "the place which God chose to put His name there," belonged "by birth," to the land of Canaan. It had been the stronghold of "the Jebusites," and indeed for some time bore the name of Jebus (Judg. xix. 10, 11). The site of the Temple was the threshing-floor of Araunah "the Jebusite" (1 Chron. xxii. 1). As regards the tribe of Judah, the heads of its three families were all born of Canaanite mothers (1 Chron. ii. 3, 4).

EZEKIEL, XVI.

of Canaan; ^cthy father *was* an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite.

4 And *as for* thy nativity, ^din the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water ²to supple *thee*; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all.

5 None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born.

6 And when I passed by thee, and saw thee ³polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee *when thou wast* in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee *when thou wast* in thy blood, Live.

7 ^eI have ⁴caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased and waxen great, and thou art come to ⁵excellent ornaments: *thy* breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown, whereas thou *wast* naked and bare.

Before
CHRIST
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^c ver. 45.
^d Hos. 2. 3.

² Or, *when I looked upon thee.*

³ Or, *troddeu under foot.*

^e Ex. 1. 7.
⁴ Heb. *made thee a millien.*
⁵ Heb. *ornament of ornaments.*

“Amorite . . . Hittite.” In Num. xiii. 29, the Jebusites are placed between the Amorites and the Hittites. The Amorites had been cast out for their “iniquity” (Gen. xv. 16, Lev. xviii. 25, Deut. ix. 24). Jerusalem, which by her iniquity proved herself to be a daughter of the Amorite (cp. Amos ii. 9, 10), must be in like manner ejected. Compare on ver. 45.

4—6. The “birth” of Jerusalem (as here contemplated) was, when it was taken from the Jebusites and made the seat of the Davidic monarchy (2 Sam. v. 9—12). That monarchy was at first despised and “loathed” “in its blood:”—the reason why David was not allowed to build the Temple being, that he was stained with “much blood” (1 Chron. xxii. 7, 8). Even at the end of David’s reign it appeared as if Jerusalem were cast away to perish (2 Sam. xxiv. 16).

6. “I said.” Rather, “I said to thee, Amidst thy blood, live;” surrounded as thou art with blood, I yet bid thee to live.—So it had been with David himself, when covered with blood-guilt and condemned to death by his own mouth. Nathan then said to him, “Thou shalt not die” (2 Sam. xii. 5, 13). So God “healed him” and “restored him to life” (Ps. xxx. 2, 3).

7—14. In Solomon’s reign, when Jerusalem attracted the attention of distant nations, its chief glory was the Temple, on which “the name of the Lord was called:” (cp. 1 Kings viii. 41, x. 1).

7. “I have caused . . .” Rather, “I caused . . . and thou didst increase and wax great, and camest,” &c. The reference is to the prosperity and splendour of Solomon’s reign (1 Kings iii. 8, iv. 20, 1 Chron. xxix. 25).

“ornaments” (ver. 11). The word used in ch. vii. 20 of the Temple.

Before
CHRIST
594.
f Ruth 3. 9. 8 Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time *was* the time of love; ^f and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and ^g thou becamest mine.

g Ex. 19. 5.
Jer. 2. 2.
2 Heb. *bloods*. 9 Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy ² blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil.

10 I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk.

h Gen. 24. 22,
47. h put bracelets upon thy hands, ⁱ and a chain on thy neck.
i Prov. 1. 9.

3 Heb. *nose*:
See Is. 3. 21. 12 And I put a jewel on thy ³ forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head.

k Dent. 32.
13, 14. 13 Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment *was of* fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; ^k thou didst eat fine flour, and

8. "the time of love." When David could say, "I have set my affection to the house of my God" (1 Chron. xxix. 3); and the people, with their rulers, "offered willingly to the Lord." "with perfect heart" (ib. vv. 9, 14, 17).

"skirt," or, "wing." In either case, *protection* is signified (as in Ruth iii. 9). Cp. Ruth ii. 12, Ps. xxxvi. 7.

"I swear:" Ps. lxxxix. 49, cxxxii. 11.

"mine;" "the city of the Lord of hosts;" Ps. xlviii. 8.

9. "washed." Compare Ps. li. 2, 7, 14:—for the king and his kingdom were intimately associated. David's absolution and sanctification were a needful preliminary to the building up of Jerusalem's walls (Ps. li. 18). Only when David's sin was purged, was Jerusalem freed from the Destroyer's sword (2 Sam. xxiv. 21, 25).

"anointed thee" to be a "royal" and a "priestly" city (cp. Ps. xlv. 7, Exod. xxix. 4, 7).

10. "broidered work." So the queenly Bride is arrayed in Ps. xlv. 15. So, in Exod. xxviii. 39, the High-priest.

"fine linen." In Rev. xix. 8 the Bride is clothed in "fine linen;" "which is the righteousness of saints." The High-priest's tunic, in Exod. xxviii. 39, was of fine linen.

11. "on thy neck." "Mercy and truth" were the material of the chain, which Jerusalem was to "bind about her neck" (Prov. iii. 3: cp. ch. i. 9, iii. 22).

13. "fine flour, honey, and oil" (ver. 19);—food resembling *manna*;—see Exod. xvi. 31 compared with Num. xi. 8. Compare also Deut. xxxii. 13, 14.

honey, and oil : and thou wast exceeding ¹ beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom.

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594.

14 And ^mthy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it *was* perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God.

Ps. 43. 2.
Lam. 2. 15.

15 ¶ ⁿBut thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was.

ⁿ See Deut. 32. 15.
Jer. 7. 4.
Mic. 3. 11.
Isai. 1. 21.
& 57. 8.
Jer. 2. 20.
& 3. 2, 6, 20.
ch. 23. 3, 8,
11, 12.
Hos. 1. 2.
2 Kin. 23. 7.
ch. 7. 20.
Hos. 2. 8.

16 ^pAnd of thy garments thou didst take, and deckedst thy high places with divers colours, and playedst the harlot thereupon: *the like things* shall not come, neither shall it be so.

17 Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my

“exceeding beautiful.” The “perfection of beauty;” Ps. l. 2, Lam. ii. 15. Compare Ps. xlviii. 2.

“prosper.” The word used in Ps. xlv. 4 of the Mighty King; Who was “more beauteous than the sons of men” (ver. 3). As the Bride reflected His beauty (cp. Ps. xlv. 11), so she shared his successes.

“into a kingdom,” or, “in royalty.” She had the promise of a King Who should reign “for ever” (2 Sam. vii. 16; Isa. ix. 7).

14. “renown;” 1 Kings x. 1, 24.—“Comeliness;” the word used in Ps. xlv. 3, 4 (“majesty”). Her renown and dignity sprang from the Name that was “called upon her.” Compare Ps. lxxviii. 29.

15. “in thy own.” Omit “own.” Her sin was, that she trusted in it *as if it were* her own. David’s fall occurred after he had subdued the neighbouring kingdoms.

Obs. Ezekiel’s denunciations are specially directed against this root-sin of self-admiration;—the sin, which hurled down the bright Archangel from heaven. See ch. xxvii. 3, 4, xxviii. 2, 12, 17, xxxi. 8.

“playedst the harlot.” See 1 Kings xi. 5—8. The neighbouring nations had but to flaunt each one its deity before the eyes of Jerusalem, and straightway her heart was given to the new god: “his it was.”

16. She employed God’s gifts in decking out “high-places;” (cp. on ch. vi. 2, xiv. 4, xx. 29). The symbol of God’s Presence with Israel was a small Ark, hidden away in “thick darkness”: its invisibility guarding and elevating the devotion of the faithful worshipper. On the other hand, faithless minds were drawn aside by the apparent nobleness of worshipping in shrines that were built on the crests of hills, under the open heaven, to sun or moon or planets;—deities which were not so exacting in their claims as “the Holy One of Israel” was (cp. on ch. xx. 27, 28).

“shall not come . . .,” or, “shall not happen, yea, they shall cease to be.” Israel’s idolatry should be swept clean away.

17. “fair jewels” (ver. 39), or, “beautiful vessels;” (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19). We read that Ahaz “gathered together the vessels of the “house of God, and cut them in pieces, and made him altars at every “corner in Jerusalem” (2 Chron. xxviii. 24).

Bef-re
CHRIST
594.

² Heb. of
a male.

¹ Hos. 2. 8.

³ Heb. a sa-
vour of rest.

^r 2 Kin. 16. 3.
Is. 106. 37,
38.

Isai. 57. 5,
Jer. 7. 31.
& 32. 35,
ch. 20. 26,
& 23. 37.

⁴ Heb. to
devour.

^s Jer. 2. 2.
ver. 43, 60.
Hos. 11. 1.
^t ver. 4, 5, 6.

gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images ² of men, and didst commit whoredom with them,

18 and tookest thy broidered garments, and coveredst them: and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them.

19 ¹ My meat also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey, *wherewith* I fed thee, thou hast even set it before them for ³ a sweet savour: and *thus* it was, saith the Lord God.

20 ^r Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them ⁴ to be devoured. *Is this* of thy whoredoms a small matter,

21 that thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through *the fire* for them?

22 And in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms thou hast not remembered the days of thy ^s youth, ^t when thou wast naked and bare, *and* wast polluted in thy blood.

23 And it came to pass after all thy wickedness, (woe, woe unto thee! saith the Lord God;)

19. "and thus it was;" or, "it was even so!"—appalling fact!

20. In addition to degrading herself by sensual idolatry, she had murdered her children—nay, not her's, but God's; for they had been born under His Covenant, in which He engaged to be a God to Abraham and to his seed.

"devoured" by fire (ch. xxiii. 37, Jer. xix. 5).

21. "delivered them," or, "given them away, by making them "pass. . ." This was in direct contravention of Lev. xviii. 21, xx. 3.

"for them;" the idol-gods. By this act the children were solemnly made over to Moloch; *dedicated* to him. Compare on ch. xx. 26 ¹.

23. Up to this point Jerusalem's sin had been in embracing false religions. We now come to a further stage, in which she subjects herself not to heathen "gods," but (on political grounds) to heathen "nations."

A germ of this evil existed, probably, in Solomon's contracting affinity with Pharaoh. During almost 500 years Egypt had held aloof from Israel. Solomon put an end to this singular state of alienation by *soliciting* Pharaoh's friendship (1 Kings iii. 1); thus violating the spirit of the precept, not "to go back" to Egypt (Deut. xvii. 16). In Ahaz

¹ "Making to pass through (the fire)" is in Hebrew a single word; which signifies "transferring." In Exod. xiii. 12 this word is rendered, "set apart." Israel was bidden to "set apart" every first-born to the Lord; that so the whole nation

might be sanctified: for "if the first-fruits "be holy, the whole mass is so." The offering of the first-born to Moloch was in direct antagonism to this; and desecrated the whole nation.

EZEKIEL, XVI.

24 *that* ^u thou hast also built unto thee an ² eminent place, and ^x hast made thee an high place in every street.

Before
CHRIST
594.

^u ver. 31.

25 Thou hast built thy high place ^y at every head of the way, and hast made thy beauty to be abhorred, and hast opened thy feet to every one that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredoms.

² Or, *brothel house*.

^x Isa. 57. 5, 7. Jer. 2. 20.

& 3. 2.

^y Prov. 9. 14.

26 Thou hast also committed fornication with ^z the Egyptians thy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke me to anger.

^z ch. 8. 10, 14. & 20. 7, 8, & 23, 19, 20, 21.

27 Behold, therefore I have stretched out my hand over thee, and have diminished thine ordinary *food*, and delivered thee unto the will of them that hate thee, ^a the ³ daughters of the Philistines, which are ashamed of thy lewd way.

^a 2 Chron. 28. 18, 19.

ver. 57.

³ Or, *cities*.

^b 2 Kings 17. 7, 10.

² Chr. 28. 23.

Jer. 2. 18, 36.

ch. 23. 12,

&c.

28 ^b Thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians, because thou wast unsatiable; yea, thou

the evil reached its full growth. He surrendered himself entirely to Tiglath-Pileser (2 Kings xvi. 7), and altered the Temple arrangements in order to conciliate him (ib. 18, 2 Chron. xxviii. 21).

24. "in every street." In every thoroughfare of the great world-city,—in Egypt, in Assyria, in Babylon,—Jerusalem might be seen making overtures to the heathen; inviting them to alliances. Compare on ver. 33.

25. "every head of the way" (ver. 31), or, "every way-head." Jerusalem, standing near the intersection of the great routes of commerce (see on ch. v. 5), might have proclaimed the message of holy wisdom "on the highest places" (Prov. ix. 3) of the civilised world. Instead of so doing, she acted the part of the "foolish woman" (Prov. ix. 13—17).

"abhorred." The heathen despised and hated the Holy Name, which in her had been associated with so much profligacy.

26. "great of flesh." Abounding in worldly resources, which attracted those who made "flesh their arm." Solomon (in neglect of Deut. xvii. 16) had a yearly importation of horses from Egypt. The later kings of Israel and Judah relied on the help of Egyptian troops; (cp. ch. xvii. 15). Wretched defence! They found that "the Egyptians were men and not God; and their horses *flesh* and not spirit" (Isa. xxxi. 3).

27. "diminished." As a husband might place an unfaithful wife on a diminished allowance. The Ten Tribes were cut off from Jerusalem. Shishak pillaged the Temple. Samaria and Syria combined to weaken her.

"the Philistines." There may be an allusion to what occurred in the reign of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 19). The Philistine cities at that time showed remarkable firmness in resisting the attacks both of Assyria and of Egypt. They might well be scandalized at Jerusalem's "lewdness" (as in ver. 43, ch. xxiii. 35); might well resent the thought of being subject to a city, whose conduct was in such flagrant opposition to her asserted history and professed religious traditions.

Before
CHRIST
594.

hast played the harlot with them, and yet couldest not be satisfied.

^c ch. 23. 14,
&c.

29 Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of Canaan ^e unto Chaldea ; and yet thou wast not satisfied herewith.

30 How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord God, seeing thou doest all these *things*, the work of an imperious whorish woman ;

² Or, *In thy daughters is thine, &c.*
^d ver. 24, 30.

31 ² in that ^d thou buildest thine eminent place in the head of every way, and makest thine high place in every street ; and hast not been as an harlot, in that thou scornest hire ;

32 *but as* a wife that committeth adultery, *which* taketh strangers instead of her husband !

^e Isai. 30. 6.
Hos. 8. 9.
³ Heb.
bribeſt.

33 They give gifts to all whores : but ^e thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers, and ³ hirest them, that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredom.

34 And the contrary is in thee from *other* women in thy whoredoms, whereas none followeth thee to commit whoredoms : and in that thou givest a reward, and no reward is given unto thee, therefore thou art contrary.

28. "yet couldest not." The Assyrian king, called in by Ahaz, "distressed him, and strengthened him not" (2 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21) ; yet Ahaz went on to "trespass yet more against the Lord" (ib. 22).

29. "the land of Canaan." Rather, "a land of traffic" (as in ch. xvii. 4). Babylon was at that time the great mart of the world.

30. Jerusalem thought her "imperious" wilfulness a sign of strength and freedom. It was just the reverse. Self-control in the fear of God is the only basis of freedom and strength.

31, 32. Jerusalem was more guilty than the heathen. They were induced to worship idol-gods by the hope of obtaining temporal benefits from them. Jerusalem had no such motive for her apostasy. She was in the height of prosperity,—bound by every obligation of gratitude, as well as of duty, to be faithful to her Covenant. She was not as one who yielded to sin through the pressure of hunger ; but as one who had every comfort that thoughtful love could supply her with, and yet violated her plighted faith.

33, 34. The nations had not courted her alliance. They seemed, indeed, to shrink instinctively from her. It was she who sought them ; purchasing her degrading connexion with them by the gifts she had received from God's own hand, and continuing to do this, when her sin cost her very dear. (Cp. Hos. viii. 9, 10, Isa. xxx. 6, lvii. 9.)

33. "hirest," marg. "bribeſt." It is the word used in 2 Kings xvi. 8 : "Ahaz took the gold and silver that was found in the house of the Lord and in the treasuries of the king's house, and sent them to the king of Assyria *for a present*" (lit. "a bribe").

35 ¶ Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD :

Before
CHRIST
594.

36 thus saith the Lord GOD ; Because thy filthiness was poured out, and thy nakedness discovered through thy whoredoms with thy lovers, and with all the idols of thy abominations, and by ^f the blood of thy children, which thou didst give unto them ;

37 behold, therefore ^g I will gather all thy lovers, with whom thou hast taken pleasure, and all *them* that thou hast loved, with all *them* that thou hast hated ; I will even gather them round about against thee, and will discover thy nakedness unto them, that they may see all thy nakedness.

38 And I will judge thee, ^h as ^h women that break wedlock and ⁱ shed blood are judged ; and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy.

39 And I will also give thee into their hand, and they shall throw down ^k thine eminent place, and shall break down thy high places : ^l they shall strip thee also of thy clothes, and shall take ^m thy fair jewels, and leave thee naked and bare.

40 ⁿ They shall also bring up a company against thee, ^o and they shall stone thee with stones, and thrust thee through with their swords.

41 And they shall ^p burn thine houses with fire, and ^p execute judgments upon thee in the sight of many women : and I will cause thee to ^q cease from

^f ver. 20.
Jer. 2. 34.

^g Jer. 13. 22,
26.
Lam. 1. 8.
ch. 23. 9,
10, 22, 29.
Hos. 2. 10,
& 8. 10.
Nab. 3. 5.

^h Heb.
with judgments of.

ⁱ Lev. 20. 10.
Deut. 22. 22,
ch. 23. 45.

^j Gen. 9. 6.
Ex. 21. 12.
See ver. 20,
36.

^k ver. 24, 31.
^l ch. 23. 26.
Hos. 2. 3.

^m Heb. *instruments of thine ornament.*

ⁿ ch. 23. 46,
47.

^o John 8. 5, 7.
^p Deut. 13. 16.
2 Kin. 25. 9.
Jer. 39. 8,
& 52. 13.

^q ch. 5. 8.
& 23. 10, 48.
^r ch. 23. 27.

37. "I will gather . . ." Such is God's usual method of punishing the sins of His people. That which is the object of their inordinate desire is made the instrument of their punishment.

"nakedness." Compare Lam. i. 8. The corresponding verb is used in Ps. cxxxvii. 7, "Rase it" (lit. "lay bare").

38. "fury and jealousy." Compare Prov. vi. 34 (where the same words are used: "jealousy . . . rage").

39. "throw down." So in Lam. ii. 2. In ch. xiii. 14 the same word is used ; (but is there rendered, "break down.")

40. "a company," or, "assembly ;" such as was convened to punish a criminal (cp. Deut. xiii. 9). "Stoning" was the punishment of persons guilty of idolatry (Deut. xiii. 6—10), or of adultery (St. John viii. 5, 7 ; cp. Lev. xx. 2, 10). Even literally, Jerusalem was "stoned" (Jer. xxxiii. 4) before she was burned.

"with their swords." The doom of those who seduced men to apostasy (Deut. xiii. 12—15). The city in such a case was to be burned (ib. 16) ;—the doom of Jerusalem in ver. 41.

41. "thine houses." See 2 Kings xxv. 8. The "women" are the surrounding nations.

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r ch. 5. 13.

s Ps. 78. 42.
ver. 22.

t ch. 9. 10.
& 11. 21.
& 22. 31.

u ver. 3.

playing the harlot, and thou also shalt give no hire any more.

42 So ^r will I make my fury toward thee to rest, and my jealousy shall depart from thee, and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry.

43 Because ^s thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, but hast fretted me in all these *things*; behold, therefore ^t I also will recompense thy way upon *thine* head, saith the Lord God: and thou shalt not commit this lewdness above all thine abominations.

44 ¶ Behold, every one that useth proverbs shall use *this* proverb against thee, saying, As *is* the mother, so *is* her daughter.

45 Thou *art* thy mother's daughter, that lotheth her husband and her children; and thou *art* the sister of thy sisters, which lothed their husbands and their children: "your mother *was* an Hittite, and your father an Amorite.

46 And thine elder sister *is* Samaria, she and her

42. "cause . . . to rest." See on ver. 13. It is plain from ver. 43, that we have here a *threat*, not a promise.

44. "as is the mother . . ." It would seem that "Salem," whose king had been "priest of the Most High God" (Gen. xiv. 18), had afterwards apostatized and adopted Amoritish ways.

45. "lotheth . . . lothed," or, "contemmeth . . . contemned;" (*s. v. a.* ch. v. 6, Lev. xxvi. 15, 43).

"their husbands." Though the northern kingdom had severed itself from the privileges of the Davidic Covenant, yet it had express Divine sanction (1 Kings xi. 29—39), and received a high degree of prophetic guidance. Rays of Divine light, too, must have fallen on the cities of the plain, while Abraham, Melchisedek, and Lot were near them.

"your father." Their spiritual father; whose sins were reproduced in them. At a later period, when higher light was afforded, but rejected, a still more terrible paternity is assigned (St. John viii. 38—44).

46. Jerusalem is about equally distant from Samaria "on the left hand" (or the north) and the tongue of the Dead Sea (the "Lisan") on the right (or the south).

"elder . . . younger." The allegory rests, not on the *chronological* relation of the parties, but on relations partly geographical and partly ideal. For (1) the northern kingdom, with its mountains of Lebanon and Hermon, towered high above Jerusalem, while the Dead Sea was far beneath it; and (2) Ephraim claimed to possess Israel's birthright (1 Chron. v. 1, 2), and had within its boundaries the old sacred places Shechem, Bethel, Gerizim, and Shiloh; while Sodom had not come inside the range of the Abrahamic Covenant.

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daughters that dwell at thy left hand: and ^{x 2} thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, is Sodom and her daughters.

47 Yet hast thou not walked after their ways, nor done after their abominations: but, ³ as *if that were* a very little *thing*, ^y thou wast corrupted more than they in all thy ways.

48 As I live, saith the Lord God, ^z Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters.

49 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, ^a fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

50 And they were haughty, and ^b committed abomination before me: therefore ^c I took them away as I saw *good*.

51 Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins; but thou hast multiplied thine abominations more than they, and ^d hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done.

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^x Deut. 32, 32.

Isai. 1. 10.

² Heb. *lesser than thou.*

³ Or, *that was looked as a small thing.*

^y 2 Kin. 21. 9. ch. 5. 6, 7. ver. 48, 51.

^z Matt. 10. 15. & 11. 24.

^a Gen. 13. 10.

^b Gen. 13. 13. & 18. 20.

& 19. 5.

^c Gen. 19. 24.

^d Jer. 3. 11. Matt. 12. 41, 42.

“thy sister . . . Sodom.” Compare Deut. xxxii. 32, Isa. iii. 10, Jer. xxiii. 14.

47. “hast not walked.” Compare on v. 6, 7. Jerusalem with its Temple, Levitical priesthood, services of song, and Divinely guaranteed royalty, had great advantages over Samaria. When it fell, its apostasy was of a correspondingly more malignant type.

48. “hath not done.” Compare Lam. iv. 6, St. Matt. xi. 24.

49. Jerusalem’s sins had sprung up in the same way as Sodom’s. The occasions of her stumbling were:—“**pride**,” or exaltation, Jer. xiii. 9; “**fulness of bread**,” the danger against which Moses had forewarned Israel, Deut. vi. 11, 12 (cp. Hos. xiii. 6); and “**abundance of idleness**,” or rather, “**secure prosperity**,” which is so apt to predispose men to infidelity; (cp. Isa. xxxii. 9, 11, Jer. xxii. 21).

“the poor and needy.” The “cry” of the oppressed in Sodom had gone up to heaven (Gen. xviii. 20, xix. 13). So too had it been in Jerusalem (ch. xxii. 7, Isa. iii. 15, v. 7).

50. “As I saw good,” or, “according to what I saw” (Gen. xviii. 21). The overthrow was total, because the people were wholly corrupted.

51. “justified.” Making her, with all her guilt, appear innocent by the spare of thee (ver. 52). Compare Jer. iii. 11. (See also Gen. xxxviii. 25, 26.)

Jerusalem had a longer probation than Samaria; and had also the solemn warning supplied by Samaria’s punishment. Yet the crimes she committed during the reigns of Manasseh and the children of Josiah were of deeper dye than any which prevailed in Samaria subsequently to Jehu’s suppression of Baal-worship.

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52 Thou also, which hast judged thy sisters, bear thine own shame for thy sins that thou hast committed more abominable than they: they are more righteous than thou: yea, be thou confounded also, and bear thy shame, in that thou hast justified thy sisters.

^e See Is. 1. 9.
& ver. 60, 61.
^f Jer. 20. 16.

53 ^e When I shall bring again their captivity, ^f the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then *will I bring again* the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them:

^f ch. 14. 22,
23.

54 that thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done, in that thou art ^g a comfort unto them.

55 When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate.

² Heb.
for a report,
or, hearing.

56 For thy sister Sodom was not ² mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy ³ pride,

³ Heb.
prides, or,
excellencies.

57 before thy wickedness was discovered, as at the

52. "hast judged." Jerusalem admitted the justice of the sentences which had been passed on Samaria and on Sodom; but flattered herself that, because she was spared, she had no such guilt as theirs.

53. "When I . . ." When Sodom shall rise out of her asphalt grave, then (not before) shalt thou, Jerusalem, be restored to thy "former state" (ver. 55).

The Jerusalem, which had the cherubim of glory and the Davidic royalty, was gone for ever; (cp. Jer. iii. 16.)

Obs. Both vv. 53 and 55 are (literally) categorical statements: "And "I will bring their captivity . . . and the captivity of thy captives . . . and thy sisters . . . shall return . . . and thou and thy daughters shall "return:" so that they appear to carry our thoughts onward to the day spoken of in St. Matt. xi. 24.

54. "a comfort." The depth of her shame will prove to them that God is no respecter of persons, and that their own punishment has not been disproportionately severe (cp. ch. xiv. 22, 23).

56. The Dead Sea lay at the foot of the hill-country of Judæa. A portion of it might be seen from Jerusalem;—a perpetual warning against carnal security (St. Jude 7). But the idea of such a warning being needed was not so much as mentioned among the citizens of Jerusalem. It was too shocking a thought to be tolerated by men who had "the Temple of the Lord" (Jer. vii. 4) in their midst.

57. Her self-flattery shall be rudely dispelled. A day is coming when she shall be reproached by all her neighbours, Syria on the north, and Philistia on the south; (cp. Isa. ix. 12.)

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time of *thy*^h reproach of the daughters of ² Syria, and all *that are* round about her, ⁱ the daughters of the Philistines, which ³ despise thee round about.

58 ^k Thou hast ⁴ borne thy lewdness and thine abominations, saith the LORD.

59 For thus saith the Lord God; I will even deal with thee as thou hast done, which hast ¹ despised ^m the oath in breaking the covenant.

60 ¶ Nevertheless I will ⁿ remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee ^o an everlasting covenant.

61 Then ^p thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee for ^q daughters, ^r but not by thy covenant.

62 ^s And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD:

63 that thou mayest ^t remember, and be confounded, ^u and never open thy mouth any more

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h 2 Kin. 16. 5.
2 Chr. 28. 18.
Isai. 7. 1.
& 14. 28.

2 Heb. *Aram.*
i ver. 27.

3 Or, *spoil.*
k ch. 23. 49.

4 Heb.
borne them.

l ch. 17. 13, 16.
m Deut. 29.
12. 14.

n Ps. 106. 45.

o Jer. 32. 40.
& 50. 5.

p ch. 20. 43.
& 36. 31.

q Isai. 54. 1.
& 60. 4.

Gal. 4. 26,
&c.

r Jer. 31. 31,
&c.

s Hos. 2. 19,
20.

t ver. 61.
u Rom. 3. 13.

“despise thee.” Rather, “do thee despite.”

58. Lit., “Thy lewdness and thy abominations! Thou hast borne them.” Thou hast borne their guilt, and hast found out at last how heavy the burden of it is.

59. “I will even . . .” He would, in very mercy, “walk contrary to them,” until their heart was humbled (Lev. xxvi. 41).

“the oath,” or “the curse” (*s. w. a.* Num. v. 21);—the oath, which invoked malediction on him who should violate the Covenant. Compare Deut. xxix. 12, 14, 20, 21.

“despised,” *s. w. a.* ch. xvii. 16, 18, 19, xx. 13, 16, 24. It is the word used in 2 Sam. xii. 9, 10, respecting the deed which exposed David to the “curses” of Lev. xx. 10, Deut. xxvii. 24.

60. “remember;” Lev. xxvi. 42. God had not broken the Covenant; and now He would take the initiative in re-establishing it. Faith in this unchanging goodness of God was what supported David, when he uttered his “last words.” He confessed that *his* house was no suitable home for Israel’s great Ruler; but the Lord had “made an everlasting Covenant with him” (2 Sam. xxiii. 5; cp. Hos. ii. 19).

61. “for daughters.” The new Jerusalem is “the mother of us all” (Gal. iv. 26); Israelites or Gentiles.

“not by thy covenant,” the Covenant assented to at Horeb (Exod. xxiv. 7). That had wrought malediction. The blessing on all nations would flow from the gracious promise which had been made to Abraham (Gal. iii. 13, 14).

62. “my covenant;” “the Covenant that was afore established by “God in Christ” (Gal. iii. 17); which uttered only benediction, and was unconditional in its wording.

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because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 Under the parable of two eagles and a vine, 11 is shewed God's judgment upon Jerusalem for revolting from Babylon to Egypt. 22 God promiseth to plant the cedar of the gospel.

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AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable unto the house of Israel;

63. "for shame;" the shame of the penitent, who is overwhelmed with a sense of God's infinite goodness and his own monstrous ingratitude; so that he cannot "open his mouth" (Rom. iii. 19) before God.

"am pacified toward . . ." or, "make reconciliation (*s. w. a.* ch. xlv. 15, 17; Dan ix. 24) for thee in regard of all . . ." Thus the long, sad, history ends with that word which had closed the prophetic song of Moses; "He will be merciful to (or, make reconciliation for) His land, His people" (Deut. xxxii. 43).

Obs. The deepest shame of the penitent is here associated with God's having made reconciliation for sin. So it is in the Church's prayers. Nowhere does the voice of confession sink to so deep a point of abasement as in the commemoration of "the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour dying for us." "The remembrance of sins is" then felt, most of all, to be "grievous unto us; the burden of them" to be "intolerable."—Compare Ps. cxxx. 4; "There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared." Who would not shrink from the thought of having offended—from the thought of again offending—One Who has proved Himself so unspeakably gracious?

CHAPTER XVII.

The Davidic kingdom overthrown by Zedekiah's breach of faith; but God's promise established.

As ch. xv was an introduction, so ch. xvii is a pendant, to ch. xvi.

In ch. xvi. 59 Jerusalem's sin was summed up by saying that she had "*despised the oath in breaking the covenant.*" The very same words are here used in ch. xvii. 18 in reference to the crime, which provoked Nebuchadnezzar to destroy Jerusalem; (cp. also vv. 13, 16, 19.)

The relation between the two chapters is thus seen to be very striking. It is not merely that Zedekiah's conduct supplies a particular instance of the criminality charged upon Jerusalem in ch. xvi:—though it does that; for Zedekiah was drawn into rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar by his reliance on Egypt (vv. 15, 17; cp. ch. xvi. 26), and he showed a disregard for the sanctity of an oath, which placed him below the level of heathen morality; (see on ver. 15; cp. ch. xvi. 47, 57.) But the teaching suggested by the parallel reaches much further. It is *an argument from analogy*. If an earthly monarch inflicted on his vassal so heavy retribution for a single breach of faith, what had Jerusalem deserved, which for 400 years had been constantly revolting (ver. 12)

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3 and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; ^a A great eagle with great wings, longwinged, full of feathers, which had ² divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and ^b took the highest branch of the cedar :

4 he cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffick; he set it in a city of merchants.

5 He took also of the seed of the land, and

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^a See ver. 12, &c.

² Heb. *em-broidering.*

^b 2Kin. 24. 12.

against her God? If it were found requisite for the maintenance of political order that treason should be so unsparingly punished, was it possible that it should be viewed with indifference in the kingdom of eternal righteousness?

Obs. 1. The parallelism of chs. xvi and xvii extends to the concluding verses. In both these the mercy of God interposes, when all human hope is gone; so that "where sin abounded, grace yet more abounds."

Obs. 2. Ch. xvii is linked on to ch. xv by the figure of the vine (vv. 6—8); by the repeated, "Shall it prosper?" (vv. 9, 10, 15; see on ch. xv. 4); and by the phrase, "trespass that he hath trespassed" (ver. 20, cp. on ch. xv. 8).

1. The date of the prophecy is the sixth month of the sixth year of Zedekiah (ch. viii. 1). Two years previously Zedekiah had gone to Babylon (Jer. li. 59); probably, having been summoned there to do homage and to renew his oath of fealty.

2. "a riddle." It is the manner of riddles to combine heterogeneous figures; as here, the cedar, the eagle, the vine.

In its immediate reference to Zedekiah it was a "riddle;" in its bearing on the house of Israel (as supplying that great *analogical* lesson) it was a "parable."

3, 4. We see from ver. 12 that Nebuchadnezzar was the great eagle (cp. Jer. xlvi. 40),—the strong, swift, keen-eyed, bird of prey (Job xxxix. 27—30). His "great wings" correspond to the vastness of his dominion; the "long" pinion-feathers are his large and well-disciplined armies. The abundant "feathers" are the numerous populations subject to him; while the "divers colours" represent the variety of races, languages, &c. in his empire.

"Lebanon," the summit of the land of Israel, here denotes Jerusalem (ver. 12), or, perhaps, its royal palace;—one part of which was called, "The house of the forest of Lebanon," 1 Kings vii. 2, 3; (cp. Jer. xxii. 23; and see *note* on ch. xx. 46.) The "cedar" is the Davidic family. Its "highest branch" and the "top," or chiefest, "of its young twigs" are the princes of Judah and the youthful king, Jehoiachin (2 Kings xxiv. 12).

"a land of traffic." See on ch. xvi. 29. They had forsaken the pure waters of the height of Lebanon (Jer. ii. 13, xviii. 14); they shall be carried away to the turbid streams of Babylon. On the busy wharves and quays of "the city of traders" they might learn to value the pure and calm joys offered to them on Zion.

5. David's family had been compared to a cedar. But as Zedekiah (Jehoiachin's uncle) did not reign in virtue of his descent, but only as a vassal of the king of Babylon, who set him on the throne, he is here

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² planted it in ^c a fruitful field; he placed *it* by great waters, *and* set it ^d as a willow tree.

² Heb. *put it in a field of seed.*

^c Deut. 8. 7, 8, 9.

^d Isai. 44. 4. ^e ver. 14.

6 And it grew, and became a spreading vine ^e of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs.

¹ ver. 15.

7 There was also another great eagle with great wings and many feathers: and, behold, ^f this vine did bend her roots toward him, and shot forth her branches toward him, that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation.

³ Heb. *field.*

8 It was planted in a good ³ soil by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine.

² Kin. 25. 7.

9 Say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Shall it prosper? ^g shall he not pull up the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit thereof, that it wither? it shall wither in all the leaves of her spring, even without great power or many people to pluck it up by the roots thereof.

spoken of, not as a twig of the cedar, but only as belonging to "the seed of the land,"—a set from the vine of Israel. He was not to rule as an independent prince, but to render "the fruit" of tribute and service to Nebuchadnezzar. Had he done so loyally, he might have "brought forth fruit" to God also,—the fruit of faith and obedience.

"great waters," or, "many waters" (ver. 8, ch. xix. 10; Num. xxiv. 7). Zedekiah, in spite of his political dependence, was placed in a favourable position for quiet and solid usefulness.

"as a willow," low, and growing near streams (Isa. xlv. 4).

6. Those who were left in Jerusalem were "of the poorest sort" (2 Kings xxiv. 14); so that the kingdom was "lowly" (*s. w. a.* in ver. 14, "base"). The vine had lost those luxuriant climbing branches (ch. xv. 2), in which it had wasted its strength. It was now closely pruned; far less pleasing to the eye, but better fitted for bearing fruit. Before long, however, it ran off into its old ways; and put forth "branches," full of boastful, but false, promises (in Isa. xvi. 6, the same word is rendered "lies"), and "sprigs," covered with showy leaves.

7. The second eagle has not the "long pinions" or "divers colours" of the first. Egypt ruled over a large and well-peopled tract of land; but had not the disciplined armies or imperial grandeur of Babylon.

8. "a goodly vine." If Judah had accepted her position, the people might have had more of real happiness than under the magnificent, but in truth ruinous, reign of Solomon.

9. "leaves of her spring," or, "fresh leaves she puts forth."

"without great power." Since the Chaldean troops retired before Pharaoh (Jer. xxxvii. 5), the besieging force may have been a com-

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10 Yea, behold, *being* planted, shall it prosper? ^h shall it not utterly wither, when the east wind toucheth it? it shall wither in the furrows where it grew.

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h ch. 19, 12.
hos. 13, 15.

11 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

12 Say now to ^l the rebellious house, Know ye not what these *things mean*? tell *them*, Behold, ^k the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem, and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon;

13 ^l and hath taken of the king's seed, and made a covenant with him, ^m and hath ² taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the might of the land:

14 that the kingdom might be ⁿ base, that it might not lift itself up, ³ but that by keeping of his covenant it might stand.

15 But ^o he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, ^p that they might give him horses and much people. ^q Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such *things*? or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?

16 As I live, saith the Lord God, surely ^r in the place *where* the king *dwelleth* that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he

i ch. 2. 5.
& 12. 9.
k ver. 3.
2 Kings 24.
11, -16.
l 2 Kin. 24. 17.
m 2 Chr. 36.
13.
2 Heb.
brought him
to an oath.
n ver. 6.
ch. 29, 14.
3 Heb.
to keep his
covenant, to
stand to it.
o 2 Kin. 24. 20.
2 Chr. 36. 13.
p Deut. 17. 16.
Isai. 31. 1, 3.
& 36. 6, 9.
q ver. 9.
r Jer. 32. 5.
& 34. 3. &
52. 11.
ch. 12. 13.

paratively small one. But no vast army was needed. God had spoken the word; and therefore, even if the Chaldeans had been routed, "and none but wounded men remained of them, yet should these rise up . . . and burn the city" (Jer. xxxvii. 10). Compare St. Matt. xv. 13.

10. "the east wind." The scorching wind of God's anger; (cp. Jon. iv. 8.)

13. "an oath." The king of Babylon had "made him swear by God" (2 Chron. xxxvi. 13).

14. Nebuchadnezzar certainly meant to keep the proud-hearted people low; but at the same time to befriend them, if they were loyal.

15. "such things." Even Pagan nations looked on perjury and breach of covenant as fearful crimes. One of the Pythagorean 'Golden Rules' was, "Reverence an oath." When one inquired of the Delphic oracle, whether he might forswear himself, he was told, that for putting so criminal a question he should be punished by the untimely death of his children¹.

¹ Matthew Henry (on this text) mentions the case of a Mohammedan prince, "who, when the Christians broke their league with him, cried out, O Jesus, are these thy Christians?"

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brake, *even* with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die.

^s Jer. 37. 7.

17 ^s Neither shall Pharaoh with *his* mighty army and great company make for him in the war, ^t by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons :

^t Jer. 52. 4.
ch. 4. 2.

18 seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had ^u given his hand, and hath done all these *things*, he shall not escape.

^u 1 Chr. 29. 24.
Lam. 5. 6.

19 Therefore thus saith the Lord God ; *As* I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head.

^x ch. 12. 13.
& 32. 3.

20 And I will ^x spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and ^y will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me.

^y ch. 20. 36.

21 And ^z all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward all winds : and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken *it*.

^z ch. 12. 14.

^a Isai. 11. 1.
Jer. 23. 5.
Zech. 3. 8.

22 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD ; I will also take of the highest ^a branch of the high cedar, and will

17. "make for him"—be of service to him.

"by casting up . . .," or, "when they (the Chaldeans) cast up . . .". (Put a full stop at the end of the verse.)

18. "when lo! . . ." Rather, "and lo, when he had . . ., he did all "these things."

19. Zedekiah had rebelled, not merely against his sovereign, but against the God of Israel, Whose Name he had invoked. Besides which, in setting at nought the most express declarations of God's prophet (Jer. xxvii. 6—11, xxvii. 14, delivered in B.C. 595), he had violated the fundamental terms of Israel's covenant.

20. "my net" (ch. xii. 13). Nebuchadnezzar was God's instrument. "plead." Working conviction in him by means of suffering ; (compare ch. xx. 36.)

22—24. The storm-cloud of judgment has passed over, and the rainbow of mercy shows itself. David's crown has been cast to the ground ; Judah is scattered to the winds ; all human hope is gone. But in this hour of utter ruin, Ezekiel is taught of God to foretell the revival of the Davidic family in the person of One, Who shall found a universal kingdom.—The reference in this passage to Messiah is undeniable.

22. "I will also." Rather, "I also will." I—a mightier than the royal eagle of Babylon—I, who bore Israel from Egypt "as on eagle's wings,"—I, too, will lay hold of David's seed.

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set *it*; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs ^b a tender one, and will ^c plant *it* upon an high mountain and eminent:

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23 ^d in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and ^e under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.

b Isai. 53. 2.
c Ps. 2. 6.
d Isai. 2. 2, 3.
ch. 20. 40.
Mic. 4. 1.
e See chap.
31. 6.
Dan. 4. 12.

24 And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD ^f have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree,

“the top,” or, “the chiefest;”—referring, perhaps, to Zerubbabel, the chief of the princes of Judah who returned to Jerusalem. His father, Shealtiel, was descended from Nathan, the son of David (St. Luke iii. 27, 31). Comp. Hagg. ii. 21—23.

“a tender one.” Applicable alike to Christ and to the Church which is His body. Both advance from seemingly weak beginnings: Christ to “fill all things;” the Church to be “the fulness of Him Who filleth all “in all” (Eph. i. 23).

“a high mountain.” Compare ch. xl. 2; Isa. ii. 2.

23. “the height;” Isa. lvii. 15; “I dwell in the *high* and holy *place*.” Thither the Holy One of Israel, after founding His Church on earth, ascended (Ps. lxxviii. 18), to be “Head over all things to the “Church” (Eph. i. 22).

“cedar.” This “tender plant” should add “the glory of Lebanon” to “the excellency of Carmel” (Isa. xxxv. 2); “bearing fruit” as a vine, yet majestic as the cedar.

“in the shadow.” This scion of David’s house should be truly what Assyria (ch. xxxi. 6) and Babylon (Dan. iv. 12) were in semblance only,—the shelter of all nations.

24. So all “the trees of the field,” all that are eminent in station among men, shall recognise that God is the sole fountain of power.

History supplies many instances, which have verified what is here spoken of;—the depression of the lofty and elevation of the lowly (1 Sam. ii. 7, 8), the withering of the richly luxuriant tree (Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36), and the re-vivifying of the sapless stem (Isa. lxi. 3). But for the one great instance (which is here immediately referred to) we naturally turn to the *Magnificat*: “He hath regarded the low estate of His “handmaiden . . . He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of “their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and hath “exalted them of low degree.” The conquests of David and the splendour of Solomon ended in the humiliation and shame of the reign of Zedekiah. But after Judah’s royal family had sunk into temporal decay, it was invested with never-ending spiritual glory by the fact of the Incarnation. Compare ch. xxi. 26, 27.

This process of spiritual elevation shall continue to the end of time; the faithful Church waxing stronger, and the unbelieving world feebler; until, at last, the “King of Pride,” who once laid claim to “all the “kingdoms of the world and the glory of them,” shall have been abased to nothingness.

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g ch. 22. 14.
& 24. 14.

and have made the dry tree to flourish: ^g I the LORD have spoken and have done it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

¹ God reproveth the unjust parable of sour grapes. ⁵ He sheweth how he dealeth with a just father: ¹⁰ with a wicked son of a just father: ¹⁴ with a just son of a wicked father: ¹⁹ with a wicked man repenting: ²⁴ with a just man revolting. ²⁵ He defendeth his justice, ³¹ and exhorteth to repentance.

594. THE word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,

Obs. 1. How dry, as regards spiritual promise, the stem of Judah was, is intimated in the genealogy of St. Matt. i: where the Saviour's descent is traced through a line, which comprised in it Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba.

Obs. 2. We are not to despond, if the wide-spreading tree of Christendom seems at times to droop, or if some of its branches wither. The power of Christ can make the dry tree to flourish again, and to "bear more fruit in old age."

"and have done it." Rather (as in ch. xxii. 14, xxxvi. 36), "and will do it."

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Rule of God's dealings uniformly equitable.

Jerusalem's guilt had gone on accumulating from age to age. God's chastisements produced no enduring reformation. At last, therefore, the long-deferred visitation must come "without remedy" (2 Chron. xxxvi. 16). Thus much had been set forth in ch. xvi. Then in ch. xvii it was shown that no injustice was done, when this final stroke alighted upon Zedekiah. He suffered nothing beyond what he had himself amply deserved;—the actual sentence against him issuing from the earthly sovereign whom he had provoked by deliberate treason. No separate sentence was required from the Court of Heaven. His disloyalty to God had wrought out its own temporal punishment through the disloyalty to man which was its natural outgrowth.

The same was true of that generation at large. They suffered no more than their own sins merited. God's forbearance towards former generations did not make the present infliction of punishment unjust. They, at any rate, deserved all that came upon them.

But many of them refused to see this. They spoke as if they themselves had been innocent, and were made to suffer for their fathers' misdoings. They even put their infidel murmurs into the form of a proverb; "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge:"—as much as to say; "See what mistakes are made by the Power that sways the destiny of nations; mistakes such as *Nature* never is guilty of. The natural world is subject to intelligible and uniform connexions of causes and effects. If a man will eat acid fruit, he must suffer for it. But in our history this order is just reversed. The man, who eats, escapes; and his son, who does not eat, suffers."

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2 What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The ^a fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?

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^a Jer. 31. 29,
Lam. 5. 7.

This blasphemous complaint rested on three errors;—

1. *An error of fact.* So far were they from being innocent, that they had much exceeded their fathers in the enormity of their sin; and this in spite of God's long-continued admonitions, conveyed through His prophets, and His protracted "goodness," which was meant to "lead them to repentance" (Rom. ii. 4).

2. *A wrong view of God's purpose in sending temporal punishments upon them.* The sentence of banishment issued against the nation was intended to preserve it from going on to yet further degrees of sin. The "body" was handed over to the destroyer, "that the spirit might be saved" (1 Cor. v. 5).

3. *Forgetfulness of the eternal consequences of sin.* If men did wrong (they said), let them be punished for it at once. Let the moral law attach suffering to sin in the way of immediate, re-actionary, consequence. Such a uniform system of checks would keep man in the same kind of order that existed in the physical world. What was this but to put out of sight the relation in which man stands to God as a *probationary being*;—to deny, in fact, that foundation-truth of religion, which says that men must give account to God in another world for the actions they have done in this? If, in some cases, evil-doing did not meet with its due punishment in the present world, Israel, at least, could not plead ignorance of the fatal consequences of sin. To them it had been revealed clearly, that, from the beginning of human history, the wages of sin was "death."

It is to this last, fundamental, error that the prophet addresses himself in ch. xviii. He declares that, *in all cases*, he who is righteous has *life* for his portion and he who is wicked *death*:—the righteous man being he who (whatever may have been his antecedents) is now walking in the fear of God; the wicked, he who (whatever his antecedents) is now in rebellion against God. This is God's unvarying rule in His government of the world; but what He *desires* is, that all should turn from sin and *live*.

It is obvious that throughout this chapter the terms "shall live," "shall die," refer to the *life* and *death* spoken of by Moses in Deut. xxx. 15, 19;—spiritual life in the possession of God's favour, spiritual death beneath His displeasure.

Obs. 1. It is a striking instance of the self-contradiction, into which error so constantly falls, that the men who here complain (falsely) that they suffer for their fathers' sin, practised the rites of Moloch-worship, in which the child was offered up to atone for the parents' sin.

Obs. 2. In recent times the notion of *physical punishments following by an exact sequence on moral transgressions* has reappeared along with the doctrine that *sin cannot be forgiven*; making sad the heart of the penitent, whom God would not have to be sad (ch. xiii. 26), and hardening the ungodly against the call to repentance.

2. "the land of Israel;" the land which for so many centuries had been a witness to God's providential justice and mercy.—The immediate

3 *As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.*

4 *Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the*

occasion of the proverb's coming into use may have been the sentence irrevocably passed on Jerusalem in the time of Manasseh (2 Kings xxiii. 26, xxiv. 3, 4; Jer. xv. 4). In reality, however, the history of Manasseh and his family furnishes an illustration of the principles laid down in this chapter. The son of a godly father, Manasseh fell away into extreme wickedness, but on his repentance was received back to God's favour; his pardon being moreover sealed outwardly by his restoration from Babylon (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11). Josiah, the son of a wicked father, walked uprightly before God and was accepted of Him; a premature death being in his case only a removal out of the way of coming evil (2 Kings xxii. 19). Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, turning aside from his father's piety, brought on himself the Divine displeasure;—manifested outwardly in the overthrow of the Davidic throne. It was no capricious destiny that brought this catastrophe upon him. It was not even the sin of Manasseh. It was his own flagrant breach of faith, at once against Nebuchadnezzar and against God.

"**The fathers.**" The proverb is also quoted in Jer. xxxi. 29, 30. It is observable that Jeremiah on two occasions enunciates with equal explicitness *both* sides of the truth, which was distorted by the proverb. (1) In ch. xxxii. 18, 19: "Thou recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them. . . . Thine eyes are open upon all the sons of men to give to every man according to his ways." (2) In Lam. v. 7, 16, 17: "Our fathers sinned and are not: we have borne their iniquities . . . The crown is fallen from our head; woe unto us that we have sinned! Therefore our heart is faint."

Obs. In reality, the fathers' teeth had been set on edge (ch. xx. 15); yet the children took no warning, but ate of the same "grapes of Sodom." Compare on ch. xx. 21.

3. "**ye shall not have occasion.**" Lit. "it shall not be to you." It shall no longer be possible for you to use it. God's ways shall be made so plain that none shall be able to charge Him with want of equity. This was done, partly, perhaps, by the withdrawal of that special forbearance which had been exhibited towards the Covenant people; partly, also, by the prophet's exposition of the principles of the Divine administration; but, above all, by the coming in of a New Dispensation (Jer. xxxi. 29—34), which made it abundantly clear that God had no pleasure in the death of a sinner.

Although, therefore, the punishment of national or family sins, after being long deferred, might, when it came, include the innocent as well as the guilty in its operation (comp. ch. xxi. 3), men would see that God's justice was not thereby impeached. Every right-minded sufferer would confess, as Daniel did (ch. ix. 14), that the Lord was righteous in all that He did.

4. "**all souls are mine.**" All came forth from Him, the fountain of life. All are His of right. Adhering to Him, they must have life. He, the living God, cannot have pleasure in the death of any (ver. 23). But, if they depart from Him, they cannot (in the nature of thing-) but die.

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father, so also the soul of the son is mine : ^b the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

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5 ¶ But if a man be just, and do ² that which is lawful and right,

6 ^c and hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath ^d defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath come near to ^e a menstruous woman,

7 and hath not ^f oppressed any, *but* hath restored to the debtor his ^g pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath ^h given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment ;

8 he *that* hath not given forth upon ⁱ usury, neither hath taken any increase, *that* hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, ^k hath executed true judgment between man and man,

9 hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly ; he *is* just, he shall surely ^l live, saith the Lord God.

10 ¶ If he beget a son *that is* a ³ robber, ^m a

^b ver. 20.
¹ Rom. 6. 23.
² Heb. judgment and justice.
^c ch. 22. 9.
^d Lev. 18. 20. & 20. 10.
^e Lev. 18. 19. & 20. 18.
^f Ex. 22. 21. Lev. 19. 15. & 25. 14.
^g Ex. 22. 26. Deut. 24. 12, 13.
^h Deut. 15. 7, 8. Isai. 58. 7. Matt. 25. 35, 36.
ⁱ Ex. 22. 25. Lev. 25. 36, 37.
^j Deut. 23. 19. Neh. 5. 7. Ps. 15. 5.
^k Deut. 1. 16. Zech. 8. 16.
^l ch. 20. 11. Amos 5. 4.
³ Or, breaker up of an house.
^m Gen. 9. 6. Ex. 21. 12. Num. 35. 31.

“it shall die”—die the death which souls suffer ; the death which consists in being excluded from the light of God's love.

5—24. The prophet speaks first of the man who walks uninterruptedly in God's ways. He then refers to four other cases : 1 and 2, when the son of a righteous man does wickedly or (conversely) the son of a wicked man walks in God's statutes : 3 and 4, when a wicked man forsakes sin or (conversely) a righteous man turns from righteousness. In all cases, righteousness tends to life, iniquity to death.

5. “that which is lawful and right.” Lit. “judgment and righteousness:”—deeds that are in conformity with the *rule of right*, and are done from the *love of right*.

6. “on the mountains.” In idol festivals (cp. ch. vi. 13). One, who ate of things offered to an idol-god, was supposed to be admitted into the deity's favour (cp. 1 Cor. x. 20, 21).

“lifted up,” in expectation of help (Ps. cxxi. 1).

7. “his bread.” Not looking on it as *his* (cp. Isa. lviii. 7) ; not saying with Nabal, “Shall I take *my* bread . . . and give it away?” (1 Sam. xxv. 11.)

8. The Israelite was forbidden to take of his brother either “usury” on a loan of money, or “increase” on a loan of the necessaries of life (Lev. xxv. 36, 37).

9. “to deal truly.” Lit. “to do truth:” acting in uprightness and sincerity (cp. Ps. li. 6 ; 1 Cor. v. 8 ; Eph. iv. 21).

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shedder of blood, and ² *that* doeth the like to *any* one of these *things*,

² Or, *that doeth to his brother besides any of these.*

11 and that doeth not any of those *duties*, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife,

n ch. 8. 6, 17.

12 hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath ⁿ committed abomination,

^o Lev. 20. 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 27. ch. 3. 18. & 33. 4. Acts 18. 6.

13 hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; ^o his ³ blood shall be upon him.

³ Heb. *bloods*.

14 ¶ Now, lo, *if* he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like,

p ver. 6, &c.

15 ^p *that* hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour's wife,

⁴ Heb. *hath not pledged the pledge, or, taken to pledge.*

16 neither hath oppressed any, ⁴ hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence, *but* hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment,

17 *that* hath taken off his hand from the poor, *that* hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live.

q ch. 3. 18.

18 *As for* his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did *that* which *is* not good among his people, lo, even ^q he shall die in his iniquity.

r Ex. 20. 5. Deut. 5. 9. 2 Kin. 23. 26. & 24. 3, 4.

19 ¶ Yet say ye, Why? ^r doth not the son bear

10. "doeth the like to," or, "doeth to a brother" (cp. ver. 18; Deut. xv. 7, xxiv. 10).

13. "die." Lit. "be put to death;" as though referring to Lev. xx. 2:—perhaps also to Lev. xx. 9; since a pious father's character is vilified by the conduct of an ungodly son.

17. "taken off," or, "withdrawn." He draws back the hand that was tempted to exact its full legal claim.

19. "Why? . . ." or, "Wherefore doth not . . .?" They mean: "On

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the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, *and* hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.

20 ^s The soul that sinneth, it shall die. ^t The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: ^u the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, ^x and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

21 But ^y if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

22 ^z All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.

23 ^a Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: *and* not that he should return from his ways, and live?

"what grounds do you deny so notorious a fact? Are we, then, not suffering on account of our fathers' misdeeds?" Really, they suffered less than their own sins had merited.

20. The direction given to civil tribunals in the Law was; "The sons shall not be put to death for the fathers" (Deut. xxiv. 16; 2 Kings xiv. 6). Assuredly God would not violate the rule He had Himself laid down. No: the son did not *bear the iniquity* of the father. If any godly man (like Ezekiel or Daniel) shared in the general calamity that was sent upon the sinful nation, he was not on that account deprived of God's favour. His sufferings were turned into blessings. That which to the nation was a judgment was to such a one a discipline of piety. Or if any such were swept away by death, it was only that they might "enter into peace" (Isa. lvii. 2).

"upon him," as a robe; of glory, or of shame.

21. So far was God from punishing a righteous man for his father's sins, that He would not remember against a man even *his own* sins, if only he turned from them.

"will turn." Here was the point of the controversy. They must recognize the fact that God dealt with each individual as a moral being; capable of renouncing evil and choosing good.

"from all his sins." From ALL:—making no reservation in favour of "heart-idols" (ch. xiv. 4). That is the test of true repentance.

22. "mentioned unto," or, "remembered against" (cp. Jer. xxxi. 34). The guilt is blotted out of remembrance; though the rod of discipline may, for most salutary purposes (Heb. xii. 10), continue to be applied (2 Sam. xii. 13, 14).

"in his righteousness." Not, "for" it,—as the procuring cause of his acceptance; yet "in" it, as the fruit of true conversion. Compare ch. xx. 11.

23. "pleasure." Even as regarded the sacrificial victims, it had

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^s ver. 4.

^t Deut. 24. 16.

² Kin. 14. 6.

² Chr. 25. 4.

Jer. 31. 29,

30.

^u Is. 3. 10, 11.

^x Rom. 2. 9.

^y ver. 27.

ch. 33. 12, 19.

^z ch. 33. 16.

^a ver. 32.

ch. 33. 11.

1 Tim. 2. 4.

2 Pet. 3. 9.

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^b ch. 3. 20.
& 33. 12,
13, 13.
^c 2 Pet. 2. 20.

24 But ^b when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, *and* doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked *man* doeth, shall he live? ^c All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

^d ver. 23.
ch. 33. 17, 20.

25 ¶ Yet ye say, ^d The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?

^e ver. 24.

26 ^e When a righteous *man* turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.

^f ver. 21.

27 Again, ^f when the wicked *man* turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

^g ver. 14.

28 Because he ^g considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

^h ver. 25.

29 ^h Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?

ⁱ ch. 7. 3.
& 33. 20.

30 ⁱ Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel,

been declared that God had "no pleasure in them" (Ps. xl. 6). They were ordained only as mysterious foreshadowings of that One Sacrifice, which would prove conclusively that God willed not the death of the sinner.

"in his trespass." The *present* condition of each soul is the evidence of its being in the way of life or of death.

25. "not equal"—not *uniform* in its working. They reiterate the charge made in ver. 2, that while some were spared, others were punished, *capriciously*.—The answer is, that the *inconsistency* lay with themselves. They went on sinning, and yet wished to be exempted from punishment. God's rule was, at all times, one and the same:—for the righteous, life; for the wicked, death.

"your ways." Ezekiel is continually turning his hearers back to consider their "own ways." See especially chs. xvi. 61, xx. 43, xxxvi. 31.

26. "dieth in them." Lit. "dieth *upon* them;"—so that they are the footing on which he stands, when natural death ends his probation.

30. "Therefore." The controversy is cut short. God's rule is invariable. *They* must decide, in which direction it shall operate. Compare ch. xiv. 6.

"I will judge;" even "justifying the righteous and condemning the "wicked" (Deut. xxv. 1).

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every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD.
^k Repent, and turn ² *yourselves* from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

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31 ¹ Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a ^m new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

^k Matt. 3. 2.
Rev. 2. 5.
² Or, others.
¹ Eph. 4. 22, 23.
^m Jer. 32. 33, ch. 11. 19, & 36. 26.
ⁿ Lam. 3. 33, ver. 23.
ch. 33. 11.
² Pet. 3. 9.
³ Or, others.

32 For ⁿ I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn ³ *yourselves*, and live ye.

CHAPTER XIX.

¹ A lamentation for the princes of Israel, under the parable of lions' whelps taken in a pit, 10 and for Jerusalem, under the parable of a wasted vine.

MOREOVER ^a take thou up a lamentation for the princes of Israel,

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^a ch. 26. 17.
& 27. 2.

“ruin.” Lit. “stumbling-block” (ch. vii. 19). Their iniquity being taken away, they would have “no case of stumbling” (Ps. cxix. 165).

31. “make you . . .” They were to carry out in act that new nature, which God had already promised (ch. xi. 19) to bestow. The “new man” is “created after God’s likeness,” but they are to “put it on” (Eph. iv. 24).—So our Lord called on the paralytic to “arise and walk;” and said to the deaf man, “Be thou opened” (St. Mark vii. 34). So St. Paul said to the Romans (ch. xii. 2); “*Be ye transformed*” by the “renewing of your mind;” and to the Ephesians (ch. iv. 23); “*Be renewed in the spirit of your mind.*”

32. “live ye.” Having re-established their relation to “the living God,” they will have eternal life.

CHAPTER XIX.

Lamentation over Israel’s fallen Royalty.

Before Justice advances to “judge” Israel “according to their ways” (ch. xviii. 30), as is done in chs. xx—xxiii, a piteous lamentation is heard over what, it is foreseen, must be the issue of the trial.

The prince referred to in vv. 3, 4, is Jehoahaz (2 Kings xxiii. 31—33).

In vv. 5—9 Jehoiakim and his son Jehoiachin seem to be combined into one picture. Their histories do, in fact, run into one. Jehoiakim, though put in chains to be carried to Babylon (2 Chron. xxxvi. 6), appears to have died at Jerusalem (cp. Jer. xxii. 18, 19). But the sentence issued against him took effect three months later on the person of Jehoiachin (2 Chron. xxxvi. 9, 10).

The allusion in ver. 14 (“a rod of her branches”) is to Zedekiah.

1. “of Israel.” As the heirs of David, Judah’s princes were princes of Israel (cp. ch. xxi. 25).

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2 and say, What *is* thy mother? A lioness: she lay down among lions, she nourished her whelps among young lions.

^b ver. 6.
2 Kings 23.
31, 32.

3 And she brought up one of her whelps: ^b it became a young lion, and it learned to catch the prey; it devoured men.

^c 2 Kin. 23. 33.
2 Chr. 36. 4.
Jer. 22. 11,
12.

4 The nations also heard of him; he was taken in their pit, and they brought him with chains unto the land of ^c Egypt.

^d 2 Kin. 23. 34.

5 Now when she saw that she had waited, *and* her hope was lost, then she took ^d another of her whelps, *and* made him a young lion.

^e Jer. 22.
13,—17.
^f ver. 3.

6 ^e And he went up and down among the lions, ^f he became a young lion, and learned to catch the prey, *and* devoured men.

^g Or, *their*
widows.

7 And he knew ^g their desolate palaces, and he laid waste their cities; and the land was desolate, and the fulness thereof, by the noise of his roaring.

^h 2 Kin. 24. 2.

8 ^h Then the nations set against him on every side from the provinces, and spread their net over him: ^h he was taken in their pit.

ⁱ ver. 4.

9 ⁱ And they put him in ward ⁱ in chains, and brought him to the king of Babylon: they brought him into holds, that his voice should no more be heard upon ^k the mountains of Israel.

^j 2 Chr. 36. 6.
Jer. 22. 18.
^k Or,
in hooks.

^l ch. 6. 2.

^m ch. 17. 6.

ⁿ Or, *in thy*
quietness,
or, in thy
likeness.

^o Deut. 8.
7, 8, 9.

10 ¶ Thy mother *is* ^l like a vine ^l in thy blood, planted by the waters: she was ^m fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters.

2. The person addressed seems to be (as in ver. 10) the reigning prince, Zedekiah. The "mother" is Jerusalem, or the royal house of Judah (cp. Gen. xlix. 9). She "lay down among lions," when she took her place among earthly monarchies (cp. 2 Sam. vii. 9).

4. "chains" (ver. 9), or, "hooks;"—such as were put in the jaws of a wild beast. Cp. ch. xxix. 4.

6. Jehoiakim affected great magnificence (Jer. xxii. 14, 15); and, to gratify this ambition, was guilty of oppression and bloodshed (ib. 13, 17).

10—14. The dirge, in turning to Zedekiah, changes the figure. Judah's royal house is now seen as a vine (cp. Gen. xlix. 11; Isa. v. 7).

10. "in thy blood." The meaning may be, that the royal vine of Judah, which was torn up, when Jehoiachin was carried to Babylon (cp. ver. 13), was planted afresh in the person of Zedekiah, in such wise that the life of the whole plant depended on him. The sap that kept the tree alive was—his blood.

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11 And she had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule, and her ⁿstature was exalted among the thick branches, and she appeared in her height with the multitude of her branches.

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ⁿ So chap.
31. 3.
Dan. 4. 11.

12 But she was plucked up in fury, she was cast down to the ground, and the ^oeast wind dried up her fruit: her strong rods were broken and withered; the fire consumed them.

^o ch. 17. 10.
Hos. 13. 15.

13 And now she *is* planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground.

14 ^p And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, *which* hath devoured her fruit, so that she hath no strong rod *to be* a sceptre to rule. ^q This *is* a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.

^p Judg. 9. 15.
2 Kin. 24. 20.
ch. 17. 18.

^q Lam. 4. 20.

CHAPTER XX.

1 God refuseth to be consulted by the elders of Israel. 5 He sheweth the story of their rebellions in Egypt, 10 in the wilderness, 27 and in the

11. "strong rods." The expression, which recurs, with dirge-like cadence, in vv. 12, 14, is the same that is used in Ps. cx. 2 of the "rod of power" to be wielded by that Son of David who was at the same time David's Lord. At present every "strong rod" of David's stem is consumed (vv. 12, 14).

"thick branches," of forest trees. The once lowly vine (ch. xvii. 6) was towering conspicuously among oaks and cedars; but was without fruit (ch. xv. 6).

13. "she is planted." David's stock is transplanted into the "wilderness" of Babylonia (cp. ch. xx. 35).

14. "her branches," her ambitious, boastful, branches (ch. xvii. 6). This vainglorious rod (Zedekiah) itself supplied the fire which burnt up the vine; for "wickedness burneth as a fire" (Isa. ix. 18; cp. Judg. ix. 20).

CHAPTER XX.

The final terms proposed to Israel were, "Turn ye and repent" (ch. xviii. 30; cp. ch. xiv. 6). But the "Elders" (cp. ch. xiv. 1) are not yet convinced. They again come to ask for Divine guidance, and this at the very time when they are desirous (ver. 32) of becoming as the heathen. The prophet is bidden to decline receiving from them any inquiry; and is directed to "judge" them by reciting the long catalogue of their fathers' sins; sins which the children reproduced (vv. 29—31).

Yet their unfaithfulness should not frustrate God's gracious purpose. He had associated His own Name with them, calling Himself the "God of Israel." That Holy Name should not be profaned (vv. 39, 44). His Covenant should stand firm. They, indeed, on their part, had broken it; but, as no one is absolved from the obligations of a Covenant by his

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land. 33 He promiseth to gather them by the gospel. 45 Under the name of a forest he sheweth the destruction of Jerusalem.

^a ch. 8. 1.
& 14. 1.

AND it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, that ^a certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the LORD, and sat before me.

2 Then came the word of the LORD unto me, saying,

3 Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Are ye come to enquire of me? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ^b I will not be enquired of by you.

^b ver. 31.
ch. 14. 3.

² Or, plead
for them.

^c ch. 22. 2.
& 23, 36.

^d ch. 16. 2.

^e Ex. 6. 7.
Deut. 7. 6.

³ Or, swear:
and so ver. 6,
&c. Ex. 6. 8.

4 Wilt thou ^a ^c judge them, son of man, wilt thou judge them? ^d cause them to know the abominations of their fathers:

5 and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when ^e I chose Israel, and ³ lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and

violation of it, the Covenant remained as binding as ever; and God would bring them under its bond (ver. 37).

Vv. 2—20 are the "Haftarah" (or prophetic section) to Lev. xix, xx. The averment, "I am the Lord your God" (vv. 5, 7, 19, 20), is found seven times in Lev. xix; while, "I am the Lord that sanctify" (ver. 12) occurs in Lev. xx. 8. One might place Lev. xx. 24, 26, "I am the Lord that "have separated you from all peoples," as a motto at the head of the present chapter.

vv. 1—44. Israel, arraigned at the bar of Divine Justice, and sentenced to wander in the Wilderness of the Nations.

1. According to Jewish tradition, the tenth day of the fifth month was the day on which the SENTENCE OF WANDERING was passed (Num. xiv. 29). On that same day the Temple was burnt both by the Chaldeans (Jer. lii. 12, 13), and by the Romans (Josephus, *J. W.*, vi. 4, 5).—This chapter (in which Num. xiv is several times referred to) proclaims a new and heavier "Sentence of Wandering" (vv. 35—38).

3. "I will not . . ." So when Saul "enquired of the Lord, the Lord "answered him not" (1 Sam. xxviii. 6).

4. "Wilt thou . . ." God had said, in ch. xviii. 30, that He would judge them. He now assigns the judicial action to the sympathising "son of man" (ep. St. John v. 27), who had twice prayed on behalf of the remnant of Israel (chs. ix. 8, xi. 13). No long process was required. Nothing more was needed than a bare recital of "the "abominations of their fathers;" for, what their fathers had done, they did even to that day (vv. 29, 31).

5. "chose," of my free grace; Deut. vii. 6, 7, x. 15, xiv. 2.

made myself ^fknown unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, ^gI am the LORD your God;

6 in the day *that* I lifted up mine hand unto them, ^hto bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, ⁱwhich *is* the glory of all lands:

7 then said I unto them, ^kCast ye away every man ^lthe abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with ^mthe idols of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

8 But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will ⁿpour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.

9 ^oBut I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they *were*, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt.

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^f Ex. 3. 8
& 4. 31.
Deut. 4. 34.
^g Ex. 20. 2.
^h Ex. 3. 8, 17.
Deut. 8. 7,
8, 9.
Jer. 32. 22.
ⁱ Ps. 48. 2.
ver. 15.
Dan. 8. 9.
& 11. 16, 41.
Zech. 7. 14.
^k ch. 18. 31.
^l 2 Chr. 15. 8.
^m Lev. 17. 7.
& 18. 3.
Deut. 29. 16,
17, 18.
Josh. 24. 14.

ⁿ ch. 7. 8.
ver. 13, 21.

^o See Exod.
32. 12.
Num. 14. 13,
&c.
Deut. 9. 28.
ver. 14, 22.
ch. 36. 21, 22.

“made myself known.” Revealing Himself in word (Exod. iii. 6—10), and verifying His revelation by outward facts (Deut. iv. 35, 36).

6. “lifted up . . .” As in the act of swearing (Gen. xiv. 22).

“had espied.” Choosing it beforehand for them; and going before them as they went to occupy it (Num. x. 33).

“the glory of all lands.” A “goodly land” (Deut. viii. 7—9) even physically: but eminently “glorious” (Dan. xi. 16, 41, 45), as the land in which the Son of God should tabernacle, and from which streams of spiritual life should flow over all the earth.

7. “of his eyes.” The visible objects, which he had substituted for the invisible God.

“of Egypt.” We learn from Josh. xxiv. 14 that the Israelites practised idolatry in Egypt. Indeed, Israel had to be redeemed, not so much from Pharaoh as from “the gods of Egypt” (Exod. xii. 12), whom Pharaoh and his magicians served. The whole controversy with Pharaoh turned on the question,—Would he allow Israel to *serve the Lord*?

8. “would not hearken.” When Moses announced his Divine commission, “they hearkened not unto him” (Exod. vi. 9, 12; cp. v. 21). They did indeed afterwards yield to his authority; but, how little they had in heart forsaken their idols, appears from their wishing that Moses had “let them alone to serve the Egyptians” (Exod. xiv. 12), and from their speedy relapse into Apis-worship (Exod. xxxii. 1—7).

9. “polluted,” or, “profaned” (Isa. xlvi. 11).

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p Ex. 13, 18.
q Deut. 4, 8.
Neh. 9, 13, 14.
Ps. 147, 19,
20.
2 Heb. made
them to
know.
r Lev. 18, 5.
ver. 13, 21.
Rom. 10, 5.
Gal. 3, 12.
s Ex. 20, 8, &
31, 13, &c.
& 35, 2.
Deut. 5, 12.
Neh. 9, 14.
t Num. 14, 22.
Ps. 78, 40, &
95, 8, 9, 10.
u Prov. 1, 25.
ver. 16, 24.
x Ex. 16, 27.
y Num. 14, 29.
& 26, 65.
Ps. 106, 23.
z ver. 9, 22.

a Num. 14, 28.
Ps. 95, 11.
& 106, 26.

b ver. 6.

c ver. 13, 24.

d Num. 15, 33.

Ps. 78, 37.

Amos 5, 25,

26.

Acts 7, 42, 43.

10 ¶ Wherefore I ^p caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness.

11 ^q And I gave them my statutes, and ² shewed them my judgments, ^r which *if* a man do, he shall even live in them.

12 Moreover also I gave them my ^s sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I *am* the LORD that sanctify them.

13 But the house of Israel ^t rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they ^u despised my judgments, which *if* a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly ^x polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the ^y wilderness, to consume them.

14 ^z But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, in whose sight I brought them out.

15 Yet also ^a I lifted up my hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given *them*, flowing with milk and honey, ^b which *is* the glory of all lands;

16 ^c because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my sabbaths: for ^d their heart went after their idols.

10. "the wilderness." This, too, was in mercy. In the seclusion of the Desert they might more readily fix their minds in contemplation of the wondrous loving-kindness manifested in their redemption (Exod. xix. 3—6).

11. "live in them." Lev. xviii. 5; Rom. x. 5. (Cp. on ch. xviii. 22.) He who walked uprightly in God's statutes, would find them tend "unto life" (Rom. vii. 10). The very "knowledge of sin," which was "by the law" (Rom. iii. 20), would make him cleave more earnestly to God,—the "God of his life" (Ps. xlii. 8).

12. "a sign." The weekly intermission of earthly labour was a sign, and a pledge, of the spiritual work which God was performing among His obedient people. (Exod. xxxi. 13).

13. "polluted," "profaned." The mind that was disengaged from worldly business, but not occupied with thoughts of God, was more open than at other times to the incursions of evil. So in later times, "Augustine, Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, and Theodoret charge the Jews "of their days with spending their sabbaths in licentiousness" (see Archdeacon Hessey's *Bampton L.*, p. 103).

16. "went after." See on ch. xiii. 3. A veil was mercifully drawn

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17 ° Nevertheless mine eye spared them from destroying them, neither did I make an end of them in the wilderness.

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° Ps. 78. 38.

18 But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols :

19 I *am* the LORD your God ; ^fwalk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them ;

^f Deut. 5. 32.
33. & 6, & 7.
& 8, & 10,
& 11, & 12.
^g Jer. 17. 22.
ver. 12.

20 ^gand hallow my sabbaths ; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I *am* the LORD your God.

21 Notwithstanding ^hthe children rebelled against me : they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, ⁱwhich *if* a man do, he shall even live in them ; they polluted my sabbaths : then I said, ^kI would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness.

^h Num. 25. 1, 2.
Deut. 9. 23,
24. & 31. 27.

ⁱ ver. 11, 13.

^k ver. 8, 13.

22 ^lNevertheless I withdrew mine hand, and ^mwrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth.

^l Ps. 78. 38.
ver. 17.
^m ver. 9, 14.

23 I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that ⁿI would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries ;

ⁿ Lev. 26. 33.
Deut. 28. 64.
Ps. 106. 27.
Jer. 15. 4.

24 ° because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and ^ptheir eyes were after their fathers' idols.

° ver. 13, 16.

^p See ch. 6. 9.

over the thirty-eight years of wandering in the desert : but an intimation of what took place is given in Amos v, 25, 26 (Acts vii. 42).

17. "mine eye." The "hand" of righteous Anger (ver. 15) was lifted to smite ; but the "eye" of gracious Pity relented, and the hand was withdrawn.

21. "the children." The younger generation. These, too, rebelled, at Kadesh (Num. xx. 2) ; by the gulf of Akaba (ib. xxi. 5) ; and at Shittim (ib. xxv. 2, 3). The children persisted in eating of the "grapes," which had already "set the fathers' teeth on edge."

Obs. From the murmuring at Kadesh (B.C. 1453) to the date of this chapter (B.C. 593) was 860 years ;—two cycles of 430 years. So long had God's mercy "spared" the people.

23. "scatter them ;" Lev. xxvi. 33. The penalty had been plainly declared beforehand : but only after the lapse of nearly nine centuries was it actually inflicted.

24. "their fathers' idols ;" against which they had been warned

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¶ See Ps. 81.
12. ver. 53.
Rom. 1. 24.
2 Thes. 2. 11.
2 Kings 17.
17. & 21. 6.
2 Chr. 28. 3.
& 33. 6.
Jer. 32. 35.
ch. 16. 20, 21.
* ch. 6. 7.

† Rom. 2. 24.

25 Wherefore ¶ I gave them also statutes *that were* not good, and judgments whereby they should not live;

26 and I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass † through *the fire* all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they ‡ might know that I *am* the LORD.

27 ¶ Therefore, son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Yet in this your fathers have † blasphemed

(ver. 18). The "vain conversation received by tradition from their fathers" (1 St. Pet. i. 18) had more authority with them than God's own word.

25. "gave them," or, "granted them."—Withdrawing His providential restraints, He permitted them to have what they were so bent upon (cp. ver. 39; Ps. lxxxii. 12; Acts vii. 42; Rom. i. 24).

The statutes, which were "not good," but the reverse (cp. ch. xviii. 18; Isa. lxxv. 2), and the judgments by which they should "not live," but should "surely die" (ch. xviii. 13), are evidently the "statutes" and "judgments" of *their fathers*, mentioned in ver. 18 (cp. Mic. vi. 16). No other view than this is consistent with ver. 26.

26. "polluted them." By a judicial sentence, allowing their inward pollution to show itself.—In Lev. xiii. 3—34 the same verb is ten times rendered, "pronounce unclean." The "gifts," with which, in their paroxysms of will-worship, they would fain have made atonement for their sins (Mic. vi. 7), *declared* how deeply conscious they were of *impurity*.

"caused to pass" (ch. xvi. 21). Awful infatuation! God, their Saviour, asked them to consecrate their first-born to Him as "living sacrifices" (Exod. xiii. 2), that the whole nation might be thereby hallowed; and they preferred to serve an imaginary malignant deity, who could be propitiated only by deeds which violated the strongest and purest instincts of humanity.

27, 28. Israel's sins in the wilderness were most grievous; yet they were not so direct an affront to God, as those which they committed in Canaan. There they "blasphemed" (or, contemptuously rejected) Him; leaving the one place which He selected "to put His name there," and offering sacrifice "on every high hill." They *slighted* the Holy Place, which, "all glorious inwardly" (Ps. xlv. 13), had no outward splendour. They must have something that exacted a smaller amount of spiritual exertion. For them, to climb up the steep heights of the mountains was a far less toilsome effort than to come with reverent faith to "rejoice before Him" Who made those heights (Ps. xcv. 1—5; Deut. xii. 12, 18).

The cry of man's unregenerate heart is still, in substance, the same. "We will recognise the idea of God," it says, "but on these conditions:—
"you must eliminate from it all thought of a righteous Ruler, a Saviour
"from sin, and a Sanctifier."

me, in that they have ² committed a trespass against me.

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28 For when I had brought them into the land, ² for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to them, then ^u they saw every high hill, and all the thick trees, and they offered there their sacrifices, and there they presented the provocation of their offering: there also they made their ^x sweet savour, and poured out there their drink offerings.

² Heb.
*trespassed
a trespass.*
^u Isai. 57. 5.
&c. ch. 6. 13.

^x ch. 16. 19.

29 Then ³ I said unto them, What is the high place whereunto ye go? And the name thereof is called Bamah unto this day.

³ Or, *I told
them what
the high
place was,
or, Bamah.*

30 Wherefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? and commit ye whoredom after their abominations?

31 For when ye offer ^v your gifts, when ye make ^v ver. 26.

27. "a trespass;" an overt and shameful breach of Covenant (see on ch. xiv. 13).

28. "there . . . there . . . there . . . there." The rhythm seems to recall that of the enactment in Deut. xii. 5—7. "Unto His habitation . . . thither . . . thither . . . there" (cp. ver. 40).

"provocation." Compare ch. viii. 17. The word is the same as in Deut. xxxii. 19; 2 Kings xxiii. 26.

29. "What is . . .," or, "What meaneth (1 Sam. xv. 14) the High-place, whereunto ye went, and whose name is called High-Place (Heb. BAMA) unto this day?"

Up to this point the prophet has been reciting the words put into his mouth respecting former generations. A message addressed to the Elders, who sit before him, will follow in vv. 30—44. But, first of all, the prophet interposes a question, which (like Samuel's question to Saul, 1 Sam. xv. 14) will admit of no evasion from them, and will furnish ground for the charge in ver. 31 ("ye offer . . . unto this day").

The Elders professed that they came to "inquire of the Lord." A doubt as to their motive had been implied in ver. 3 (lit. "Is it to enquire of Me that ye are come?"). But now their insincerity is suddenly laid bare. "You say that you wish to consult the Lord. What means, then, that High-place, which you so lately frequented, yonder in front of the Lord's Temple (see on ch. xiv. 3)? that High-place, which, in spite of the reformations under Hezekiah and Josiah, to this day retains its name, and is still, what it was in Solomon's time, the throne of Moloch and Chemosh?"

30, 31. The two verses are to be read together; the first portion of

¹ It is remarkable that, when Jeroboam laid his plans for keeping the people away from Jerusalem, he not only built an altar at Bethel to rival the Temple altar, but also a high-place (2 Kings xxiii. 15), as if to rival the high-place on Olivet.

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^z ver. 3.

your sons to pass through the fire, ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day : and ^z shall I be enquired of by you, O house of Israel ? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be enquired of by you.

^a ch. 11. 5.

32 And that ^a which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.

^b Jer. 21. 5.

33 ¶ As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and ^b with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you :

34 and I will bring you out from the people, and

ver. 31 being parenthetical. "Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? . . . and shall I be enquired of by you?"

32. Their most secret thoughts are here unveiled. They had come to look on their deportation from the Holy Land as a sign that they were released from the tremendous responsibilities of being God's special people ; as a sign, that they were henceforth to be merged among the nations of the world, and, like them, to follow their own ways.

"Vain thought that could not be at all!" (Keble, *Chr. Year*; 18th Sun. after Trin.) Their national privileges imposed on them duties, from which they could not escape ; for the neglect of which they must suffer severely (Amos iii. 2). God's purpose in choosing Israel was, that by their means the nations might be raised out of sin and misery. He could not suffer them to sink permanently to the level of the nations.

33. "rule," or, "reign;"—proving Myself to be your King. The rebels should be purged out (ver. 38). Israel's avowed motive in asking for a king had been the desire to be "as the nations" (1 Sam. viii. 5). Their first king grievously miscarried. Then God in His condescension gave David to be their king ; but at the same time taught them that THE KING, Whom He had constituted Universal Ruler, was *His own Son* (Ps. ii. 6, 12). The downfall of David's throne ought to have made them turn their eyes towards Him, Whose throne was "for ever and ever" (Ps. xlv. 6, lxxii. 17). Instead of that, they added enormously to their guilt by saying ; "Let us be as the nations to serve "wood and stone."

The "mighty hand," and "stretched out arm," carry our minds back to the deliverance out of Egypt (Deut. iv. 34, cp. on ch. v. 8); when Israel's song was, "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever" (Exod. xv. 18). A greater emancipation was hereafter to be accomplished, which would free Israel from *spiritual* bondage. Then God's kingdom should be completely established.

34. "bring you out," by a higher exodus (same word as in ver. 10).

"the people;" "the peoples" (and so in vv. 35 and 41). Since this "gathering" from among the peoples coincides in time with their being brought "into the wilderness of the peoples" (ver. 35), the pro-

will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out.

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35 And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there ° will I plead with you face to face.

c Jer. 2. 9, 35.
ch. 17. 20.

36 ^d Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God.

d See Num.
14. 21, 22,
23, 28, 29.

37 And I will cause you to ° pass under the rod, and I will bring you into ² the bond of the covenant :

e Lev. 27. 32.
Jer. 33. 13.
2 Or, a
delivering.

38 and ^f I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and ^g they shall not enter into the land of Israel: ^h and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

f ch. 34. 17, 20.
Matt. 25. 32,
33.

g Jer. 44. 14.

h ch. 6. 7.
& 15. 7.
& 23. 49.

39 As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the

cess must be of a spiritual kind. It is "Israel's Shepherd" (Ps. lxxx. 1) gathering His flock (cp. ver. 37), which had been scattered away from Him (ch. xxxiv. 5, 6, 12, 21).

35. In ancient time, Israel had been trained and disciplined in the sandy desert (Deut. viii. 15, 16). This new schooling should be in the busy, populous, world; a world that would be at great pains to make them feel their isolation. In that wilderness they should be led about from one stage of experience to another, "by a way they knew not" (Isa. xlii. 16); and at each point of their pilgrimage God would "plead with them" (Jer. ii. 35, cp. on ch. xvii. 20), deepening in them the conviction of their sin and of His righteousness.

36. The end of all the pleadings addressed to them in the desert had been, to lead them to "love the Lord their God" (Deut. xxx. 16, 20). The object of God's later dealings with them was the very same.

37. "the rod;" as of a shepherd counting his sheep (Lev. xxvii. 32).

"the bond of the covenant;" whose "bands" are those of love (Hos. xi. 4). Until they took this "easy yoke" upon them, they never could reach the land of peace,—never "find rest unto their souls" (St. Matt. xi. 28, 29).

38. "the rebels." Those who would not have the Lord for their King (ver. 33). Compare St. Luke xix. 14, 27.

"country where they sojourn," or, "land of their pilgrimage,"—used in Exod. vi. 4 of Canaan. Canaan, debased by their heathenism, had become to them a land of bondage (cp. on ver. 8). They must be brought out of it, and be made to wander in the world's wilderness; unable to "enter into God's rest" (Ps. xcv. 11), which is given to His faithful people (Heb. iv. 9).

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Lord GOD; ⁱ Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, and hereafter *also*, if ye will not hearken unto me: ^k but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols.

ⁱ Judg. 10. 14.
Ps. 81. 12.
Amos 4. 4.

^k Isai. 1. 13.
ch. 23. 38, 39.

^l Isai. 2. 2, 3.
ch. 17. 23.
Micah 4. 1.

^m Isai. 56. 7.
& 60. 7.
Zech. 8. 20,
&c.
Mal. 3. 4.

Rom. 12. 1.
² Or, *chief*.

³ Heb. *savour of rest*.

ⁿ Eph. 5. 2.
Phil. 4. 18.

^o ver. 33, 44.
ch. 36. 23.
& 38. 23.

^p ch. 11. 17.
& 34. 13. &
36. 24.

^q ch. 16. 61.

^r Lev. 26. 33.
ch. 6. 9.
Hos. 5. 15.

^s ver. 38.
ch. 24. 24.
^t ch. 36. 22.

40 For ¹ in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there ^m will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the ² firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things.

41 I will accept you with your ³ *sweet savour*, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen.

42 ^o And ye shall know that I *am* the LORD, ^p when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country *for* the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers.

43 And ^q there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ^r ye shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed.

44 ^s And ye shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have wrought with you ^t for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

39. "Go ye." Let there be no more vacillation and double-heartedness. Make full trial of the idols you have chosen (ch. xiv. 4).

"and hereafter also." The same rule will hold good in all later dealings with you. If you refuse My conditions, know at any rate that they are unalterable.

"pollute ye," or, "My holy Name shall ye no more profane." This agrees better with the "For" of ver. 40.

40. "the height." See on ch. xvii. 23.

"all the house of Israel," ch. xxxix. 25. Then "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. xi. 26).

41. "sweet savour;" offerings of piety and charity made in Christ's name (Rom. xv. 16; Phil. iv. 18).

44. "for my name's sake." That is the burden of the preceding recital. God's revelation of Himself as holy, righteous, and merciful, however resisted by Israel, should infallibly work out its own purposes. There should never be wanting an elect remnant of faithful men to glorify Him.

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45 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before
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46 ^u Son of man, set thy face toward the south, and drop *thy word* toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of the south field; ^u ch. 6. 2.
& 21. 2.

47 and say to the forest of the south, Hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, ^x I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour ^y every green tree in thee, and every dry ^y tree: the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces ^z from the south to the north shall be burned therein. ^x Jer. 21. 14.
^y Luke 23. 31.
^z ch. 21. 4.

48 And all flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it: it shall not be quenched.

49 Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! they say of me, Doth he not speak parables?

CHAPTER XXI.

¹ Ezekiel prophesieth against Jerusalem with a sign of sighing. ⁸ The

ver. 45—xxi. 32. **The Fire and Sword of Divine Justice go forth against heathenized Jerusalem.**

45—49. A comparison of these verses with ch. xxi. 2—5 shows that they belong properly to ch. xxi.

46. “drop thy word.” The verb is used of the prophesying of Amos (ch. vii. 16), when he foretold that “the sanctuaries of Israel” should “be laid waste,” and Israel “be led away captive out of their own land” (ib. 9, 11, 17; the word rendered “sanctuaries” being the same word as in ch. xxi. 2). Amos had declared the doom of the Northern kingdom; Ezekiel declares that of the Southern. (Comp. Intro. to ch. vii.)

“the forest;” in which the Davidic “cedar” grew (ch. xvii. 3).

47. “green . . . dry.” In ch. xxi. 3, 4, “the righteous and the wicked.” The passage appears to be referred to by our Lord in St. Luke xxiii. 31. Compare on ch. xxi. 5.

“flaming flame.” The “vehement flame” of God’s jealousy (Song of Songs viii. 6; cp. chs. x. 3, xvi. 38, 42). The word rendered “flaming” occurs elsewhere only in Cant. viii. 6 and Job xv. 30.

“burned,” or, “scorched;” cp. Joel ii. 6; Isa. xiii. 8.

48. “not be quenched.” So in Huldah’s prophecy, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 25.

49. “Doth he not . . . ?” or, “Is he not a speaker of parables?” The words have an air of irony: “Is he not clever at saying things which sound very terrible;—if only they were not so hard to understand?”

CHAPTER XXI.

The parabolic character of ch. xx. 46—48 is continued throughout ch. xxi. The figure there used was “fire;” here, it is “the sword.”

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sharp and bright sword, 18 against Jerusalem, 25 against the kingdom, 28 and against the Ammonites.

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a ch. 20. 46.
b Deut. 32. 2.
Amos 7. 16.
Mic. 2. 6, 11.

AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 ^a Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, and ^b drop *thy word* toward the holy places, and prophesy against the land of Israel,

c Job 9. 22.

3 and say to the land of Israel, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I *am* against thee, and will draw forth my sword out of his sheath, and will cut off from thee ^c the righteous and the wicked.

d ch. 20. 47.

4 Seeing then that I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked, therefore shall my sword go forth out of his sheath against all flesh ^d from the south to the north:

e So Isai. 45. 23. & 55. 11.

5 that all flesh may know that I the LORD have drawn forth my sword out of his sheath: it ^e shall not return any more.

The thing signified is the same. Indeed the sword is one that has a "lightning" power in it (see on ver. 10); and in vv. 31, 32, the image of "fire" re-appears. Compare on ch. x. 19.

The word "sword" occurs in this chapter fifteen times. In vv. 3—5 God's sword is to be drawn out of its sheath. In vv. 9—15 it is described as being bright as lightning and of power irresistible. In vv. 19, 20 it takes a visible, earthly, form, and is wielded by the king of Babylon (cp. ch. xxx. 24). The Chaldean army was, for the present, God's sword (cp. on ver. 16).

2. "holy places." See on ch. xx. 46 (same word as in Jer. li. 51).

3. "my sword," Deut. xxxii. 41; Jer. xlvii. 6.

"out of his sheath," in which it had rested for above 400 years. In David's time, it had been ready to descend on Jerusalem; but the Destroying Angel's arm was then "stayed" (as Abraham's had been on the same Mount Moriah). By God's direction David offered burnt-offerings on what was afterwards the site of the Temple altar; and the sword was returned "into the sheath thereof" (1 Chron. xxi. 16, 27, xxii. 1). There, in the sheath of Divine forbearance, it had remained at rest. Now, since God's altar has been irremediably profaned, the sword must again leave its scabbard.

"the righteous and the wicked." In no way inconsistent with ch. xviii (see on ch. xviii. 20). What is here spoken of is, the being cut off from "the land of Israel" (ver. 2). But the righteous, even when they were in exile, still enjoyed the favour of God; still had access to Him as their "sanctuary" (ch. xi. 16).

5. "shall not return;" as it had done in David's time. It shall no more turn back empty. It shall go forth "against all flesh" (ver. 4). Israel, the premier nation, which had been selected to be a vehicle of God's salvation to the world, falls beneath its stroke; who, then, of all flesh can escape? The altar on Moriah had, through "the forbearance of God" (Rom. iii. 25) served for a time to hold back the out-

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6 ^f Sigh therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of *thy* loins; and with bitterness sigh before their eyes.

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^f Isai. 22. 4.

7 And it shall be, when they say unto thee, Wherefore sighest thou? that thou shalt answer, For the tidings; because it cometh: and every heart shall melt, and ^g all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit shall faint, and all knees ² shall be weak *as* water: behold, it cometh, and shall be brought to pass, saith the LORD GOD.

^g ch. 7. 17.

² Heb.
*shall go
into water.*

8 ¶ Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

9 Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD; Say, ^h A sword, a sword is sharpened, and also furbished:

^h Deut. 32. 41.
ver. 15, 23.

10 it is sharpened to make a sore slaughter; it is furbished that it may glitter: should we then make mirth? ³ it contemneth the rod of my son, *as* every tree.

³ Or,
*it is the rod
of my son,
it despiseth
every tree.*

stretched arm of justice from Jerusalem: but where is the altar beneath whose shadow *mankind* may take refuge? Must "all flesh," then, be "cut off?"

The great problem remained unsolved until the true Heir of David appeared. Against Him the long-slumbering sword awoke (Zech. xiii. 7), and, plunging into His heart, was satiated with blood. Justice had thenceforward no claims to urge against any, who were sheltered by the One propitiatory Altar (Rom. iii. 25; 1 St. John ii. 1, 2).

Obs. Our Lord had applied Zech. xiii. 7 to Himself (St. Matt. xxvi. 31) a little before He made reference to Ezek. xx. 47.

6. "Sigh." As "son of man," Ezekiel is throughout the exponent of God's mind and will. His "sigh" represents the reluctance with which the Judge pronounced Jerusalem's sentence. Cp. St. Luke xix. 41.

9. "furbished." As though it had rusted in its sheath.

10. "glitter." Lit., "have lightning" (cp. vv. 15, 28). It is the sword spoken of in Dent. xxxii. 41, "the lightning of My sword;" wielded by the cherubim (ch. i. 13, 14), who were the avengers of God's broken Law (cp. Exod. xix. 16).

"should we . . ." Or, "shall we make mirth, O sceptre of My 'Son, that disdainest every tree?" The sword, alas! is ready; or, must we disbelieve the warning, and make supercilious mirth over it, O thou disdainful sceptre (ver. 13) of Judah, that forgettest Whose thou art, and lookest with contempt on the powers of the world (the "trees of the forest," ch. xv. 2, 6), trusting in thy "sanctuary, the pride of thy 'strength?" (ch. xxiv. 21, 25.)

"of my son." Belonging "of right" (ver. 27) to Him, Who had the decree addressed to Him, "Thou art My Son" (Ps. ii. 7). They, by

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¹ ver. 13.

² Or, *they are thrust down to the sword with my people.*

³ Jer. 31. 19.

⁴ Or, *When the trial hath been, what then? shall they not also belong to the despising rod?*

¹ Job 9. 23.

² Cor. 8. 2.

^m ver. 27.

ⁿ Num. 24.

¹⁰ ver. 17.

ch. 6. 11.

⁴ Heb. *hand to hand.*

^o 1 Kin. 20. 30.

& 22. 25.

⁵ Or, *glittering, or, fear.*

^p ver. 10, 23.

⁶ Or, *sharpened.*

11 And he hath given it to be furbished, that it may be handled: this sword is sharpened, and it is furbished, to give it into the hand of ¹the slayer.

12 Cry and howl, son of man: for it shall be upon my people, it *shall be* upon all the princes of Israel: ²terrors by reason of the sword shall be upon my people: ^ksmite therefore upon *thy* thigh.

13 ³Because *it is* ¹a trial, and what if *the sword* condemn even the rod? ^mit shall be no *more*, saith the Lord God.

14 Thou therefore, son of man, prophesy, and ⁿsmite *thine* ⁴hands together, and let the sword be doubled the third time, the sword of the slain: it *is* the sword of the great *men that are slain*, which entereth into their ^oprivy chambers.

15 I have set the ⁵point of the sword against all their gates, that *their* heart may faint, and *their* ruins be multiplied: ah! ^p*it is* made bright, *it is* ⁶wrapped up for the slaughter.

claiming it as their own (ch. xix. 14) became rebels against Him, and must "perish" (Ps. ii. 12).

11. "the slayer." Compare ch. ix. 6, 7.

13. "Because. . .," or, "Verily, a time of trial! And what if the "disdainful sceptre (ver. 10) shall be no more?" What if, under this strict ordeal, Judah's temporal royalty shall cease to exist?

In ver. 27 we are told that this result would certainly follow: "it shall be no more." But the kingdom shall be restored by One, Who can endure the severest ordeal (cp. Isa. xxviii. 16, "a *tried* stone"), because His sceptre is all "righteousness" (Ps. xlv. 6).

14. "smite. . ." An action which denoted strong emotion. Here it is meant to urge the sword onward in its course.

"doubled," or "repeated." Twice already the Chaldeans had captured Jerusalem and carried away portions of the royal family.

"the slain," or, "the wounded" (ch. xxvi. 15). The rendering, "deadly wounded," given in the margin of ch. xxx. 24, probably represents the exact force of the word; and explains how it comes to be so often rendered "slain." The word occurs in Ezekiel above thirty times, and (except in ver. 25 below) is everywhere rendered by A. V. either "slain," or "wounded."

"the great men. . ." Rather, "the great one that is wounded;" pre-eminent, as in sin (ver. 25), so in suffering.

"entereth into. . ." Violating the sanctity of their houses (cp. Deut. xxxii. 25); penetrating into their secret "chambers of imagery" (see on ch. viii. 12).

15. "ruins." Rather, "causes of stumbling."

"wrapped up," or, "made keen."

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16 ¹Go thee one way or other, *either* on the right hand, ²*or* on the left, whithersoever thy face is set.

17 I will also ^rsmite mine hands together, and ^sI will cause my fury to rest: I the LORD have said *it*.

18 ¶ The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,

19 Also, thou son of man, appoint thee two ways, that the sword of the king of Babylon may come: both twain shall come forth out of one land: and choose thou a place, choose *it* at the head of the way to the city.

20 Appoint a way, that the sword may come to ^tRabbath of the Ammonites, and to Judah in Jerusalem the defenced.

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¹ ch. 14. 17.
² Heb.
*set thyself,
take the left
hand.*

^r ver. 14.
ch. 22. 13.
^s ch. 5. 13.

^t Jer. 49. 2.
ch. 25. 5.
Amos 1. 14.

16. "Go thee . . ." Or, "unite thee; go to the right: stand; go to the left." The orders are given to the sword, as if it were an army. See the *Introduction*.

"whithersoever . . ." The sword moves in the way that the "living creatures" did (ch. i. 9, 12); doubtless under their influence. Compare on ch. x. 10.

18—23. In ch. iv the prophet was directed to draw a symbolic sketch of the siege of Jerusalem. Here he is to represent Nebuchadnezzar's advance against Jerusalem. The representation is evidently enigmatic. The king of Babylon is seen standing at a point from which two roads diverge, one to Jerusalem, the other to Rabbah. Which road shall he take? It does not matter which; for "both come forth out of one land" (ver. 19). Judah has long ago been Ammonized (see on ver. 28). Since there is nothing to choose between them, the matter is decided by augury; and this assigns Jerusalem as the first object of attack. When the rumour of Nebuchadnezzar's advance comes to the men of Jerusalem, they treat it lightly. The heathen king (they say) has been misled by false divinations. *He*, however, perseveres; as well he may, for he has solid grounds of justice on his side; whilst *they* have the worst of omens against them, the guilt of treason and perjury. Though the soothsaying king may not know it, he is truly an instrument in God's hand for punishing the iniquity of the nation.

19. "appoint," or, "set;" marking it, probably, on a tile.

"choose," or, "carve out."

20. "Judah." The royal house of Judah; which was the special object of Nebuchadnezzar's indignation.

"the defenced;" same word as in Deut. xxviii. 52, "thy high and fenced walls, wherein thou trustedst." It was Zedekiah's trust in Jerusalem's fortifications that led him to break faith with his sovereign.

The parallelism, in which Rabbah and Jerusalem stand, is the main point of the enigmatic representation. In what respect was Jerusalem superior to that city, on which David had inflicted so stern retribution?

On human grounds, it was more guilty. Hanun had scornfully re-

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² Heb.
*mother of
the way.*

³ Or, *knives.*

⁴ Heb.
teraphim.

⁵ Or, *batter-
ing rams,*
ch. 4. 2.

⁶ Heb. *rams.*

^u Jer. 51. 14.

^x ch. 4. 2.

⁷ Or, *for the
oaths made
unto them.*

^y ch. 17. 13,
15, 16, 18.

21 For the king of Babylon stood at the ² parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination: he made *his* ³ arrows bright, he consulted with ⁴ images, he looked in the liver.

22 At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem, to appoint ^{5 6} captains, to open the mouth in the slaughter, to ^u lift up the voice with shouting, ^x to appoint *battering* rams against the gates, to cast a mount, *and* to build a fort.

23 And it shall be unto them as a false divination in their sight, ⁷ to them that ^y have sworn oaths: but he will call to remembrance the iniquity, that they may be taken.

24 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because ye have made your iniquity to be remembered, in

jected David's overtures of friendship (2 Sam. x. 1—6); but he broke no solemn oaths, as Zedekiah did.

As regarded its relation to God, it was immeasurably more guilty. In the Ammonites, Moloch-worship was a piteous confession of the need that men felt of some atonement for sin. But for Israel, which from the first had heard of God as One Who "forgave iniquity, transgression, and "sin," there could be no such extenuating plea.

21. "arrows;" used in divination. Probably each of the arrows had the name of a city marked on it. The arrows were then drawn as lots; that which was drawn by the right hand having the prior claim.

23. The Jews looked on Nebuchadnezzar as misled by false auguries; while they themselves were fatally deluded by the "vain divinations" of lying prophets (ver. 29, chs. xiii. 6, 7, xxii. 28).

"to them that . . ." or, "most solemn oaths have they." They can rely on the oaths by which the Egyptian alliance was ratified; or, perhaps, on the Divine oaths which promised eternity of duration to David's throne.

"call to remembrance," or, "bring to remembrance" (as in Num. v. 15). Nebuchadnezzar's strong hand should be laid on the unfaithful nation, and they shall be "taken" (same word as in Num. v. 13) in the very fact.

24. "Because ye . . ." The reason, why they were thus "taken" and convicted by Nebuchadnezzar, was, their own continual iteration of sin. They would not allow their iniquity to be cast into oblivion. They constantly dragged it afresh to light by new enormities. Therefore Nebuchadnezzar should detect them and punish them before the eyes of the world.

They could not now complain of Jerusalem's being overthrown; it was their own perjury and treason, that overthrew it. Neither could they say that their fathers' guilt was visited upon them: it was incontrovertibly their own misdeed which brought this catastrophe upon them.

"your iniquity . . . transgressions . . . sins." The words used in Lev. xvi. 22. On the day of Atonement "a remembrance was made of

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that your transgressions are discovered, so that in all your doings your sins do appear; because, *I say*, that ye are come to remembrance, ye shall be taken with the hand.

25 ¶ And thou, ² profane wicked prince of Israel, ^a whose day is come, when iniquity *shall have an end*,

26 thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this *shall not be the same*: ^b exalt *him that is low*, and abase *him that is high*.

27 ² I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: ^c and

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² 2 Chr. 36. 13.

Jer. 52. 2.

ch. 17. 19.

^a ver. 29.

ch. 35. 5.

^b ch. 17. 24.

Luke 1. 52.

² Heb.

Perverted,

perverted,

perverted,

will I make

it.

^c Gen. 49. 10.

ver. 13.

Luke 1. 32,

33.

John 1. 49.

“sins” (Heb. x. 3); but the sins being confessed were forgiven. Now it is otherwise. The people are peremptory in refusing to acknowledge their guilt (ch. xviii. 2); therefore their sin is “discovered” and laid bare; it “appears,” or stands out conspicuously, before the eyes of all men.

25. “profane.” Rather, “deadly wounded” (see on ver. 14). It was not only Zedekiah that suffered. In his person the temporal sovereignty of David’s house received a wound, from which it never recovered.

“when iniquity . . .” Or, “in the time of final iniquity.” Their iniquity being “full” (Gen. xv. 16), justice can forbear no longer. Compare St. James i. 15.

26. The pillars of the national constitution—not the Davidic royalty only, but the Aaronic priesthood as well—are to be taken away. Compare on ch. xvi. 53.

“the diadem.” Rather, “the mitre.” The word is found elsewhere *only* in Exod. xxviii, xxix, xxxix; Lev. viii, xvi:—always of the High-priest’s mitre.

“the crown.” The regal crown (as in Jer. xiii. 18). The only place, where the word occurs in the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, is in the history of David’s conquest of Rabbah (2 Sam. xii. 30; 1 Chron. xx. 2). He “took the crown of their king [or, of Milcom, Zeph. i. 5] “from off his head . . . and it was set on David’s head.” Compare on ver. 28.

“this shall.” Lit. “this is not this:”—is *not-this*; is the reverse. This hallowed nation is unholy. The mitre, which has “Holiness to “the Lord” upon it, is worn by one who is profane. The regal crown has been from the first a tainted thing. All have the stamp of unreality upon them. Let them all be removed.

“him that . . .,” or, “that which.” The words used by the Septuagint (here and in ch. xvii. 24) for “exalt the low,” are the same that occur in St. Luke i. 52 (cp. on ch. xvii. 24). The fact, that the Son of God was born of a lowly virgin, set forth the law of God’s kingdom. Compare St. Luke xiv. 11.

27. “I will . . .” Lit., “An overthrow, overthrow, overthrow, will “I make it.” A like solemn repetition is employed by Jeremiah, where he foretells the failure of David’s line (ch. xxii. 29); “O earth, earth, “earth!”

“and it . . .,” or, “even this is no more” (cp. ver. 13). Even that

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it shall be no *more*, until he come whose right it is ;
and I will give it *him*.

d Jer. 43. 1.
ch. 25. 2, 3, 6.
Zeph. 2. 8,
9, 10.
e ver. 9, 10.

28 ¶ And thou, son of man, prophesy and say,
Thus saith the Lord GOD ^d concerning the Am-
monites, and concerning their reproach ; even say
thou, ^e The sword, the sword *is* drawn : for the
slaughter *it is* furbished, to consume because of the
glittering :

f ch. 12, 24,
& 22, 25.

g ver. 25,
Job 18. 20.
Ps. 37. 13.

² Or, *Cause
it to return.*

h Jer. 47. 6, 7.

i Gen. 15. 14,
ch. 16. 38.

k ch. 16. 3.

29 whiles they ^f see vanity unto thee, whiles they
divine a lie unto thee, to bring thee upon the necks
of *them that are* slain, of the wicked, ^g whose day is
come, when their iniquity *shall have* an end.

30 ^{2h} Shall I cause *it* to return into his sheath ?
ⁱ I will judge thee in the place where thou wast
created, ^k in the land of thy nativity.

Divinely constituted order of things is become as though it had never been.

“until.” The allusion to Gen. xlix. 10 is obvious. Judah’s royalty is taken away ; but not for ever. His inherent dignity remains. The change in the outward royalty and priesthood is only preparatory to the coming of Him to Whom both these “of right” belong, “the Holy and “the Just” (Acts iii. 14) ; the Holy Priest (Heb. vii. 26) and the Just King (Zech. ix. 9) ; the “Priest upon His throne” (Zech. vi. 13).

“give it *him*.” Rather, “give it Him” (cp. St. Luke i. 32, 33).

28—32. A comparison of these verses with vv. 3, 9—11, 15, 25, and ch. xxii. 20—22, 28, makes it plain that there is no break of continuity here. It is Judah (or, the House of David) that is referred to under the allegorical title, “Children of Ammon” (comp. on vv. 18, 20, 26, ch. xiv. 3). The designation carries our thoughts back to that mournful history of 2 Sam. xii, which is so intimately connected with the subject of this chapter.

When David, having fallen into the Tempter’s net, had been dragged onward in it, until at last he “slew Uriah with *the sword of the “children of Ammon”* (2 Sam. xii. 9), the sentence passed upon him was, “therefore *the sword* shall never depart from thy house.” That sword—the sword of Divine Justice—was now about to smite off the “crown,” which David so strangely received at Rabbah.

28. “their reproach.” The shame and indignity, which they are to suffer (ch. xxii. 4).

29. “upon the necks . . .” Involved in one common ruin with them.

30. “Shall I . . .,” or, (as marg.) “Return it.” The sword with its lightning-flash has done its appointed work ; the rest will be effected by the “fire” which it leaves behind it (vv. 31, 32).

“the land of . . .” Canaan (ch. xvi. 3). Jerusalem’s children are to be slain, or carried away captive : she herself is to be “burnt” (cp. Lev. xxi. 9), there in the land.

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31 And I will ¹pour out mine indignation upon thee, I will ^mblow against thee in the fire of my wrath, and deliver thee into the hand of ²brutish men, *and* skilful to destroy.

32 Thou shalt be for fuel to the fire; thy blood shall be in the midst of the land; ^athou shalt be no *more* remembered: for I the LORD have spoken *it*.

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¹ ch. 7. 8.
& 14. 19.
& 22. 22.
^m ch. 22. 20,
21.
² Or,
burning.
ⁿ ch. 25. 10.

CHAPTER XXII.

¹ *A catalogue of sins in Jerusalem. 18 God will burn them as dross in his furnace. 23 The general corruption of prophets, priests, princes, and people.*

MOREOVER the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

2 Now, thou son of man, ^awilt thou ²judge, wilt thou judge ^bthe ³bloody city? yea, thou shalt ⁴shew her all her abominations.

3 Then say thou, Thus saith the Lord God, The city sheddeth blood in the midst of it, that her time may come, and maketh idols against herself to defile herself.

4 Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou hast ^cshed; and hast defiled thyself in thine idols which thou hast made; and thou hast caused thy days to draw near, and art come *even* unto thy years:

^a ch. 20. 4.
& 23. 36.
² Or,
lead for.
^b ch. 24. 6, 9.
Nah. 3. 1.
³ Heb. *city of bloods.*
⁴ Heb. *make her know,*
ch. 16. 2.

^c 2 Kin. 21. 16.

31. "blow;" to increase the intensity of the flame (ch. xxii. 20, 21).

32. "no more remembered." She shall be consigned to oblivion, and her mournful failures be no more mentioned; because out of her ashes shall have risen a new and joyous city of God (Isa. lxxv. 17).

Obs. Even the Aaronic priesthood and the Davidic royalty belonged to the things which are "shaken" and removed, when God arises to judgment. So must it be sooner or later with all earthly institutions. They do but prepare the way for "the Kingdom that cannot be moved" (Heb. xii. 28).

CHAPTER XXII.

Jerusalem's corruption deep and universal.

The judicial process in ch. xx had reviewed the whole of Israel's history; this in ch. xxii describes the existing condition of Jerusalem. There it was, "Make them to know the abominations of their fathers" (ch. xx. 4): here it is, "Make her to know her abominations" (ver. 2).

3. "her time." The limit of her probation (Isa. xliii. 22, cp. ch. xxx. 3).

4. "thy days . . . thy years." The full term of thy days and years (cp. Deut. xxxi. 14).

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- ^d therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the heathen, and a mocking to all countries.
- 5 *Those that be near, and those that be far from thee, shall mock thee, which art* ² *infamous and much vexed.*
- 6 Behold, ^e the princes of Israel, every one were in thee to their ³ power to shed blood.
- 7 In thee have they ^f set light by father and mother: in the midst of thee have they ^g dealt by oppression with the stranger: in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow.
- 8 Thou hast ^h despised mine holy things, and hast ⁱ profaned my sabbaths.
- 9 In thee are ^{5k} men that carry tales to shed blood: ^l and in thee they eat upon the mountains: in the midst of thee they commit lewdness.
- 10 In thee have they ^m discovered their fathers' nakedness: in thee have they humbled her that was ⁿ set apart for pollution.
- 11 And ^o one hath committed abomination ^o with his neighbour's wife; and ⁷ another ^p hath ⁸ lewdly defiled his daughter in law; and another in thee hath humbled his ^q sister, his father's daughter.
- 12 In thee ^r have they taken gifts to shed blood; ^s thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and ^t hast forgotten me, saith the Lord God.
- 13 Behold, therefore I have ^u smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee.
- 14 ^x Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? ^y I the LORD have spoken *it*, and will do *it*.

5. "Those that." Rather, "the women that." The cities are personified; as in ch. xxiii. 48.

"which art . . ." Lit., "O thou polluted in name, great in turmoil." Her "renown for beauty" (ch. xvi. 14) had been changed into infamy; she that had been "great among the nations" (Lam. i. 1) had now only a pre-eminence in calamity.

6. "to their power." Lit., "to his own arm." Each one made his strength the rule of right. His arm was his god.

12. "gifts," or, "bribes."

"forgotten me." The fearful catalogue of sins ends with that which was the root of them all (Deut. xxxii. 18; Jer. iii. 21).

15 And ^zI will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries, and ^awill consume thy filthiness out of thee.

Before
CHRIST
593.

^z Dent. 4. 27.
& 28. 25, 64.
ch. 12. 14, 15.

^a ch. 23. 27,
48.

² Or, *shalt*
be profaned.

^b Ps. 9. 16.
ch. 6. 7.

17 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

18 Son of man, ^cthe house of Israel is to me become dross: all they *are* brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are *even* the ³dross of silver.

^c Isai. 1. 22.
Jer. 6. 28,
&c. See
Ps. 119. 119.

³ Heb.
drosses.

19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.

20 ⁴As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt *it*; so will I gather *you* in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave *you there*, and melt you.

⁴ Heb.
According
to the *ga-*
thering.

21 Yea, I will gather you, and ^dblow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof.

^d ch. 22. 20.
21, 22.

22 As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the LORD have ^epoured out my fury upon you.

^e ch. 20. 8, 33.
ver. 31.

23 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

24 Son of man, say unto her, Thou *art* the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation.

15. "among the heathen." Heathenized Israel must learn what heathenism means.

16. "take . . ." or, (as marg.), "be profaned in thyself;" thou that hast profaned My holy things (ver. 8).

18. "dross." Some kinds of silver ore contain a large amount of copper, iron, lead, etc. Judah has had its good silver drained off (by death or exile); so that only baser metal remains, with a few grains of silver in it. The slag shall be gathered again into the smelting furnace, and subjected to a yet fiercer flame. Compare Jer. vi. 28—30.

24. "not cleansed." The priests, whose office it was to keep it free

Before
CHRIST
593.

f Hos. 6. 9.

g Matt. 23. 14.

h Mic. 3. 11.

i Zeph. 3. 3, 4.

j Mal. 2. 8.

k Heb.

offered vio-

lence to.

l Lev. 22. 2,

&c.

m Sam. 2. 29.

n Lev. 10. 10.

o Jer. 15. 19.

p ch. 44. 23.

q Isai. 1. 23.

r ch. 22. 6.

s Mic. 3. 2, 3,

9, 10, 11.

t Zeph. 3. 3.

u ch. 13. 10.

v ch. 13. 6, 7,

& 21. 29.

w Jer. 5. 26,

27, 28.

x ch. 18. 12.

y Or, *deceit*.

z Ex. 22. 21

& 23. 9.

aa Lev. 19. 33.

ab ch. 22. 7.

ac Heb. *with-*

out right.

25 ^f *There is* a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they ^g have devoured souls; ^h they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof.

26 ⁱ Her priests have ^j violated my law, and have ^k profaned mine holy things: they have put no ^l difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed *difference* between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.

27 Her ^m princes in the midst thereof *are* like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, *and* to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain.

28 And ⁿ her prophets have daubed them with untempered *mortar*, ^o seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the LORD hath not spoken.

29 ^p The people of the land have used ^q oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have ^r oppressed the stranger ^s wrongfully.

from moral and ceremonial pollution (cp. ver. 26; Lev. xvi. 19), had neglected their charge.

“nor rained upon.” Lit., “that hath not her rain,”—the gentle, fructifying, showers of the prophetic word (Deut. xxxii. 2). Her prophets gave forth only lying visions, which added to the Divine indignation.

25. “a conspiracy.” The prophets, while professing to be envoys from God, were in fact “conspirators” against Him; agents of the Enemy, who roamed about the world, “as a roaring lion, seeking whom “he may devour” (1 St. Pet. v. 8).

“have taken . . .” Rather, “take away (ch. xxiii. 29) wealth and “precious things.” By their lying prophecies they hand over Jerusalem to plunder (see Jer. xx. 5).

“made her many widows,” or, “multiplied her widows;” by bringing the sword upon the city.

26. “violated,” or, “done violence to;” breaking it themselves, and wresting it from its true meaning by forced interpretations.

“hid their eyes.” Neither themselves hallowing the Sabbath, nor reproving those who profaned it.

28. “daubed them.” Rather, “daubed for them;”—for the princes. The prophets here mentioned dealt with *political* matters, like the prophets of ch. xiii. 10—16. Those mentioned above in ver. 25 correspond in character with the classes described in ch. xiii. 17—23, who concerned themselves more with the religious side of things;—the priest-prophets, who “devoured souls” (ver. 25, cp. on ch. xiii. 17).

EZEKIEL, XXIII.

30 ^r And I sought for a man among them, that should ^s make up the hedge, and ^t stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

Before
CHRIST
593.

^r Jer. 5. 1.
^s ch. 13. 5.
^t Ps. 106. 23.
^u ver. 22.

31 Therefore have I ^u poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: ^x their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the LORD GOD.

^x ch. 9. 10.
& 11. 21.
& 16. 43.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 *The whoredoms of Aholah and Aholibah.* 22 *Aholibah is to be plagued by her lovers.* 36 *The prophet reproveth the adulteries of them both,* 45 *and sheweth their judgments.*

THE word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, there were ^a two women, the daughters of one mother:

3 and ^b they committed whoredoms in Egypt; they committed whoredoms in ^c their youth: there were their breasts pressed, and there they bruised the teats of their virginity.

^a Jer. 3. 7.
8. 10.
ch. 16. 46.

^b Lev. 17. 7.
Josh. 24. 14.
ch. 20. 8.
^c ch. 16. 22.

30. "found none." Jeremiah was not permitted to intercede (Jer. xi. 14). He was, rather, the human instrument that was employed to make the search (ib. v. 1).

31. "their own way." So that ch. xviii. 30 is fulfilled. It is "for their own sin" that they are punished.

Obs. They, in their worldliness and unbelief, had made no distinction between "the holy and the profane" (ver. 26). By so doing they had cut away the basis of their national privileges. By their own admission they were *not* "a holy nation." Therefore their sanctuary, profaned by their sin, shall be outwardly profaned by the heathen. As they have despised God, they shall be "lightly esteemed" (1 Sam. ii. 30).

CHAPTER XXIII.

Israel and Judah punished for their adultery and child-murder.

In ch. xvi Jerusalem's infidelity was viewed primarily on its religious side. It had shown itself in a frenzied attachment to idolatry. Here the political motives, which urged Ephraim and Judah to apostatise, are principally dwelt upon. They had been swayed by admiration of the secular greatness of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon.

Revolted as the allegorical description given in this chapter is, the spiritual reality—the degradation caused by false religion—must needs be incomparably more so. Compare *Introd.* to ch. xvi.

3. "in Egypt." The two kingdoms existed there, virtually, in the tribes of Ephraim and Judah. In Egypt all the tribes alike fell into idolatry (see on ch. xx. 8).

Before
CHRIST
59.

4 And the names of them *were* Aholah the elder, and Aholibah her sister: and ^d they were mine, and they bare sons and daughters. Thus *were* their names; Samaria is ² Aholah, and Jerusalem ³ Aholibah.

5 And Aholah played the harlot when she was mine; and she doted on her lovers, on ^e the Assyrians *her* neighbours,

6 *which were* clothed with blue, captains and rulers, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding upon horses.

7 Thus she ⁴ committed her whoredoms with them, with all them *that were* ⁵ the chosen men of Assyria, and with all on whom she doted: with all their idols she defiled herself.

8 Neither left she her whoredoms *brought* ^f from Egypt: for in her youth they lay with her, and they bruised the breasts of her virginity, and poured their whoredom upon her.

9 Wherefore I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the ^g Assyrians, upon whom she doted.

10 These ^h discovered her nakedness: they took her sons and her daughters, and slew her with the sword: and she became ⁶ famous among women; for they had executed judgment upon her.

11 And ⁱ when her sister Aholibah saw *this*, ^{k7} she was more corrupt in her inordinate love than she, and in her whoredoms ⁸ more than her sister in *her* whoredoms.

4. "Aholah" was she that had "her own tent" (as the name signifies); since the Northern kingdom had erected an altar of her own will (1 Kings xii. 31—33). "Aholibah," means "My tent is in her;" for "the Lord had chosen Zion" for His habitation (Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14). The names seem to be moulded on that of Aholibamah ("My tent is a high place"), the Hittite wife of Esau.

"were mine," or, "became mine."

5. "her neighbours," or, "kinsmen." Asshur was brother to Arphaxad, Abraham's ancestor (Gen. x. 22, 24, xi. 16—26).

6. Israel's imagination had been dazzled by the military organization of Assyria.

8. The Apis-worship, which Jeroboam instituted (reproducing the sin committed at Horeb) was never discontinued. Even Jehu tolerated it (2 Kings x. 31).

^d ch. 16. 8, 20.

² That is, *His tent, or, tabernacle.*

³ That is, *My tabernacle in her,* 1 Kin. 8. 21.

^e 2 Kin. 15. 19. & 16. 7. & 17. 3. Hos. 8. 9.

⁴ Heb. *bestored her whoredoms upon them.*

⁵ Heb. *the choice of the children of Asshur.*

^f ver. 3.

^g 2 Kin. 17. 3. 4, 5, 6, 23. & 18. 9, 10, 11.

^h ch. 16. 37, 41.

⁶ Heb. *a name.*

ⁱ Jer. 3. 8.

^k Jer. 3. 11. ch. 16. 47, 51.

⁷ Heb. *she corrupted her inordinate love more than, &c.*

⁸ Heb. *more than the whoredoms of her sister.*

EZEKIEL, XXIII.

12 She doted upon the ¹ Assyrians *her* neighbours, ^m captains and rulers clothed most gorgeously, horsemen riding upon horses, all of them desirable young men.

Before
CHRIST
593.

¹ 2 Kings 16.
7, 10.
2 Chron. 28.
16,—23.
ch. 16. 28.
^m ver. 6, 23.

13 Then I saw that she was defiled, *that* they *took* both one way,

14 and *that* she increased her whoredoms: for when she saw men pourtrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldeans pourtrayed with vermilion,

15 girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look to, after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea, the land of their nativity:

16 ⁿ and ² as soon as she saw them with her eyes, she doted upon them, and sent messengers unto them into Chaldea.

ⁿ 2 Kin. 24. 1.
ch. 16. 29.
² Heb.
*at the sight
of her eyes.*
³ Heb.
*children
of Babel.*

17 And the ³ Babylonians came to her into the bed of love, and they defiled her with their whoredom, and she was polluted with them, and ^o her mind was ⁴ alienated from them.

^o ver. 22, 28.

⁴ Heb.
*loosed, or,
disjointed.*

18 So she discovered her whoredoms, and discovered her nakedness: then ^p my mind was alienated from her, like as my mind was alienated from her sister.

^p Jer. G. 8.

19 Yet she multiplied her whoredoms, in calling to remembrance the days of her youth, ^q wherein she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt.

^q ver. 3.

20 For she doted upon their paramours, ^r whose flesh *is as* the flesh of asses, and whose issue *is like* the issue of horses.

^r ch. 16. 26.

21 Thus thou calledst to remembrance the lewdness of thy youth, in bruising thy teats by the Egyptians for the paps of thy youth.

14. "men." Human forms, representing gods or heroes, were painted on the walls of Babylonian temples and palaces.

17. "alienated" (vv. 22, 28). Israel, with its memory of better things, could not find rest in idolatry. Unlawful passion soon passed into aversion; lust into hate.

19. Her estrangement from Babylon was not followed by penitence. She turned back again to Egypt (2 Kings xxiii. 29—35).

20. No idolatry that we know of was accompanied by the fearfully degraded brutality, which was mixed up with that of Egypt.

Before
CHRIST
593.

^s ch. 16. 37.
ver. 28.

^t Jer. 50. 21.

^u ver. 12.

22 ¶ Therefore, O Aholibah, thus saith the Lord GOD; ^a Behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee, from whom thy mind is alienated, and I will bring them against thee on every side;

23 the Babylonians, and all the Chaldeans, ^t Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them: ^u all of them desirable young men, captains and rulers, great lords and renowned, all of them riding upon horses.

24 And they shall come against thee with chariots, wagons, and wheels, and with an assembly of people, *which* shall set against thee buckler and shield and helmet round about: and I will set judgment before them, and they shall judge thee according to their judgments.

25 And I will set my jealousy against thee, and they shall deal furiously with thee: they shall take away thy nose and thine ears; and thy remnant shall fall by the sword: they shall take thy sons and thy daughters; and thy residue shall be devoured by the fire.

^x ch. 16. 33.

² Heb. *instruments of thy decking.*

^y ch. 16. 41.

& 22. 15.

^z ver. 3, 19.

26 ^x They shall also strip thee out of thy clothes, and take away thy ² fair jewels.

27 Thus ^y will I make thy lewdness to cease from thee, and ^z thy whoredom *brought* from the land of Egypt: so that thou shalt not lift up thine eyes unto them, nor remember Egypt any more.

23. "Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa." Since the first name (meaning "visitation," or "retribution") is used allegorically in Jer. l. 21 for Babylon, it is probable that the other two are also allegorical. "Shoa" means "crying," or, "shrieking" (*s. v. a.* Isa. xxii. 5). "Koa" (allied to the verb rendered "alienated" in vv. 17, 18, 22) may mean "aversion." So then, Judah is besieged by "the sons of Babel, and all the Chaldees, "Retribution, Shrieking, and Aversion." Such were the lovers on whom she had so madly doted.

24. "buckler and . . ." All are defensive armour. The Chaldeans had only to lay siege to the city, and bide their time. God's arrows would do the rest.

"according to." On grounds of natural justice (*cp.* on ch. xvii. 15). The perjured city was condemned by *man* for an offence against *human* law. Yet it was God's providence that raised up Nebuchadnezzar to administer the punishment.

25. "thy nose." Slitting, or cutting off, the nose is still, in some Asiatic countries, the punishment of adultery.

27. "to cease." After the Captivity the Jews never again relapsed into idolatry.

EZEKIEL, XXIII.

28 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will deliver thee into the hand of *them*^a whom thou hatest, into the hand of *them*^b from whom thy mind is alienated:

Before
CHRIST
593.

^a ch. 16. 37.
^b ver. 17.

29 and they shall deal with thee hatefully, and shall take away all thy labour, and ^c shall leave thee naked and bare: and the nakedness of thy whoredoms shall be discovered, both thy lewdness and thy whoredoms.

^c ch. 16. 39.
ver. 26.

30 I will do these *things* unto thee, because thou hast ^d gone a whoring after the heathen, and because thou art polluted with their idols.

^d ch. 6. 9.

31 Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister; therefore will I give her ^e cup into thine hand.

^e Jer. 25. 15,
&c.

32 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou shalt drink of thy sister's cup deep and large: ^f thou shalt be laughed to scorn and had in derision; it containeth much.

^f ch. 22. 4, 5.

33 Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, with the cup of astonishment and desolation, with the cup of thy sister Samaria.

34 Thou shalt ^g even drink it and suck *it* out, and thou shalt break the sherds thereof, and pluck off thine own breasts: for I have spoken *it*, saith the Lord GOD.

^g Ps. 75. 8.
Isai. 51. 17.

35 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou ^h hast forgotten me, and ⁱ cast me behind thy back, therefore bear thou also thy lewdness and thy whoredoms.

^h Jer. 2. 32,
& 3. 21. &
13. 25.
ch. 22. 12.
ⁱ 1 Kin. 14. 9.
Neh. 9. 26.

36 ¶ The LORD said moreover unto me; Son of man, wilt thou ^k judge Aholah and Aholibah? yea, ^l declare unto them their abominations;

^k ch. 20. 4.
& 22. 2.

37 that they have committed adultery, and ^m blood *is* in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery, and have also caused their sons, ⁿ whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through *the fire*, to devour *them*.

^l Or,
plead for.
ⁱ Isai. 58. 1.
^m ch. 16. 38.
ver. 45.

ⁿ ch. 16. 29,
21. 36, 45,
& 20. 26, 31.

29. "labour," or, fruits of toil (Jer. xxi. 5).

34. "break," or, crunch. In her frenzy she would gnaw the sherds of the earthen cup.

37. "caused to pass," or, "made over to them [the idols] to be devoured." Compare on ch. xvi. 21.

Before
CHRIST
593.
o ch. 22. 8.

38 Moreover this they have done unto me: they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and have profaned my sabbaths.

39 For when they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it; and, lo, thus have they done in the midst of mine house.

40 And furthermore, that ye have sent for men to come from far, unto whom a messenger was sent; and, lo, they came: for whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thy eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments,

41 and satest upon a stately bed, and a table prepared before it, whereupon thou hast set mine incense and mine oil.

42 And a voice of a multitude being at ease was with her: and with the men of the common sort were brought Sabeans from the wilderness, which put bracelets upon their hands, and beautiful crowns upon their heads.

43 Then said I unto her that was old in adulteries, Will they now commit whoredoms with her, and she with them?

44 Yet they went in unto her, as they go in unto a woman that playeth the harlot: so went they in unto Aholah and unto Aholibah, the lewd women.

39. "the same day." After they had performed the rites of Moloch, the priests "came into God's sanctuary." They surrendered their dearest treasure to propitiate a sanguinary idol-god; then they came to offer a hollow and reluctant service to Him, Whose marvellous love they had long rejected.

41. "stately;" *s.w.a.* Ps. xlv. 13 "glorious" (not elsewhere). In contrast with the faithful Bride who was "all glorious inwardly," she that had "become a harlot" (Isa. i. 21), was enamoured of outward splendour.

"prepared," for heathen gods (Isa. lxxv. 11).

"mine oil." Reserved for sacred uses (Exod. xxx. 23—33).

42. "at ease." In careless prosperity.

"with her." Lit., "in her:" the allegory allowing its meaning to shine through.

"their hands." The hands of Aholah and Aholibah. Egyptian envoys appear to be meant by the "Sabeans (or, drunkards) from the wilderness,"—that wilderness which lay as a providential barrier between Egypt and Israel. These by their flatteries persuaded both Samaria and Jerusalem to adopt the policy which in each case proved fatal (2 Kings xvii. 4; Lam. iv. 17).

43, 44. "Will they . . . Yet . . .," or, "Now will she commit her

EZEKIEL, XXIV.

45 And the righteous men, they shall ^x judge them after the manner of adulteresses, and after the manner of women that shed blood; because they *are* adulteresses, and ^y blood is in their hands.

Before
CHRIST
593.

^x ch. 16. 38.
^y ver. 37.

46 For thus saith the Lord God; ^z I will bring up a company upon them, and will give them ² to be removed and spoiled.

^z ch. 16. 40.

² Heb. for a
removing
and spoil.

47 ^a And the company shall stone them with stones, and ³ dispatch them with their swords; ^b they shall slay their sons and their daughters, and burn up their houses with fire.

^a ch. 16. 40.

³ Or, single
them out.

^b 2 Chr. 36.
17, 19.
ch. 24. 21.

48 Thus ^c will I cause lewdness to cease out of the land, ^d that all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness.

^c ch. 22. 15.
ver. 27.

^d Deut. 13. 11.
2 Pet. 2. 6.

49 And they shall recompense your lewdness upon you, and ye shall ^e bear the sins of your idols: ^f and ye shall know that I *am* the Lord God.

^e ver. 35.

^f ch. 20. 38,
42, 44. &
25. 5.

CHAPTER XXIV.

¹ Under the parable of a boiling pot, ⁶ is shewed the irrevocable destruction of Jerusalem. ¹⁵ By the sign of Ezekiel not mourning for the death of his wife, ¹⁹ is shewed the calamity of the Jews to be beyond all sorrow.

AGAIN in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month. the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 590.

“whoredoms, even she and they . . .” It is like the sad sentence, “Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone” (Hos. iv. 17).

45. “the righteous men.” The Chaldeans; who, as against Zedekiah, had right on their side (ch. xvii. 15, 16).

Obs. What a commentary is furnished by this chapter to the Apostle’s remark, “The Law entered that the offence might abound” (Rom. v. 20)! The presence of God’s holy Law seemed only to stir up men’s proud wills to more desperate self-assertion. They rushed the more wildly into forbidden alliances with the world. What would be the history of the Churches of Christendom, if it were written with the pen of him who said, “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?”

CHAPTER XXIV.

vv. 1—14. Jerusalem which, though often cleansed, still retained her foulness, shall be purified by fire.

1. “ninth year.” B. C. 590. The tenth day of the tenth month was afterwards (and still is) kept as a fast.

Before
CHRIST
590.

2 Son of man, write thee the name of the day, *even* of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem ^a this same day.

^a 2 Kin. 25. 1.
Jer. 39. 1.
& 52. 4.

^b ch. 17. 12.

^c See Jer. 1.
13.
ch. 11. 3.

3 ^b And utter a parable unto the rebellious house, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; ^c Set on a pot, set *it* on, and also pour water into it:

4 gather the pieces thereof into it, *even* every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder; fill *it* with the choice bones.

² Or, *heap*.

5 Take the choice of the flock, and ² burn also the bones under it, *and* make it boil well, and let them seethe the bones of it therein.

^d ch. 22. 3.
& 23. 37.
ver. 9.

^e See 2 Sam.

8. 2.
Joel 3. 3.
Obad. 11.
Nah. 3. 10.

^f Lev. 17. 13.
Deut. 12. 16,
24.

6 Wherefore thus saith the Lord God; Woe to ^d the bloody city, to the pot whose scum *is* therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it! bring it out piece by piece; let no ^e lot fall upon it.

7 For her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the top of a rock; ^f she poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust;

2. "this same day" (2 Kings xxv. 1). On the banks of the Chebar, 400 miles from Jerusalem, Ezekiel told his fellow-captives that the siege was begun. He also declared (as indeed he had done for five years past) what the issue of the siege would be.

"set himself against," or, "laid (his hand) upon:"—as the witnesses laid their hand on a blasphemer, before he was stoned (Lev. xxiv. 4, cp. ch. xxiii. 45, 47); or, as a sacrificer laid his hand upon the victim (Exod. xxix. 19).

3. The figure of "the caldron," which the scoffers had jeered at (ch. xi. 3), is made the basis of an allegory. Jerusalem is a pot that has been often cleansed (ver. 13), but is ever afresh covered with verdigris, poisoning the meat that is in it. Hitherto, when the cry, "There ⁴ is death in the pot," had been raised, Jerusalem had had Elisha's miracle (2 Kings iv. 40, 41) repeated on her. But now the caldron shall be purged in fire (vv. 11, 12).

"water." The water of affliction.

4. "the pieces thereof." The pieces of meat (Exod. xxix. 17) that are to be cooked in it:—the various members of the body corporate.

5. "burn," or (as marg.), "heap." The bones are to be well piled up beneath the flesh, at the bottom of the caldron.

6. "scum," or, "foulness;"—the verdigris of the brass or copper (ver. 11).

"no lot"—to decide "what part" should be taken (Nah. iii. 10). *All* shall be carried off, by death or by captivity.

7. "in the midst." Compare ch. xxii. 3, 7, 10, 13.

"the top." The bright, hard, surface, exposed to the sun. The blood of beast or bird taken for food had to be poured on the earth and covered with dust (Lev. xvii. 13). Moloch-worshipping Jerusalem recklessly poured out even human blood under the open sky. There-

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8 that it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance; ^g I have set her blood upon the top of a rock, that it should not be covered.

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^g Matt. 7. 2.

9 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; ^h Woe to the bloody city! I will even make the pile for fire great.

^h ver. 6.
Nab. 3. 1.
Hab. 2. 12.

10 Heap on wood, kindle the fire, consume the flesh, and spice it well, and let the bones be burned.

11 Then set it empty upon the coals thereof, that the brass of it may be hot, and may burn, and *that* ⁱ the filthiness of it may be molten in it, *that* the scum of it may be consumed.

ⁱ ch. 22. 15.

12 She hath wearied *herself* with lies, and her great scum went not forth out of her: her scum *shall be* in the fire.

13 In thy filthiness *is* lewdness: because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, ^k till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee.

^k ch. 5. 13.
& 8. 18.
& 16. 42.

14 ^l I the LORD have spoken *it*: it shall come to pass, and I will do *it*; I will not go back, ^m neither will I spare, neither will I repent; according to thy ways, and according to thy doings, shall they judge thee, saith the Lord God.

^l 1 Sam. 15. 29.
^m ch. 5. 11.

15 ¶ Also the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

16 Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt

fore (ver. 8) her blood should be ruthlessly poured out before the eyes of the world.

The words had an awful application to the later Jerusalem;—guilty (St. Matt. xxvii. 25) of the holy blood shed on Calvary.

10. “**spice it well,**” or, “**boil it well down;**” till the poisonous liquid disappears.

12. “**wearied herself . . .**,” or, “**wearied men with toil: yet . . .**” The labour spent in cleansing her was of no avail.

13. “**purged thee;**” as, for example, by the prophetic word, which effected the reformatations under Hezekiah and Josiah (2 Chron. xxix. 15, 18, xxxiv. 5).

“**my fury.**” To prepare the way for a complete purification (ch. xxxvi. 25, 33).

vv. 15—27. The Death of Ezekiel's wife, and what it typified.

16. “**a stroke.**” As sudden as that of pestilence (the word being the same that is rendered “**plague**” in 2 Sam. xxiv. 21, 25).

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thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears ² run down.

² Heb. *go*.

³ Heb.

Be silent.

ⁿ Jer. 16. 5,

6, 7.

^o See Lev. 10.

6. & 21. 10.

^p 2 Sam. 15.

30.

^q Mic. 3. 7.

⁴ Heb. *upper*

lip: And so

ver. 22.

Lev. 13. 45.

^r ch. 12. 9.

& 37. 18.

17 ³ Forbear to cry, ⁿ make no mourning for the dead, ^o bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and ^p put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and ^q cover not *thy* lips, and eat not the bread of men.

18 So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded.

19 And the people said unto me, ^r Wilt thou not tell us what these *things are* to us, that thou doest *so*?

20 Then I answered them, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

21 Speak unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, ^s I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, ^t the desire of your eyes, and ^u that which your soul pitieth; ^v and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword.

^s Jer. 7. 14.

ch. 7. 20, 21,

22.

^t Ps. 27. 4.

^u Heb.

the pity of

your soul.

^v ch. 23. 47.

^x Jer. 16. 6, 7.

ver. 17.

22 And ye shall do as I have done: ^x ye shall not cover *your* lips, nor eat the bread of men.

17. "Forbear." Lit., "be silent" (*s. w. a.* Ps. xxxvii. 7). He was to suppress his strongest natural emotions under a solemn sense of God's having interposed (cp. Lev. x. 7, xxi. 10, 12). So in Ps. xxxix. 9: "I was dumb . . . ; because Thou didst it."

"tire," or, turban. Mourners put upon their heads sackcloth (2 Sam. xv. 30) or ashes (Isa. lxi. 3); and went barefoot (2 Sam. xv. 30).

"thy lips;" "the upper lip" (marg.): as the unclean did (Lev. xiii. 45, cp. Mic. iii. 7).

"bread of men" (ver. 22). Such as was used in the house of mourning (comp. Jer. xvi. 5).

18. On the morning of the tenth he spoke to the people—probably the whole of vv. 2—17. In the evening his wife died; and on the following morning, when he did as had been enjoined him, the people came to ask what so strange a command could mean.

19. "to us." They have begun to learn that the prophet is a "sign unto them."

21. "excellency of your strength." In Lev. xxvi. 19 the same words are rendered "the pride of your power" (cp. on ch. vii. 24). The men of the captivity would not even yet believe that the Temple on Moriah, the "excellency of Jacob" (Ps. xlvii. 4) could be overthrown. Compare Amos vi. 8.

"pitieth." They felt towards it, as a father might towards a tenderly loved child (same word as in Mal. iii. 17, "spareth").

"have left," or, "left behind,"—in Jerusalem.

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23 And your tires *shall be* upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet: ^y ye shall not mourn nor weep; but ^z ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one toward another.

24 Thus ^a Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: ^b and when this cometh, ^c ye shall know that I *am* the Lord God.

25 Also, thou son of man, *shall it* not be in the day when I take from them ^d their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and ² that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters,

26 *that* ^e he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause *thee* to hear it with *thine* ears?

27 ^f In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and ^g thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

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^y Job 27. 15.
Ps. 78. 64.

^z Lev. 26. 39.
ch. 33. 10.

^a Isai. 20. 3.
ch. 4. 3.

& 12. 6, 11.

^b Jer. 17. 15.
John 13. 19.

& 14. 29.

^c ch. 6. 7.
& 25. 5.

^d ver. 21.

² Heb. *the lifting up of their soul.*

^e ch. 33. 21, 22.

^f ch. 3. 26, 27.
& 29. 21.

& 33. 22.

^g ver. 24.

23. "mourn;" with outward expressions of grief,—as beating the breast. When the tidings of Jerusalem's fall arrived, it would awaken in them such an appalling sense of guilt, as would swallow up all mere thought of bereavement.

"for your." Rather, "in your;"—as in Lev. xxvi. 39, which is evidently referred to.

"and mourn." Rather, "groan;"—in deep "disquietness of heart." No room now for the formal grief of the "mourner."

"one to another." Jerusalem's downfall would be the one, ever-recurring, theme of their discourse.

25. "strength." Rather, "stronghold," or, fortress;—the Temple in which they trusted, forgetting their true "fortress-rock" (Isa. xvii. 10).

27. "In that day." See ch. xxxiii. 21, 22. For almost five years Ezekiel had prophesied in dumb show, or by parable and allegory, of the final siege of Jerusalem. Thus, whatever could be done to show that her overthrow was no accident, but God's own deed, had been done. In due time the prophet's veracity will be made clear. Then he will "speak" (Hab. ii. 3), clearly and articulately, to all.

CHAPTERS XXV—XXXII.

The chronological order is—

B.C.

590 ch. xxv

589 xxix. 1—16

588 xxvi—xxviii, xxx. 20—26, xxxi } during

587 xxxii } the

572 xxix. 17—xxx. 19 } Siege.

The firm hand of Justice has been laid on Jerusalem. But, when

1 *God's vengeance, for their insolency against the Jews, upon the Ammonites; 8 upon Moab and Seir; 12 upon Edom, 15 and upon the Philistines.*

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THE word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

she shall have fallen, will not impiety reign over the whole world? Will not the one lamp of Divine truth have been quenched in the darkness of heathenism? Will not the Divine purpose of blessing all nations by means of Israel have visibly failed? Will not the empire of evil have been finally consolidated?

Not so. Jerusalem's overthrow is the proof that evil shall *not* triumph. Judgment has begun at the house of God (ch. ix. 6); and shall visit the other nations, punishing each according to its guilt.

Seven peoples in particular are denounced in this section: *four* confined within very narrow areas, Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Philistia; and *three*, Tyre, Sidon, and Egypt, whose influence extended over the western world. All seven had stood in close relation to Israel. Chemosh, Moloch, and Ashtoreth, the deities of *Moab*, *Ammon*, and *Sidon*, had long occupied the Mount of Olives, on a higher level than that of Moriah (cp. on chs. xiv. 4, xx. 29). Sidon had moreover poured out a flood of Baal-worship, which streamed down through Samaria into Judah (1 Kings xvi. 31; 2 Chron. xxiii. 17). The case of *Tyre* was different. She did not add to the number of heathen shrines in Israel; but she deified herself, proclaiming that in communion with her (not with the God of Israel) the world was to find its enrichment and blessedness¹. *Egypt*, besides being the fountain of Israel's "original sin," had deluded Samaria and Jerusalem to their ruin (cp. on ch. xxiii. 42). Lastly, *Edom* and *Philistia* had been Israel's bitter and implacable enemies, taking advantage of every moment of weakness to injure and insult her. Each of these nations is brought before the bar of Divine justice, and each has sentence pronounced on it for its own sin.

This was not done now for the first time. Jeremiah had, twenty years previously, foretold the subjugation of Moab, Edom, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon by Nebuchadnezzar (ch. xxvii. 1—8); and in a prophecy dated four years later, he added Egypt and Philistia to the list (ch. xxv. 19, 20).

Of Babylon itself nothing is said by Ezekiel. At the present time, Nebuchadnezzar was employed in God's service (ch. xxix. 18). But the data supplied in ch. xxxi would enable every thoughtful Israelite to forecast the doom of Babylon. If Assyria's fall were a prelude of Egypt's, how much more, then, of Babylon's!

In the chapters which relate to Tyre and Egypt we meet with many expressions that remind us of Jerusalem. The same phrases, which described her sin and its punishment, described theirs too². Sometimes,

¹ It is probable that Solomon's intercourse with Tyre was what prepared the way for his later apostasy. Compared with Moab or Ammon, or even Sidon, Tyre appeared "as an angel of light."

² Compare, for instance—
ch. xxvi. 4, 14 with xxiv. 7, 8.
xxvi. 17, xxvii. 2, xxviii. 12, xxxii. 2.
16 with xix. 1, 14 (ii. 10).
xxvii. 2, xxviii. 17 with xvi. 14, 15.

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2 Son of man, ^a set thy face ^b against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them ;

3 and say unto the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord God ; Thus saith the Lord God ; ^c Because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned ; and against the land of Israel, when it was desolate ; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity ;

4 behold, therefore I will deliver thee to the ² men of the east for a possession, and they shall set their palaces in thee, and make their dwellings in thee : they shall eat thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk.

5 And I will make ^d Rabbah ^e a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couchingplace for flocks : ^f and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

6 For thus saith the Lord God ; Because thou ^g hast clapped *thine* ³ hands, and stamped with the ⁴ feet, and ^h rejoiced in ⁵ heart with all thy despite against the land of Israel ;

7 behold, therefore I will ⁱ stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for ⁶ a spoil to the

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^a ch. 6. 2.
& 35. 2.
^b Jer. 49. 1, &c.
ch. 21. 24.
Amos 1. 13.
Zeph. 2. 9.
^c Prov. 17. 5.
ch. 26. 2.

² Heb.
children.

^d ch. 21. 29.
^e Isai. 17. 2.
& 32. 14.
Zeph. 2. 14,
15.

^f ch. 24. 24.
& 26. 6.
& 35. 9.

^g Job 27. 23.
Lam. 2. 15.
Zeph. 2. 15.

³ Heb. *hand.*

⁴ Heb. *foot.*

^h ch. 36. 5.
Zeph. 2. 8,
10.

⁵ Heb. *soul.*

ⁱ ch. 35. 3.
⁶ Or, *meat.*

indeed, the language seems *more* applicable to her than to them (see Introd. to chs. xxviii, xxix).

CHAPTER XXV.

The Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and Philistines.

Though Israel had sinned grievously, yet the malicious foes, who rejoiced over their fall, as if it disproved their claim to be God's special people (ver. 8), should be undeceived.

2. After the capture of Jerusalem, Baalis, king of Ammon, procured the assassination of Gedaliah (Jer. xl. 14, cp. ch. xli. 10). Tobiah, the "Ammonite," was one of Nehemiah's chief opponents (Neh. ii. 10, iv. 7).

4. "men of the east." The Bedouins ; who to this day occupy Ammonitis.

"palaces," or, "folds."

5. "Rabbah," in later times called Philadelphia (after the Ptolemy who rebuilt it), was in ruins in the fourteenth century. When Burckhardt visited it, he found a party of Arabs there, who had stabled their camels among the ruins.

ch. xxviii. 7 with vii. 21.
xxviii. 22 with xx. 41.
xxix. 14, 15 with xvii. 14.
xxx. 6, 18 with vii. 24, xxiv. 21.

ch. xxx. 13 with xxi. 13, 25, 27.
xxx. 14, 19 with v. 8, 10, 15.
xxx. 15 with vii. 8, ix. 8.
xxxii. 15 with xii. 19.

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heathen; and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD.

8 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because that ^k Moab and ^l Seir do say, Behold, the house of Judah *is* like unto all the heathen;

9 therefore, behold, I will open the ² side of Moab from the cities, from his cities *which are* on his frontiers, the glory of the country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim,

10 ^m unto the men of the east ³ with the Ammonites, and will give them in possession, that the Ammonites ⁿ may not be remembered among the nations.

11 And I will execute judgments upon Moab; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

12 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; ^o Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah ⁴ by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them;

13 therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate from Teman; and ⁵ they of Dedan shall fall by the sword.

14 And ^p I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel: and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my fury; and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord GOD.

7. "from the people." Rather, "from among the peoples."

8. "Seir." Cp. ch. xxxv. 2, 14. Edom and Moab were of one mind in saying that Judah had become "like all the nations." Yet nine centuries previously a king of Moab had been told by a Gentile seer (who was probably of Edomite extraction), that Israel should "dwell alone, and not be reckoned among the nations" (Num. xxiii. 9). That oracle, reluctantly uttered by Balaam, should continue to be verified. Israel, however much they might wish it, *could not* be "as the nations" (see on ch. xx. 32).

10. "with the Ammonites:" "in addition to" Ammon, Moab also shall be given up to the Bedouin tribes.

14. The Idumeans were entirely subdued by John Hyrcanus, and incorporated in the Jewish nation.

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15 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; ¹ Because ² the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy *it* ³ for the old hatred;

16 therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, ⁴ I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the ⁵ Cherethims, ⁶ and destroy the remnant of the ⁷ sea coast.

17 And I will ⁸ execute great ⁹ vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; ¹⁰ and they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.

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¹ Jer. 25. 20.
& 47. 1, &c.
Joel 3. 4, &c.
Amos 1. 6.

² Chr. 28. 18.

³ Or, with
perpetual
hatred.

⁴ Zeph. 2. 4, &c.

⁵ 1 Sam. 30.
14.

⁶ Jer. 47. 4.

⁷ Or, haven
of the sea.

⁸ ch. 5. 15.

⁹ Heb. ven-
geances.

¹⁰ Ps. 9. 16.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 Tyrus, for insulting against Jerusalem, is threatened. *7* The power of Nebuchadrezzar against her. *15* The mourning and astonishment of the sea at her fall.

AND it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

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CHAPTER XXVI.

The Fall of Tyre.

Three chapters are given to Tyre. In ch. xxvi her overthrow is foretold. In ch. xxvii her world-wide commerce is described. In ch. xxviii the nature of her sin (alluded to in chs. xxvii. 2, xxvi. 3) is set forth at large.

So far as can be made out, Tyre rose to eminence at the same time as Jerusalem, under Hiram, the friend of David and of Solomon. How glorious might have been the issue, if each of the two cities had been true to its vocation! if the Bride of Messiah had been faithful to her Lord (Ps. xlv. 11), and the daughter of Tyre had duly brought her tribute of reverent service (ib. 12)¹! But both had been led astray by self-exaltation. Jerusalem, proud of her religious dignity, aspired after worldly splendour; and Tyre, proud of her commercial greatness, claimed to be looked upon as a sacred city.

When the prophet's eye was directed towards Jerusalem (now undergoing siege), a very slight turn would bring it upon Tyre. While he gazes upon it, he sees it (in prophetic vision) assailed by an army of Chaldeans, with cavalry and war-chariots, like that which had so shortly before gathered against Jerusalem (ver. 10, cp. ch. xxiii. 24), and invested, like Jerusalem, with siege-lines (ver. 8, cp. chs. iv. 2, xxi. 22, 27).

1. "the eleventh year," B.C. 588; the year of Jerusalem's capture.

¹ The parallelism between the two island, became the centre of the world's cities is striking. Tyre, on her little commerce; enabling the most distant

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^a Isai. 23.
Jer. 25. 22.
& 47. 4.
Amos 1. 9.
Zech. 9. 2.
^b ch. 25. 3.
& 36. 2.

2 Son of man, ^abecause that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, ^bAha, she is broken *that was* the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, *now* she is laid waste:

3 therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up.

^c ver. 14.

^d ch. 27. 32.

4 And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and ^cmake her like the top of a rock.

5 It shall be *a place for* the spreading of nets ^din the midst of the sea: for I have spoken *it*, saith the Lord GOD: and it shall become a spoil to the nations.

^e ch. 25. 5.

6 And her daughters which *are* in the field shall be slain by the sword; ^eand they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

^f Ezra 7. 12.
Dan. 2. 37.

7 ¶ For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, ^fa king of kings, from the north, with horses, and

No month is named. Probably, as in 2 Kings xxv. 3, it was the woeful "fourth" month (see on ch. iii. 15).

2. "she is . . ." Or, "The gate of the peoples is broken open (Gen. "xix. 9); it is turned (on its hinges, Prov. xxvi. 14) towards me." Tyre had looked on Jerusalem as a closed gate, which excluded her from free communication with the Eastern world.—Elath, the port for Arabian and Indian commerce, belonged to Judah (1 Kings ix. 26, xxii. 48; 2 Kings xiv. 22).

3. "its waves," rolling onward in slow, but irresistible, succession. Tyre suffered from many waves of invasion,—those especially of Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander, the Crusaders and the Saracens. Though it was not finally overthrown till the thirteenth century, it never recovered from the blow which Nebuchadnezzar inflicted on it.

4. "top of a rock." The same words as in ch. xxiv. 7. The island is about a mile long by half a mile broad.

5. Dr. Robinson found the southern side of the rock of Tyre so used by fishermen.

6. "daughters." Daughter-cities; as Gebal, Beyrout, &c.

nations to contribute each one its quota to the well-being of mankind. Jerusalem—a mere island rock amidst the sea of nations—was constituted the world's spiritual centre; and would, if faithful, have been the means of uniting all nations in

the service of God. The "princes of the "peoples" would have gathered around "the people of the God of Abraham" (Ps. xlvii. 9), and have found their "blessedness" in Him.

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with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people.

8 He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field: and he shall ^gmake a fort against thee, ^gch. 21. 22. and ²cast a mount against thee, and lift up the buckler against thee. ²Or, pour out the engine of shot.

9 And he shall set engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers.

10 By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee: thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, ³as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach. ³Heb. according to the enterings of a city broken up.

11 With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets: he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground.

12 And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy ⁴thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water. ⁴Heb. houses of thy desire.

13 ^hAnd I will cause the noise of ⁱthy songs to cease; and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard. ^hIsai. 14. 11. & 24. 8. Jer. 7. 34. & 16. 9. & 25. 10.

14 And ^kI will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more: for I the LORD have spoken it, saith the Lord God. ⁱIsai. 23. 16. ch. 28. 13. Rev. 18. 22. ^kver. 4. 5.

15 ¶ Thus saith the Lord God to Tyrus; Shall

7. "companies." Rather, "a company;" or, "an assembly" (as in ch. xxiii. 24).

8. "buckler." The approaches of the besiegers were made under cover of a roof of bucklers.

9. "axes." Rather, "swords:"—the swords of the storming parties. No miner's axe should be needed.

10. "wherein . . ." or, "which is broken up" (as in 2 Kings xxv. 4).

11. "garrisons." Rather, "pillars." There were two famous pillars in the temple of Melkarth at Tyre; one of topaz, the other of emerald.

14. Cp. on ver. 5. Maundrell found not so much as one entire house left. The sand has made its waters so shallow that only small craft can approach it. Queenly Tyre can never be rebuilt.

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¹ Jer. 49. 21.
ver. 18.
ch. 27. 28.
& 31. 16.

^m Isai. 23. 8.
ⁿ Jonah 3. 6.

² Heb.
tremblings.
^o Job 2. 13.
^p ch. 32. 10.
^q ch. 27. 35.
^r ch. 27. 32.
Rev. 18. 9.

³ Heb.
of the seas.
^s Isai. 23. 4.

^t ver. 15.

^u ch. 32. 18,
24.

^x ch. 32. 23,
26, 27, 32.
^y ch. 27. 36,
& 28. 19.

⁴ Heb.
terrors.

not the isles ¹shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee?

16 Then all the ^mprinces of the sea shall ⁿcome down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments: they shall clothe themselves with ²trembling; ^othey shall sit upon the ground, and ^pshall tremble at every moment, and ^qbe astonished at thee.

17 And they shall take up a ^rlamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed, *that wast* inhabited ³of seafaring men, the renowned city, which wast ^sstrong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which cause their terror *to be* on all that haunt it!

18 Now shall ^tthe isles tremble in the day of thy fall; yea, the isles that *are* in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure.

19 For thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee;

20 when I shall bring thee down ^uwith them that descend into the pit, with the people of old time, and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth, in places desolate of old, with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited; and I shall set glory ^xin the land of the living;

21 ^yI will make thee ⁴a terror, and thou *shalt be*

15. "the isles." This term includes lands which border on the sea. Tyre was looked on as a sacred city by her numerous colonies, which studded the coasts of the Mediterranean. Even Carthage sent her a yearly offering.

19. "great." Rather, "the great." The armies of mighty nations shall sweep over her (ver. 3) like a deluge.

20. "glory," or, "beauty:"—*s. w. a.* Isa. iv. 2; "In that day the "Branch of the Lord shall be *beauty* and glory." The "beauty" of Tyre should disappear, as that of Moab (ch. xxv. 9), of ancient Israel (ch. xx. 6, 15), and of Babylon (Isa. xiii. 19), had done. But a higher life would be poured forth over the earth, accompanied by a nobler and an enduring beauty.

21. "a terror." A mass of terror;—so pervaded with consternation that it melts away, and "is not."

Thus Ps. xxxvii. 36 shall be fulfilled in Tyre. Let not the faithful,

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no more : ² though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God.

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² 1's. 37. 36.

CHAPTER XXVII.

¹ *The rich supply of Tyrus.* ²⁶ *The great and unrecoverable fall thereof.*

THE word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

² Now, thou son of man, ^a take up a lamentation for Tyrus ;

³ and say unto Tyrus, ^b O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea, *which art* ^c a merchant of the people for many isles, Thus saith the Lord God ; O Tyrus, thou hast said, ^d *I am* ² of perfect beauty.

⁴ Thy borders *are* in the ³ midst of the seas, thy builders have perfected thy beauty.

⁵ They have ⁴ made all thy *ship* boards of fir trees of ^e Senir : they have taken cedars from Lebanon to make masts for thee.

⁶ *Of* the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars ; ⁵ ⁶ the company of the Ashurites have made thy benches *of* ivory, *brought* out of ^f the isles of Chittim.

^a ch. 19. 1. & 26. 17. & 28. 12. & 32. 2.

^b ch. 28. 2.

^c Isai. 23. 3.

^d ch. 28. 12.

² Heb. *perfect of beauty.*

³ Heb. *heart.*

⁴ Heb. *built.*

^e Deut. 3. 9.

⁵ Or, *they have made thy hatches of ivory well trodden.*

⁶ Heb. *the daughter.*

^f Jer. 2. 10.

then, "fret," because Jerusalem is in ashes, while Tyre still sits like a queen. Let them "wait on the Lord and keep His way" (ib. 34).

CHAPTER XXVII.

Lamentation over the once glorious Queen of the Seas.

The *representative* character of Tyre in these chapters will be seen on a comparison of Rev. xviii. 3—21 ; where mystical Babylon is spoken of in language very similar to that of Ezek. xxvi—xxviii (see especially vv. 11—13, 17—19).

³. "at the entry . . ." Rather, "by the entrances of the seas." From her ports (one on the north and the other on the south) she holds communication with the most distant seas.

"the people for." Rather, "the peoples unto." Tyrian sailors had already circumnavigated Africa.

"of perfect beauty." Cp. ch. xvi. 13, 14. As Jerusalem, so Tyre, had fallen by "trusting in her beauty" (ch. xvi. 15).

⁴. In vv. 4—8 the city is described as a stately vessel. In the middle of ver. 9 the allegory is broken off, but is resumed in ver. 26.

⁶. "the company . . ." Or, "they made thy benches (or, helms) "with ivory inlaid in box-wood." "Chittim" is Cyprus ; which supplied excellent box-wood.

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² Or, purple
and scarlet.

7 Fine linen with broidered work from Egypt was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail; ² blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was that which covered thee.

8 The inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad were thy mariners: thy wise *men*, O Tyrus, *that* were in thee, were thy pilots.

^g 1 Kin. 5. 18.
Ps. 83. 7.

^h Or, stoppers
of chinks.

ⁱ Heb.
strengthen-
ers.

^j Jer. 46. 9.
ch. 30. 5.
& 38. 5.

9 The ancients of ^g Gebal and the wise *men* thereof were in thee thy ³⁴ calkers: all the ships of the sea with their mariners were in thee to occupy thy merchandise.

10 They of Persia and of Lud and of ^h Phut were in thine army, thy men of war: they hanged the shield and helmet in thee; they set forth thy comeliness.

11 The men of Arvad with thine army *were* upon thy walls round about, and the Gammadims were in thy towers: they hanged their shields upon thy walls round about; they have made ⁱ thy beauty perfect.

^k ver. 3.

^l Gen. 10. 4.
^m Chr. 20. 36.

12 ^k Tarshish *was* thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all *kind of* riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs.

ⁿ Gen. 10. 2.

^o Rev. 18. 13.

^p Or, mer-
chandise.

13 ^l Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they *were* thy merchants: they traded ^m the persons of men and vessels of brass in thy ^o market.

7. "broidered work." The sails had devices worked in them, so that they were at once sails and ensigns.

"covered thee," as an awning.

"Elishah." Probably, the Peloponnese. Laconian purple was held in great repute.

9. "occupy," or, "traffick in."

10. "Persia." The earliest occurrence of the name (Heb. *Parás*). In ch. xxxviii. 5, it is again mentioned, along with African nations, as supplying soldiers. Some of the African mercenaries may have come through Carthage.

"set forth," or, "gave (thee)." Tyre's commercial greatness, like that of Carthage, rested on a military basis.

12. "Tarshish." The Vulgate here has, "Carthage;" and so the Septuagint both here and in ch. xxxviii. 13 (as also in Isa. xxiii. 1, 10). "Tartessus" in Spain (with which Tarshish is commonly identified) may have been a yet older Carthage; as Carthage in Spain was a younger.—The silver, &c., were got chiefly from Spain and Britain.

13. "Javan" corresponds to the Western coast of Asia Minor: "Tubal" and "Meshech" to the Northern. Copper-mines are still worked near Trebizond.

"persons of men," slaves. Cp. Joel iii. 6.

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14 They of the house of ⁿTogarmah traded in thy fairs with horses and horsemen and mules.

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15 The men of ^oDedan *were* thy merchants; many isles *were* the merchandise of thine hand: they brought thee *for* a present horns of ivory and ebony.

ⁿ Gen. 10. 3.
ch. 38. 6.
^o Gen. 10. 7.

16 Syria *was* thy merchant by reason of the multitude of ²the wares of thy making: they occupied in thy fairs with emeralds, purple, and brodered work, and fine linen, and coral, and ³agate.

² Heb.
thy works.

³ Heb. *chry-
soprase.*

17 Judah, and the land of Israel, they *were* thy merchants: they traded in thy market ^pwheat of ^qMinnith, and Pannag, and honey, and oil, and ^r⁴balm.

^p 1 Kin. 5. 9.
11.
Ezra 3. 7.
Acts 12. 20.
^q Judg. 11. 33.

^r Jer. 8. 22.

⁴ Or, *rosin.*

18 Damascus *was* thy merchant in the multitude of the wares of thy making, for the multitude of all riches; in the wine of Helbon, and white wool.

19 Dan also and Javan ⁵going to and fro occupied in thy fairs: bright iron, cassia, and calamus, were in thy market.

⁵ Or, *Meuzal.*

20 ^sDedan *was* thy merchant in ⁶precious clothes for chariots.

^s Gen. 25. 3.
⁶ Heb. *clothes
of freedom.*

21 Arabia, and all the princes of ^tKedar, ⁷they occupied with thee in lambs, and rams, and goats: in these *were they* thy merchants.

^t Gen. 25. 13.
Isai. 60. 7.

⁷ Heb. *they
were the
merchants
of thy hand.*

22 The merchants of ^uSheba and Raamah, they *were* thy merchants: they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, and gold.

^u Gen. 10. 7.
1 Kin. 10. 1, 2.
Ps. 72. 10, 15.
Isai. 60. 6.

23 ^xHaran, and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of ^ySheba, Asshur, and Chilmad, *were* thy merchants.

^x Gen. 11. 31.
2 Kin. 19. 12.
^y Gen. 25. 3.

24 These *were* thy merchants in ⁸all sorts of ⁹things, in blue ⁹clothes, and brodered work, and

⁸ Or, *excel-
lent things.*
⁹ Heb.
foldings.

15. Two Dedans are mentioned in this chapter (see ver. 20), as in Gen. x. 7, xxv. 3. The "isles," or coast-lands, brought into connexion with Tyre through Dedan, would include India; which supplied ebony, as well as ivory.

17. On the relation of Palestine to Tyre, cp. Acts xii. 20. "Minnith" was in the rich Ammonite district (Judg. xi. 33). "Pannag" is variously rendered, "cassia," "balsam," "sweet-meats."

19. "Dan . . . to and fro." Or, "Vedan and Javan Mëuzzal;" probably in Arabia Felix. Cp. "Uzal" in Gen. x. 27.

23. "Haran, and Canneh, and Eden," were all in Mesopotamia.

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in chests of rich apparel, bound with cords, and made of cedar, among thy merchandise.

25 ^zThe ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market: and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious ^ain the midst of the seas.

^a ver. 4.

26 ¶ Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters: ^bthe east wind hath broken thee in the ²midst of the seas.

^b Ps. 48. 7

² Heb. *heart*.

27 Thy ^criches, and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war, that *are* in thee, ³and in all thy company

^c Prov. 11. 4.
ver. 34.
Rev. 18. 9,
&c.

³ Or, *even with all*.

⁴ Heb. *heart*.

⁵ Or, *waves*.

^d ch. 26. 15, 18.

^e Rev. 18. 17,
&c.

28 'The ⁵suburbs ^dshall shake at the sound of the cry of thy pilots.

29 And ^eall that handle the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships, they shall stand upon the land;

30 and shall cause their voice to be heard against thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall ^fcast up dust upon their heads, they ^gshall wallow themselves in the ashes:

^f Job 2. 12.
Rev. 18. 19.

^g Esth. 4. 1, 3.
Jer. 6. 26.

^h Jer. 16. 6.
& 47. 5.
Mic. 1. 16.

31 and they shall ^hmake themselves utterly bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee with bitterness of heart and bitter wailing.

ⁱ ch. 26. 17.
ver. 2.

^k R v. 18. 18.

32 And in their wailing they shall ⁱtake up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, *saying*,
^kWhat *city* is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?

^l Rev. 18. 19.

33 ^lWhen thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many people; thou didst enrich the

25. "in the midst of the seas." This takes us back to ver. 4; and the allegory is resumed.

26. "east wind." Cp. Ps. xlvi. 7: "With an east wind Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish." In Pss. xlvii—xlviii the City of God is contrasted with the kingdoms of the world. She continues unmoved, "though the earth be changed, and though the mountains be removed in the midst of the seas."

32. "like Tyrus:" in her surpassing beauty; in her sudden overthrow.

33. "people," "peoples."

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kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise. Before CHRIST 588.

34 In the time *when* ^m thou shalt be broken by ^m the seas in the depths of the waters ⁿ thy merchandise and all thy company in the midst of thee shall fall. ^m ch. 26. 13.
ⁿ ver. 27.

35 ^o All the inhabitants of the isles shall be astonished at thee, and their kings shall be sore afraid, they shall be troubled in *their* countenance. ^o ch. 26. 15, 16.

36 The merchants among the people ^p shall hiss at thee; ^q thou shalt be ² a terror, and ³ never shalt be any more. ^p Jer. 18. 16.
^q ch. 26. 21.
² Heb. terrors.
³ Heb. shalt not be for ever.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

¹ God's judgment upon the prince of Tyrus for his sacrilegious pride. ¹¹ A lamentation of his great glory corrupted by sin. ²⁰ The judgment of Zidon. ²⁴ The restoration of Israel.

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35. "sore afraid." The overthrow of the queenly city proves to them how transitory *all* earthly greatness is.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Tyre's sin of self-glorification (ch. xxvii. 3) is here attributed more particularly to one who is called "Prince, or King, of Tyre" (vv. 2, 12). Much, however, of the language of vv. 2—18 is unsuited to any king of literal Tyre¹. The true view appears to be this. As the prediction of the overthrow of literal Babylon in Isa. xiii is followed in ch. xiv by the picture of an ideal "King of Babel," in whom we recognize a likeness to the fallen archangel,—“the Prince of this world;” so here the doom of literal Tyre is followed by that of an ideal “Prince of Tyre,” in whom the features of the same “King of Pride” may be traced.

But further: some parts of the description almost compel us to think of Jerusalem. She was “perfect in beauty” (ver. 12, cp. on ch. xxvii. 3), and because of it her “heart was lifted up” (ver. 17, cp. ch. xvi. 15). She had been on “God's holy mountain” (ver. 14, cp. ch. xx. 40). Her temple contained “the anointed cherub that covereth” (ver. 14, cp. Exod. xxv. 20). Her High-priest's breast-plate contained all the precious stones mentioned in ver. 13. But she had “profaned her sanctuaries” (ver. 18, cp. ch. xxii. 8; Zeph. iii. 4). Her great king, who had “wisdom and understanding,” so that he was “wiser than all men” (vv. 3, 4, cp. 1 Kings iv. 29, 31), and had abundance of “traffic” and “gold and silver” (ver. 4, cp. 1 Kings x. 14, 15, 21—25), had been “perfect, till iniquity was found in” him (ver. 15, cp. 1 Kings xi. 4).

¹ This was observed in ancient times: whence Origen, Tertullian, Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine made the chapter refer to Satan; while Hippolytus applied it to Antichrist, “whose coming is after the working of Satan” (2 Thess. ii. 9).

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^a ver. 9.
^b ch. 27. 3, 4.
² Heb. *heart*.
^c Isai. 31. 3.

2 Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart *is* lifted up, and ^athou hast said, I *am* a God, I sit *in* the seat of God, ^bin the ²midst of the seas; ^cyet thou *art* a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God:

^a Zech. 9. 2. 3 behold, ^athou *art* wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee:

4 with thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures:

³ Heb. *By the greatness of thy wisdom*.
^c Ps. 62. 10.
Zech. 9. 3. 5 ³by thy great wisdom *and* by thy traffick hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches:

He, who might have realised the ideal of monarchy, "kept not his own principality" (St. Jude 6); and bowing down before the Phœnician goddess Ashtoreth, made himself in effect a vassal of the arch-enemy of God, who really, though invisibly, held sway in Tyre¹.

The wreck of Tyre was a saddening sight. But was not that other wreck, which had taken place hard by, far more grievous?

Obs. The vision of ch. i, in which the Lord of Glory was seen in likeness "as a man," was a prelude of the coming of Christ. Ch. xxviii furnishes a prelude of Antichrist; one who, being man, claims to be God. Already in our own age—so proud of its achievements in art and science and commerce—the wildly blasphemous assertion has been made that "there is no God save humanity."

vv. 1—19. The self-deifying Prince of Tyre overthrown.

2. "say." Ezekiel, feeble "son of man" though he be, is yet an envoy from "the great and only Potentate;" and therefore he may boldly confront that haughty prince of Tyre.

"thine heart is lifted up" (vv. 5, 17): the sin against which Israel (Deut. viii. 14) and her kings (ib. xvii. 20) were so pointedly cautioned (cp. ch. xxxi. 10, Dan. v. 20).

"the seat." The word used in ch. viii. 3 of the throne on which the "image of jealousy" sate. Compare 2 Thess. ii. 4.

3. Daniel (cp. on ch. xiv. 14) had at this time (B.C. 588) been head of the wise men of Babylon for about fourteen years. *He* had always been careful to ascribe his superior knowledge to God only (Dan. ii. 20, 28, 29, 30, 45).

Daniel had some time before predicted the coming in of a universal kingdom (ch. ii. 44). The self-deifying prince thought himself "wiser than Daniel," and able to convict him of error; for was not he himself firmly established as the "god of this world?"

¹ There is a singular legend in Sanchoniathon, which makes Astarte in the course of her wanderings see a star fall from heaven, which she took and gave to Tyre.

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6 therefore thus saith the Lord GOD ; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God ;

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7 behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, ^fthe terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness.

^f ch. 30. 11.
& 31. 12.
& 32. 12.

8 They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of *them that are slain* in the midst of the seas.

9 Wilt thou yet ^gsay before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou *shalt be* a man, and no God, in the hand of him that ²slayeth thee.

^g ver. 2.

10 Thou shalt die the deaths of ^hthe uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken *it*, saith the Lord GOD.

² Or,
woundeth.
^h ch. 31. 18.
& 32. 19, 21,
25, 27.

11 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

12 Son of man, ⁱtake up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD ; ^kThou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

ⁱ ch. 27. 2.

^k ch. 27. 3.
ver. 3.

13 Thou hast been in ¹Eden the garden of God ; every precious stone *was* thy covering, the ³sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the ⁴beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the ⁵emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of ^mthy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

¹ ch. 31. 8, 9.

³ Or, *ruby.*

⁴ Or,
chrysolite.

⁵ Or, *chry-
soprane.*

^m ch. 26. 13.

14 Thou *art* the anointed ⁿcherub that covereth ;

ⁿ See Exod.
25. 20.
ver. 16.

7. "strangers." Cp. ch. vii. 21, xi. 9, xvi. 32.

"defile," or, "profane;" s. *w. a.* ch. vii. 21, 22 ("pollute").

8. "the deaths . . ." Rather, "the death of one that is deadly wounded" (see on ch. xxi. 14, 25).

9. The first "slayeth" is the word used in ch. xxi. 11. The second should be, "profaneth" (ep. ver. 16).

10. "of the uncircumcised." Cp. ch. xxxii. 30. True also of unfaithful Israel, ch. xlv. 7, 9; Jer. ix. 26.

13. "in Eden;" under the shadow of the tree of knowledge and the tree of life; in the region from which happiness should have been diffused over the earth.

The precious stones here mentioned are those which formed the first, second, and fourth rows on the High-priest's breast-plate (Exod. xxviii. 17—20). Those of the third row also are here inserted by the Septuagint.

14. "Thou art . . .," or, "Thou wert the anointed covering cherub"

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o ch. 20. 40.

and I have set thee so : thou wast upon ° the holy mountain of God ; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

15 Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

P ver. 14.

16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned : therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God : and I will destroy thee, P O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

q ver. 2, 5.

17 q Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness : I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

18 Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick ; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.

r ch. 26. 21.
& 27. 36.

s Heb.
terrors.

19 All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee : r thou shalt be s a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.

t ch. 6. 2. &
25. 2. & 29. 2.

u Is. 23. 4, 12.
Jer. 25. 22.
& 27. 3.
ch. 32. 30.

20 ¶ Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

21 Son of man, s set thy face t against Zidon, and prophesy against it,

(ver. 16);—like one of those cherubim, which “covered” (Exod. xxv. 20) the Ark ; forming by their outspread wings the “throne of grace,” from which God dispensed His blessing.

“set thee,” or, “appointed thee.”

“walked up and down ;” as priest (*s. v. a.* 1 Sam. ii. 30, 35).

16. “filled . . . violence.” The prince is here addressed, as though the community were personified in him (cp. ch. vii. 23, viii. 17, xxii. 3).

17. “cast . . .” Cp. ch. xix. 12, Lam. ii. 1.

18. “from the midst of thee.” Cp. ch. xix. 4.

vv. 20—26. Sidon shall be judged ; and Israel delivered.

21—23. Here again the language reminds us of Jerusalem ; in which God “executed judgments” (ver. 22, cp. ch. v. 10, 15, xi. 9, xvi. 41),

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22 and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; "Behold, I *am* against thee, O Zidon; and I will be glorified in the midst of thee: and ^x they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I shall have executed judgments in her, and shall be ^y sanctified in her.

23 ^z For I will send into her pestilence, and blood into her streets; and the wounded shall be judged in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

24 ¶ And there shall be no more ^a a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor *any* grieving thorn of all *that are* round about them, that despised them; and they shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

25 Thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall have ^b gathered the house of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered, and shall be ^c sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob.

26 And they shall ^d dwell ² safely therein, and shall ^e build houses, and ^f plant vineyards; yea, they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that ³ despise them round about them; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God.

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^u Ex. 14. 4, 17.

ch. 39. 13.

^x Ps. 9. 16.

^y ch. 20. 41.

& 36. 23.

ver. 25.

^z ch. 38. 22.

^a Num. 33. 55.

Josh. 23. 13.

^b Isai. 11. 12.

ch. 11. 17. &

20. 41. & 34.

13. & 37. 21.

^c ver. 22.

^d Jer. 23. 6.

ch. 36. 28.

² Or, *with*

confidence.

^e Isai. 65. 21.

Amos 9. 14.

^f Jer. 31. 5.

³ Or, *spoil.*

on which He sent "pestilence and blood" (ver. 23, cp. ch. v. 17), in which He would "be sanctified" (ver. 23, cp. ver. 25, ch. xx. 41, xxxvi. 23).

22. "glorified." Cp. Exod. xiv. 17, 18 ("get me honour").

Obs. In reproving the Galilean cities, in which so many mighty works had been done, our Lord said that it should be "more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for them" (St. Matt. xi. 21, 22). How great then must be the condemnation of those, who carelessly set aside the accumulated evidences of Christianity!

24. "pricking." The word occurs elsewhere only in Lev. xiii. 51, 52, xiv. 44, of the "fretting leprosy." The wound of the Sidonian briar left a permanent disease behind it.

"grieving;" *s. w. a.* ch. xiii. 22 ("made sad").

25. "people," "peoples."

"sanctified in them." Cp. ver. 23. Her inward enemies—the "briars and thorns" of ch. ii. 6—would also be removed.

26. "with confidence." In the first clause of the verse the same



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in the midst of the countries *that are* desolate, and her cities among the cities *that are* laid waste shall be desolate forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries.

^q Isai. 19. 23.
Jer. 46. 26.

13 ¶ Yet thus saith the Lord GOD; At the ^qend of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the people whither they were scattered:

² Or, *birth*.

and I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return *into* the land of Pathros, into the land of their ²habitation; and they shall be there a ³*r* base kingdom.

³ Heb. *low*.
^r ch. 17. 6, 14.

15 It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.

^s Isai. 30. 2, 3.
& 36. 4, 6.

16 And it shall be no more ^sthe confidence of the house of Israel, which bringeth *their* iniquity to remembrance, when they shall look after them: but they shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

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17 ¶ And it came to pass in the seven and twentieth year, in the first *month*, in the first *day* of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

began in the year following the capture of Tyre, B.C. 572, it would end in the fifth year of Cyrus (B.C. 532)¹.

14. "Pathros." Upper Egypt, or the Thebais; "the parent of Egyptian civilization," according to Wilkinson.

"habitation." Rather, "nativity" (as in ch. xvi. 3, xxi. 30).

"a base kingdom." Not perishing, like Babylon; but remaining in a state of vassalage (cp. ch. xvii. 14).

16. "which bringeth..." If it had not been for Egypt's promises of help, the "iniquity" of Israel and Judah might have gone on *working inwardly*, without becoming patent to the world. Egypt gave occasion for that iniquity to take outward shape, and so to be noted in the records of the great world-assize.

"when they shall." Rather, "in that they." Judah's turning her eyes toward Egypt *was* iniquity. Cp. ch. xvii. 6, 15.

17. This is the last of Ezekiel's prophecies; being dated two years later than the vision in ch. xl.

¹ Herodotus throws no light on this. He got his information from the priests, who told him nothing about the defeat of Pharaoh-Necoh at Carchemish (Jer. xlvi. 2, cp. 2 Kings xxiv. 7), or about Nebuchadnezzar's invading Egypt and carrying away many captives (mentioned by Berosus and Megasthenes; comp. Jer. xliii. 11).

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18 Son of man, ^t Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head *was* made bald, and ^o every shoulder *was* peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it:

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^t Jer. 27. 6.
ch. 26. 7, 8.

19 therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall take her multitude, and ² take her spoil, and take her prey; and it shall be the wages for his army.

² Heb. *spoil her spoil, and prey her prey.*

20 I have given him the land of Egypt ³ for his labour wherewith he ^u served against it, because they wrought for me, saith the Lord GOD.

³ Or, for his hire.
^u Jer. 25. 9.

21 In that day ^x will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth, and I will give thee ^y the opening of the mouth in the midst of them; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

^x Ps. 132. 17.

^y ch. 24. 27.

CHAPTER XXX.

¹ *The desolation of Egypt and her helpers.* ²⁰ *The arm of Babylon shall be strengthened to break the arm of Egypt.*

THE word of the LORD came again unto me, 572.
saying,

18. The siege lasted thirteen years. Jerome reports, that, before the city was taken, the Tyrians had carried away the bulk of their treasures in ships (as they did afterwards, when besieged by Alexander).

“for Tyrus.” Rather, “out of Tyre.”

20. “for Me.” In Jer. xxv. 9 God speaks of Nebuchadnezzar as His “servant.” If God were thus careful to reward one who worked for Him *unconsciously*, how certain was it that He would forget no “work “and labour of love!” He, the Righteous One, will be no man’s debtor.

Obs. It is difficult not to carry on the application of this verse to that “Servant of the Lord,” who so long laboured to fulfil God’s purpose of mercy to Israel, yet said, “I have laboured in vain” (Isa. xlix. 3). Though Jerusalem were now in ashes, and Israel scattered among the nations, His “reward” (the same word is here rendered, “for his labour”) was “with His God.” The Gentiles should be His possession “unto “the end of the earth.”

21. “cause the . . .,” or, “cause a horn to shoot forth unto . . .” After Egypt had been brought low, a “horn of salvation” should be raised up for Israel (St. Luke i. 67).

“give thee . . .” Long after Ezekiel’s mouth was closed in death, his prophetic words would be confirmed. His visions of a Divine Person “like the appearance of a son of man,” of a mighty cedar planted on a lofty mountain (ch. xvii. 22—24), of an Israel, in which God would be sanctified before the nations, should be gradually verified.

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^a Isai. 13. 6.
^b ch. 7. 7, 12.
Joel 2. 1.
Zeph. 1. 7.

2 Son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; ^aHowl ye, Woe worth the day!

3 For ^bthe day *is* near, even the day of the LORD *is* near, a cloudy day; it shall be the time of the heathen.

² Or, *fear*.
^c ch. 29. 19.
^d Jer. 50. 15.

4 And the sword shall come upon Egypt, and great ²pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they ^cshall take away her multitude, and ^dher foundations shall be broken down.

³ Heb. *Phut*,
ch. 27. 10.
^e Jer. 25. 20,
24.

5 Ethiopia, and ³Libya, and Lydia, and ^eall the mingled people, and Chub, and the ⁴men of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword.

⁴ Heb.
children.
⁵ Or, *from*
Migdol to
Syene.
^f ch. 29. 10.

6 Thus saith the LORD; They also that uphold Egypt shall fall; and the pride of her power shall come down: ⁵*f*from the tower of Syene shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord GOD.

^g ch. 29. 12.

7 ^gAnd they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries *that are* desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities *that are* wasted.

8 And they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have set a fire in Egypt, and *when* all her helpers shall be ⁶destroyed.

⁶ Heb.
broken.
^h Isai. 18. 1, 2.

9 In that day ^hshall messengers go forth from me in ships to make the careless Ethiopians afraid, and great pain shall come upon them, as in the day of Egypt: for, lo, it cometh.

CHAPTER XXX.

The Sword and Fire laying low Egypt's strongholds.

The woe denounced on Egypt in ch. xxix. 8—15 is further expanded.

Although ch. xxix. 17—21 is complete in itself, there is no need to take it as a parenthetic section. The more detailed character of ch. xxx. 2—19, and the recurring mention of Nebuchadnezzar in ver. 10, agree better with the view that all from ch. xxix. 17 to xxx. 19 is of the same date.

3. "the time of the heathen." The time of their visitation; as in ch. xxii. 3, "her time." Cp. Obad. 15, St. Luke xxi. 24.

4. "her foundations." The old Egyptian constitution and the Pharaonic dynasty.

5. "men of . . ." or, "sons of the land of the Covenant;"—according to Jerome, the Jews who had taken refuge in Egypt. The Septuagint has "of My Covenant."

10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; ⁱI will also make the multitude of Egypt to cease by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon.

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ⁱ ch. 29. 19.

^k ch. 28. 7.

11 He and his people with him, ^kthe terrible of the nations, shall be brought to destroy the land: and they shall draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with the slain.

12 And ^lI will make the rivers ²dry, and ^msell the land into the hand of the wicked: and I will make the land waste, and ³all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the LORD have spoken *it*.

¹ Isai. 19. 5, 6.

² Heb. drought.

^m Isai. 19. 4.

³ Heb. the fulness thereof.

13 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also ⁿdestroy the idols, and I will cause *their* images to cease out of Noph; ^oand there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: ^pand I will put a fear in the land of Egypt.

ⁿ Isai. 19. 1.

Jer. 43. 12.

& 46. 25.

Zech. 13. 2.

^o Zech. 10. 11.

^p Isai. 19. 16.

14 And I will make ^qPathros desolate, and will set fire in ^r4 Zoan, ^sand will execute judgments in No.

^q ch. 29. 14.

^r Ps. 78. 12, 43.

^s Or, Taxis.

^t Nah. 3. 8,

9, 10.

^u Or, Pelusium.

^v Jer. 46. 25.

15 And I will pour my fury upon ⁵Sin, the strength of Egypt; and ^tI will cut off the multitude of No.

16 And I will ^uset fire in Egypt: Sin shall have great pain, and No shall be rent asunder, and Noph shall have distresses daily.

^u ver. 8.

17 The young men of ⁶Aven and of ⁷Pi-beseth shall fall by the sword: and these *cities* shall go into captivity.

⁶ Or, Heliopolis.

⁷ Or, Pubastum.

18 ^xAt Tehaphnehes also the day shall be ⁸darkened, when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt: and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her: as for her, a cloud shall cover her, and her daughters shall go into captivity.

^x Jer. 2. 16.

⁸ Or, restrained.

13. On the proper names in vv. 13—18; cp. Isa. xix and Jer. xlvi.

“of the land,” or, “from the land.” The old native royalty shall be no more.—It is a matter of fact that the Egypt of the Pharaohs stands as a thing that is quite apart from the Egypt of later days, under the rule of the Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, and Turks.

15. “strength,” or, “stronghold” (as in ch. xxiv. 25). Sin, or Pelusium, was the key of Egypt.

16. “daily,” or, “in the day-time:” not coming on her stealthily, as by night, but in open day. Cp. ver. 18, Jer. xv. 8, 9.

18. “yokes;” oppressive burdens (Isa. lviii. 6), which she had laid on her own sons and on foreigners. Cp. Lev. xxvi. 13, ch. xxxiv. 27.

19 Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt : and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

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20 ¶ And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first *month*, in the seventh *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

y Jer. 43. 25.

21 Son of man, I have ^y broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt ; and, lo, ^z it shall not be bound up to be healed, to put a roller to bind it, to make it strong to hold the sword.

z Jer. 46. 11.

22 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD ; Behold, I *am* against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will ^a break his arms, the strong, and that which was broken ; and I will cause the sword to fall out of his hand.

a Ps. 37. 17.

b ver. 26.
ch. 29. 12.

23 ^b And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries.

24 And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and put my sword in his hand : but I will break Pharaoh's arms, and he shall groan before him with the groanings of a deadly wounded *man*.

c Ps. 9. 16.

25 But I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down ; and ^c they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I shall put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall stretch it out upon the land of Egypt.

d ver. 23.
ch. 29. 12.

26 ^d And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries ; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

20. The date is three months and two days before Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar.

21. "to be healed." Similarly Jeremiah had spoken of Egypt twenty years before (Jer. xlv. 11).

24. "my sword." As in ch. xxi. 3—5, our thoughts are constantly led to think even more of Egyptianised Israel, than of Egypt herself.

Obs. 1. So too in Jeremiah ;—compare ch. xlv. 11 with chs. viii. 21, 22, xxx. 12—17.

Obs. 2. When the Church leans for support on the world, she must share the righteous judgments, which God sends upon the world ;—share them, it may be, in their severest form.

1 *A relation unto Pharaoh, 3 of the glory of Assyria, 10 and the fall thereof for pride. 18 The like destruction of Egypt.*

AND it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the third month, in the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to his multitude; ^a Whom art thou like in thy greatness? a ver. 18.

3 ^b Behold, the Assyrian *was* a cedar in Lebanon b Dan. 4. 10.
² with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, 2 Heb. fair of branches.
and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs.

4 ^c The waters ³ made him great, the deep ⁴ set him up on high with her rivers running round about his plants, and sent out her ⁵ little rivers unto all the trees of the field. c Jer. 51. 26.
3 Or, nourished.
4 Or, brought him up.
5 Or, conduits.

5 Therefore ^d his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, d Dan. 4. 11.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Assyria had fallen; was Egypt mightier than she?

Can it be, that so ancient and powerful a monarchy as that of the Pharaohs should fall?—The doubt is answered in this chapter by a reference to the fall of the Assyrian empire, which had been a mightier power even than Egypt.—The capture of Nineveh took place in B.C. 625; thirty-seven years previously to the delivery of this prophecy.

Was not the argument of this chapter applicable also to another great power,—to the empire which had been employed by God for the punishment of Judah, as Assyria had been for the punishment of Samaria? How easily might Babylon share the fate of Assyria!—This application was the more obvious as Babylon was sometimes styled “Asshur;” see 2 Kings xxiii. 29, Jer. ii. 18, Lam. v. 6. Observe, too, the resemblance between vv. 3—6 and Daniel’s description of Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 10—14.

1. The date is one month eight days before the capture of Jerusalem.

2. “Whom . . . ?” She had claimed Divine power (ch. xxix. 3). But did she, then, surpass Assyria, whose empire was no more?

4. “The waters.” As of the river of Eden (ver. 16);—the Tigris, indeed, being one of the streams which flowed from Eden.

“the deep . . . rivers” (ver. 15). Cp. Isa. xlv. 27. The “deep” is spoken of as the ultimate source of fountains and rivers. Cp. Gen. xlix. 25, Deut. xxxiii. 13.

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² Or, when
it sent them
forth.

^e ch. 17, 23.
Dan. 4. 12.

and his branches became long because of the multitude of waters, ² when he shot forth.

6 All the ^e fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations.

7 Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches: for his root was by great waters.

^f Gen. 2. 8.
& 13. 10.
ch. 28. 13.

8 The cedars in the ^f garden of God could not hide him: the fir trees were not like his boughs, and the chesnut trees were not like his branches; nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty.

9 I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him.

^g Dan. 5. 20.

10 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because thou hast lifted up thyself in height, and he hath shot up his top among the thick boughs, and ^g his heart is lifted up in his height;

^h Heb.
in doing he
shall do
unto him.

11 I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the heathen; ^h he shall surely deal with him: I have driven him out for his wickedness.

ⁱ ch. 28. 7.

^j ch. 32. 5.
& 35. 8.

12 And strangers, ^h the terrible of the nations, have cut him off, and have left him: ⁱ upon the mountains and in all the valleys his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the rivers of the land; and all the people of the earth are gone down from his shadow, and have left him.

5. "multitude of waters." The words used in Isa. viii. 7 ("mighty waters") of the forces of the Assyrian empire.

6. "All the fowls . . ." As though Assyria were about to realize the picture that was given in ch. xvii. 23, of God's kingdom upon earth (cp. Dan. iv. 12).

10. The person addressed must (it would seem) be the same as in vv. 2, 18. There was no need to say what had become of Asshur:—that was notorious (ch. xxxii. 22, 23). Babylon's new empire had risen upon the ruins of Assyria.

"lifted up . . ." As Asshur had done (ver. 3).

11. "I have therefore . . ." Rather, "I will even deliver him."

"the mighty one." Nebuchadnezzar. The common reading gives; "The god of the nations."

12. "strangers . . . terrible" as in ch. xxviii. 7; "people," "peoples."

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13 ^k Upon his ruin shall all the fowls of the heaven remain, and all the beasts of the field shall be upon his branches :

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^k Isai. 18. 6.
ch. 32. 4.

14 to the end that none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves for their height, neither shoot up their top among the thick boughs, neither their trees ² stand up in their height, all that drink water: for ¹ they are all delivered unto death, ^m to the nether parts of the earth, in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit.

² Or, stand upon themselves for their height.
¹ Ps. 82. 7.

^m ch. 32. 18.

15 Thus saith the Lord God; In the day when he went down to the grave I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon ³ to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him.

³ Heb. to be black.

16 I made the nations to ⁿ shake at the sound of his fall, when I ^o cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and ^p all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, ^q shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth.

ⁿ ch. 26. 15.

^o Isai. 14. 15.

^p Isai. 14. 8.

^q ch. 32. 31.

17 They also went down into hell with him unto them that be slain with the sword; and they that were his arm, that ^r dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen.

^r Lam. 4. 20.

18 ^s To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth: ^t thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with them that be slain

^s ver. 2.
ch. 32. 19.

^t ch. 28. 10.
& 32. 19, 21,
24, &c

14. "their trees." Rather, "their strong ones" (as in ch. xxxii. 21, Ps. xxix. 1). This rendering agrees better with the "children of men," which follows (cp. Ps. lxxxii. 7).

"that drink water." As living in well-watered regions (cp. ch. xxxiv. 18).

15. "I covered," as with mourning (cp. Isa. l. 3). The deep and her rivers had lovingly reared this fair tree (cp. ver. 4).

16. "comforted." So that they cease to complain of their own humiliation as excessive (ch. xxxii. 31, cp. xiv. 22, 23).

18. "thus"—in this way. Go, see now what thy resemblance to Asshur involves.

"yet shalt thou be." Rather, "yea, thou art."

by the sword. This *is* Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord God.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1 *A lamentation for the fearful fall of Egypt.* 11 *The sword of Babylon shall destroy it.* 17 *It shall be brought down to hell, among all the uncircumcised nations.*

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AND it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, in the first *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

^a ch. 27. 2.
ver. 16.

^b ch. 19. 3, 6.
& 38. 13.

2 Son of man, ^atake up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say unto him, ^bThou art like

"This is Pharaoh." As if his corpse were close by; like the "This is Jezebel" of 2 Kings ix. 37.

Must we not add? "Here too lies the Prince of Israel, who trusted "in Pharaoh."

He was "driven out for his wickedness" (ver. 11, cp. ch. xxi. 11) from the Holy Land,—as Adam from Paradise (Gen. iii. 24). *He* had been "delivered over to the strong one (or, the god) of the nations;"—excommunicated, "for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit "might be saved." Such, unquestionably, was the meaning of Israel's calamity. The fairest tree "in the garden of God" was felled, and its branches left upon all "the mountains and valleys" of the earth; in order that the way might be prepared for the one "plant of renown" (ch. xxxiv. 29, cp. xvii. 22).

Obs. The tacit reference to Israel gives greater significancy to other parts of the chapter; for instance to ver. 13, where we are reminded of Deut. xxviii. 26; "Thy carcase shall be meat unto all the fowls of the "air, and unto the beasts of the earth." Israel's "fall should be the "riches of the world" (Rom. xi. 12). Their dispersion carried far and wide the "word of life," to supply spiritual food to the nations (cp. xxxii. 4).

Israel's unfaithfulness could not render God's plighted faith inoperative (Rom. iii. 3). A "dispensation" of God's word was entrusted to them, and even against their will,—even during their prostrate condition,—they must carry it out.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Two dirges over "Egypt and all her multitude" (vv. 16, 18).

vv. 1—16. Lamentation over Pharaoh.

1. "twelfth year, twelfth month." There is much variety of reading here in the versions; arising, probably, from the fact that the date in the received text is nearly two months later than that of ch. xxxiii. 21. But there is no real difficulty in this. It was natural that the two dirges in ch. xxxii should be uttered *after* the tidings of Jerusalem's fall had arrived; and no less so that they should be added on to chs. xxix—xxx; (cp. Introd. to ch. xxxiii).

2. "Thou art like . . ." or, "Thou wert compared unto . . . , but . . ."

a young lion of the nations, ^c and thou *art* as a ² whale in the seas: and thou camest forth with thy rivers, and troubledst the waters with thy feet, and ^d fouledst their rivers.

3 Thus saith the Lord God; I will therefore ^e spread out my net over thee with a company of many people; and they shall bring thee up in my net.

4 Then ^f will I leave thee upon the land, I will cast thee forth upon the open field, and ^g will cause all the fowls of the heaven to remain upon thee, and I will fill the beasts of the whole earth with thee.

5 And I will lay thy flesh ^h upon the mountains, and fill the valleys with thy height.

6 I will also water with thy blood ³ the land wherein thou swimmest, *even* to the mountains; and the rivers shall be full of thee.

7 And when I shall ⁴ put thee out, ⁱ I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light.

8 All the ⁵ bright lights of heaven will I make ⁶ dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God.

9 I will also ⁷ vex the hearts of many people, when I shall bring thy destruction among the nations, into the countries which thou hast not known.

10 Yea, I will make many people ^k amazed at thee, and their kings shall be horribly afraid for thee, when I shall brandish my sword before them; and ¹ they shall tremble at *every* moment, every man for his own life, in the day of thy fall.

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^c ch. 23. 3.
² Or, *dragon*.
^d ch. 31. 18.

^e ch. 12. 13.
& 17. 20.
Hos. 7. 12.

^f ch. 23. 5.
^g ch. 31. 13.

^h ch. 31. 12.

³ Or, *the
land of thy
swimming*.

⁴ Or,
extinguish.
ⁱ Isai. 13. 10.
Joel 2. 31.
& 3. 15.
Amos 8. 9.
Matt. 24. 29.
Rev. 6. 12,
13.

⁵ Heb. *lights
of the light
in heaven*.

⁶ Heb.
them dark.

⁷ Heb.
*provoked to
anger, or,
grief*.
^k ch. 27. 35.

¹ ch. 26. 16.

The lion-like energy of ancient times was gone. He now resembled the unwieldy monster of the waters (cp. ch. xxix. 3).

"fouledst." The word used in ch. xxxiv. 18, where the oppression practised by Israel's rulers is spoken of. Cp. Prov. xxv. 26: "As a fountain fouled and a well defiled, is a righteous man giving way before the wicked."

4. "fill," or, "satiatc."

7. It should be as if primeval darkness had returned (Jer. iv. 23).

7, 8. "make . . . dark," or, "cause . . . to mourn" (as in ch. xxxi. 15).

9. "people," "peoples."

"thy destruction," or, "the fragments of thee,"—the poor, broken, remains of the nation.

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^m Jer. 46. 26.
ch. 30. 4.
ⁿ ch. 28. 7.
^o ch. 29. 19.

11 ^m For thus saith the Lord GOD; The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon thee.

12 By the swords of the mighty will I cause thy multitude to fall, ⁿ the terrible of the nations, all of them: and ^o they shall spoil the pomp of Egypt, and all the multitude thereof shall be destroyed.

^p ch. 29. 11. 13 I will destroy also all the beasts thereof from beside the great waters; ^p neither shall the foot of man trouble them any more, nor the hoofs of beasts trouble them.

14 Then will I make their waters deep, and cause their rivers to run like oil, saith the Lord GOD.

² Heb. *desolate from the fulness thereof.* 15 When I shall make the land of Egypt desolate, and the country shall be ² destitute of that whereof it was full, when I shall smite all them that dwell therein, ³ then shall they know that I *am* the LORD.

^q Ex. 7. 5.
& 14. 4, 18.
Ps. 9. 16.
ch. 6. 7.
^r 2 Sam. 1. 17.
2 Chr. 35. 25.
ch. 26. 17.
ver. 2.

16 This *is* the ^r lamentation wherewith they shall lament her: the daughters of the nations shall lament her: they shall lament for her, *even* for Egypt, and for all her multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

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17 ¶ It came to pass also in the twelfth year, in the fifteenth *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

^s ch. 26. 20.
& 31. 14. 18 Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt, and ^s cast them down, *even* her, and the daughters of the famous nations, unto the nether parts of the earth, with them that go down into the pit.

^t ch. 31. 2, 18.
^u ver. 21, 24,
&c.
ch. 23. 10.

19 ^t Whom dost thou pass in beauty? ^u go down, and be thou laid with the uncircumcised.

13—15. The fruit of this heavy judgment shall be the genuine "knowledge of the Lord." The waters shall no more be "troubled;" they shall run like oil, clear and smooth. The *Messianic* tone of this is evident.

13. In ver. 2 Pharaoh himself was the beast that troubled the waters.

14. "make . . . deep," or, "make . . . clear" (cp. on ch. xxxiv. 18). The turbulent, muddy, river shall no more overflow the land. In its stead there will be streams flowing within their banks, bright and tranquil as oil.

16. "the daughters." So in Jer. ix. 17—20 the mourning women are called to chant a dirge over Jerusalem, when she is laid low "with "the uncircumcised" (ib. ver. 25).

vv. 17—32. Egypt laid low, with all the uncircumcised.

17. "the month." No doubt, the twelfth, as in ver. 1.

EZEKIEL, XXXII.

20 They shall fall in the midst of *them that are slain* by the sword: ² she is delivered to the sword: draw her and all her multitudes.

21 ² The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him: they are ³ gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword.

22 ² Asshur *is* there and all her company: his graves *are* about him: all of them slain, fallen by the sword:

23 ^a whose graves are set in the sides of the pit, and her company is round about her grave: all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which ^b caused ³ terror in the land of the living.

24 There *is* ^c Elam and all her multitude round about her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which are ^d gone down uncircumcised into the nether parts of the earth, ^e which caused their terror in the land of the living; yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit.

25 They have set her a bed in the midst of the slain with all her multitude: her graves *are* round about him: all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword: though their terror was caused in the land of the living, yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit: he is put in the midst of *them that be* slain.

26 There *is* ^f Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude: her graves *are* round about him: all of them ^g uncircumcised, slain by the sword, though they caused their terror in the land of the living.

27 ^h And they shall not lie with the mighty *that are* fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to hell ⁴ with their weapons of war: and they have laid their swords under their heads, but their iniquities shall be upon their bones, though *they were* the terror of the mighty in the land of the living.

Before
CHRIST
587.

² Or,
*the sword
is laid.*

^x Isai. 1. 31.
& 14. 9, 10.
ver. 27.

^y ver. 19, 25,
&c.

^z ver. 24, 26,
29, 30.

^a Isai. 14. 15.

^b ch. 26. 17.
ver. 24, 25,
26, 27, 32.

³ Or,
dismaying.

^c Jer. 49. 34,
&c.

^d ver. 21.

^e ver. 23.

^f Gen. 10. 2.
ch. 27. 13,
& 38. 2.

^g ver. 19, 20,
&c.

^h ver. 21.
Is. 14. 18, 19.

⁴ Heb. *with
weapons of
their war.*

20. "draw her," drag her away, as a condemned criminal (Ps. xxviii. 3).

27. The "mighty" here seem to be those, who died honourably and were laid in their tombs with their military decorations (cp. Isa. xiv. 18).

"but their . . . bones," or, "and their iniquities were upon their bones;"—not visited on them during their lives, but buried with them.

Before
CHRIST
587.

28 Yea, thou shalt be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised, and shalt lie with *them that are slain* with the sword.

ⁱ ch. 25. 12,
&c.
² Heb. *given*,
or, *put*.

29 There *is* ¹Edom, her kings, and all her princes, which with their might are ²laid by *them that were slain* by the sword: they shall lie with the uncircumcised, and with them that go down to the pit.

^k ch. 38. 6, 15,
& 39. 2,
^l ch. 28. 21.

30 ^k There *be* the princes of the north, all of them, and all the ¹Zidonians, which are gone down with the slain; with their terror they are ashamed of their might; and they lie uncircumcised with *them that be slain* by the sword, and bear their shame with them that go down to the pit.

^m ch. 31. 16.

31 Pharaoh shall see them, and shall be ^mcomforted over all his multitude, *even* Pharaoh and all his army slain by the sword, saith the Lord GOD.

32 For I have caused my terror in the land of the living: and he shall be laid in the midst of the uncircumcised with *them that are slain* with the sword, *even* Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

28. "Yea, thou," or, "But thou" (cp. Isa. xiv. 19): the person addressed being the same as in ver. 19.

30. "of the north." Cp. Jer. xxv. 26.

32. "my terror . . .," or, "his terror . . . ; but."

The undercurrent of reference to Israel, which was noticed at the end of the last chapter, is observable here too.

In ch. xix. 2, 3, 5, 6, the prince of Israel had been compared to a "young lion" (ver. 2). The figure of the "net" (ver. 3) occurred in chs. xii. 13, xvii. 20, xix. 8, the "company of the peoples" in chs. xvi. 40, xxiii. 24, 46, 47. The "fouling" of the deep, clear, waters (vv. 2, 14) occurs in ch. xxxiv. 18. Israel was the one spiritual luminary, which had enlightened the old world. When it was "put out" (ver. 7), it was as though "the sun had gone down at noon" (Amos viii. 9), and thick darkness rested over the nations (Isa. lx. 2).

The frequent repetition of the term, "uncircumcised," suggests the antithesis, Israel;—to whom the question in ver. 19 also points; for the verb there used occurs (in the same form) in Cant. vii. 6, of the Bride; "How fair and how beautiful, art thou!" So long as "the beauty of the Lord her God" (Pss. xxvii. 4, xc. 17) rested upon her, she was surpassingly beautiful. That being withdrawn, she (like Pharaonic Egypt) was numbered among the things of the past,—the monarchies of the old world, that were dead and gone (cp. Isa. xxvi. 14).

EZEKIEL, XXXIII.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Before
CHRIST
587.

1 According to the duty of a watchman, in warning the people, 7 Ezekiel is admonished of his duty. 10 God sheweth the justice of his ways towards the penitent, and towards revolters. 17 He maintaineth his justice. 21 Upon the news of the taking of Jerusalem he prophesieth the desolation of the land. 30 God's judgment upon the mockers of the prophets.

AGAIN the word of the LORD came unto me, 5-7.

2 Son of man, speak to ^a the children of thy people, ^a ch. 3. 11.

and say unto them, ^b 2 When I bring the sword upon ^b ch. 14. 17.

a land, if the people of the land take a man of their ² Heb. A land when I bring a sword upon her.

coasts, and set him for their ^c watchman : ^c 2 Sam. 18. 24, 25.

3 if when he seeth the sword come upon the land, ² Kin. 9. 17. ver. 7.

he blow the trumpet, and warn the people ; ³ Heb. he that hearing heareth.

4 then ³ whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning ; if the sword come, and take him away, ^d his blood shall be upon his own head. ^d ch. 18. 13.

5 He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning ; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.

6 But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned ; if the sword come, and take *any* person from among them, ^e he is taken away in his iniquity ; but his ^e ver. 6.

blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

7 ^f So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a ^f ch. 3. 17, &c.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The date is the same as that of ch. xxxii. 17. This agrees with what we read in ver. 10 : where, at last, the proud heart of captive Israel has given way, and they admit that their "sins are upon" them, and that they are "pining away," as had been foretold in ch. xxiv. 23.

The prophet, therefore, again rehearses the principles of the Divine government, which he had set forth twice already (chs. iii. 17—21, xviii. 19—32).

vv. 1—20. The Principles of God's dealings with Israel again stated.

2—6. The *description* refers to ordinary, civil, arrangements. The parabolic application begins at ver. 7.

2. "thy people," vv. 2, 12, 17, 30. So in chs. iii. 11, xiii. 17. Cp. Exod. xxxii. 7.

6. "in his iniquity ;" as a member of the sinful nation, against whom the sword was sent (ver. 2).

watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

8 When I say unto the wicked, O wicked *man*, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

9 Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

10 Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins *be* upon us, and we ^g pine away in them, ^h how should we then live?

^g ch. 24. 23.
^h So Isaiah
49. 14.
ch. 37. 11.
ⁱ 2 Sam. 14. 14.
ch. 18. 23, 32.
^j Pet. 3. 9.
^k ch. 18. 31.

11 Say unto them, *As I live*, saith the Lord God, ⁱ I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for ^k why will ye die, O house of Israel?

^l ch. 3. 20. &
18. 24, 26, 27.

12 Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The ^l righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, ^m he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his *righteousness* in the day that he sinneth.

ⁿ 2 Chron. 7.
14.

10. "If our . . .," or, "Truly our . . ., how then shall we live?" They confess that they are suffering the penalty of their sins. But they have passed from presumption to despair. "We are pining away," as was foretold (ch. xxiv. 23), "and must go on doing so. How can repentance at all alter our position?" They look only at the temporal consequences of sin, and do not see how a continuance of these is consistent with God's receiving the penitent back to His favour, (as had been promised in ch. xviii. 23, 32).

11. The declaration here made of God's good-will to all men (cp. 1 Tim. ii. 4) is accompanied by the strongest possible form of asseveration; "*As I live*, saith the Lord God (Heb. the Lord JEHOVAH)."

12. The matter had been clearly stated in chs. iii. 20, xviii. 24—27. Yet the prophet is to expound it once more. So inexhaustibly patient is the love of God.

"for his *righteousness*;" lit. "thereby;"—because he *has been* righteous heretofore.

EZEKIEL, XXXIII.

Before
CHRIST
587.

13 When I shall say to the righteous, *that* he shall surely live; ⁿ if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.

ⁿ ch. 3. 20.
& 18. 24.

14 Again, ^o when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do ² that which is lawful and right;

^o ch. 3. 18, 19.
& 18. 27.

15 *if* the wicked ^p restore the pledge, ^q give again that he had robbed, walk in ^r the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.

² Heb.
*judgment
and justice.*

^p ch. 18. 7.
^q Ex. 22. 1, 4.
Lev. 6. 2, 4, 5.
Num. 5. 6, 7.
Luke 19. 8.

16 ^s None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

^r Lev. 18. 5.
ch. 20. 11,
13, 21.
^s ch. 18. 22.

17 ¶ ^t Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal.

^t ver. 20.
ch. 18. 25, 29.

18 ^u When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby.

^u ch. 18. 26,
27.

19 But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby.

20 Yet ye say, ^x The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel. I will judge you every one after his ways.

^x ver. 17.
ch. 18. 25, 29.

21 ¶ And it came to pass in the twelfth year ^y of our captivity, in the tenth *month*, in the fifth ^y

ch. 1. 2

13. "righteousnesses," or, "righteous deeds." These are of no more avail to a soul which has lost the living principle of righteousness,—faith in God,—than dead leaves are to a tree whose root is dead. At each successive period of time "the just man lives in (virtue of) his "faith;" that faith which rests firmly on the living God.

"for his . . . for it." Rather, "in his . . . in it."

15. "statutes of life;" which by God's gracious "covenant of life and peace" (Mal. ii. 5) had the promise of life attached to them. Cp. ch. xx. 11, Deut. xxxii. 47.

18, 19. "thereby," or, "therein" (cp. ch. xx. 11).

20. "every one;"—accepting none on the ground of mere corporate privileges; condemning none merely on the ground of national solidarity (Rom. ii. 6, 10).

Before
CHRIST
587.

day of the month, ²that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, ³The city is smitten.

² ch. 24. 26.
³ 2 Kin. 25. 4.
^b ch. 1. 3.

22 Now ^bthe hand of the LORD was upon me in the evening, afore he that was escaped came; and had opened my mouth, until he came to me in the morning; ^cand my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb.

^c ch. 24. 27.
^d ch. 34. 2.
^e ver. 27.
^f ch. 36. 4.
^f Isai. 51. 2.
Acts 7. 5.

23 Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

^g See Mic. 3. 11.
^h Matt. 3. 9.
John 8. 39.
^h Gen. 9. 4.
Lev. 3. 17.
& 7. 26.
& 17. 10.
& 19. 26.
Deut. 12. 16.
ⁱ ch. 18. 6.

24 Son of man, ^dthey that inhabit those ^ewastes of the land of Israel speak, saying, ^fAbraham was one, and he inherited the land: ^gbut we *are* many; the land is given us for inheritance.

25 Wherefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; ^hYe eat with the blood, and ⁱlift up your

vv. 21—33. Ezekiel's mouth opened. He reproves the pride of the Israelites who remained in Canaan, and the self-deceit of the Exiles.

21. "one that," or, "certain that;" the noun being collective (cp. ch. xxiv. 26, Gen. xiv. 13). Eighteen months passed before any, who had been eye-witnesses of the capture of Jerusalem, came to the colony on the banks of the Chebar.

22. "had opened." For three years Ezekiel had delivered no direct addresses to his own people; though Jerusalem had been constantly before the eye of his mind. Now the day spoken of in ch. xxiv. 27 has arrived. He speaks to the people plainly and freely; and, whilst he is thus engaged, a band of the fugitives appears, whose testimony proves him to have been indeed God's prophet. Henceforth he is wholly unfettered.

23. "Then." Rather "And." What follows was probably delivered *before* the arrival of the fugitives; for in ver. 30 the people are still spoken of as in a doubtful state of mind, and in ver. 33 the decisive evidence of his prophetic foresight is alluded to as "coming;" (cp. ch. xxiv. 24.)

24. "wastes." Rather, "ruins" (and so in ch. xxxvi. 33);—the ruined towns of Palestine.

"given us." Cp. ch. xi. 15. They look on it as a matter of natural descent, regulated by physical laws. Abraham was to them a man of lofty destiny. The "gift" of the land, made over to him when he was "one," before the birth of Isaac, had wrought its effect visibly in Israel's history for the last 800 years. A new cycle of Destiny was now to begin, with ampler materials to work upon; for *they* were "many," and have, therefore, a manifoldly more glorious future before them.—For the relation in which they stand to the God of Abraham they care nothing; (cp. St. John viii. 33—40.)

eyes toward your idols, and ^kshed blood: and shall ye possess the land?

Before
CHRIST
587.

26 Ye stand upon your sword, ye work abomination, and ye ^ldefile every one his neighbour's wife: and shall ye possess the land?

^k ch. 22. 6, 9.
^l ch. 18. 6.
& 22. 11.

27 Say thou thus unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; As I live, surely ^mthey that *are* in the wastes shall fall by the sword, and him that *is* in the open field ⁿwill I give to the beasts ²to be devoured, and they that *be* in the forts and ^oin the caves shall die of the pestilence.

^m ver. 24.

28 ^pFor I will lay the land ³most desolate, and the ^apomp of her strength shall cease; and ^rthe mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through.

ⁿ ch. 39. 4.
² Heb. *to devour him.*
^o Judg. 6. 2.
¹ Sam. 13. 6.
^p Jer. 44. 2, 6, 22.
ch. 36. 34, 35.
³ Heb. *desolation and desolation.*

29 Then shall they know that I *am* the LORD, when I have laid the land most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed.

^q ch. 7. 24.
& 24. 21. & 30. 6, 7.
^r ch. 6. 2, 3, 6.

30 ¶ Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking ⁴against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and ^sspeak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the LORD.

⁴ Or, *of thee.*
⁵ Isai. 29. 13.
^t ch. 14. 1.
& 20. 1, &c.
⁵ Heb. *according to the coming of the people.*

31 And ^tthey come unto thee ⁵as the people cometh, and ⁶they ^usit before thee *as* my people,

⁶ Or, *my people sit before thee.*
^u ch. 8. 1.

25. "possess," or, "inherit" (as in ver. 24). It is the word used in Gen. xv. 8.

26. Far from being heirs of Abraham, they were imitating Esau; for they "stood upon the sword," and made that the ground of their title to the land; (cp. Gen. xxvii. 40, and Introd. to ch. xxxv.)

30. "against thee,"—in the way of proud, censorious, criticism (Num. xii. 1, Ps. cxix. 23). Ezekiel was their theme; whether they sate at their meals "by the walls" (1 Sam. xx. 25), or conversed together at the doorways. They listened to his discourses without entering into their real import. It was a rare enjoyment for them to hear the energetic prophet pass sentence on vainglorious Tyre or proud Egypt; and then—forgetting what he said about Israel's long course of guilt—to reflect that they, captives as they were, were God's people, whom He would "gather from among the peoples" (ch. xxviii. 25). Of the "sanctification," which was to precede that gathering they had no thought or care. On that point, indeed, they were bold to think that Ezekiel, good man, was not a little crazy.

31. "as the people cometh," or, "as at the people's entry" (*s. w. a.*)

EZEKIEL, XXXIII.

Before
CHRIST
587.

and they hear thy words, but they will not do them :
^x for with their mouth ² they shew much love, *but*
^y their heart goeth after their covetousness.

^x Ps. 78. 36, 37. ^y Isai. 23. 13.
² Heb. *they make loves,*
or, jests.
^y Matt. 13. 22.
³ Heb. *a song of loves.*
 32 And, lo, thou *art* unto them as ³ a very lovely
 song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play
 well on an instrument : for they hear thy words, but
 they do them not.

^z 1 Sam. 3. 20. 33 ^z And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will
 come,) then ^a shall they know that a prophet hath
 been among them.

Jer. xxxviii. 14);—crowding to hear him, as in old times they had
 crowded up to the gate of the Temple.

“much love.” Lit. “loves¹.” They made a display of warm and
 affectionate sentiment: but it was in its nature earthly and selfish.
 What they were intent on was “gain,” not godliness. The Messiah they
 longed for was one, who would give them worldly prosperity; (cp. St.
 Matt. xxii. 16—18.)

“goeth after.” See on ch. xiii. 3.

“covetousness.” Rather, “gain” (Isa. lvii. 17, Jer. vi. 13). “Gain”
 was now the object of their idolatry (1 Tim. vi. 5).

32. “a very lovely song.” Lit. “a song of loves.” They listened
 to his scathing reproofs, as they might do to a love-song. The story of
 Aholah and Aholibah, though they could scarcely fail to see its drift, was
 to them of no more practical moment than if it had been a ballad.
 So little did they realize the guilt of the nation’s sins, or believe the
 prophet’s announcement of Jerusalem’s approaching fall.

Obs. So, too, with many, who hear of “the wrath of God revealed”
 by the Gospel “against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men”
 (Rom. i. 18); who even take delight in listening to eloquent discourses
 on this great theme, and yet (strange fallacy of self-love, St. James i. 23)
 go forth, and “forget what manner of men” God’s word had shewn them
 to be (ib. ver. 24).

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Jerusalem has fallen; but the survivors are not brought to repen-
 tance. What hope, then, can remain of Israel’s ever fulfilling the
 great vocation which had been assigned to her?

Yet, when all seems lost, the prophet comes forward with overflowing
 consolation.—Through the neglect of the shepherds, whose “heart went
 “after their gain” (ch. xxxiii. 31, cp. Isa. lvi. 11), the flock had been
 scattered over the earth. But God Himself would re-gather them (vv.
 11—16); raising up “one Shepherd” to feed them (ver. 23), under whom
 they should dwell safely “in the wilderness” (ver. 26). Compare Jer.
 xxiii. 1—6.

¹ The noun occurs only here and in
 ver. 32. But it is evident from the use
 of the allied noun in ch. xxiii. 11, and of
 the verb in ch. xxiii. 5 and Jer. iv. 30,
 that it denotes inordinate, passionate,
 love;—the most concentrated form of
 selfishness.

1 *A reproof of the shepherds.* 7 *God's judgment against them.* 11 *His providence for his flock.* 20 *The kingdom of Christ.*

AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
2 Son of man, prophesy against the ^a shepherds ^a ch. 33. 24.
of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith
the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; ^b Woe *be* to the ^b Jer. 23. 1.
shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should ^c Zech. 11. 17.
not the shepherds feed the flocks?

3 ^c Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the ^c Isai. 56. 11.
wool, ^d ye kill them that are fed: *but* ye feed not the ^c Zech. 11. 16.
flock. ^d ch. 33. 25, 26.
^e Mic. 3. 1, 2, 3.
^f Zech. 11. 5.

4 ^e The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither ^e ver. 16.
have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye ^c Zech. 11. 16.
bound up *that which was* broken, neither have ye
brought again that which was driven away, neither
have ye ^f sought that which was lost; but with
^g force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. ^f Luke 15. 4.
^g 1 Pet. 5. 3.
^h ch. 33. 21, 28.
ⁱ 1 Kin. 22. 17.
^j Matt. 9. 36.

5 ^h And they were ⁱ scattered, ² because *there is* no
shepherd: ^k and they became meat to all the beasts
of the field, when they were scattered. ² Or, *with-*
out a shep-
herd, and so
ver. 8.
^k Isai. 56. 9.
Jer. 12. 9.
ver. 8.

The Flock, which has been neglected by its Shepherds,
and in which the strong have oppressed the weak,
shall be cared for by the Lord and His Servant David.

2. "the shepherds." *All*, to whom Israel's Great Shepherd (Ps. lxxx. 1) had given authority to guide or to feed His flock (cp. Num. xxvii. 17);—whether judges (2 Sam. vii. 7), or kings (2 Sam. v. 2, Ps. lxxviii. 70, 71), or prophets (Jer. xvii. 16), or priests (Ps. lxxvii. 20). Here, however, the reference seems to be chiefly to the priests and prophets.

"feed themselves." Cp. ch. xiii. 19, St. Jude 12.

"feed the flocks." Cp. Acts xx. 28, 1 St. Pet. v. 2.

4. "diseased," or, "weakly;" delicate and infirm. The shepherd's duties were, to strengthen the weak (cp. 1 Thess. v. 14); to heal the sick (cp. St. James v. 16); to bandage the wounded (cp. Isa. lxi. 1); to bring back that which had been drawn off from the fold (cp. 2 Sam. xiv. 14, Gal. vi. 1); to seek for that which had lost its way (Ps. cxix. 176).

"cruelty," or, "rigour" (as in Lev. xxv. 43, 46).

"ruled them," or, "held lordship over them" (cp. St. Mark x. 42, 1 St. Pet. v. 3).

5. "scattered." *Literally*: over Assyria, Babylonia, Egypt, &c.; a prey to heathen powers (cp. Isa. lvi. 9). *Spiritually* also: in the wilds of superstition, unbelief, and sensuality; a prey to the arch-enemy (1 St. Pet. v. 9) and his agents (St. John x. 12, Acts xx. 29). Cp. ch. xxxv. 12.

Before
CHRIST
587.

6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek *after them*.

7 Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

8 *as* I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock ¹ became meat to every beast of the field, because *there was* no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, ^m but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock;

¹ ver. 5, 6.

^m ver. 2, 10.

9 therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

ⁿ ch. 3, 18.
Heb. 13, 17.

^o ver. 2, 8.

10 thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against the shepherds; and ⁿ I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds ^o feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.

11 ¶ For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, *even* I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.

² Heb. *According to the seeking.*

12 ² As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep *that are* scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in ^p the cloudy and dark day.

^p ch. 30, 3.
Joel 2, 2.
^q Is. 65, 9, 10.
Jer. 23, 3.
ch. 28, 25.
& 36, 24, &
37, 21, 22.

13 And ^q I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the

6. "did search . . ." Rather, "cared (*s. w. a.* Ps. exlii. 4) or made "search;" (and so in vv. 8, 11.)

10. "require." Demanding an account of it (Gen. xxxi. 39). Compare Heb. xiii. 17.

11. "I, even I." Rather, "I myself" (and so in ver. 20). He would intervene personally.

12. "cloudy and dark day," or, "day of clouds and thick darkness" (as in Joel ii. 2, Zeph. i. 15). "Clouds and darkness" had rested upon Sinai at the giving of the law (Deut. iv. 11, v. 22; cp. Ps. xevii. 2; Heb. xii. 18). When the violated majesty of the law had to be vindicated, the terrors of Sinai re-appeared.

13. "people," "peoples." Comp. on ch. xi. 17, xx. 41.

EZEKIEL, XXXIV.

mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

Before
CHRIST
587.

14 ^r I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: ^s there shall they lie in a good fold, and *in* a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.

Ps. 23. 2.

Jer. 33. 12.

15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God.

16 ^t I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up *that which was* broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy ^u the fat and the strong; I will feed them ^x with judgment.

^t See ver. 4.
Isai. 40. 11.
Micah 4. 6.
Matt. 18. 11.
Mark 2. 17.
Luke 5. 32.
^u Isai. 10. 16.
Amos 4. 1.
^x Jer. 10. 24.

17 And *as for* you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God; ^y Behold, I judge between ² cattle and cattle, between the rams and the ³ he goats.

^y ch. 20. 37, 38.
ver. 20, 22.
Zech. 10. 3.
Matt. 25. 32, 33.

18 *Seemeth it* a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet?

² Heb. *small cattle of lambs and kids.*

³ Heb. *great he goats.*

19 And *as for* my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet.

20 Therefore thus saith the Lord God unto them; ^z Behold, I, *even* I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle.

^z ver. 17.

14. "high mountains." Lit. "mountains of the height." The "mountain" of ch. xvii. 23, xx. 40, is here seen as several "mountains." The Church Catholic has many centres of spiritual life; though the flock be one (St. John x. 16).

16. "seek . . ." Eminently the work of the "Good Shepherd" (St. Luke xix. 10, ep. St. Matt. xviii. 11).

"destroy." The word used in ch. xiv. 9 respecting the doom of the unrighteous prophet. The "fat and strong" appear to be the same as the "shepherds" of ver. 2. They who care only to "feed themselves" do, in fact, forfeit the title of "shepherds."

17. "between cattle . . ." Rather, "between these cattle and those, even the rams . . ."

18. "deep," or, "clear" (from the verb used in ch. xxxii. 14). God had provided "good pasture" and "clear water" (cp. Ps. xxiii. 2) for Israel's spiritual nourishment. The unfaithful pastors,—priests, kings, and prophets—had trampled on the ordinances of Divine worship, and corrupted the teaching of the Divine word.

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^a ver. 17.
^b Isai. 40. 11.
Jer. 23. 4, 5.
John 10. 11.
Heb. 13. 20.
^c 1 Pet. 2. 25.
& 5. 4.
^d Jer. 30. 9.
ch. 37. 24, 25.
Hos. 3. 5.
^e Ex. 29. 45.
ver. 30.
ch. 37. 27.
^f ch. 37. 22.
Luke 1. 32,
33.
^g ch. 37. 26.
^h Lev. 26. 6.
Is. 11. 6,—3,
& 35. 9.
Hos. 2. 18.
ⁱ Jer. 23. 6.
ver. 28.
^j Isai. 56. 7.
ch. 20. 40.
^k Gen. 12. 2.
Isai. 19. 24.
Zech. 8. 13.
^l Lev. 26. 4.

21 Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad ;

22 therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey ; and ^a I will judge between cattle and cattle.

23 And I will set up one ^b shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, ^c *even* my servant David ; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.

24 And ^d I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David ^e a prince among them ; I the LORD have spoken *it*.

25 And ^f I will make with them a covenant of peace, and ^g will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land : and they ^h shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.

26 And I will make them and the places round about ⁱ my hill ^k a blessing ; and I will ^l cause the

23. "set up," or, "raise up ;" as in ver. 29, Jer. xxiii. 5 (where the righteous king is contrasted with the evil pastors).

"one shepherd." Ch. xxxvii. 24. Cp. St. John x. 16, Heb. xiii. 20. He would combine in one all those various offices ;—being king (Jer. xxiii. 5), priest (Ps. cx. 4), prophet (Deut. xviii. 15—18) :—the *one* Mediator between God and man (1 Tim. ii. 5).

Obs. In vv. 14, 15, God Himself promises to feed His flock. The Good Shepherd could say, "I and the Father are one" (St. John x. 30 ; cp. Isa. xl. 10, 11, Zech. xiii. 7).

"my servant David" (ch. xxxvii. 24, 25). See Ps. lxxxix. 20, 2 Sam. vii. 5, 8. David's whole-hearted obedience, up to the time of his receiving that great promise, made him a fitting type of the perfect Servant of the Lord (Isa. xlii. 1) :—who in Hos. iii. 5, Jer. xxx. 9, bears the name, DAVID, "The Beloved." But David's own sin endangered the flock (2 Sam. xxiv. 15—17), and was a principal cause of Israel's scattering (see on ch. xxi. 28—32). Not in David, but only in that infinitely higher One, Whom he typified ("The Beloved," Eph. i. 6), could Israel be redeemed, or the "everlasting Covenant" be established (Isa. lv. 3).

24. "will be their God ;" the promise of Lev. xxvi. 12 (cp. on ch. xxxvi. 28). In the next six verses there are several manifest references to Lev. xxvi. 4—6, 9, 13.

"a prince." Rather, "prince." Cp. Acts v. 31.

25. "a covenant of peace" (ch. xxxvii. 26) ; by which peace is assured. This Covenant was established by "the Great Shepherd" (Heb. xiii. 20).

Obs. In Num. xxv. 12, 13, the "Covenant of peace" is defined to be "the Covenant of an everlasting priesthood." Cp. Zech. vi. 13.

"wilderness . . . woods"—the usual haunts of "evil beasts" (St. Mark i. 13, Ps. civ. 20).

26. "a blessing ;" like Abraham, Gen. xii. 2 ; cp. Zech. viii. 13.

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shower to come down in his season ; there shall be ^m showers of blessing.

27 And ⁿ the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have ^o broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that ^p served themselves of them.

28 And they shall no more ^q be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them ; but ^r they shall dwell safely, and none shall make *them* afraid.

29 And I will raise up for them a ^s plant ² of renown, and they shall be no more ³ consumed with hunger in the land, ^t neither bear the shame of the heathen any more.

30 Thus shall they know that ^u I the LORD their God *am* with them, and *that* they, *even* the house of Israel, *are* my people, saith the Lord GOD.

31 And ye my ^x flock, the flock of my pasture, *are* men, and I *am* your God, saith the Lord GOD.

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^m Ps. 68. 9.
ⁿ Mal. 3. 10.
^o Lev. 26. 4.
^p Ps. 85. 12.
^q Isai. 4. 2.
^r Lev. 26. 13.
^s Jer. 2. 20.

^t Jer. 25. 14.

^u See ver. 8.
ch. 36. 4.

^x Jer. 30. 10.
& 46. 27.
ver. 25.

^y Isai. 11. 1.
Jer. 23. 5.

^z Or,
for renown.

^{aa} Heb.
taken away.

^{ab} ch. 36. 3, 6,
15.

^{ac} ver. 24.
ch. 37. 27.

^{ad} Ps. 100. 3.
John 10. 11.

27. There is an *allusion* to the fertility of Judea (styled by Tacitus "most fruitful in corn"). But the language is, doubtless, figurative (as in ch. xxxvi. 29, 30). The produce of the earth is "righteousness and salvation" (Isa. xlv. 8).

"served themselves," or, "exacted bondwork" (Exod. i. 14, Jer. xxx. 8).

29. "a plant," or, "plantation" (in Isa. lxi. 3 "planting");—trees of life, which shall be of endless "renown" (lit. "for a name," Isa. lv. 13); whose "fruit shall be for food and their leaf for medicine" (ch. xlvii. 12).

"of the heathen;" inflicted by the scoffing heathen (ch. xxxvi. 6, 15). *Their own* shame,—at having offended so gracious a Benefactor—they would still bear (ch. xvi. 63, xliii. 10).

31. "men," "mankind" (Heb. ADAM). So, in Ps. c. 1—3, "all the earth" is to rejoice in the Lord, because all are "the sheep of His pasture." Although God was with Israel (ver. 30) in a special way, yet "MANKIND" was His flock. The antitypical David, Whom the Father "loved before the foundation of the world," had "power given" Him "over *all flesh*" (St. John xvii. 2, 24). The one Mediator made Himself "a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 4—6).

That the Eternal would be pleased to stand in such a relation to men,—the children of Adam, "the earthly,"—was the mystery, which had been intimated to Ezekiel, when he saw "the likeness as of the appearance of a MAN" above the sapphire-like throne (ch. i. 26). The vision implied a special "love of God to man" (Tit. iii. 4), such as no heart

CHAPTER XXXV.

The judgment of mount Seir for their hatred of Israel.

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MOREOVER the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

^a ch. 6. 2.
^b Deut. 2. 5.
^c Jer. 49. 7, 8.
ch. 25. 12.
Amos 1. 11.
Obad. 10, &c.
^d ch. 6. 14.

2 Son of man, ^a set thy face against ^b mount Seir, and ^c prophesy against it,

3 and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O mount Seir, I *am* against thee, and ^d I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee ² most desolate.

² Heb. *desolation and desolation*:
³ So ver. 7.
^e ver. 9.

4 ^e I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD.

could fully conceive, until it was manifested in "the Second Man, the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor. xv. 47).

CHAPTER XXXV.

While Jacob was yet an exile, Esau had occupied Mount Seir (Gen. xxxii. 3, xxxiii. 14, 16). After some centuries, "Seir became a possession" to Israel (Num. xxiv. 18, 2 Sam. viii. 14). But Edom never forgot the ancient feud: and when Israel's land was desolated, they grasped at it as theirs; *theirs*, and not (as Israel had so long said) *the Lord's* (ver. 10). For this profaneness they should be judged (ver. 11). While the "places around God's hill" became "a blessing,"—a new paradise (ch. xxxiv. 26, 29),—Mount Seir should be "most desolate" (vv. 3, 7).

In a literal sense the prophecy had its fulfilment. After the restoration Judea became fruitful as of old (see on ch. xxxiv. 27); whilst Idumea by the end of the fifth century before Christ was a waste (Mal. i. 3).

But a comparison of this chapter with ch. xxxiii. 24—29 makes it evident, that more than literal Edom falls within its scope. The worldliness of him who "despised his birthright" had been reproduced in Israel; and still, in spite of God's heavy chastisements, it survived among them. The Jews, who remained in Palestine, used the same kind of language as these men of Seir:—"The land is given to us;" "we will possess it" (ch. xxxiii. 24—26; cp. xxxv. 10, 12, xxxvi. 2, 3, 5). Their character, too, was the same;—they took their stand on "the sword" and "shed blood" (ch. xxxiii. 25; cp. xxxv. 5, 6). Therefore their doom must be the same; (compare ch. xxxiii. 28, 29 with ch. xxxv. 3, 4, 7.)

Even in the Church of Christ men have still to be warned against Esau's "profaneness" (Heb. xii. 16); to be reminded that, while "mercy and peace" rest on "the Israel of God" (Gal. vi. 16), for those who "love not the Lord Jesus Christ" there is an abiding anathema (1 Cor. xvi. 22): and, in particular, that they who take their stand on "the sword" shall perish by it.

5 ^f Because thou hast had a ² perpetual hatred, and hast ³ shed *the blood of* the children of Israel by the ⁴ force of the sword in the time of their calamity, ⁵ in the time *that their iniquity had an end* :

6 therefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee : ^h sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee.

7 Thus will I make mount Seir ⁵ most desolate, and cut off from it ⁱ him that passeth out and him that returneth.

8 ^k And I will fill his mountains with his slain *men* : in thy hills, and in thy valleys, and in all thy rivers, shall they fall that are slain with the sword.

9 ^l I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return : ^m and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

10 Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will ⁿ possess it ; ^o whereas ^o the LORD was there :

11 therefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will even do ^p according to thine anger, and according to thine envy which thou hast used out of thy hatred against them ; and I will make myself known among them, when I have judged thee.

12 ^q And thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD, and that I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel,

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^f ch. 25. 12.
Obad. 10.

² Or, *hatred of old*,
ch. 25. 15.

³ Heb.
poured out the children.

⁴ Heb. *hands.*

⁵ Ps. 137. 7.
ch. 21. 25, 29.
Dan. 9. 24.
Obad. 11.

^h Ps. 109. 17.

⁵ Heb. *desolation and desolation*,
ver. 3.

ⁱ Judg. 5. 6.
ch. 29. 11.

^k ch. 31. 12.
& 32. 5.

^l Jer. 49. 17,
18. ver. 4.
ch. 25. 13.
Mal. 1. 3, 4.

^m ch. 6. 7.
& 7. 4, 9.
& 36. 11.

ⁿ Ps. 83. 4, 12.
ch. 36. 5.
Obad. 13.

^o Or, *though the LORD was there.*

^p Ps. 48. 1, 3,
& 132. 13, 14.
ch. 48. 35.

^q Matt. 7. 2.
Jam. 2. 13.

^r Ps. 9. 16.
ch. 6. 7.

Mount Seir for its unrelenting cruelty to Israel sentenced to desolation.

5. "in the time that..."—"in the time of final iniquity" (as in ch. xxi. 25):—when God interposed with His heavy judgments. At such a season they ought to have "shown pity" (Job vi. 14).

10. "two nations." Judea and Samaria. The two countries should now (they imply) find their "unity" in Esau, the original heir of the Promised Land.

"whereas," or, "and yet." Though the Temple was no more, yet He Who of old had frustrated the policy of Edom (Ps. lxxxiii. 6, ff.), was still owner of the land (Lev. xxv. 23). The land was now holding its Sabbaths to Him (Lev. xxvi. 43). His eyes were still upon it (Deut. xi. 12).

12. "against the mountains." God's promises to Abraham and

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- saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us
² to consume.
- ¹³ Thus ^r with your mouth ye have ³ boasted
 against me, and have multiplied your words against
 me : I have heard *them*.
- ¹⁴ Thus saith the Lord GOD ; ^s When the whole
 earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate.
- ¹⁵ ^t As thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the
 house of Israel, because it was desolate, so will I do
 unto thee : ^u thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir,
 and all Idumea, *even* all of it : and they shall know
 that I *am* the LORD.

² Heb.
to devour.
^r 1 Sam. 2. 3.
 Rev. 13. 6.
³ Heb.
magnified.
^s Isai. 65. 13,
 14.
^t Obad. 12, 15.
^u ver. 3, 4.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

¹ *The land of Israel is comforted, both by destruction of the heathen, who spitefully used it, 8 and by the blessings of God promised unto it.*

David were specially associated with Mount Moriah (Gen. xxii. 14—18) and Mount Zion (Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14). Reproaches cast on these were in reality cast on God; and so were “blasphemies.” Cp. ch. xxxvi. 3.

Obs. 1. Behind this rejoicing of Edom over the desolated mountains of Israel there lurked a yet more bitter, more ungodly, exultation; that of him who had “perpetual hatred” (ver. 5) against “the seed of the woman” (Gen. iii. 15). The arch-enemy had long ago got possession of the heights of Israel, when he persuaded men to build idolatrous shrines upon them (vi. 2—7). Now, when God’s sanctuary was in ruins, his triumph seemed to be complete. “The enemy blasphemed continually” (Ps. lxxiv. 10, 18). Does any hope still remain?

The following chapter will supply an answer.

Obs. 2. It has been the aim of the same enemy to corrupt, and thereby effect the ruin of, the “high mountains,” the noblest nations, of Christendom. Who that considers the present state of the world can avoid seeing that an eager pursuit of wealth, reliance on military force, and pride of intellect—clear marks of the wisdom which is “earthly, sensual, devilish”—are the leading characteristics of our own age? But “in the midst of His enemies” (Ps. cx. 2) Christ still “has dominion;” and, as in time past, so in all time to come, they shall be made to “know, that He is the Lord.”

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Israel’s land appeared to have become a perpetual desolation; but the prophet foretells that it shall be restored to more than its former fertility (vv. 8—12). God’s “jealousy,” which had been roused into activity *against* the sinful nation, will also work *on behalf* of His Covenant people (vv. 5, 6). God’s great Name shall yet be “sanctified” in Israel (ver. 23); and nobler sacrifices, than were presented in the olden time shall then be offered to Him (vv. 37, 38).

16 *Israel was rejected for their sin, 21 and shall be restored without their desert.* 25 *The blessings of Christ's kingdom.*

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ALSO, thou son of man, prophesy unto the ^a mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD :

ch. 6. 2, 3.

2 thus saith the Lord GOD ; Because ^b the enemy hath said against you, Aha, ^c even the ancient high places ^d are our's in possession :

b ch. 25. 3.

& 26. 2.

c Deut. 32. 13.

d ch. 35. 10.

3 therefore prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD ; ² Because they have made *you* desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the heathen, ^e and ³ ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and *are* an infamy of the people :

² Heb. Because for because.

^e Deut. 28. 37.

1 Kin. 9. 7.

Lam. 2. 15.

Dan. 9. 16.

4 therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD ; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the ⁴ rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken, which ^f became a prey and ^g derision to the residue of the heathen that *are* round about ;

³ Or, ye are made to come up on the tip of the tongue.

⁴ Or, bottoms, or, dales.

^f ch. 34. 23.

^g Ps. 79. 4.

5 therefore thus saith the Lord GOD ; ^h Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea,

^h Deut. 4. 24.

ch. 33. 19.

The Mountains of Israel comforted. God will sanctify His name in the restoration and purification of Israel.

1. "the word of the Lord." Cp. vv. 4, 16, 36. The surprising nature of the message here delivered demanded the strongest assurances of its having come from God. Accordingly, "Thus saith the Lord God" occurs in this chapter ten times, and "saith the Lord God" three times.

2. "the enemy." Not Edom only (ch. xxxv. 5); but he whose malignity had followed Israel from the beginning (Ps. viii. 3, Deut. xxxii. 27, 42).

"the ancient high places,"—which Israel, when loyal to its God, had wrested from the enemy (Deut. xxxii. 12, 13, xxxiii. 29).

3. "therefore." The word recurs at the beginning of vv. 4, 5, 6, 7; giving marked emphasis to the contrast between the imagined triumph of the enemy and the overthrow which awaited him.

"of the heathen,"—heathenized Judah included (ch. xxxiii. 24). The word rendered "residue," is used in Jer. xl. 11, xlii. 2, of the Jews who remained in Palestine after the capture of Jerusalem.

"and are an . . ." Or, "and in the ill-report of;" the word being that which is used in Num. xiii. 32, xiv. 36, 37 (of the "evil report" of Canaan). Cp. on ver. 13.

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¹ ch. 35. 10, 12. ⁱ which have appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all *their* heart, with despightful minds, to cast it out for a prey.

6 Prophecy therefore concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my fury, because ye have ^kborne the shame of the heathen:

⁷ therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I have ¹lifted up mine hand, Surely the heathen that *are* about you, they shall bear their shame.

8 ¶ But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come.

9 For, behold, I *am* for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown:

10 and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, *even* all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and ^mthe wastes shall be builded:

11 and ⁿI will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit: and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better *unto you* than at your beginnings: ^oand ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

12 Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, *even* my people Israel; ^pand they shall possess thee, and

6, 7. Israel for its sins had "borne the shame of the heathen" (ch. xxxiv. 29); being humiliated in their sight. The heathen should now "bear their own shame," and be in their own eyes humiliated.

8. "they are at hand." The new Israel, so long promised. Cp. Isa. lvi. 1, Ps. xxii. 31.

10. "multiply." The word used in the blessing of Abraham (Gen. xvii. 2, xxii. 17).

"all the house. . . ." All who were "of a clean heart" (Ps. lxxiii. 1), whether Jew or Gentile.

11. "increase and bring fruit," or, "multiply and be fruitful;" (as in Gen. i. 28, ix. 1, 7). This new Israel—this new race of "men" (vv. 10, 12, Heb. ADAM)—should have the energy of the Divine benediction working in them, enabling them to realise God's original design.

"settle you . . .," or, "make you to be inhabited as in your olden time."

12. "cause men . . .," or, "lead men unto you;" as of old He had led Israel (*s.w.a.* Isa. xlvi. 21, lxiii. 12, 13). "Mankind" was now His flock (see on ch. xxxiv. 31; cp. vv. 37, 38, below).

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thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth ^a bereave them of *men*. Before CHRIST 587.

13 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because they say ^a unto you, ^rThou *land* devourest up men, and hast bereaved thy nations;

14 therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither ² bereave thy nations any more, saith the Lord God. ² Or, *cause to fall.*

15 ^a Neither will I cause *men* to hear in thee the shame of the heathen any more, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the people any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nations to fall any more, saith the Lord God. ^a ch. 34. 29.

16 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

17 Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, ^t they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as ^u the uncleanness of a removed woman. ^t Lev. 18. 25, 27, 28.
^u Jer. 2. 7.
^u Lev. 15. 19, &c.

18 Wherefore I poured my fury upon them ^x for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols *wherewith* they had polluted it: ^x ch. 16. 36, 38. & 23. 37.

19 and I ^y scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: ^z according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. ^y ch. 22. 15.
^z ch. 7. 3. & 18. 30. & 39. 24.

20 And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they ^a profaned my holy name, ^a Isai. 52. 5. Rom. 2. 24.

“bereave them” (ver. 13). In 2 Kings ii. 19, 21, the marg. renders the word, “causing to miscarry.” As the waters of Jericho were then healed, so would Israel’s land be healed; that there should “be no more death or cause of miscarriage” (cp. Isa. xxvi. 18).

13. “devourest up.” See Num. xiii. 32 (cp. on ver. 3). Really it was the sin of the Amorites that had “devoured” them; and their sin had been only too closely copied by Israel.

14. “bereave . . .” Rather, “cause thy nations to stumble.”

15. “people,” “peoples.”

17. “removed.” See marg. of ch. vii. 19. Israel must be “put apart as impure;”—separated from the Holy Land.

20—23. Five times in these verses it is said that Israel “profaned God’s holy name among the heathen.” Yonder, men said, is the fruit of the great experiment we have heard so much about. God brought them out of Egypt, made them His own people, and kept them 900 years under His own training; with what result? To see them make

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when they said to them, These *are* the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land.

^b ch. 20. 9, 14.

21 But I had pity ^b for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.

^c Ps. 106. 8.

22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; I do not *this* for your sakes, O house of Israel, ^c but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.

^d ch. 20. 41.

& 28. 22.

² Or, *your*.

^e ch. 34. 13.

& 37. 21.

23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I *am* the LORD, saith the Lord God, when I shall be ^d sanctified in you before ² their eyes.

^f Isai. 52. 15.

Heb. 10. 22

^g Jer. 33. 8.

24 For ^e I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

25 ^f Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: ^g from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

another Exodus, a most ignominious one, *out of His land*. Did not, then, the gods of Babylon do more for their people than the God of Israel for His? Was not the king of Babylon superior to the perjured king of Judah? Were not the Chaldeans a nobler set of men than the proud, weak, moody, Israelites? Could the work of an almighty, all-wise, Being have been so entire a failure? Thus the oft-repeated titles, Holy and True, Merciful and Gracious, seemed, when brought to the test of experience, to be unrealities.

20. "when they said to them." Or, "in that men said of them."

"out of his land." The land, which was to have attracted distant nations (1 Kings viii. 41—43), cannot retain its own people.

21. The Name, which had been revealed to Israel with a view to the world's salvation, was trampled upon and maligned. How deeply must Holy Love have been thereby *pained*! But God "has pity upon" His name; and will provide a way by which it shall be honoured,—in Israel and among the nations.

22. "I do not this . . .," or, "Not for your sakes do I work" (ep. ch. xx. 9, 14).

23. "their eyes." Rather, "your eyes" (as in Zeph. iii. 20):—so as to produce conviction in *you* first of all (ep. ver. 31).

25. "sprinkle clean water . . ." As one, who had been set apart (ver. 17) for uncleanness, had to be purified by the sprinkling of the "water of separation" (Num. xix. 13, 20). According to Heb. x. 23, the prophecy has its fulfilment in that "sprinkling of the heart from an evil

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26 A ^h new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you : and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

27 And I will put my ⁱ spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*.

28 ^k And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers ; ^l and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

29 I will also ^m save you from all your uncleannesses : and ⁿ I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and ^o lay no famine upon you.

30 ^p And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen.

31 Then ^q shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that *were* not good, and ^r shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.

32 ^s Not for your sakes do I *this*, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you : be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel.

“conscience,” of which the baptism with “pure water” is a sign and a pledge (cp. Heb. ix. 13, 14).

26. “stony heart.” That “tablet” on which Divine love made so little impression ; while their sins were “graven” on it in clear and deep lines (Jer. xvii. 1). For this stony heart, with its apparently indelible record of guilt, there should be substituted “a heart of flesh,” on whose “tablets” the law of righteousness should be written “by the Spirit of the living God” (2 Cor. iii. 3). Cp. Jer. xxxi. 33. See also on ch. xi. 19.

28. “ye shall be . . .” The promise, “I will be their God,” had been attached *unconditionally* to the “everlasting Covenant” made with Abraham, as the “father of many nations” (Gen. xvii. 4—8). The other promise, “Ye shall be My people,” had been made to Israel at Sinai with the condition, “If ye . . . keep My commandments “and do them” (Lev. xxvi. 3, 12). That condition had not been fulfilled ; but the grace of God would overflow the bounds of the Sinaitic Covenant, and out of stony-hearted Israel would raise up true “children unto Abraham” (St. Matt. iii. 9).

29. “I will also.” Rather, “And I will.” None but God Himself could “save from the uncleannesses” of sin (cp. St. Matt. i. 21—23).

“famine” (ver. 30). Cp. on ch. xxxiv. 27, 29. They should be provided plenteously with “the bread that endures to everlasting life” (St. John vi. 27 ; cp. Amos viii. 11, St. Luke i. 53).

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^h Jer. 32 33.
ch. 11. 19.

ⁱ ch. 11. 19.
& 37. 14.

^k ch. 28. 25.
& 37. 25.

^l Jer. 30. 22.
ch. 11. 20.
& 37. 27.

^m Matt. 1. 21.
Rom. 11. 26.

ⁿ See Ps. 105.
16.

^o ch. 34. 29.
^p ch. 34. 27.

^q ch. 16. 61,
63.

^r Lev. 26. 39.
ch. 6. 9. &
20. 43.

^s Deut. 9. 5.
ver. 22.

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t ver. 10.

33 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause *you* to dwell in the cities, ^t and the wastes shall be builded.

34 And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by.

u Isai. 51. 3.
ch. 28. 13.
Joel 2. 3.

35 And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of ^u Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities *are become fenced, and* are inhabited.

x ch. 17. 24.
& 22. 14. &
37. 14.

36 Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined *places, and* plant that that was desolate: ^x I the LORD have spoken *it*, and I will do *it*.

y See ch. 14. 3.
& 20. 3, 31.

37 Thus saith the Lord GOD; ^y I will yet *for* this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do *it* for them; I will ^z increase them with men like a flock.

z ver. 10.

² Heb.
flock of holy things.

38 As the ² holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that *I am* the LORD.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1 *By the resurrection of dry bones.* 11 *The dead hope of Israel is revived.* 15 *By the uniting of two sticks,* 18 *is shewed the incorporation of Israel into Judah.* 20 *The promises of Christ's kingdom.*

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a ch. 1. 3.

b ch. 3. 14. &
8. 3. & 11. 24.
Luke 4. 1.

THE ^a hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out ^b in the spirit of the LORD, and set

36. "build . . . plant." The new Israel is "God's building, God's husbandry" (1 Cor. iii. 9),—Zion and Paradise conjoined.

37. "I will yet . . .," or, "Moreover for this will I . . ." It is a further promise. In ch. xiv. 3, xx. 3, God had refused "to be inquired of" by Israel. The time shall come, when they shall be allowed to ask, and He, in reply, will grant a large "multiplication" of the flock.

"increase them . . ." Lit. "multiply them [ver. 10], human beings [Heb. ADAM] as a flock," (cp. ver. 38, xxxiv. 31).

38. "the holy flock,"—the sheep that were brought up to Jerusalem to be sacrificed at the feasts (the Passover, especially). All over the desolate world such flocks should be formed;—"flocks of men," whose bodies should be presented as "*living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God*" (Rom. xii. 1, xv. 16).

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The restoration and expansion of Israel, as promised in chs. xxxiv and xxxvi, appeared to the exiles a sheer impossibility. The nation

me down in the midst of the valley which *was* full of bones,

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2 and caused me to pass by them round about : and, behold, *there were* very many in the open valley ; and, lo, *they were* very dry.

² Or, *champaign*.

3 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, ^c thou knowest.

^c Dent. 32. 39.
¹ Sam. 2. 6.
John 5. 21.
Rom. 4. 17.
² Cor. 1. 9.

4 Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these

was no more ; and its individual members, "slain" (ver. 9) by the sword of Divine justice, lay scattered over the face of the earth, a mass "of dry bones" (cp. Ps. exli. 7). For them, "cut off" (ver. 11) from the land of life, what hope of restoration?

The answer is here given. It was true that the Israel of the Old Covenant was no more. Its bones lay bleaching with those of the "uncircumcised" (ch. xxxii. 19), who had fallen "slain with the sword" on the world's great battle-field. That was because Israel by its wilful sin had "chosen death" (Dent. xxx. 19) ; for death is the inevitable doom of sin. Yet even in this its state of death, Israel shall feel the virtue of the "Everlasting Covenant" established with Abraham (cp. on ch. xxxvi. 28). He, Who "callesth the things that are not as though they were" (Rom. iv. 17), still calls them "His people" (ver. 13). He Who appointed that Abraham, when he was "as good as dead" (Heb. xi. 12), should be constituted "a father of many nations," could take them out of their state of death, and bestow on them a far higher life. What had been sown "a natural body," a carnal Israel, should be raised "a spiritual body," a "sanctified Israel" (ver. 28) ; the Church of the living God, in which God would "set His sanctuary for evermore" (ver. 26).

Obs. Since all allegorical teaching supposes that the learner is familiar with the facts from which the allegory is derived (that of the vine, for instance, in ch. xv, implying that they who heard it were well acquainted with the character of the vine) ; it is obvious (as Jerome long ago remarked) that the men, to whom Ezekiel spoke, must have been familiar with the doctrine of a Resurrection. Cp. Hos. xiii. 14, Isa. xxvi. 19.

vv. 1—14. The Vision of the Dry Bones and its Interpretation.

1. "the valley," *s.w.a.* ch. iii. 22. Previously he had been in his house (ch. xxxiii. 31 ; cp. on ch. iii. 24).

3. "thou knowest." If He *willed it*, they could (Jer. xxxii. 17 f.) ; but whether He meant so to put forth His power, was known to Himself only. The prophet's hesitation as to the possibility of Israel's national restoration no more implied ignorance or doubt respecting the "Resurrection at the last day," than did Martha's unpreparedness for an immediate restoration of Lazarus (St. John xi. 24).

4. "upon," or, "over."

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bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

^d Ps. 104. 30.
ver. 9.

5 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will ^d cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

^e ch. 6. 7.
& 35. 12.
Joel 2. 27.
& 3. 17.

6 and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; ^e and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

7 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

8 And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but *there was* no breath in them.

² Or, *breath*.

9 Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the ² wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; ^f Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

^f Ps. 104. 30.
ver. 5.

10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, ^g and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

^g Rev. 11. 11.

11 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, ^h Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.

^h Ps. 141. 7.
Isai. 49. 14.

“the word of the Lord.” By which the universe was created (Ps. xxxiii. 6); by which the dead shall be raised (St. John v. 25, 28).

5. “breath.” So in vv. 6, 8—10. In ver. 9 the word is rendered “wind,” and in vv. 1, 14, “spirit” (cp. St. John iii. 8). The Greek and Latin versions are able to keep the same word throughout.

6. “and I will.” Rather, “I will even.”

7. “noise . . . shaking.” The words are the same as in ch. iii. 12, (“voice . . . rushing.”) It is as if the “living creatures” were speeding (obedient to “the Spirit,” ch. i. 12) to clothe the bones with sinews and flesh.

8. The same order is followed as in Gen. ii. 7.

9. “son of man.” It is the word of the Lord, yet uttered by the son of man. So was foreshadowed the power of “the Word made flesh” (cp. St. John v. 25—27).

“slain” by the avenging sword (ch. xxi. 11).

11. “Our bones.” The allegory now takes a change of form. The exiles confess that Israel in its entirety is dead; and that individually they are as skeletons: their bones withered by the scorching rays of

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12 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, ¹O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and ^kbring you into the land of Israel.

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¹Isai. 26. 19.
¹¹os. 13. 14.
^kch. 36. 24.
ver. 25.

13 And ye shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves,

14 and ¹shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken *it*, and performed *it*, saith the LORD.

15 ¶ The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

16 Moreover, thou son of man, ^mtake thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for ⁿthe

Divine justice (cp. Ps. vi. 2, xxxii. 3); their "hope lost" (or, "perished," *s.w.a.* Lam. iii. 18); themselves "cut off" from communion with God (*s.w.a.* Ps. lxxxviii. 5, Lam. iii. 54). Can these "dead rise up again and praise" God? (Ps. lxxxviii. 10.)

12. "my people." In that name lay an assurance of their resurrection; cp. Exod. iii. 10, Isa. xl. 1, Joel ii. 26, 27.

"cause you to come up." The word is often used of God's bringing Israel up out of Egypt (a land of graves); as in Gen. i. 24, Exod. iii. 8, Jer. xxiii. 7.

"graves"—the "dark places" in which they lay, as men that have been "long dead" (Lam. iii. 6); buried in despairing self-reproach.

"the land of Israel;" that goodly land, into which carnal Israel could not enter (ch. xx. 38).

14. "my spirit." An initial fulfilment (cp. ch. xi. 17) was seen in the men of the Restoration, "whose spirit the Lord stirred up" (Ezra i. 5; cp. Hag. i. 14, ii. 5; Zech. iv. 6).

15 ff. The schism, which was the commencement of national dissolution, had followed upon the apostasy of Solomon. The gift of spiritual life should bring with it a restoration of unity, the "unity of the Spirit" (Eph. iv. 3).

vv. 15—28. Israel shall be re-united to Judah, and David, the Lord's Servant, shall be their Prince for ever.

Obs. Verses 15—28 are the *Haftarah* to Gen. xliv. 18—xlvii. 27; the passage which relates how Judah, by his self-devoting generosity, was the means of restoring unity to the House of Israel.

16. "stick." Lit. "wood." They could no more create organic unity between themselves, than two pieces of dry wood could make themselves one.

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children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions:

° See ver. 22,
24.

17 and ° join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.

p ch. 12. 9.
& 24. 19.

18 And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, ^p Wilt thou not shew us what thou *meanest* by these?

q Zech. 10. 6.
r ver. 16, 17.

19 ^q Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take ^r the stick of Joseph, which *is* in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, *even* with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand.

s ch. 12. 3.

20 ¶ And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand ^s before their eyes.

t ch. 36. 24.

21 And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, ^t I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land:

u Isai. 11. 13.
Jer. 3. 18.
& 50. 4.
Hos. 1. 11.
x ch. 34. 23, 24.
John 10. 16.

22 and ^u I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and ^x one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two

“his companions”—who had attached themselves to him. This included, not only Simeon and Benjamin, but Levi and individuals from other tribes.

17. “join them. . .” Or, “bring them near . . . as one stick.” It is something for divided bodies to draw as near together as may be, in friendly efforts after unity; but the living principle of unity must be God’s own gift.

19. “tribes,” or, “sceptres;” tribal sceptres.
“with him, even with.” Rather, “beside it with.” All are to be united with Judah: because “salvation came out of Judah” (St. John iv. 22, Heb. vii. 14).

“in mine hand.” Jews “from every nation under heaven” found a renewal of unity in the Church which was created by the descent of the Holy Ghost. They were all of “one heart and one soul” (Acts iv. 32; cp. St. James i. 1, Acts ii. 5, 42).

22. “one nation . . . one king.” The tribes of Israel were brought into unity, when they came to David, and said; “Behold, we are thy “bone and thy flesh” (2 Sam. v. 1—5). So the faithful are made one by their common relation to Christ, as it is said, “We are members of His body, of His flesh, of His bones” (Eph. iv. 3, 15, 16, v. 30).

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nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all :

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23 ^y neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions : but ^z I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them : so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.

^y ch. 36. 25.

^z ch. 36. 23, 29.

24 And ^a David my servant shall be king over them ; and ^b they all shall have one shepherd : ^c they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.

^a Isai. 40. 11.
Jer. 23. 5.
& 30. 9.
ch. 34. 23, 24.
Hos. 3. 5.
Luke 1. 32.

^b ver. 22.
John 10. 16.
^c ch. 36. 27.
^d ch. 36. 28.

25 ^d And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt ; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children ^e for ever : and ^f my servant David shall be their prince for ever.

^e Isai. 60. 21.
Joel 3. 20.
Amos 9. 15.
^f ver. 24.
John 12. 34.

26 Moreover I will make a ^g covenant of peace with them ; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them : and I will place them, and ^h multiply them, and will set my ⁱ sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.

^g Pa. 89. 3.
Isai. 55. 3.
Jer. 32. 40.
ch. 34. 25.
^h ch. 36. 10, 37.
ⁱ 2 Cor. 6. 16.

27 ^k My tabernacle also shall be with them : yea, I will be ^l their God, and they shall be my people.

^k Lev. 26. 11,
12. ch. 43. 7.
John 1. 14.

28 ^m And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do ⁿ sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.

^l ch. 11. 20,
& 14. 11, &
36. 28.
^m ch. 36. 23.
ⁿ ch. 20. 12.

24. "David." See on ch. xxxiv. 23.

"shall walk . . ." Joyful tidings indeed to men who grieved so bitterly over the memory of past sin (ch. xxxvi. 31); tidings that well deserved to be a second time recorded (see ch. xxxvi. 27).

26. "covenant . . ." See on ch. xxxiv. 25.

"place them." Rather, "give it them." Cp. Num. xxv. 12.

"my sanctuary." When the Temple was overthrown, God was an invisible sanctuary to His people, "for a little while" (ch. xi. 16). Hereafter He would provide a spiritual Temple, to be His Sanctuary "for evermore."

27. "My . . . also . . . : yea." Rather, "Yea, My . . . , and."

"with them." Rather, "over, (or, upon) them." God's glory, as manifested in Christ (St. John i. 14), should rest upon them (cp. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 1 St. Pet. iv. 14).

28. "for evermore," "to the end of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 20), and thenceforward for ever (Rev. xxi. 3).

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CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1 *The army, 8 and malice of Gog. 14 God's judgment against him.*

AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
2 ^a Son of man, ^b set thy face against ^c Gog, the
land of Magog, ² the chief prince of ^d Meshech and
Tubal, and prophesy against him,

^a ch. 39. 1.
^b ch. 35. 2, 3.
^c Rev. 20. 8.
² Or, *prince of the chief.*
^d ch. 32. 26.

3 and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold,
I *am* against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Me-
shech and Tubal:

^e 2 Kin. 19. 28.
ch. 23. 4. &
39. 2.

4 and ^e I will turn thee back, and put hooks into
thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine
army, horses and horsemen, ^f all of them clothed

^f ch. 23. 12.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Israel assailed by the long-foretold, final, Enemy.

Restored Israel had been promised an everlasting "covenant of peace" (ch. xxxvii. 24, 26). Were all its enemies, then, finally put down? After Edom and Egypt and the other old-world powers had disappeared, would the subtle adversary find no other agents, by whom he might assault God's earthly kingdom?

Not so. Israel's safety was guaranteed, but there would still be many surviving foes: and in the "latter days" (ver. 16) these would be combined into one vast organization by a mysterious leader, who would conceive the design of exterminating the people of God. His attempt should utterly miscarry; he and his whole host perishing "on the mountains of Israel."

The colouring of the allegory may, perhaps, have been drawn from the political history of the seventh century before Christ; when there was a large irruption of Scythians into Western Asia. But that a distant future is contemplated, is evident from vv. 8, 16; (compare Rev. xx. 7—9.)

2. "the land." Rather, "of the land." Magog, the second of Japheth's sons (between Gomer and Madai, Gen. x. 2), represents the regions which of old went by the name of Scythia (including Russia and Tartary); from which so many hordes of Kimmerians, Huns, Mongols, and Turks have issued.

"Gog" probably signifies "gigantic" (akin to Og and Agag).

"chief prince of Meshech . . .," or, "prince of Rosh, Meshech, . . ." The name "Rosh" is thought to be allied to *Rozolani*, Araxes, Russ. He comes forward as the adversary of the "Prince" mentioned in chs. xxxiv. 24, xxxvii. 25; in other words, as the enemy of Messiah,—as Antichrist.

4. "turn thee back" (ch. xxxix. 2), or, "bring thee back." He had been imprisoned (ver. 8); but is now suffered to go forth and renew his projects: only he is restrained within certain limits; held in, as a wild beast, by "hooks" in his jaws (cp. Isa. xxxvii. 29).

"all of them . . ." The language is here borrowed from the descrip-

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with all sorts of *armour*, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords :

5 Persia, Ethiopia, and ²Libya with them ; all of them with shield and helmet :

6 ^gGomer, and all his bands ; the house of ^hTogarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands : and many people with thee.

7 ⁱBe thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them.

8 ¶ ^kAfter many days ^lthou shalt be visited : in the latter years thou shalt come into the land *that is brought back from the sword*, ^mand is gathered out of many people, against ⁿthe mountains of Israel, which have been always waste : but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall ^odwell safely all of them.

9 Thou shalt ascend and come ^plike a storm, thou shalt be ^qlike a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee.

10 Thus saith the Lord God ; It shall also come to pass, *that* at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt ³think an evil thought :

11 and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwall'd villages ; I will ^rgo to them that are at rest, ^sthat dwell ⁴safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,

12 ⁵to take a spoil, and to take a prey ; to turn thine hand upon ^tthe desolate places *that are now*

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² Or, *Phut*,
ch. 27. 10.
& 30. 5.

^g Gen. 10. 2.
^h ch. 27. 14.

ⁱ Like Isaiah
8. 9. 10.
Jer. 46. 3. 4.
14. & 51. 12.

^k Gen. 49. 1.
Deut. 4. 30.
ver. 16.

^l Isai. 29. 6.
^m ver. 12.
ch. 34. 13.

ⁿ ch. 36. 1,
4, 8.

^o Jer. 23. 6.
ch. 28. 26.
& 34. 25, 28.
ver. 11.

^p Isai. 28. 2.
^q Jer. 4. 13.
ver. 16.

³ Or, *conceive*
a mischief-
ous purpose.

^r Jer. 41. 31.
^s ver. 8.

⁴ Or,
confidently.

⁵ Heb.
To spoil the
spoil, and
to prey the
prey,
ch. 29. 19.
ch. 36. 34, 35.

tion of the Assyrians and Chaldeans in ch. xxiii. 12, 24 : while that of ver. 5 takes us back to Tyre (ch. xxvii. 10) and Egypt (ch. xxx. 5). It is a resuscitation of the old world on an enlarged scale.

6. "people," "peoples" (and so in vv. 8, 9, 15, 22).

7. Gog is challenged to do his best ; to put out the whole of his skill as commander-in-chief of the invading forces.

8. "visited." Set free, for a full and final manifestation of character (cp. Isa. xxiv. 22).

"gathered . . ." under the care of the Good Shepherd (ch. xxxiv. 13, 23).

11. "at rest," or, "quiet." Man's natural conscience has enacted a rule that war should not be made on the peaceful and defenceless. He of the "Evil Thought" (ver. 10) is not to be so fettered ; (cp. St. James v. 6.)

12. "to turn thine hand." As he had brought Israel to ruin in the

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^u ver. 8.
² Heb. *navel*,
Judg. 9. 37.
^x ch. 27. 22,
23.
^y ch. 27. 15,
20.
^z ch. 27. 12.
^a See chap.
13. 3, 5.

inhabited, ^u and upon the people *that are* gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the ²midst of the land.

13 ^x Sheba, and ^y Dedan, and the merchants ^z of Tarshish, with all ^a the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?

14 ¶ Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God; ^b In that day when my people of Israel ^c dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know *it*?

15 ^d And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, ^e and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army:

16 ^f and thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; ^g it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, ^h that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

17 Thus saith the Lord God; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time ³ by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those

old time (ch. xxxvi. 2—4), so would he now seek to mar God's work of restoration, the new Israel.

“cattle and goods.” Such as a people might have, who lived in patriarchal simplicity (same words as in Gen. xxxiv. 23).

“midst of the land,” or, “centre (lit. navel) of the earth.” (Cp. on ch. v. 5.)

13. It is a world-wide movement which specially attracts the attention of the *commercial* nations of Sheba and Dedan, who carried on the land-traffic with the South and East, and of Tarshish, the queen of maritime commerce in the West. Their question is one of surprise:—“What? all this vast armament to carry off booty from so peaceful a people!”

14. “know it,” or, “take knowledge of it.”

16. “bring thee.” The enemy is urged forward by his own fierce impulse; yet is always under the control of a Hand (ver. 4), which directs all things with infinite wisdom.

“sanctified in thee.” By the judgments wrought on thee (cp. ch. xxviii. 22, Isa. v. 16).

17. “the prophets.” See especially Ps. cx. 5, 6; Joel iii. 9—11;

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days *many* years that I would bring thee against them?

18 And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, *that* my fury shall come up in my face.

19 For ⁱin my jealousy ^kand in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, ^lSurely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel;

20 so that ^mthe fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that *are* upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, ⁿand the mountains shall be thrown down, and the ^osteep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.

21 And I will ^pcall for ^qa sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: ^revery man's sword shall be against his brother.

22 And I will ^splead against him with ^tpestilence and with blood; and ^uI will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that *are* with him, an overflowing rain, and ^vgreat hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

23 Thus will I magnify myself, and ^wsanctify myself; ^xand I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

1 God's judgment upon Gog. 8 Israel's victory. 11 Gog's burial in Hamon-gog. 17 The feast of the fowls. 23 Israel, having been plagued for their sins, shall be gathered again with eternal favour.

THEREFORE, ^athou son of man, prophesy ^bagainst Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:

Before
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ⁱ ch. 34, 5, 6, & 39, 25.
^k 1's, 80, 46.
^l Hag. 2, 6, 7, Rev. 16, 18.
^m Hos. 4, 3.

ⁿ Jer. 4, 24, Nah. 1, 5, 6.
^o Or, towers, or, stairs.

^p Ps. 105, 16, P ch. 14, 17.

^q Judg. 7, 22, 1 Sam. 14, 20, 2 Chr. 20, 23.
^r Isai. 66, 16, Jer. 25, 31.

^s ch. 5, 17, t Ps. 11, 6, Isai. 29, 6, & 30, 30.

^u ch. 13, 11, Rev. 16, 21, x ch. 36, 23.

^y Ps. 9, 16, ch. 37, 28, & 39, 7, ver. 16.

Isa. xi. 4, xxiv. 17—22, lix. 19, lxvi. 15, 16:—which point to some movement of a far wider kind than any that has occurred in past history.

19. "in the land of Israel." The commotion has its origin in Israel, but affects the whole world. Cp. Hag. ii. 6, 7.

21. His host sinks down like that of Midian (Judg. vii. 20—22).

22. Most of these engines of destruction had been employed against Jerusalem (chs. v. 4, 17, xiii. 11). The last expression, "fire and brimstone," looks back to Gen. xix. 24.

Before
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² Or, *strike thee with six plagues*; or, *draw thee back with an hook of six teeth*, as ch. 33. 4.

^b ch. 33. 15.

³ Heb. *the sides of the north*.

^c ch. 38. 21. ver. 17.

^d ch. 33. 27.

⁴ Heb. *wing*.

⁵ Heb. *to devour*.

⁶ Heb. *the face of the field*.

^e ch. 38. 22. Amos 1. 4.

⁷ Or, *confidently*.

^f Ps. 72. 10.

^g ver. 22.

^h Lev. 18. 21. ch. 20. 33.

ⁱ ch. 38. 16, 23.

^k Rev. 16. 17. & 21. 6.

^l ch. 38. 17.

⁸ Or, *javelins*.

⁹ Or, *make a fire of them*.

2 and I will turn thee back, and ²leave but the sixth part of thee, ^band will cause thee to come up from ³the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel :

3 and I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand.

4 ^oThou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that *is* with thee : ^dI will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every ⁴sort, and *to* the beasts of the field ⁵to be devoured.

5 Thou shalt fall upon ⁶the open field : for I have spoken *it*, saith the Lord God.

6 ^oAnd I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell ⁷carelessly in ^fthe isles : and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

7 ^gSo will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel ; and I will not *let them* pollute my holy name any more : ⁱand the heathen shall know that I *am* the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.

8 ¶ ^kBehold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God ; this *is* the day ^lwhereof I have spoken.

9 And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the ⁸handstaves, and the spears, and they shall ⁹burn them with fire seven years :

10 so that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down *any* out of the forests ; for they

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The hostile world-power is buried out of sight for ever (vv. 1—16) ; and Israel is received back to God's everlasting favour (vv. 17—29).

2. "leave but the sixth," or, "allure thee."

4. "people that is," "peoples that are."

9. "seven years." Signifying, in allegory, the completeness of the purification which the land should undergo. All trace of what is opposed to the kingdom of Peace shall be obliterated.

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shall burn the weapons with fire: ^m and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord God.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 587.
^m Isai. 14. 2.

11 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the ² noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call *it* The valley of ³ Hamon-gog.

² Or, mouths.

³ That is,
The multi-
tude of Gog.
ⁿ Deut. 21. 23.
ver. 14, 16.

12 And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, ^a that they may cleanse the land.

13 Yea, all the people of the land shall bury *them*; and it shall be to them a renown the day that ^o I shall be glorified, saith the Lord God.

^o ch. 28. 22.

14 And they shall sever out ⁴ men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, ^p to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search.

⁴ Heb.
men of con-
tinuance.

^p ver. 12.

15 And the passengers *that* pass through the land, when *any* seeth a man's bone, then shall he ⁵ set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog.

⁵ Heb. *builtd*.

16 And also the name of the city *shall be* ⁶ Hamonah. Thus shall they ^q cleanse the land.

⁶ That is,
The multi-
tude e.
^q ver. 12.

17 ¶ And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord

11. "of graves." Instead of plunder, he shall find there a grave.

"passengers" (ver. 14); or, "transgressors" (*s. v. a.* Num. xiv. 41). The reference is taken to be to the "Valley of Salt" (2 Sam. viii. 13); which, however, was not "on the east of" the Dead Sea, though "in front of it."

"it shall stop . . .," or, "and this curbeth in the transgressors." The Valley which in the olden time had witnessed so singular a repression of human pride, should be the scene of that final act of judgment, which would make "all iniquity stop its mouth" (Ps. cvii. 42).

12. "seven months." So much weary labour would it cost to bury the remains of the dead world.

14. "with the . . .," or, "the transgressors that."

15. "Hamon-gog." That is, "The tumult of Gog."

16. "And also . . .," or, "And also the name of the City of Tumult (shall they bury),"—along with the bones of the tumultuous host (cp. Ps. ix. 5, 6).

17, 18. Comp. Isa. xxxiv. 6, 7.

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God; ^r Speak ² unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, ^s Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my ³ sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, *even* a great sacrifice ^t upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood.

¹⁸ ^u Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of ⁴ goats, of bullocks, all of them ^x fatlings of Bashan.

¹⁹ And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you.

²⁰ ^y Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, ^z with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God.

²¹ ^a And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and ^b my hand that I have laid upon them.

²² ^c So the house of Israel shall know that I *am* the LORD their God from that day and forward.

²³ ^d And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore ^e hid I my face from them, and ^f gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword.

²⁴ ^g According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them.

²⁵ Therefore thus saith the Lord God; ^h Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the ⁱ whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name;

²⁶ ^k after that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they ^l dwelt safely in their land, and none made *them* afraid.

26. "after that . . .," or, "and they shall bear . . .; when they "dwell . . ., and none maketh." Their experience of God's wondrous mercy will make them the more keenly sensible of the heinous nature of their sin. Cp. chs. xx. 41—43, xxxvi. 28—31.

27 ^m When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and ⁿ am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations;

Before
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cir. 587.

^m ch. 28, 25, 26.

ⁿ ch. 36, 23, 24, & 38, 16.

^o ch. 34, 30, ver. 22.

² Heb. *by my causing of them, &c.*

28 ^o then shall they know that I *am* the LORD their God, ² which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there.

29 ^p Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have ^q poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.

^p Isai. 54, 8.

^q Joel 2, 28.

Zech. 12, 10.

Acts 2, 17.

27. "people," "peoples."

29. "for," or, "forasmuch as." They, on whom the Spirit of God abides, must be well-pleasing to Him.

"poured out;" Joel ii. 28. They had compelled Him to pour out on them His wrath (chs. xx. 33, 34, xxi. 31, xxii. 31). Now of His own bounteous grace He pours out His Spirit upon them.

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTERS XL—XLVIII

One of the consolatory assurances, which had been granted to the prophet after the fall of Jerusalem, was (ch. xxxvii. 26), that God would make "an everlasting Covenant of Peace" with His people, and "set His sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore." In the vision of chs. xl—xlviii that assurance is embodied in a pictorial form, fitted to lay hold of the imagination of the Israelite exiles. One portion of the vision is clearly and continuously *allegorical* (ch. xlvii. 1—12). The rest of it partakes of this character, but more obscurely; the allegory forcing itself into notice only here and there (as was the case in chs. xxxviii and xxxix, in contrast with ch. xxxvii. 1—10).

The following points deserve to be noted as indicating the design of these chapters:—

1. The Temple is built "on a very high mountain" (ch. xl. 2). This takes us back to the Messianic prophecy in ch. xvii. 22, 23, where the tender twig planted on "a high mountain" grows into a majestic cedar, that overshadows the world ¹.

2. The prophet is to observe carefully what he sees and hears, and

¹ The *dimensions* of the City and Temple show that we are not to think of the literal Jerusalem, or Moriah. The sacred enclosure (ch. xlii. 15—20) is a square, whose side is above $9\frac{1}{2}$ furlongs in length; and its area twenty times greater than that of the *Haram*. The City (xlv. 6, xlvi. 15 f.) is a square whose side is $11\frac{3}{8}$ miles long, and its area above 200 times greater than that of Jerusalem. So, too, the side of the oblation (ch. xlv. 1—5) exceeds 59 miles,

while the breadth of the central part of Canaan is less than 50 miles.

The description, "*very high mountain*," is plainly unsuited to lowly Moriah. Indeed, as the "Holy oblation" had five tribes to the south of it, and the Temple stood in the northern part of the oblation, its situation would correspond rather to that of *Bethel* "the House of God;" (which is "the Church of the living God," 1 Tim. iii. 15).

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CHAPTER XL.

1 *The time, manner, and end of the vision.* 6 *The description of the east gate, 20 of the north gate, 24 of the south gate, 32 of the east gate,*

to show it to the House of Israel, "that they may be ashamed of their iniquities" (chs. xl. 4, xliii. 10). That was the end, which this vision, with its manifold ritual and architectural details, was to subservise. It was meant, above all, to impress on the minds of the people, how holy God was, and how great their guilt had been in sinning against Him.

3. There is an absence from this Temple of three things, which formed the very core of the old Levitical system; (1) the Ark of the Covenant surmounted by the Cherubim of glory, (2) the High-priesthood, and (3) the Day of Atonement. No account of this can be given, except the one which the Gospel furnishes; namely, that He, Whose glory fills the Temple (ch. xliii. 1—7), has made eternal expiation for the sins of that race whose form He condescended to wear (ch. i. 26), and is now seated as High-priest (King and Priest in one) on His throne in Heaven.

4. The ministering priests are no longer "uncircumcised in heart" (ch. xlv. 4—16); they are all sons of "Zadok," the Righteous One (cp. chs. xl. 46, xliii. 19, xlviii. 11), skilful in teaching God's people to distinguish "between the holy and the profane" (ch. xlv. 23; cp. ch. xxii. 26).

Ezekiel's vision then, containing elements like these, could not fail to supply the Church of the Exile-period with lively hopes. At a time when the suggestive rites of the Temple service were withdrawn from them, they had here, in this "labyrinth of the mysteries of God" (St. Jerome), ample material provided for their meditation. It was but a "Vision," like the prophecies of chs. i, viii—xi, xxxvii—xxxix; but like them it symbolized high spiritual truth. The very indefiniteness of the form in which it was presented was fitted to stimulate them to reflexion. If much was obscure, some portions at least could scarcely be misunderstood. All might readily gather from it, for instance, the following weighty truths:—

(1) The old Levitical Dispensation had come to a close. During its continuance, it had been only as a dramatised enigma; couched in the language of figures and types. Now it is to retire, and make room for a widely different system.

(2) God's design for the recovery of man and the sanctification of our earth was not to be frustrated because of Israel's failure. He would build up a new habitation for His glory,—a far vaster and loftier sanctuary, every part of which should be holy (chs. xl. 1—xliii. 12).

(3) God should be served in this sanctuary with purer devotion. The ministering priests should be holy and righteous. The people and their prince should be regular and reverent in their worship (chs. xliii. 13—xlv. 24).

(4) A stream of life should flow from this sanctuary over the dead, curse-stricken, world; healing its bitter waters, and changing the Desert into Eden: while the New Israel should dwell together in peace, having for a centre of unity one common City, whose glory should consist in the Lord's presence.

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35 and of the north gate. 39 Eight tables. 41 The chambers. 43 The porch of the house.

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574.

574.

IN the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth *day* of the month, in the fourteenth year after that ^a the city was smitten, in the selfsame day ^b the hand of the LORD was upon me, and brought me thither.

2 ^c In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, ^d and set me upon a very high mountain, ^e by which *was* as the frame of a city on the south.

3 And he brought me thither, and, behold, *there was* a man, whose appearance *was* ^e like the appearance of brass, ^f with a line of flax in his hand, ^g and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate.

4 And the man said unto me, ^h Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew *them* unto thee *art* thou brought hither: ⁱ declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel.

5 And behold ^k a wall on the outside of the house

CHAPTER XL.

Chs. xl—xlii. The new Temple with its Inner and Outer Courts measured and described.

1. "five-and-twentieth," B.C. 574; fifty years after the great Passover held by Josiah. The "tenth day of the first month" was the day on which the Passover lamb was set apart (Exod. xii. 3). The Passover is the only great feast mentioned by name in these chapters (see ch. xlv. 21).

"thither." No need to say "whither." It could only be to the land which was ever near his heart (ver. 2).

2. "high mountain;" ch. xvii. 22, 23; comp. ch. xx. 40, Rev. xxi. 10. The new Temple was to be the "light of the world;" it must needs stand on a lofty eminence (St. Matt. v. 14, Isa. ii. 2—5).

"by which," or, "upon which." The next verse shows that the Temple is referred to. This was so large that it seemed to have "as the frame (or, outline) of a city." The area of the sacred enclosure (ch. xlii. 15—20) is more than double that of modern Jerusalem.

3. Since the man's appearance is like that of the "living creatures" (ch. i. 7), it follows that he was an angel (compare ch. ix. 1, 2). The "line," was for land measurements (ch. xlvii. 3), the "reed," or cane, for the buildings (cp. Rev. xi. 1, xxi. 15).

5. "a wall." Probably the same as in ch. xlii. 15, 20; enclosing a large space around the outer court, to mark more strongly the distinction between the sacred and common.

round about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits *long* by the cubit and an hand breadth: so he measured the breadth of the building, one reed; and the height, one reed.

² Heb. *whose face was the way toward the east.*

6 ¶ Then came he unto the gate ² which looketh toward the east, and went up the stairs thereof, and measured the threshold of the gate, *which was* one reed broad; and the other threshold *of the gate, which was* one reed broad.

7 And *every* little chamber *was* one reed long, and one reed broad; and between the little chambers *were* five cubits; and the threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate *within was* one reed.

8 He measured also the porch of the gate *within*, one reed.

“cubits.” The common cubit contained *six*, the sacred *seven*, hand-breadths. The common Hebrew cubit has been variously estimated at $21\frac{1}{3}$, $21\frac{2}{3}$, and $21\frac{5}{8}$ English inches. If we take the second of these, the sacred cubit will be $25\frac{1}{4}$ inches; and the reed a little over $12\frac{1}{2}$ feet.

Many ancient writers take the reed to be a symbol of the “canon” (or, rule) of Holy Scripture; which forms the line of demarcation between the Church and the world. Others refer to the “rule” of Gal. vi. 16, by which it is determined who are “the Israel of God.” That rule is, in brief, conformity to the Cross of Christ. They who “walk according to that rule” enjoy “grace and mercy” (Gal. vi. 16). They, who oppose it, bring destruction on themselves (Phil. iii. 18, 19).

6—38. The main stress of the description of the Temple precincts is thrown on the gates. Their elaborate construction and the care with which their passage is guarded, mark how solemn a thing admission into the House of God must be.

The three outer gates (leading into the outer court) are described in vv. 6—26; the three inner (leading into the inner court) in vv. 27—38. The outer gateways projected forty-four cubits into the outer court. It would seem from vv. 31, 34, 37 that the inner gateways also projected into the outer court, so as to be directly opposite to the other three. But on this and other parts of the description there is great difference of opinion among commentators.

6. “the stairs.” Consisting of seven steps (vv. 22, 26).

7. “little chamber,” or, “cell;” for a guard, or sentry.

The whole length of the gateway was fifty cubits (ver. 15). At each end was a porch six cubits long, and the space occupied by the cells was twenty-eight cubits. The remaining ten cubits may have belonged to two colonnades like that mentioned in ver. 30 (each measuring twenty-five cubits by five cubits). The whole breadth was twenty-five cubits (ver. 13).

“within.” That is, at the western end of the gateway.

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9 Then measured he the porch of the gate, eight cubits; and the posts thereof, two cubits; and the porch of the gate *was* inward.

10 And the little chambers of the gate eastward *were* three on this side, and three on that side; they three *were* of one measure: and the posts had one measure on this side and on that side.

11 And he measured the breadth of the entry of the gate, ten cubits; *and* the length of the gate, thirteen cubits.

12 The ²space also before the little chambers *was* one cubit *on this side*, and the space *was* one cubit on that side: and the little chambers *were* six cubits on this side, and six cubits on that side.

13 He measured then the gate from the roof of *one* little chamber to the roof of another: the breadth *was* five and twenty cubits, door against door.

14 He made also posts of threescore cubits, even unto the post of the court round about the gate.

15 And from the face of the gate of the entrance unto the face of the porch of the inner gate *were* fifty cubits.

16 And *there were* ¹³narrow windows to the little chambers, and to their posts within the gate round about, and likewise to the ⁴arches: and windows *were* round about ⁵inward: and upon *each* post *were* palm trees.

17 Then brought he me into ^mthe outward court, and, lo, *there were* ⁿchambers, and a pavement made for the court round about: ^othirty chambers *were* upon the pavement.

18 And the pavement by the side of the gates over against the length of the gates *was* the lower pavement.

19 Then he measured the breadth from the fore-

15. "fifty;" the number which is symbolic of renovation and restoration (as in the cases of the Jubile-year and Pentecost).

16. "palm-trees;" the symbol of life triumphing over death.

17. "thirty." Probably, five on either side of each of the three gateways.

18. "over against," or, "in a line with." The pavement formed a broad border in front of the chambers, its margin being in a line with the end of the gateway.

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574.

² Or, from
without.

³ Heb. whose
face was.

⁴ Or,
galleries,
or, porches.

front of the lower gate unto the forefront of the inner court ² without, an hundred cubits eastward and northward.

20 ¶ And the gate of the outward court ³ that looked toward the north, he measured the length thereof, and the breadth thereof.

21 And the little chambers thereof *were* three on this side and three on that side; and the posts thereof and the ⁴arches thereof were after the measure of the first gate: the length thereof *was* fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.

22 And their windows, and their arches, and their palm trees, *were* after the measure of the gate that looketh toward the east; and they went up unto it by seven steps; and the arches thereof *were* before them.

23 And the gate of the inner court *was* over against the gate toward the north, and toward the east; and he measured from gate to gate an hundred cubits.

24 ¶ After that he brought me toward the south, and behold a gate toward the south: and he measured the posts thereof and the arches thereof according to these measures.

25 And *there were* windows in it and in the arches thereof round about, like those windows: the length *was* fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.

26 And *there were* seven steps to go up to it, and the arches thereof *were* before them: and it had palm trees, one on this side, and another on that side, upon the posts thereof.

27 And *there was* a gate in the inner court toward the south: and he measured from gate to gate toward the south an hundred cubits.

28 And he brought me to the inner court by the south gate: and he measured the south gate according to these measures;

19. "and northward." After finishing the measurement on the east side, he advanced and measured the north side.

26. There was no entrance to the Temple from the west (cp. on ch. xli. 12).

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29 and the little chambers thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, according to these measures: and *there were* windows in it and in the arches thereof round about: *it was* fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits broad.

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574.

30 And the arches round about *were* ^P five and twenty cubits long, and five cubits ² broad.

^P See ver. 21, & 25, & 33, & 36.

31 And the arches thereof *were* toward the utter court; and palm trees *were* upon the posts thereof: and the going up to it *had* eight steps.

² Heb. breadth.

32 ¶ And he brought me into the inner court toward the east: and he measured the gate according to these measures.

33 And the little chambers thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, *were* according to these measures: and *there were* windows therein and in the arches thereof round about: *it was* fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits broad.

34 And the arches thereof *were* toward the outward court; and palm trees *were* upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it *had* eight steps.

35 ¶ And he brought me to the north gate, and measured *it* according to these measures;

36 the little chambers thereof, the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, and the windows to it round about: the length *was* fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.

37 And the posts thereof *were* toward the utter court; and palm trees *were* upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it *had* eight steps.

38 And the chambers and the entries thereof *were* by the posts of the gates, where they washed the burnt offering.

39 ¶ And in the porch of the gate *were* two tables on this side, and two tables on that side, to slay

31. "eight" is the signature of the new Covenant, as "seven" (ver. 22) of the old.

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^q Lev. 4. 2, 3.

^r Lev. 5. 6. &
6. 6. & 7. 1.

² Or, at
the step.

thereon the burnt offering and ^a the sin offering and ^r the trespass offering.

40 And at the side without, ² as one goeth up to the entry of the north gate, *were* two tables; and on the other side, which *was* at the porch of the gate, *were* two tables.

41 Four tables *were* on this side, and four tables on that side, by the side of the gate; eight tables, whereupon they slew *their sacrifices*.

42 And the four tables *were* of hewn stone for the burnt offering, of a cubit and an half long, and a cubit and an half broad, and one cubit high: whereupon also they laid the instruments wherewith they slew the burnt offering and the sacrifice.

³ Or, end-
irons, or, the
two hearth-
stones.

43 And within *were* ³ hooks, an hand broad, fastened round about: and upon the tables *was* the flesh of the offering.

⁶¹ Chr. 6. 31.

44 ¶ And without the inner gate *were* the chambers of ^s the singers in the inner court, which *was* at the side of the north gate; and their prospect *was* toward the south: one at the side of the east gate *having* the prospect toward the north.

¹ Lev. 8. 35.
Num. 3. 27,
28, 32, 33.
& 18. 5.

¹ Chr. 9. 23.
² Chr. 13. 11.
Ps. 134. 1.

⁴ Or, ward,
or, ordi-
nance: And
so ver. 46.

^u Num. 18. 5.
ch. 44. 15.

^x 1 Kin. 2. 35.
ch. 43. 19.
& 44. 15, 16.

45 And he said unto me, This chamber, whose prospect *is* toward the south, *is* for the priests, ^t the keepers of the ⁴ charge of the house.

46 And the chamber whose prospect *is* toward the north *is* for the priests, ^u the keepers of the charge of the altar: these *are* the sons of ^x Zadok among the sons of Levi, which come near to the LORD to minister unto him.

47 So he measured the court, an hundred cubits long, and an hundred cubits broad, foursquare; and the altar *that was* before the house.

46. The High-priesthood promised to the family of Phinehas (Num. xxv. 13) had passed into the line of Ithamar, to which Eli and Abiathar belonged (1 Kings ii. 27, 1 Chron. xxiv. 3, 6). When Abiathar proved unfaithful, he was deposed, and Zadok, of the line of Phinehas (1 Chron. vi. 50—53), was put in his place (1 Kings ii. 35). The name "Zadok" signifies "Righteous."

Obs. In that new dispensation God would have those to minister before Him whose character was moulded on that of "the King of Righteousness" (Heb. vii. 2).

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48 ¶ And he brought me to the porch of the house, and measured *each* post of the porch, five cubits on this side, and five cubits on that side: and the breadth of the gate *was* three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that side.

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49 ¶ The length of the porch *was* twenty cubits, ¹ and the breadth eleven cubits; and *he brought me* by the steps whereby they went up to it: and *there were* ² pillars by the posts, one on this side, and ² another on that side.

CHAPTER XLI.

The measures, parts, chambers, and ornaments of the temple.

AFTERWARD he brought me to the temple, and measured the posts, six cubits broad on the one side, and six cubits broad on the other side, *which was* the breadth of the tabernacle.

2 And the breadth of the ² door *was* ten cubits; ² and the sides of the door *were* five cubits on the one side, and five cubits on the other side: and he measured the length thereof, forty cubits: and the breadth, twenty cubits.

3 Then went he inward, and measured the post of the door, two cubits; and the door, six cubits; and the breadth of the door, seven cubits.

4 So ^a he measured the length thereof, twenty cubits; and the breadth, twenty cubits, before the temple: and he said unto me, *This is* the most holy place.

5 After he measured the wall of the house, six cubits; and the breadth of *every* side chamber, four cubits, round about the house on every side.

6 ^b And the side chambers *were* three, ³ one over

48. "the house." The Temple proper. These two verses belong to the next chapter.

CHAPTER XLI.

1. "of the tabernacle." The breadth of the old Tabernacle was twelve cubits, which is equal to the thickness of the two walls of the Temple now seen in vision (cp. ver. 5).

3. "inward," toward the Holy of Holies.

6. There were three tiers of chambers, each tier containing thirty; probably twelve on each side of the House, and six at the west-end.

The beams of these side-chambers rested on rebatements of the Temple

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² Or, *three and thirty times, or, foot.*

³ Heb. *be holden.*

⁴ Heb. *it was made broader, and went round.*

^c 1 Kin, 6. 8.

another, and ² thirty in order; and they entered into the wall which *was* of the house for the side chambers round about, that they might ³ have hold, but they had not hold in the wall of the house.

7 And ^{4c} *there was* an enlarging, and a winding about still upward to the side chambers: for the winding about of the house went still upward round about the house: therefore the breadth of the house *was still* upward, and so increased *from* the lowest chamber to the highest by the midst.

^d ch. 41. 5.

8 I saw also the height of the house round about: the foundations of the side chambers *were* ^d a full reed of six great cubits.

9 The thickness of the wall, which *was* for the side chamber without, *was* five cubits: and *that* which *was* left *was* the place of the side chambers that *were* within.

10 And between the chambers *was* the wideness of twenty cubits round about the house on every side.

11 And the doors of the side chambers *were* toward *the place that was* left, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south: and the breadth of the place that was left *was* five cubits round about.

12 Now the building that *was* before the separate place at the end toward the west *was* seventy cubits broad; and the wall of the building *was* five cubits thick round about, and the length thereof ninety cubits.

13 So he measured the house, an hundred cubits long; and the separate place, and the building, with the walls thereof, an hundred cubits long;

wall; and were not inserted into the wall. So in the spiritual Temple:—the various communities of the faithful are built up on Him, “in Whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily;” yet the distinction between Him and them remains. Their personality is not absorbed in, or confounded with, His.

9. “five cubits.” Very precious must have been the treasures, which such walls were meant to guard.

12. The “separate place,” corresponds in position to the gate *Shallé keth*, of Solomon’s Temple (1 Chron. xxvi. 16); through which the sweepings of the Temple were thrown. It may be the “appointed place,” in which the carcase of the sin-offering was to be burnt (ch. xliii. 21; cp. ch. xlii. 13).

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14 also the breadth of the face of the house, and of the separate place toward the east, an hundred cubits.

15 And he measured the length of the building over against the separate place which *was* behind it, and the ² galleries thereof on the one side and on the other side, an hundred cubits, with the inner temple, and the porches of the court ;

² Or, several walls, or walls with pillars.

16 the door posts, and ⁶ the narrow windows, and the galleries round about on their three stories, over against the door, ³ cieled with wood round about, ⁴ and from the ground up to the windows, and the windows *were* covered ;

⁶ ch. 40. 16. ver. 26.

³ Heb. *cieling of wood.*

⁴ Or, and the ground unto the windows.

17 to that above the door, even unto the inner house, and without, and by all the wall round about within and without, by ⁵ measure.

⁵ Heb. measures.

18 And *it was* made ^f with cherubims and palm trees, so that a palm tree *was* between a cherub and a cherub ; and *every* cherub had two faces ;

^f 1 Kin. 6. 29.

19 ^g so that the face of a man *was* toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side : *it was* made through all the house round about.

^g See chap. 1. 10.

20 From the ground unto above the door *were* cherubims and palm trees made, and *on* the wall of the temple.

21 The ⁶ posts of the temple *were* squared, and the face of the sanctuary ; the appearance *of the one* as the appearance *of the other*.

⁶ Heb. post.

22 ^h The altar of wood *was* three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits ; and the corners thereof, and the length thereof, and the walls thereof, *were* of wood : and he said unto me, This *is* ⁱ the table that *is* ^k before the LORD.

^h Ex. 30. 1.

ⁱ ch. 44 16. Mal. 1 7, 12.
^k Ex. 30. 8.

18. "two faces." The carved work admitted only of two: probably, two adjacent ones, as of the man and the ox (ch. i. 10).

21. "as the appearance." The Holy place and the Most Holy were adorned in the same way.

22. This "altar" being entirely of wood (not overlaid with gold) could not be meant for the burning of incense.

As there is no Ark in the Most Holy, so in the Holy place there is neither incense-altar nor lamp nor table of shew-bread. The only article of furniture present is altar and table in one; as in our Christian churches. See ch. xlv. 16.

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23 ¹ And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors.

¹ 1 Kings 6.
31,—35.

24 And the doors had two leaves *apiece*, two turning leaves; two *leaves* for the one door, and two leaves for the other *door*.

25 And *there were* made on them, on the doors of the temple, cherubims and palm trees, like as *were* made upon the walls; and *there were* thick planks upon the face of the porch without.

^m ch. 40. 16.
ver. 16.

26 And *there were* ^m narrow windows and palm trees on the one side and on the other side, on the sides of the porch, and *upon* the side chambers of the house, and thick planks.

CHAPTER XLII.

1 *The chambers for the priests.* 13 *The use thereof.* 19 *The measures of the outward court.*

^a ch. 41. 12,
15.

THEN he brought me forth into the utter court, the way toward the north: and he brought me into ^a the chamber that *was* over against the separate place, and which *was* before the building toward the north.

2 Before the length of an hundred cubits *was* the north door, and the breadth *was* fifty cubits.

^b ch. 41. 16.

3 Over against the twenty *cubits* which *were* for the inner court, and over against the pavement which *was* for the utter court, *was* ^b gallery against gallery in three *stories*.

4 And before the chambers *was* a walk of ten cubits breadth inward, a way of one^c cubit; and their doors toward the north.

² Or, *did eat of these.*

³ Or, and the building consisted of the lower and the middlemost.

5 Now the upper chambers *were* shorter: for the galleries ² were higher than these, ³ than the lower, and than the middlemost of the building.

6 For they *were* in three *stories*, but had not pillars as the pillars of the courts: therefore *the building* was straitened more than the lowest and the middlemost from the ground.

7 And the wall that *was* without over against the chambers, toward the utter court on the forepart of the chambers, the length thereof *was* fifty cubits.

8 For the length of the chambers that *were* in the utter court *was* fifty cubits: and, lo, before the temple *were* an hundred cubits.

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9 And ²from under these chambers *was* ³the entry on the east side, ⁴as one goeth into them from the utter court.

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10 The chambers *were* in the thickness of the wall of the court toward the east, over against the separate place, and over against the building.

² Or, *from the place.*
³ Or, *he that brought me.*
⁴ Or, *as he came.*

11 And ^cthe way before them *was* like the appearance of the chambers which *were* toward the north, as long as they, *and* as broad as they: and all their goings out *were* both according to their fashions, and according to their doors.

c ver. 4.

12 And according to the doors of the chambers that *were* toward the south *was* a door in the head of the way, *even* the way directly before the wall toward the east, as one entereth into them.

13 ¶ Then said he unto me, The north chambers *and* the south chambers, which *are* before the separate place, they *be* holy chambers, where the priests that approach unto the LORD ^dshall eat the most holy things: there shall they lay the most holy things, and ^ethe meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering; for the place *is* holy.

d Lev. 6. 16,
26. & 24. 9.

e Lev. 2. 3,
10. & 6. 14,
17. 25. 29.
& 7. 1. &
10. 13. 14.
Num. 18.
9, 10.

14 ^fWhen the priests enter therein, then shall they not go out of the holy *place* into the utter court, but there they shall lay their garments wherein they minister; for they *are* holy; and shall put on other garments, and shall approach to *those things* which *are* for the people.

f ch. 44. 19.

15 Now when he had made an end of measuring the inner house, he brought me forth toward the gate whose prospect *is* toward the east, and measured it round about.

CHAPTER XLII.

14. Compare the injunction in ch. xlv. 19. The priesthood was ordained for the sanctifying of God's Name among the people. The priest was "taken from among men" to minister to God "on behalf of "men," but he was still "compassed with infirmity" (Heb. v. 1, 2). What, indeed, were his vestments but a confession of his *personal* unworthiness to appear before God? He must not, then, make use of these for his own aggrandizement.

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² Heb. *wind*.

16 He measured the east ² side with the measuring reed, five hundred reeds, with the measuring reed round about.

17 He measured the north side, five hundred reeds, with the measuring reed round about.

18 He measured the south side, five hundred reeds, with the measuring reed.

19 He turned about to the west side, *and* measured five hundred reeds with the measuring reed.

g ch. 40. 5.

h ch. 45. 2.

20 He measured it by the four sides: ^g it had a wall round about, ^h five hundred *reeds* long, and five hundred broad, to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place.

CHAPTER XLIII.

a ch. 10. 19.
& 44. 1. &
46. 1.

b ch. 11. 23.

c ch. 1. 21.
Rev. 1. 15
& 14. 2. &
19. 1. 6.

d ch. 10. 4.
Rev. 18. 1.

e ch. 1. 4, 28.
& 8. 4.

² Or, *when I came to prophesy that the city should be destroyed:*

See ch. 9. 1, 5.

f So Jer. 1. 10.

1 *The returning of the glory of God into the temple.* 7 *The sin of Israel hindered God's presence.* 10 *The prophet exhorteth them to repentance, and observation of the law of the house.* 13 *The measures, 18 and the ordinances of the altar.*

AFTERWARD he brought me to the gate, *even* the gate ^a that looketh toward the east:

2 ^b and, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and ^c his voice *was* like a noise of many waters: ^d and the earth shined with his glory.

3 And *it was* ^e according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, *even* according to the vision that I saw ² when I came ^f to destroy the city: and the

16. "five hundred reeds," or, about 6250 feet (see on ^g ch. xl. 5).

CHAPTER XLIII.

Thus far the prophet has seen the body of the new Temple, with its bones and sinews and flesh and skin, but "no breath in it." Now he shall see it quickened, by the entrance into it of "the glory of the Lord;" a glory, which is no longer hidden in "thick darkness;" for "the earth shines" with its rays (ver. 2). It is the glory which proceeds from Him Who is seated in the likeness of man "above all."

vv. 1—12. The Glory of the Lord enters the Temple, making the whole of the Mountain-top holy.

1. "the gate;" of the Outer Court (cp. ch. xlv. 1, 2). By that gate the glory had taken its departure (ch. x. 19, xi. 23).

2. "God of Israel." As in Exod. xxiv. 10. (Cp. on ch. i. 26.)

"shined." Lit. "gave light." Cp. Rev. xviii. 1.

3. "to destroy." Nebuchadnezzar had been the instrument; the

visions *were* like the vision that I saw ^s by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face.

4 ^h And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect *is* toward the east.

5 ⁱ So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, ^k the glory of the LORD filled the house.

6 And I heard *him* speaking unto me out of the house; and ^l the man stood by me.

7 And he said unto me, Son of man, ^m the place of my throne, and ⁿ the place of the soles of my feet, ^o where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel ^p no more defile, *neither* they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by ^q the carcases of their kings in their high places.

8 ^r In their setting of their threshold by my thresholds, and their post by my posts, ² and the wall between me and them, they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger.

9 Now let them put away their whoredom, and ^s the carcases of their kings, far from me, ^t and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever.

10 ¶ Thou son of man, ^u shew the house to the

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^s ch. 1. 3.
& 3. 23.
^h See ch. 10.
D. & 41. 2.

ⁱ ch. 3. 12,
14 & 8. 3.
^k 1 Kin. 8. 10,
11. ch. 41. 4.

^l ch. 40. 3.

^m Ps. 99. 1.
ⁿ 1 Chr. 28. 2.
Ps. 99. 5.

^o Ex. 29. 45.
Ps. 68. 16.
& 1:2. 14.
Joel 3. 17.
John 1. 14.

^p 2 Cor. 6. 16.
^q ch. 39. 7.

^r Lev. 26. 30.
Jer. 16. 18.

^s See 2 Kings
16. 14. &
21. 4, 5, 7.

ch. 8. 3.
& 23. 39.
& 41. 7.

² Or, *for*
there was
but a wall
between me
and them.

^s ver. 7.
^t ver. 7.

^u ch. 40. 4.

cause was the word of God, which had been spoken by the prophet's mouth seven years beforehand. Cp. ch. xxx. 10.

7. In the old Temple the Cherubim had been symbolically God's "throne," and the Mercy-seat His "footstool" (Ps. xcix. 1, 5; 1 Chron. xxviii. 2). Now He reigns in His Church really.

"the carcases of their kings." Probably, the "idols" which the kings had set up to displace the "living God;"—corrupt, abominable things (cp. ch. viii. 10, Lev. xxvi. 30, Jer. xvi. 18), chosen in preference to the holy and glorious Lord.

8. "and the wall," or, "with the wall." There was but a wall between the House of God and the idol-shrines (2 Kings xxi. 5; cp. ch. viii. 3—16). The germ of the evil, however, seems to have existed in those gorgeous palaces, which Solomon built for himself and Pharaoh's daughter on the southern part of Moriah,—so nearly in a position of rivalry with the Temple. Compare 1 Kings ix. 10 with 2 Kings xxv. 9.

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² Or, *sum*,
cr, *number*.

house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities : and let them measure the ² pattern.

11 And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof : and write *it* in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.

^x ch. 40. 2.

12 This *is* the law of the house ; Upon ^x the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about *shall be* most holy. Behold, this *is* the law of the house.

^v ch. 40. 5.
& 41. 8.

² Heb. *bosom*.

⁴ Heb. *tip*.

13 ¶ And these *are* the measures of the altar after the cubits : ^v The cubit *is* a cubit and an hand breadth ; even the ³ bottom *shall be* a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by the ⁴ edge thereof round about *shall be* a span : and this *shall be* the higher place of the altar.

⁵ Heb. *Harel*,
that is, *the*
mountain
of God.

⁶ Heb. *Ariel*,
that is, *the*
lion of God,
Isai. 29. 1.

14 And from the bottom *upon* the ground *even* to the lower settle *shall be* two cubits, and the breadth one cubit ; and from the lesser settle *even* to the greater settle *shall be* four cubits, and the breadth *one* cubit.

15 So ⁵ the altar *shall be* four cubits ; and from ⁶ the altar and upward *shall be* four horns.

10. "pattern." The elaborate details of the vision were meant to set forth the perfect sanctity of Him, Whom Israel had slighted.

11. "if they be ashamed." The first requisite of all was repentance (St. Matt. iii. 2).

12. "This is the law." Ps. xciii. 5 ; Rev. xxi. 27. None must enter who do not conform to this law.

vv. 13—27. The consecration of the Altar of Burnt-offering.

13. "higher place," or "base."

15. Two different words are here rendered "altar:" (1) *Har-el*, which means "Mount of God;" and (2) *Aryel*, or *Arieyl*, meaning "Lion of God" (cp. Isa. xxix. 1), or, "I will provide a ram." The altar was a miniature of Mount Moriah ; that mount, on which should be offered the One True Sacrifice, in which both Isaac and the substituted ram (Gen. xxii. 6, 13, 14) would find their Antitype.

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16 And the altar *shall be twelve cubits long, twelve broad, square in the four squares thereof.*

17 And the settle *shall be fourteen cubits long and fourteen broad in the four squares thereof; and the border about it shall be half a cubit; and the bottom thereof shall be a cubit about; and* ^z his stairs shall look toward the east.

^z See Exod. 20. 26.

18 ¶ And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; These *are* the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and to ^a sprinkle blood thereon.

^a Lev. 1. 5.

19 And thou shalt give to ^b the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord GOD, ^c a young bullock for a sin offering.

^b ch. 44. 15.

^c Ex. 29. 10, 12.
Lev. 8. 14, 15.
ch. 45. 18, 19.

20 And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put *it* on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it.

21 Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin offering, and he ^d shall burn it in the appointed place of the house, ^e without the sanctuary.

^d Ex. 29. 14.

^e Heb. 13. 11.

22 And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse *it* with the bullock.

23 When thou hast made an end of cleansing *it*, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish.

24 And thou shalt offer them before the LORD, ^f and the priests shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up *for* a burnt offering unto the LORD.

^f Lev. 2. 13.

25 ^g Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat *for* a sin offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without blemish.

^g Ex. 29. 35, 36.
Lev. 8. 33.

26 Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall ² consecrate themselves.

² Heb. *fill their hands*,
Ex. 23. 24.

24. "salt." The symbol of incorruption: compare Lev. ii. 13, St. Mark ix. 45.

26. "consecrate themselves." Rather, "consecrate it." Through-

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^h Lev. 9. 1.

² Or, *thank offerings.*

ⁱ Job 42. 8.
ch. 29. 40, 41.

Rom. 12. 1.
1 Pet. 2. 5.

27 ^h And when these days are expired, it shall be, *that* upon the eighth day, and *so* forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your ² peace offerings; and I will ⁱ accept you, saith the Lord God.

CHAPTER XLIV.

1 The east gate assigned only to the prince. 4 The priests reproved for polluting of the sanctuary. 9 Idolaters incapable of the priest's office. 15 The sons of Zadok are accepted thereto. 17 Ordinances for the priests.

^a ch. 43. 1.

WHEN he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary ^a which looketh toward the east; and it *was* shut.

^b ch. 43. 4.

2 Then said the LORD unto me; This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; ^b because the LORD, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut.

out vv. 18—27 the altar is the prominent object. Here it actually supplies the (vacant) place of the High-priest: for the phrase rendered "consecrate" is used of the consecration of Aaron or his sons in Exod. xxviii. 41, xxix. 9, 29, 33, 35; Lev. viii. 33, xvi. 33, xxi. 10; Num. iii. 3. The allegory, then, points to Him Who is not only High-priest and Victim, but Altar also (cp. Heb. xiii. 10). "He," says St. Cyril of Alexandria, "is our Altar: He too is our Incense and our High-priest."

Obs. The consecration of Aaron and of the altar run into one another in a remarkable way in Exod. xxix. 35—37 and Lev. viii. 9—12.

27. "and so forward." In vv. 19—25 there was repeated mention of the "sin-offering." When the altar has been fully consecrated, they bring their "burnt-offerings," expressive of entire devotion to the will of God, and "peace-offerings," the means of holding communion with Him.

CHAPTER XLIV.

chs. xlv—xlvi. Ordinances concerning the Princes and the Priests of restored Israel.

The sins of the kings and priests had contributed largely to Israel's fall. Now they are to have no human *king* among them, but a prince, or civil governor, who would act in perfect subordination to the Divine Law; and their *priests* shall be true servants of God, circumcised in heart and clothed with righteousness.

2. No creature may be associated with the Lord of Glory. The Church, in her nearest approaches to the Throne of grace, makes the confession:—"Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord."

EZEKIEL, XLIV.

3 *It is* for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to ^ceat bread before the LORD; ^dhe shall enter by the way of the porch of *that* gate, and shall go out by the way of the same.

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^c Gen. 31. 54.
^d 1 Cor. 10. 13.
^e ch. 46. 2, 8.

4 ¶ Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house: and I looked, and, ^ebehold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD: ^fand I fell upon my face.

^e ch. 3. 23.
& 43. 5.

^f ch. 1. 28.

5 And the LORD said unto me, ^gSon of man, ^hmark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the LORD, and all the laws thereof; and mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary.

^g ch. 40. 4.

^h Heb. *set*
thine heart.

6 And thou shalt say to the ⁱrebellious, *even* to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; O ye house of Israel, ^jlet it suffice you of all your abominations,

ⁱ ch. 2. 5.

^j ch. 45. 9.

^k 1 Pet. 4. 3.

^l ch. 43. 8.

ver. 9.

Acts 21. 28.

^m Heb.

children of

a stranger.

ⁿ Lev. 22. 25.

^o Lev. 26. 41.

Deut. 10. 16.

Acts 7. 51.

^p Lev. 21. 6,

8, 17, 21.

^q Lev. 3. 16,

& 17. 11.

^r Lev. 22. 2,

&c.

^s Or, *ward,*

or, *ordi-*

nance: And

so ver. 14, &

16, & ch. 40,

45.

7 ^kin that ye have brought *into my sanctuary* ^lstrangers, ^muncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, *even* my house, when ye offer ⁿmy bread, ^othe fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations.

8 And ye have not ^pkept the charge of mine holy things: but ye have set keepers of my ^qcharge in my sanctuary for yourselves.

3. "It is for . . ." or, "The prince indeed, he as prince shall sit in it." He may not pass through it; but, when he brings his offering, he may enter it from the court, returning as he entered. Cp. ch. xlvi. 2, 12.

"eat bread." Compare St. Luke xiv. 15.

4. The North Gate had been especially desecrated (ch. viii. 3).

6. "let it suffice you." The same phrase is used in Deut. i. 6, ii. 3; where Moses tells the people they have reached the term of their wanderings in the wilderness. Now Israel's long pilgrimage in the "wilderness of the peoples" (ch. xx. 35) is accomplished. Similarly St. Peter, addressing the "royal priesthood," says: "Sufficient for us is 'the time past of our lives to have wrought the will of the Gentiles'" (1 St. Pet. iv. 3).

7. "uncircumcised. . ." Because they were without purity of heart, the mark of the true Israel (Ps. lxxiii. 1), "their circumcision was 'made uncircumcision'" (Rom. ii. 24). Cp. Lev. xxvi. 41.

8. "for yourselves," after your own will (cp. on ch. xiii. 18): with an eye to your worldly interests.

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^q ver. 7.

9 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; ^qNo stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel.

^r See 2 Kings 23. 8, &c.
² Chr. 29. 4.
5. ch. 48. 11.

10 ^r And the Levites that are gone away far from me, when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols; they shall even bear their iniquity.

11 Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, ^shaving charge at the gates of the house, and ministering to the house: ^tthey shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and ^uthey shall stand before them to minister unto them.

12 Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and ^x²caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; therefore have I ^ylifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their iniquity.

13 ^z And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, in the most holy place: but they shall ^abear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed.

14 But I will make them ^bkeepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein.

15 ¶ ^c But the priests the Levites, ^dthe sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary ^ewhen the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they ^fshall stand before me to offer unto me ^gthe fat and the blood, saith the Lord GOD:

16 they shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to ^hmy table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge.

17 ¶ And it shall come to pass, *that* when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, ⁱthey shall be clothed with linen garments; and no wool shall

10. "Levites." The unfaithful *priests* are included.

"went astray." Cp. ch. xiv. 11.

17. On "linen," as a symbol of purity, see Rev. xix. 8.

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come upon them, whiles they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within.

18 ^k They shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, and shall have linen breeches upon their loins; they shall not gird *themselves* ^{2 3} with any thing that causeth sweat.

19 And when they go forth into the utter court, *even* into the utter court to the people, ¹ they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments; and they shall ^m not sanctify the people with their garments.

20 ⁿ Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long; they shall only poll their heads.

21 ^o Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into the inner court.

22 Neither shall they take for their wives a ^p widow, nor her that is ⁴ put away: but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow ⁵ that had a priest before.

23 And ^q they shall teach my people *the difference* between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.

24 And ^r in controversy they shall stand in judgment; *and* they shall judge it according to my judgments: and they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies; ^s and they shall hallow my sabbaths.

25 And they shall come at no ^t dead person to defile themselves: but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband, they may defile themselves.

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^k Ex. 28. 40,
42. & 39. 28.

^{2 Or,}
in sweat-
ing places.

³ Heb. *in, or,*
with sweat.

¹ ch. 42. 14.

^m ch. 46. 20.
See Ex. 21,
37. & 30. 29.

Lev. 6. 27.
Matt. 23. 17,
19.

ⁿ Lev. 21. 5.

^o Lev. 10. 9.

^p Lev. 21. 7,
13, 14.

⁴ Heb. *thrust*
forth.

⁵ Heb. *from*
a priest.

^q Lev. 10. 10,
11.

ch. 22. 26.
Mal. 2. 7.

^r Deut. 17. 8,
&c.

² Chron. 13.
8, 10.

^s See chap.
22. 26.

^t Lev. 21. 1,
&c.

19. "shall not sanctify . . ." Cp. chs. xlii. 14, xlii. 20. The people were truly sanctified, when the priests discharged their own duties with lowly reverence; not when there was a lax commingling of things sacred and common.

20. "We ought not," says St. Jerome, "to have shaven heads, like the "priests of Isis; nor yet to wear our hair long, as voluptuaries do. "Shaven heads belong to pagan superstition." True religion will be sober-minded; not affecting to extirpate nature, but keeping it under orderly rule.

Most of the provisions in vv. 20—31 are old laws re-enacted; in some cases (vv. 22, 26) with additional stringency.

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26 And ^uafter he is cleansed, they shall reckon unto him seven days.

27 And in the day that he goeth into the sanctuary, ^xunto the inner court, to minister in the sanctuary, ^yhe shall offer his sin offering, saith the Lord GOD.

28 And it shall be unto them for an inheritance: ^zI *am* their inheritance: and ye shall give them no possession in Israel: I *am* their possession.

29 ^aThey shall eat the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering; and ^bevery ²dedicated thing in Israel shall be their's.

30 And the ^{3c}first of all the firstfruits of all *things*, and every oblation of all, of every *sort* of your oblations, shall be the priest's: ye ^dshall also give unto the priest the first of your dough, ^ethat he may cause the blessing to rest in thine house.

31 The priests shall not eat of any thing that is ^fdead of itself, or torn, whether it be fowl or beast.

CHAPTER XLV.

² Heb. when ye cause the land to fall. ¹ The portion of land for the sanctuary, 6 for the city, 7 and for the prince. ⁹ Ordinances for the prince.

MOREOVER, ²when ye shall ^adivide by lot the land for inheritance, ye shall ^boffer an oblation unto the LORD, ³an holy portion of the land: the

28. "I am their inheritance." In this the Levites represented spiritual Israel at large (Ps. xvi. 5).

30. "that he may cause." Rather, "to cause." By caring for the priest they obtained a blessing from Him whose servant the priest was (Mal. iii. 10).

Obs. Our Lord's promise is that even a cup of cold water, given to one of His little ones "in the name of a disciple," shall in no wise lose its reward.

CHAPTER XLV.

Of old the Ark had resided in the territory of one tribe; Ephraim, or Judah. The royal city, too, had belonged to one tribe. Now the Temple is to stand in the centre of the land, in a domain of its own: and the metropolis is to be the common property of all the tribes.

The prince, moreover, is not a monarch; but a defender of the priests and Levites and of the common city.

1. That "reeds" (and not "cubits") is the proper unit to supply is clear from ver. 2; for we know that the Sanctuary was 500 reeds square (ch. xlii. 19, 20).

length *shall be* the length of five and twenty thousand *reeds*, and the breadth *shall be* ten thousand. This *shall be* holy in all the borders thereof round about.

2 Of this there shall be for the sanctuary ^c five hundred *in length*, with five hundred *in breadth*, square round about; and fifty cubits round about for the ² suburbs thereof. c ch. 42. 20.

3 And of this measure shalt thou measure the length of five and twenty thousand, and the breadth of ten thousand: ^d and in it shall be the sanctuary ^d and the most holy *place*. ² Or, void places.
d ch. 48. 10.

4 ^e The holy *portion* of the land shall be for the priests the ministers of the sanctuary, which shall come near to minister unto the LORD: and it shall be a place for their houses, and an holy place for the sanctuary. ^e ver. 1.
ch. 48. 10,
&c.

5 ^f And the five and twenty thousand of length, and the ten thousand of breadth, shall also the Levites, the ministers of the house, have for themselves, for a possession for ^g twenty chambers. f ch. 48. 13.
g See chap.
40. 17.

6 ¶ ^h And ye shall appoint the possession of the city five thousand broad, and five and twenty thousand long, over against the oblation of the holy *portion*: it shall be for the whole house of Israel. h ch. 48. 15.

7 ¶ ⁱ And a *portion shall be* for the prince on the one side and on the other side of the oblation of the holy *portion*, and of the possession of the city, before the oblation of the holy *portion*, and before the possession of the city, from the west side westward, and from the east side eastward: and the length *shall be* over against one of the portions, from the west border unto the east border. i ch. 43. 21.

2. "suburbs," or, "unoccupied ground."

5. A second portion, of the same dimensions as the first, was assigned to the Levites (see ch. xlviii. 13). The "twenty chambers" may signify (see ch. xl. 17) that the Levites of the lower order were two-thirds of the whole body.

6. The unity of the "House of Israel" was secured by the fact that the city, which was the centre of unity, was a portion of the holy oblation.

7. Comp. ch. xlviii. 21. The prince's lands appear to have flanked the oblation on its east and west sides.

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^k See Jer.
22. 17.
ch. 22. 27.
& 46. 18.

8 In the land shall be his possession in Israel : and ^k my princes shall no more oppress my people ; and *the rest of* the land shall they give to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

^l ch. 44. 6.

^m Jer. 22. 3.

² Heb.
expulsions.

ⁿ Lev. 19. 35,
36.
Prov. 11. 1.

9 ¶ Thus saith the Lord God ; ¹ Let it suffice you, O princes of Israel : ^m remove violence and spoil, and execute judgment and justice, take away your ² exactions from my people, saith the Lord God.

10 Ye shall have just ⁿ balances, and a just ephah, and a just bath.

11 The ephah and the bath shall be of one measure, that the bath may contain the tenth part of an homer, and the ephah the tenth part of an homer : the measure thereof shall be after the homer.

^o Ex. 30. 13.
Lev. 27. 25.
Num. 3. 47.

12 And the ^o shekel *shall be* twenty gerahs : twenty shekels, five and twenty shekels, fifteen shekels, shall be your maneh.

13 This *is* the oblation that ye shall offer ; the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of wheat, and ye shall give the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of barley :

14 concerning the ordinance of oil, the bath of oil, *ye shall offer* the tenth part of a bath out of the cor, *which is* an homer of ten baths ; for ten baths *are* an homer :

³ Or, *kid.*

15 and one ³ lamb out of the flock, out of two hundred, out of the fat pastures of Israel ; for a meat offering, and for a burnt offering, and for ⁴ peace offerings, ^p to make reconciliation for them, saith the Lord God.

⁴ Or, *thank offerings.*

^p Lev. 1. 4.

⁵ Heb. *shall be for.*

⁶ Or, *with.*

16 All the people of the land ⁵ shall give this oblation ⁶ for the prince in Israel.

17 And it shall be the prince's part *to give* burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and drink offerings, in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sab-

12. The "maneh" of Solomon was 100 shekels (cp. 1 Kings x. 17, 2 Chron. ix. 16). Here it seems to amount only to 60.

13—15. These contributions were for the Temple service ; there being no need of tithes, now that the priests and Levites had a separate allotment. The contributions were at the rate of 1 in 60 for grain, 1 in 100 for oil, and 1 in 200 for the flock.

16. "for," or, "to." The prince received it as the national trustee.

baths, in all solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare the sin offering, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the ² peace offerings, to make reconciliation for the house of Israel.

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² Or, *thank offerings.*

18 Thus saith the Lord God; In the first *month*, in the first *day* of the month, thou shalt take a young bullock without blemish, and ¹ cleanse the sanctuary:

¹ Lev. 16. 16.

19 ^r and the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering, and put *it* upon the posts of the house, and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar, and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court.

^r ch. 43. 20.

20 And so thou shalt do the seventh *day* of the month ^a for every one that erreth, and for *him that* is simple: so shall ye reconcile the house.

^a Lev. 4. 27.

21 ^t In the first *month*, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.

^t Ex. 12. 18.
Lev. 23. 5, 6.
Num. 9. 2, 3.
& 24. 16, 17.
Deut. 16. 1,
&c.

22 And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land ^u a bullock *for* a sin offering.

^u Lev. 4. 14.

23 And ^x seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the LORD, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days; ^y and a kid of the goats daily *for* a sin offering.

^x Lev. 23. 8.
^y See Num.
28. 15, 22, 30.
& 29. 5, 11,
16, 19, &c.
^z ch. 46. 5, 7.

24 ^z And he shall prepare a meat offering of an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and an hin of oil for an ephah.

25 In the seventh *month*, in the fifteenth day of the month, shall he do the like in the ^a feast of the seven days, according to the sin offering, according to the burnt offering, and according to the meat offering, and according to the oil.

^a Lev. 23. 34.
Num. 29. 12.
Deut. 16. 13.

17. "prepare;" through the priests; cp. ch. xlvi. 2.

"reconciliation," or, "atonement" (*s. w. a.* Lev. xvi. 6, 11, 17, 24).

20. "reconcile," *s. w. a.* ch. xliii. 20 ("purge").

25. On the fifteenth day of the seventh month the Feast of Tabernacles began. But the name has disappeared, and with it the distinctive ritual; for the same sacrifices are here prescribed for it as for the Passover.

Obs. They who know that "Christ has been sacrificed for them as their "Passover," keep the feast of faith and love all the year round.

CHAPTER XLVI.

1 *Ordinances for the prince in his worship. 9 and for the people. 16 An order for the prince's inheritance. 19 The courts for boiling and baking.*

THUS saith the Lord GOD; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened.

^a ch. 41. 3.
ver. 8.

2 ^a And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of *that* gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening.

3 Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the LORD in the sabbaths and in the new moons.

^b ch. 45. 17.

4 And the burnt offering that ^b the prince shall offer unto the LORD in the sabbath day *shall be* six lambs without blemish, and a ram without blemish.

^c ch. 45. 24.
ver. 7, 11.

² Heb.
*the gift of
his hand,*
Deut. 16. 17.

5 ^c And the meat offering *shall be* an ephah for a ram, and the meat offering for the lambs ² as he shall be able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

6 And in the day of the new moon *it shall be* a young bullock without blemish, and six lambs, and a ram: they shall be without blemish.

7 And he shall prepare a meat offering, an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and for the lambs according as his hand^a shall attain unto, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

^d ver. 2.

8 ^d And when the prince shall enter, he shall go in by the way of the porch of *that* gate, and he shall go forth by the way thereof.

CHAPTER XLVI.

2. The kings in old time stood by one of the pillars of the Temple porch (2 Kings xi. 14, xxiii. 3). The "Prince" stands at the threshold of the Eastern Gateway of the Inner Court.

5. "able to give." Cp. ver. 7. The actual amount was left to his own decision; only he was told that it was his duty to give according to his means.

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9 ¶ But when the people of the land ^e shall come before the LORD in the solemn feasts, he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate: he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth over against it.

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^e Exod. 23.
14.—17.
Deut. 16. 16.

10 And the prince in the midst of them, when they go in, shall go in; and when they go forth, shall go forth.

11 And in the feasts and in the solemnities ^f the meat offering shall be an ephah to a bullock, and an ephah to a ram, and to the lambs as he is able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

^f ver. 5.

12 Now when the prince shall prepare a voluntary burnt offering or peace offerings voluntarily unto the LORD, ^g one shall then open him the gate that looketh toward the east, and he shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, as he did on the sabbath day: then he shall go forth; and after his going forth one shall shut the gate.

^g ch. 44. 3.
ver. 2.

13 ^h Thou shalt daily prepare a burnt offering unto the LORD ⁱ of a lamb ² of the first year without blemish: thou shalt prepare it ³ every morning.

^h Ex. 21. 30.
Num. 28. 3.

² Heb. a son
of his year.

³ Heb.
morning by
morning.

14 And thou shalt prepare a meat offering for it every morning, the sixth part of an ephah, and the third part of an hin of oil, to temper with the fine flour; a meat offering continually by a perpetual ordinance unto the LORD.

15 Thus shall they prepare the lamb, and the meat offering, and the oil, every morning for a continual burnt offering.

16 ¶ Thus saith the Lord God; If the prince give a gift unto any of his sons, the inheritance thereof shall be his sons'; it shall be their possession by inheritance.

17 But if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall be his to ⁱ the year ¹ Lev. 25. 10.

13, 14. "Thou." The address is to Israel, as in Num. xxviii. 4, 8. It is remarkable that no evening sacrifice is appointed.

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* ch. 45. 8.

of liberty; after it shall return to the prince: but his inheritance shall be his sons' for them.

18 Moreover ^k the prince shall not take of the people's inheritance by oppression, to thrust them out of their possession; *but* he shall give his sons inheritance out of his own possession: that my people be not scattered every man from his possession.

19 ¶ After he brought me through the entry, which *was* at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers of the priests, which looked toward the north: and, behold, there *was* a place on the two sides westward.

20 Then said he unto me, This *is* the place where the priests shall ¹ boil the trespass offering and the sin offering, where they shall ^m bake the meat offering; that they bear *them* not out into the utter court, ⁿ to sanctify the people.

21 Then he brought me forth into the utter court, and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court; and, behold, ² in every corner of the court *there was* a court.

¹ 2 Chr. 35. 13.
^m Lev. 2. 4,
5, 7.
ⁿ ch. 44. 19.

² Heb. a court in a corner of a court, and a court in a corner of a court.

³ Or, made with chimneys.

⁴ Heb. cornered.

22 In the four corners of the court *there were* courts ³ joined of forty cubits long and thirty broad: these four ⁴ corners *were* of one measure.

23 And *there was* a row of building round about in them, round about them four, and *it was* made with boiling places under the rows round about.

24 Then said he unto me, These *are* the places of them that boil, where the ministers of the house shall ^o boil the sacrifice of the people.

^o See ver. 20.

17. "of liberty," or, "of release: "—the jubile-year.

20. The trespass-offerings and sin-offerings were eaten by the priests only. The "sacrifice of the people," in ver. 24, refers to the peace-offerings.

CHAPTER XLVII.

The allegorical character of vv. 1—12 is evident. No stream growing so rapidly in breadth and depth (and that, too, in its descent from the top of a high mountain) is physically possible.

The substance of the allegory was contained in a prophecy delivered by Joel 200 years before (Joel iii. 18): "A fountain shall come forth "of the House of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim" (which lies to the north of the Dead Sea).

There was, no doubt, a natural basis for the allegory in the fact that

1 *The vision of the holy waters.* 6 *The virtue of them.* 13 *The borders of the land.* 22 *The division of it by lot.*

AFTERWARD he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, ^a waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house *stood toward* the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south *side* of the altar.

^a Joel 3. 18.
Zech. 13. 1.
& 14. 8.
Rev. 22. 1.

2 Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto

a spring existed in the rock on which the Temple stood. But the ideal must not be fettered by the actual, which it far transcends. The stream here issues "from within the sanctuary" (vv. 1—12); that Sanctuary which had been filled with the Divine glory (ch. xliii. 7).

The interpretation is supplied by St. John vii. 37—39. He, Whose body was the true Temple of God (St. John ii. 21, Col. ii. 9), is the Fountain of Life to the world. From His sacred Person "rivers of living water flowed forth" after His Ascension. The Holy Spirit issued on the Day of Pentecost, from the heavenly Sanctuary (cp. Rev. xxii. 1), in a stream which has gone on increasing age after age in breadth and in depth ¹.

When the stream first began to flow, the civilized world might have had the description applied to it, which travellers give of the Dead Sea.—Its waters, which are "bitter to the taste and very offensive to the smell," look exceeding bright and clear; thereby adding to the disappointment of the thirsty traveller who drinks of them. Amidst the order and enlightenment of the Roman empire, mankind were "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. ii. 1, 2).

vv. 1—12. The life-giving Waters of the Sanctuary.

1. "issued out," from within the sanctuary (ver. 12). The word used here by the Septuagint is the one which occurs in Rev. xxii. 1: "He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, *proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.*"

"came down." The Temple area was higher than that of the court (ch. xl. 49).

"the altar;" of burnt-offering. The grace of the Holy Spirit flows forth upon the Church under the perpetual guarantee of the atonement which was effected on the altar of the Cross.

¹ So one, who was both poet and historian, has compared the Christian Church to a stream, "narrow at first and hardly to be traced in its secret windings into the world, but with the light of heaven upon it, and gradually widening, till it embraces a large part of Asia, part of

"Africa, the whole of Europe, and becomes a mighty, irresistible, river,—a river with many branches,—gladdening and fertilizing mankind, and bearing civilization, as well as holiness and happiness, in its course." (Dean Milman's *List. of the Jews*, ii. p. 91).

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^b ch. 40. 3.

² Heb.
*waters of
the ancles.*

³ Heb.
*waters of
swimming.*

⁴ Heb. *lip.*

^c ver. 12.
Rev. 22. 2.

⁵ Or, *plain*:
See Deut. 3.
17. & 4. 49.
Josh. 3. 16.

the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward ; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

3 And when ^b the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters ; the ² waters *were* to the ancles.

4 Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters ; the waters *were* to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through ; the waters *were* to the loins.

5 Afterward he measured a thousand ; *and it was* a river that I could not pass over : for the waters were risen, ³ waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.

6 And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen *this* ? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river.

7 Now when I had returned, behold, at the ⁴ bank of the river *were* very many ^c trees on the one side and on the other.

8 Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the ⁵ desert, and go into the sea : *which being* brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed.

9 And it shall come to pass, *that* every thing that

3. "brought me through," or, "made me pass over" (cp. ver. 5).

5. "a river," or, "torrent" (*s. w. a.* Ps. xxxvi. 9).

"were risen," like those of Jordan in harvest-time. While the empires of the world are as rivers which spend themselves on the sands of a desert and so disappear, God's kingdom enlarges as it advances.

6. "Son of man." This is the last time the title occurs in this book. It was first used (ch. ii. 1), when the prophet saw the storm-cloud of judgment advancing against Jerusalem. Since that time, the earthly Temple has been swept away ; but the prophet beholds in vision a nobler Temple, the source of life and paradisiacal blessedness to a dead world.

8. "the desert," or, "the Arabah ;" which denotes here the shores of the Dead Sea.

"and go into . . ." or, "and they go toward the sea ; into the sea" (go) those that were made to issue forth ; and its waters are healed." That was the purpose for which they were made to issue.

An earlier foreshadowing of this "healing" had been given in a miracle performed in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea by Elisha, immediately after the ascension of Elijah. See on ch. xxxvi. 12.

9. "everything that ;" or, "every living creature, that shall be

liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the ² rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.

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² Heb. *two rivers.*

10 And it shall come to pass, *that* the fishers shall stand upon it from En-ge-di even unto En-eglaim; they shall be a *place* to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish ^d of the great sea, exceeding many.

^d Num. 34. 6.
Josh. 23. 4.
ch. 48. 28.

11 But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof ³ shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.

³ Or, *and that which shall not be healed.*

^e ver. 7.

12 And ^e by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, ⁴ shall grow all trees for meat, ^f whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth ⁵ new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof ⁶ for ^g medicine.

⁴ Heb. *shall come up.*

^f Job 8. 16.

Ps. 1. 3.

Jer. 17. 8.

⁵ Or,

principal.

⁶ Or,

for bruises and sores.

^g Rev. 22. 2.

13 ¶ Thus saith the Lord God; This *shall be* the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel: ^h Joseph *shall have two* portions.

^h Gen. 48. 5.
1 Chr. 5. 1.
ch. 48. 4, 5.

“brought forth abundantly wheresoever the waters come, shall live.” Fishes brought down by the Jordan into the Dead Sea soon die.—The waters from the Sanctuary shall “quicken” the dead (Eph. ii. 5) and cause them to increase abundantly.

10. “En-ge-di” on the west, and “En-eglaim” (Isa. xv. 8) on the east, appear to represent the whole circuit of the sea-shore.

“according to their kinds:” in this new, as in the old, creation (Gen. i. 21).

11. “given to salt,” and therefore barren (Deut. xxix. 23); yet not useless. From them would come the “salt,” which guarded against corruption (ch. xliii. 24). A Jewish tradition says that the salt used in the Temple-sacrifices was brought from the southern end of the Dead Sea.

12. “shall not fade.” For they are “trees of righteousness” (Isa. lxi. 3). Cp. Ps. i. 3.

“be consumed,” or, “come to an end.” There should be continually new supplies of it.

“new fruit.” Lit. “firstlings.” Every new moon would see a fresh crop of fruit.

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² Or, *swore*.

¹ Gen. 12. 7.
& 13. 15.
& 15. 7. & 26. 3.
& 28. 13.
ch. 20. 5, 6,
28, 42.

^k ch. 48. 29.

^l ch. 48. 1.

^m Num. 34. 8.

ⁿ Num. 34. 8.

^o 2 Sam. 8. 8.

³ Or,
*the middle
village.*

^p Num. 34. 9.
ch. 48. 1.

⁴ Heb. *from
between.*

^q Num. 20. 13.
Deut. 32. 51.
Ps. 81. 7.
ch. 48. 28.

⁵ Or,
Meribah.

⁶ Or, *valley.*

⁷ Or, *toward
Teman.*

^r See Ephes.
3. 6.
Rev. 7. 9, 10.

14 And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another: *concerning* the which I ²¹lifted up mine hand to give it unto your fathers: and this land shall ^kfall unto you for inheritance.

15 And this *shall be* the border of the land toward the north side, from the great sea, ^lthe way of Hethlon, as men go to ^mZedad;

16 ⁿHamath, ^oBerothah, Sibram, which *is* between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; ³Hazar-hatticon, which *is* by the coast of Hauran.

17 And the border from the sea shall be ^pHazar-enan, the border of Damascus, and the north northward, and the border of Hamath. And *this is* the north side.

18 And the east side ye shall measure ⁴from Hauran, and from Damascus, and from Gilead, and from the land of Israel *by* Jordan, from the border unto the east sea. And *this is* the east side.

19 And the south side southward, from Tamar *even* to ^qthe waters of ⁵strife *in* Kadesh, the ⁶river to the great sea. And *this is* ⁷the south side southward.

20 The west side also *shall be* the great sea from the border, till a man come over against Hamath. *This is* the west side.

21 So shall ye divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel.

22 And it shall come to pass, *that* ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, ^rand to the strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget

vv. 13—21. The boundaries of the Holy Land.

14. "one as well as another." All having equal portions. The ideal tribes of Israel will each have the same perfect number of tribesmen (Rev. vii. 5—8).

15. The boundaries correspond in general to those of Num. xxxiv. 1—12; according to which Canaan lies wholly to the west of Jordan.

19. "the river to." Rather, "toward the river (of Egypt, Num. "xxxiv. 5), unto."

vv. 22, 23. The Stranger to have equal share with the Israelite.

22. "the strangers." They, who aforetime were "strangers and "foreigners," are incorporated into "the commonwealth of Israel" (Eph. ii. 12, 19).

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children among you : ^s and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel ; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel.

B fore
CHRIST
5:4.

^s Rom. 10. 12.
Gal. 3. 28.
Col. 3. 11.

23 And it shall come to pass, *that* in what tribe the stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give *him* his inheritance, saith the Lord God.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

1, 23 *The portions of the twelve tribes, 8 of the sanctuary, 15 of the city and suburbs, 21 and of the prince. 30 The dimensions and gates of the city.*

NOW these *are* the names of the tribes. ^a From the north end to the coast of the way of Hethlon, as one goeth to Hamath, Hazar-enan, the border of Damascus northward, to the coast of Hamath ; for these are his sides east *and* west ; ² a *portion for* Dan.

^a ch. 47. 15,
&c.

2 And by the border of Dan, from the east side unto the west side, a *portion for* Asher.

² Heb. one
portion.

3 And by the border of Asher, from the east side even unto the west side, a *portion for* Naphtali.

4 And by the border of Naphtali, from the east side unto the west side, a *portion for* Manasseh.

5 And by the border of Manasseh, from the east side unto the west side, a *portion for* Ephraim.

6 And by the border of Ephraim, from the east side even unto the west side, a *portion for* Reuben.

7 And by the border of Reuben, from the east side unto the west side, a *portion for* Judah.

8 ¶ And by the border of Judah, from the east side unto the west side, shall be ^b the offering which ye shall offer of five and twenty thousand *reeks* in breadth, and *in* length as one of the *other* parts,

^b chap. 45.
1,—6.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

The partition of the land. The City ; its gates ; and its name.

1. *Seven* tribes are placed to the north of the oblation (ver. 1—7), *five* to the south (vv. 23—28).

8. Jerusalem had stood on the confines of Judah and Benjamin. These two tribes are still nearest to the holy portion.

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from the east side unto the west side : and the sanctuary shall be in the midst of it.

9 The oblation that ye shall offer unto the LORD shall be of five and twenty thousand in length, and of ten thousand in breadth.

10 And for them, *even* for the priests, shall be *this* holy oblation; toward the north five and twenty thousand *in length*, and toward the west ten thousand in breadth, and toward the east ten thousand in breadth, and toward the south five and twenty thousand in length : and the sanctuary of the LORD shall be in the midst thereof.

c ch. 44. 15.
2 Or, *The sanctified portion shall be for the priests.*

11 ^c ² *It shall be* for the priests that are sanctified of the sons of Zadok; which have kept my ³ charge, which went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, ^d as the Levites went astray.

3 Or, *ward, or, ordinance.*
d ch. 44. 10.

12 And *this* oblation of the land that is offered shall be unto them a thing most holy by the border of the Levites.

13 And over against the border of the priests the Levites shall have five and twenty thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth: all the length shall be five and twenty thousand, and the breadth ten thousand.

e Ex. 22. 29.
Lev. 27. 10,
28, 33.

14 ^e And they shall not sell of it, neither exchange, nor alienate the firstfruits of the land: for *it is* holy unto the LORD.

f ch. 45. 6.

15 ¶ ^f And the five thousand, that are left in the breadth over against the five and twenty thousand, shall be ^g a profane *place* for the city, for dwelling, and for suburbs: and the city shall be in the midst thereof.

g ch. 42. 20.

16 And these shall be the measures thereof; the north side four thousand and five hundred, and the south side four thousand and five hundred, and on the east side four thousand and five hundred, and the west side four thousand and five hundred.

17 And the suburbs of the city shall be toward

15. "a profane place," or, "for ordinary use." Though it was a part of the oblation (ver. 20), it was not set apart for sacred purposes.

16. The circuit of the city, therefore, was 18,000 reeds; or, $42\frac{3}{4}$ miles: about three-fourths of that of Babylon.

the north two hundred and fifty, and toward the south two hundred and fifty, and toward the east two hundred and fifty, and toward the west two hundred and fifty.

18 And the residue in length over against the oblation of the holy *portion shall be* ten thousand eastward, and ten thousand westward: and it shall be over against the oblation of the holy *portion*; and the increase thereof shall be for food unto them that serve the city.

19 ^h And they that serve the city shall serve it ^{h ch. 45. 6.} out of all the tribes of Israel.

20 All the oblation *shall be* five and twenty thousand by five and twenty thousand: ye shall offer the holy oblation foursquare, with the possession of the city.

21 ¶ ⁱ And the residue *shall be* for the prince, on ^{i ch. 45. 7.} the one side and on the other of the holy oblation, and of the possession of the city, over against the five and twenty thousand of the oblation toward the east border, and westward over against the five and twenty thousand toward the west border, over against the portions for the prince: and it shall be the holy oblation; ^k and the sanctuary of the house *shall be* ^{k ver. 8, 10.} in the midst thereof.

22 Moreover from the possession of the Levites, and from the possession of the city, *being* in the midst of *that* which is the prince's, between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin, shall be for the prince.

23 As for the rest of the tribes, from the east side unto the west side, Benjamin *shall have* ² a *portion*. ^{2 Heb. one portion.}

24 And by the border of Benjamin, from the east side unto the west side, Simeon *shall have* a *portion*.

25 And by the border of Simeon, from the east side unto the west side, Issachar a *portion*.

26 And by the border of Issachar, from the east side unto the west side, Zebulun a *portion*.

18. "serve the city." Working in it, and for it; for the public good.

21. "over against the portions . . ." or, "over against the portions" (of the oblation) shall be for the prince: thus shall be . . .

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27 And by the border of Zebulun, from the east side unto the west side, Gad a *portion*.

28 And by the border of Gad, at the south side southward, the border shall be even from Tamar unto ¹the waters of ²strife in Kadesh, and to the river toward the great sea.

29 ^mThis is the land which ye shall divide by lot unto the tribes of Israel for inheritance, and these are their portions, saith the Lord GOD.

30 ¶ And these are the goings out of the city on the north side, four thousand and five hundred measures.

31 ⁿAnd the gates of the city shall be after the names of the tribes of Israel: three gates northward; one gate of Reuben, one gate of Judah, one gate of Levi.

32 And at the east side four thousand and five hundred: and three gates; and one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan.

33 And at the south side four thousand and five hundred measures: and three gates; one gate of Simeon, one gate of Issachar, one gate of Zebulun.

34 At the west side four thousand and five hundred, with their three gates; one gate of Gad, one gate of Asher, one gate of Naphtali.

35 It was round about eighteen thousand measures: ^oand the name of the city from that day shall be, ^{3 p}The LORD is there.

¹ ch. 47. 19.

² Heb.

Meribah-kadesh.

^m ch. 47. 14,

21, 22.

ⁿ Rev. 21. 12,

&c.

^o Jer. 33. 16.

³ Heb.

Jehovah-

shammah:

See Exod.

17. 15.

Judg. 6. 24.

^p Jer. 3. 17.

Jos. 3. 21.

Zech. 2. 10.

Rev. 21. 3.

& 22. 3.

31. The first-born by nature; the heir of princely dignity (1 Chron. v. 2); the owner of the priestly office.

32. The two sons of Rachel, with the eldest son of her handmaid.

33. The three remaining sons of Leah.

34. The three remaining sons of the handmaids.

35. "from that day." The day of the Glory's return (ch. xliii. 1—5).

"The Lord is there." The Temple, in which the Glory resided, stood apart from the city, on a "very high mountain." But the Glory perpetually sent forth its rays upon the city, making it God's abode (cp. Gen. xxviii. 16).

Even so the ascended Saviour, to Whom all power is given in heaven and in earth, is with His Church always (St. Matt. xxviii. 20).

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

ALL that we know of the life of Daniel is told us in the book which bears his name ; a very few additional particulars which, however, rest on no contemporary authority, are stated by Josephus (*Antiquities*, x. 10. 11). Born in Judæa about B.C. 620, he was sent with other Jewish captives of royal or noble birth and comely appearance to the city of Babylon, and was placed in the household of Nebuchadnezzar. His ability and integrity marked him out for promotion, and he was appointed to high offices among the learned men, and among the royal counsellors. Nebuchadnezzar's successors (B.C. 561—539) neglected him ; but he was again brought into prominence in his old age at the close of Belshazzar's reign. Darius the Mede employed and honoured him, and he died in the reign of the next king Cyrus, probably about B.C. 533, after the decree authorising the return of the Jews to Palestine was obtained, and the seventy years of national captivity were ended.

All through his life he was first, of all things, a consistent and devout servant of God. Living in an age of sin, sorrow, and degradation, when the true faith had nearly died out, his religion was of an ascetic character, severe to himself even while attractive to those about him. Identifying himself thoroughly with his countrymen, he became the leading man of his nation through the Captivity, guiding them in the way of repentance and restoration to the Divine favour, by affording an example of quiet but determined abhorrence of idolatry, by strict self-discipline, prayer, and study of Scripture, by industry in his secular calling and fidelity to the secular authority under which he was placed. Thus Daniel and those whom he influenced waited in patience for the deliverance from Babylon, with unshaken confidence in God's promised care for His people. We see by the references in his contemporary Ezekiel (xiv. 14 and xxviii. 3) to his holiness and wisdom, what reputation he had acquired among the Jews, and how powerful was the example of his life.

The moral of the life of Daniel is thus set forth to a Christian audience in a sermon by Bishop Ken. "Consider the attractions of Divine love,

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“ till God’s sovereign love influence you, and you habitually breathe His
“ praises. Learn like Daniel humility by affliction, purity by temperance,
“ to keep your graces alive by prayer and frequenting your oratory, to
“ subdue rebellious nature by fasting and mortification. Learn from
“ Daniel a universal obligingness and benignity, an awful love to your
“ Prince, a constant fidelity, an undaunted courage, an unwearied zeal
“ in serving him. Learn from Daniel an equal mixture of the wisdom
“ of the serpent and the innocence of the dove, an inoffensive conversa-
“ tion, a clean integrity, and an impartial justice to all within your
“ sphere. Learn from the ‘man greatly beloved’ to reconcile policy and
“ religion, business and devotion, abstinence and abundance, greatness
“ and goodness, magnanimity and humility, power and subjection, au-
“ thority and affability, conversation and retirement, interest and integrity,
“ heaven and the court, the favour of God and the favour of the king:—
“ and you are masters of Daniel’s secret; you will secure yourselves an
“ universal and lasting interest; you like him will be greatly beloved
“ both by God and man. For when we have in vain tried all other
“ methods, there is nothing stable but virtue; nothing that can keep us
“ steady in all revolutions but the love of God.”

The first six chapters of the book are *historical*. Not only do they exhibit the life of a saint in a time of severe trial; but also they shew how God made use of the Captivity of His people to confront falsehood with truth, to open the mind of the heathen to some knowledge of the true God, and to correct their idolatry. Four times was instruction sent to Nebuchadnezzar. He was made to see, first, the superiority of the Jews who served God in intellectual gifts; next, their supernatural knowledge of the past and of the future derived from intimate communion with Him; next, their unconquerable faith in and attachment to a God Whose power surpassed anything that had been attributed to the gods of Babylon; lastly, he saw that this Almighty God is the Moral Governor of the world, punishing pride, injustice, and cruelty in high places. These were lessons to Nebuchadnezzar. After twenty-two years, the last day of the last Babylonian sovereign, Belshazzar, closed with a signal assertion of the retributive justice of the God of Israel and a vindication of His supremacy. Finally, the Median king Darius on his newly-settled throne after placing Daniel first amongst his subjects was taught, by the miraculous defeat of an intrigue which had baffled him, that the God of Daniel is the One Living and Almighty God. All these events contributed to the preparation of the heathen world to receive the kingdom of Christ.

The last six chapters are *prophetical*. Their instruction is addressed not to the heathen but to the people of God, and their object is to strengthen faith and to console believers in the midst of future sufferings

INTRODUCTION.

and perplexities. Four revelations are made to Daniel: the vision of the four beasts; the vision of the ram and the goat and the little horn; the revelation of the time of Messiah's coming; and the revelation of the conflicts between Persia and Greece, between Egypt and Syria, between "the wilful king" and his opponents; in all which the people of God have their lot of trial and tribulation, for the increase of their faith and patience; and in all which it will be their comfort to know that everything which happens has been foreseen and taken account of by the God of Israel.

All these things, says Josephus, God shewed to Daniel, to convince him who reads them how much the philosophers are mistaken who cast out a Providence from human life, who think that God takes no heed of the affairs of the world, and that the Blessed and Immortal Being does not govern everything with a view to the permanent preservation of the whole, who say that the world goes on of its own accord without any ruler and director.

The Collect for the Second Sunday after Trinity.

O LORD, Who never failest to help and govern them whom Thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love; Keep us, we beseech Thee, under the protection of Thy good Providence, and make us to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy Holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Collect for Michaelmas Day.

O EVERLASTING God, Who hast ordained and constituted the services of Angels and men in a wonderful order; Mercifully grant, that as Thy holy Angels always do Thee service in heaven, so by Thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 607.

CHAPTER I.

1 *Jehoiakim's captivity.* 3 *Ashpenaz taketh Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah.* 8 *They refusing the king's portion do prosper with pulse and water.* 17 *Their excellency in wisdom.*

IN the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah ^a came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

^a 2 Kin. 24. 1.
² Chr. 36. 6.

cir. 606.

^b Jer. 27. 19,
20.

^c Gen. 10. 10.
& 11. 2.

Isai. 11. 11.
Zech. 5. 11.

^d 2 Chr. 36. 7.

2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with ^b part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried ^c into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; ^d and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

1—7. The Jewish Captives.

1. "reign of Jehoiakim." Jehoiakim, otherwise called Eliakim, was the eldest son of Josiah, the last good king of Judah. Three months after his father's death he was made king (about August B.C. 609) by Pharaoh-necho, the conqueror of his father (2 Kings xxiii. 34). His wicked character and ignominious death, after a reign of eleven years, are described in Jer. xxii. 13—19. In the third or fourth year of his reign he submitted to Nebuchadnezzar, but threw off the Chaldean yoke three years afterwards. Nebuchadnezzar, after repeatedly sending troops to attack him, at last took him and put him in chains with the intention of carrying him captive to Babylon, but the design was frustrated by the death of Jehoiakim at Jerusalem. The third year of his reign extended from the middle of B.C. 607 to the middle of B.C. 606. Daniel mentions this as the date of his own captivity, and as the beginning of the seventy years' Captivity.

"came Nebuchadnezzar." This may be translated *went Nebuchadnezzar*. It was in this expedition that Nebuchadnezzar defeated the army of Pharaoh-necho at Carchemish, as described by Jeremiah (ch. xlv). The name Nebuchadnezzar, or, Nabu-kudur-uzur, is said to signify "May Nebo protect the crown."

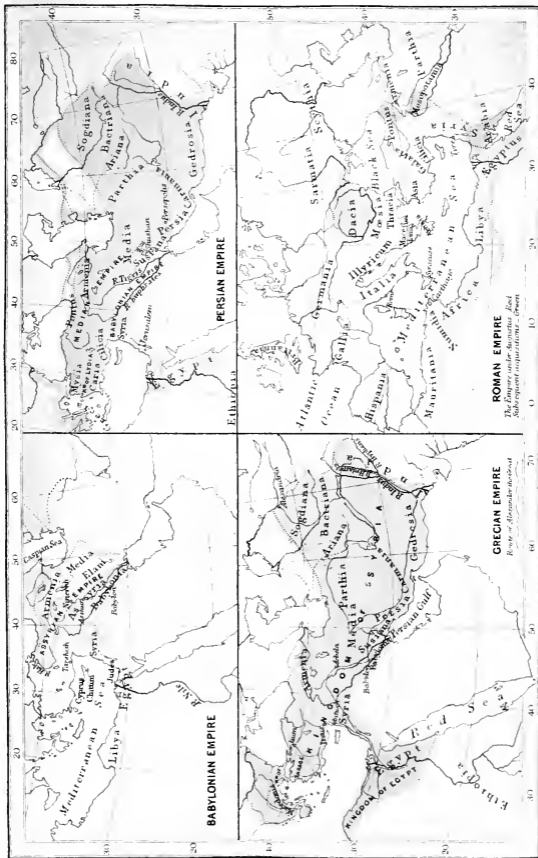
"king of Babylon." This title is naturally given to Nebuchadnezzar. But, in fact, he was not yet king when he was sent forth from Babylon on this expedition by his aged father, king Nabopolassar, who died before Nebuchadnezzar's return. We learn from Jeremiah (ch. xxv. 1) that Nebuchadnezzar's reign began in the fourth year of Jehoiakim.

2. "part of the vessels." Another part was carried to Babylon when Jeconiah was taken (Jer. xxvii. 18—20), and the remainder by Nebuzaradan (2 Kings xxv) B.C. 588. These vessels are again mentioned by Daniel (ch. v. 2).

"Shinar." The country otherwise called Chaldæa, or Babylonia, south of Assyria, including the lower part of the Euphrates and the Tigris, in which Babel, or Babylon, was the principal city (Gen. x. 10).

"house of his god." Probably the great temple of Belus, or Bel-Merodach, at Babylon: it was repaired at a later period by Nebuchad-

THE FOUR EMPIRES OF DANIEL





DANIEL, I.

3 ¶ And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring ² *certain* of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes ;

4 children ^e in whom *was* no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as *had* ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and ^f whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

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² Foretold
2 Kings 20.
17, 18.

Isai. 39. 7.
^e See Lev. 24.
19, 20.

^f Acts 7. 22.

nezzar, who attributed much of his prosperity to the favour of Merodach. The bricks recently brought from the mound, now called Babil, on the east side of the Euphrates, which is supposed to be the ruins of this temple, are stamped with the name of Nebuchadnezzar.

3. "of the king's seed." The prophecy of Isaiah to Hezekiah was thus fulfilled (2 Kings xx. 17), "thy sons . . . shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

4. "children." Boys among the Persians were ordinarily selected for special education of this kind when they had completed their fourteenth year. Daniel was probably not much older when he was thus chosen, for we know that he lived more than seventy years in Chaldæa.

"well favoured." A similar expression is used of the personal appearance of Joseph (Gen. xxxix. 6). The striking resemblance between the history of Daniel and that of Joseph ought not to be overlooked. Each of these holy youths was removed at an early age from home with its religious influence, and was made an exile in a condition of servitude under a heathen master. In these trying circumstances each has left an example to young men. Each cherished tenderly the recollection of his early home: each remained firm and steadfast in his faith, and was not ashamed or afraid to stand up alone for God and to serve Him under many discouragements: each wrestled with sore temptation yet was enabled by grace to keep nature in subjection: each while seeking the true riches, met with unexpected earthly rewards, power, and honour: each has his record in the book of God, and "stands in the lot" of God's true servants.

"the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans." The young persons already distinguished for their beauty, intelligence, and proficiency in the knowledge which was then attainable in Palestine (see 1 Kings iv. 29—33), were now to complete their education in Babylon by acquiring the language and literature of the Chaldeans. The name Chaldeans is given by Daniel to one of the four classes (ch. ii. 2) into which the wise men of Babylon are divided. It may be inferred from their name that they represented the most ancient people of Babylon, who were famous for their knowledge of astronomy and arithmetic, and whose peculiar language and alphabet—very different from that which we now call Chaldee—are preserved in the cuneiform inscriptions recently discovered in their country and brought to Europe. Their historical traditions beginning with the Deluge, and their astronomical records reaching back (it is said) to B.C. 2234, which with their language are now

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² Heb. *the wine of his drink.*

[†] Gen. 41. 46.
¹ Kin. 10. 8.
ver. 13.

^h Gen. 41. 45.
² Kin. 24. 17.
ⁱ ch. 4. 8.
& 5. 12.

5 And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of ²the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might ^gstand before the king.

6 Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

7 ^hunto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: ⁱfor he gave unto Daniel *the name of* Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abed-nego.

8 ¶ But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself ^kwith the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

[†] Deut. 32. 33.
[†] Ezek. 4. 13.
[†] Hos. 9. 3.

occupying the attention of learned men in Europe, are, probably, a part at least of the literature which was studied by Daniel and his companions in their three years' training.

5. "the king's meat, and . . . wine." The household of the king of Babylon (like that of Solomon, 1 Kings iv. 22, 23) received a daily tribute, or provision of food, from his subjects.

"three years." Among the ancient Persians the young men who had been trained for the king's service were received into it at the age of sixteen or seventeen.

6. "children of Judah." The Jewish historian Josephus (*Antiquities of the Jews*, x. 1) states that Daniel and his three friends were not only of the tribe of Judah, but also members of the royal family.

7. "gave names." The Hebrew names of Daniel and his companions commemorate the true God, signifying "God is my Judge," "the Lord gave graciously," "who is like God?" and "the Lord helpeth." Two at least of their Babylonian names are idolatrous: Belteshazzar = Beltis defend the king (otherwise translated, "Preserve thou his life"), and Abed-nego = servant of Nego, or Nebo; the other two names, Shadrach and Meshach, are conjectured to relate to some idols connected with the sun and stars. The change of name, says Dr. Pusey, was a badge of servitude intended to obliterate the memory of their early home and of their God. So Joseph's name was changed by Pharaoh (Gen. xli. 45).

8—16. Daniel's religious steadfastness.

8. "not defile himself." Hitherto Daniel has appeared as a passive instrument in the hands of others, enslaved, exiled, deprived (so far as his master could deprive him) of the name given to him at his circumcision. Now we have the first recorded purpose and act of his own; and it shows his character even at the early age of fourteen. He knew that

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9 Now ¹God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

10 And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces ²worse liking than the children which *are* of your ³sort? then shall ye make *me* endanger my head to the king.

11 Then said Daniel to ⁴Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

12 prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us ⁵pulse ⁶to eat, and water to drink.

13 Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

14 So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

15 And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the

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¹ See Gen. 39, 21.
Ps. 106. 46.
Prov. 16. 7.

² Heb. sadder.
³ Or, term, or, continuance?

⁴ Or, The steward.

⁵ Heb. of pulse.
⁶ Heb. that we may eat, &c.

the Law forbade him to eat either the blood of fowl or beast (Lev. vii. 26), or to eat of any heathen sacrifice (Exod. xxxiv. 15). These things and others by which captive Jews often contracted defilement (Ezek. iv. 13. Amos vii. 17. Hos. ix. 3), were included in the provision for the king's table. "In that simplicity of boyish faith which is the herald of future greatness, in uncompromising obedience to the law of his God, Daniel, the soul of the action of his three companions, trusted that God would uphold his health and strength" (*Pusey*) without the forbidden food.

9. "favour." In the case of Daniel, as in that of Joseph (Gen. xxxix. 21), and others, God "made them to be pitied of those that carried them captives" (Ps. cvi. 46). So Solomon prayed for his people (1 Kings viii. 50).

10. "faces worse liking." "A sad countenance" is a natural effect of fasting (St. Matt. vi. 16).

"of your sort." Otherwise translated, "of your age."

11. "to Melzar." Daniel, having ascertained that the prince of the eunuchs would not object to their abstinence from the forbidden food, unless it should be followed by deterioration of their appearance, now makes application to another officer, the steward or butler (Melzar seems to be the name of the office, as in our margin, rather than of a man), whose immediate duty it was to supply them with food, and asks him to make the experiment.

12. "pulse." The word thus translated includes wheat, barley, beans, peas, and other vegetables.

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children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.

16 Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

^m 1 Kin. 3. 12.
Jan. 1. 5, 17.
ⁿ Acts 7. 22.

17 As for these four children, ^m God gave them ⁿ knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and ² Daniel had ^o understanding in all visions and dreams.

² Or,
*he made
Daniel un-
derstand.*

^o Num. 12. 6.
² Chr. 26. 5.
ch. 5. 11, 12,
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18 ¶ Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

^p Gen. 41. 46.
ver. 5.

19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Haniah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore ^p stood they before the king.

^q 1 Kin. 10. 1.
³ Heb.
*wisdom
of under-
standing.*

20 ^q And in all matters of ³ wisdom *and* understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and* astrologers that *were* in all his realm.

17—21. The attainments of the four captives.

17. "God gave," &c. God, the Father of Lights and Giver of every good gift, not only gives practical wisdom to the man who faithfully prays for it, either in the hour of temptation, or under a settled conviction of his natural insufficiency for the work before him (St. James i. 5, 6. 1 Kings iii. 9, 12), but also renders fruitful the labour of the student of literature who studies like these four youths in the fear of God.

"Daniel had understanding," &c. God sometimes sends visions and dreams either to prophets or to other men (as Nebuchadnezzar, ch. ii. 28, and Pharaoh, Gen. xli), for the purpose of making known His Will. The power of discriminating such dreams and of interpreting them truly is a special gift of God (ch. viii. 15, and Gen. xl. 8), and was given particularly to Daniel, as of old to Joseph and to the prophet Zechariah (2 Chron. xxvi. 5).

18. "at the end of the days." When the prescribed time of three years (ver. 5) was over.

19. "stood before the king," i.e. were appointed to a position in the court of Nebuchadnezzar.

20. "magicians and astrologers." Called in Hebrew *Chartummim* and *Ashshajim*. The word *Chartummim* is used of the Egyptian magicians (Gen. xli. 24, &c.) and of a class of the wise men of Babylon. It probably signifies etymologically, "writers of sacred writing" (such as

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21 ^r And Daniel continued *even* unto the first year of king Cyrus.

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^r ch. 6. 23.
& 10. 1.
He lived to see that glorious time of the return of his people from the Babylonian captivity, though he did not die then. So *till* is used, Ps. 110. 1. & 112. 8.

^a Gen. 41. 8.

ch. 4. 5.

^b Esth. 6. 1.

ch. 6. 18. ^c Gen. 41. 8. Ex. 7. 11. ch. 5. 7.

1 *Nebuchadnezzar, forgetting his dream, requireth it of the Chaldeans, by promises and threatenings.* 10 *They acknowledging their inability are judged to die.* 14 *Daniel obtaining some respite findeth the dream.* 19 *He blesseth God.* 24 *He staying the decree is brought to the king.* 31 *The dream.* 36 *The interpretation.* 46 *Daniel's advancement.*

AND in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, ^a wherewith his spirit was troubled, and ^b his sleep brake from him.

2 ^c Then the king commanded to call the magi-

the hieroglyphics in Egypt and the cuneiform characters in Babylon). These men in Egypt (and probably the same institution prevailed in Babylon) "had to know about cosmography and geography, the order of "the sun and moon and the five planets; the ground-plan of Egypt and "the diagram of the Nile; the register of the ornaments of the temples, and "of the spots consecrated to them; about the measures and the things of "use in the temple" (*Clement of Alexandria*, quoted by Dr. Pusey). The Ashshaphim are mentioned only by Daniel (chs. i. 20; ii. 2). They were probably the professors of some mode of divination peculiar to Aramaea.

21. "Daniel continued," &c. The meaning probably is that Daniel continued in the honourable position in which he was now providentially placed, until he who had witnessed the beginning of the Captivity saw also the release of Israel in the first year of Cyrus. He survived that period (see ch. x. 1). Dr. Pusey, commenting on this verse, says: "What a volume of tried faithfulness is enrolled in these simple words. "Amid all the intrigues indigenous at all times in dynasties of Oriental "despotism; amid all the envy towards a foreign captive in high office "as a king's counsellor; amid all the trouble incidental to the insanity "of the king, or to the murder of two of his successors, in that whole "critical period for his people, 'Daniel continued'. . . . Deeds are more "eloquent than words. Such undeviating integrity, beyond the ordinary "life of man, in a worshipper of the One God, in the most dissolute "and degraded of the merchant-cities of old, first minister in the first of "the world-monarchies, was in itself a great fulfilment of the purpose of "God in converting the chastisement of His people into the riches of the "Gentiles."

CHAPTER II.

1—13. Failure of the Chaldean interpreters.

1. "second year." The second year of Nebuchadnezzar would correspond with the fifth year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xxv. 1), and would include part of the fourth year of Daniel's captivity in which the events related in this chapter occurred.

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cians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

3 And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.

4 Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation.

5 The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be ^{e 2} cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.

6 ^f But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and ³ rewards

^{d 1} Kin. 1. 31.
ch. 3. 9.
& 5. 10. &
6. 6, 21.

^{e 2} Kin. 10. 27.
Ezra 6. 11.
ch. 3. 29.

² Chald.
made pieces.

^f ch. 5. 16.

³ Or, *fee*,
ver. 48.
ch. 5. 17.

2. "sorcerers." This class of the wise men of Babylon is mentioned here only in Daniel, unless they are the same as the "soothsayers" (ch. ii. 27, &c.). The same class of men existed among the Egyptians (Exod. vii. 11), and the art which they practised was condemned (2 Chron. xxxiii. 6. Mal. iii. 5) and forbidden to the people of God (Deut. xviii. 10).

"they came." Probably only the principal members of the four classes of wise men actually waited on the king. Daniel and his companions seem to have been absent, perhaps as being younger members.

4. "in Syriack," *Aramith*, i.e. in Aramaic. The two sister-languages, which we commonly call Syriac and Chaldee, are more strictly called Western and Eastern Aramaic. In the time of Daniel the Aramaic (called Syriac here and in 2 Kings xviii. 26) was the popular language in Syria, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, and Assyria. A large part of the book of Daniel, namely, from this verse to ch. vii. 28, is written in what we call Chaldee. It is a different language from the tongue of the Chaldeans mentioned in ch. i. 4. It is used in these chapters because it was the ordinary language of the Babylonians who are here introduced (see *note* at the end of ch. vii). In the other chapters (chs. i. and viii—xii), where Daniel speaks of himself and of his revelations, he writes in Hebrew, the sacred tongue; chapter vii. is made an exception, perhaps because the vision of the four beasts seen by the Hebrew Daniel is in part a repetition of the dream of the Babylonian Nebuchadnezzar in this chapter.

"live for ever." This style of address to a king occurs frequently in the book of Daniel. It is also used by Bathsheba to king David (1 Kings i. 31), and by Nehemiah to Artaxerxes (Neh. ii. 3).

5. "The thing is gone from me." These words, here and in ver. 8, may be otherwise translated, a decree has gone forth from me, i.e. I have given my orders. Cruelty appears to have been a feature in the character of Nebuchadnezzar: witness his treatment of Zedekiah (Jer. liii. 11). A similar decree is made against the more wilful guilt of blasphemers (ch. iii. 29) and rebels (Ezra vi. 11).

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and great honour: therefore shew me the dream, and the interpretation thereof. Before
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7 They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation of it.

8 The king answered and said, I know of certainty that ye would ²gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me. ² Chald. *buy*,
Eph. 5. 16.

9 But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, ⁸*there is but* one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof. ⁸ Esth. 4. 11.

10 The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter: therefore *there is* no king, lord, nor ruler, *that* asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean.

11 And *it is* a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, ^hexcept the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh. ^h ver. 23.
ch. 5. 11.

12 For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise *men* of Babylon.

13 ¶ And the decree went forth that the wise *men* should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain. ³ Chald.
returned.
⁴ Or, *chief marshal*.
⁵ Chald.
chief of the executioners, or, *slaughtermen*.
Gen. 37. 36.

14 Then Daniel ³answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the ⁴⁵captain of the king's guard,

9. "till the time be changed," i.e. till your present danger pass away, as it might, either if I should be able to tell you more of my dream, or if I should cease to care about it.

10. "no king, lord, nor ruler." Otherwise translated, "no king, however great or powerful."

11. "rare." Difficult.

"not with flesh," i.e. not among men on earth, but (as ver. 28) "in heaven."

14—28. Daniel is inspired to interpret.

14. "Arioch." An ancient name in this country. See Gen. xiv. 1. Arioch held an office similar to that of Potiphar (Gen. xxxvii. 36).

which was gone forth to slay the wise *men* of Babylon :

15 he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, Why *is* the decree so hasty from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel.

16 Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation.

17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions :

18 ⁱ that they would desire mercies ² of the God of heaven concerning this secret ; ³ that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise *men* of Babylon.

ⁱ Matt. 18, 19.
² Chald. *from before God.*
³ Or, *that they should not destroy Daniel, &c.*

19 ¶ Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel ^k in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

^k Num. 12, 6.
Job 33, 15, 16.

20 Daniel answered and said, ^l Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever : ^m for wisdom and might are his :

^l Ps. 113, 2. & 115, 18.
^m Jer. 32, 19.

21 and he changeth ⁿ the times and the seasons : ^o he removeth kings, and setteth up kings : ^p he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding :

ⁿ 1 Chr. 29, 30.
Esth. 1, 13. ch. 7, 25. & 11, 6.
^o Job 12, 18.
Ps. 75, 6, 7. Jer. 27, 5. ch. 4, 17.

22 ^q he revealeth the deep and secret things : ^r he knoweth what *is* in the darkness, and ^s the light dwelleth with him.

^p Jam. 1, 5.
^q Job 12, 22.
Ps. 25, 14. ver. 28, 29.
^r Ps. 139, 11, 12.

23 I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we ^t desired of thee : for thou hast *now* made known unto us the king's matter.

^s ch. 5, 11, 14.
Jam. 1, 17.
^t ver. 18.

24 ¶ Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise *men* of Babylon : he went and said thus unto him ; Destroy

18. "God of heaven." Many of the Chaldaean idols were considered to represent the heavenly bodies. This was doubtless a special reason which moved worshippers of the true God, who were conversant with that country, to assert by this title His supremacy over heaven. See Gen. xxiv. 7. Neh. i. 5. Ezra i. 2, &c.

not the wise *men* of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will shew unto the king the interpretation.

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25 Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, ² I have found a man of the ³ captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation.

² Chald.
That I have
found.
³ Chald. chil-
dren of the
captivity of
Judah.

26 The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name *was* Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?

27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise *men*, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king;

28 ^u but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and ⁴ maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar ^x what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;

^u Gen. 40. 8.
& 41. 16.
ver. 18. 47.
Amos 4. 13.
⁴ Chald.
hath made
known.
^x Gen. 49. 1.

29 as for thee, O king, thy thoughts ⁵ came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: ^y and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass.

⁵ Chald.
came up.
^y ver. 22,
& 28.

30 ^z But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for *any* wisdom that I have more than any living, ⁶ but for *their* sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, ^a and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart.

^z So Gen. 41.
16.
Acts 3. 12.
⁶ Or, but for
the intent
that the inter-
pretation
may be made
known to
the king.

31 ¶ Thou, O king, ⁷ sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness *was* excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof *was* terrible.

^a ver. 47
⁷ Chald.
wast seeing.

29—35. Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image.

29. "thy thoughts came," &c. Nebuchadnezzar in the beginning of his reign had already driven back Pharaoh-necho and the Egyptians from the Euphrates, and had established his sovereignty over Syria. Probably he was at this time meditating some of the remoter conquests which afterwards distinguished his reign, and was extending his thoughts to what might eventually occur after he himself had passed away.

31. "image." The image here (as in ch. iii. 1) was a colossal human figure. It is an embodiment, or representation of human power, as

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^b See ver. 23,
&c.

² Or, sides.

32 ^b This image's head *was* of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his ²thighs of brass,

33 his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out

exhibited in the four great empires rising successively in that part of the heathen world which came in contact with the people of God.

32. "This image's head." This is explained (vv. 37 and 38) to signify the empire which Nebuchadnezzar himself ruled. His empire, although it did not include that part of Assyria which had been conquered by the Medes, yet represented to the Jews the old Assyrian monarchy which had carried away the Ten Tribes of Israel, had sustained a defeat from Abram (Gen. xiv) and claimed Nimrod and Asshur (Gen. x. 9—11) as its founders. Nebuchadnezzar reigned forty-three years in Babylon: he is said by Berosus to have surpassed all the preceding kings of Chaldea and Babylon in his exploits, and to have held in subjection Egypt, Syria, Phœnicia, and Arabia; according to other ancient authors, his armies penetrated even into Libya, Spain, and Thrace. It may be expected that some official account of the exact extent of the empire which he claimed will be deciphered among the cuneiform inscriptions of that age, which are now in the British Museum. The Babylonian empire is represented by the head as preceding the others in order of time, and it is of gold as characterised by its magnificence.

"breast and arms of silver." This is explained (ver. 38) to signify another kingdom inferior to that of Babylon, and rising after it. This is the Persian empire under Cyrus, who, after the subjugation of Media and Western Asia, took Babylon and transferred the seat of empire from thence to Ecbatana, or Pasargadae. It was inferior to the preceding empire in duration and magnificence. The two arms united in the breast may symbolise the union of the Medes and Persians under Cyrus.

"belly and his thighs of brass." This is explained (ver. 38) as a third kingdom, which shall bear rule over all the earth. The empire of Alexander, to which that of Persia gave place, was wider in extent than its predecessors. The two thighs may symbolize his successors, the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemies.

33. "feet part of iron and part of clay." The Roman empire, which gradually subdued all the countries once subject to Alexander, bound them together in a more compact dominion, and ruled them with greater vigour than had been previously known in the world. Power is as much the characteristic feature of the Roman as magnificence of the Babylonian empire. The clay may represent the incongruous mixture of strange and barbarous nations which even the iron strength of Rome could not completely assimilate to itself, and which eventually were the instruments of its decline and fall. The two feet are interpreted to mean the divided Eastern and Western empires.

34. "a stone." This is explained (ver. 44) to signify the kingdom of the God of heaven, i.e. that kingdom of God or kingdom of heaven which our Lord Jesus Christ preached (St. Matt. iv. 17, &c.), and which

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² without hands, which smote the image upon his feet *that were* of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became ^d like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that ^e no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image ^f became a great mountain, ^g and filled the whole earth.

36 This *is* the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

37 ^h Thou, O king, *art* a king of kings: ⁱ for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

38 ^k And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. ^l Thou *art* this head of gold.

39 And after thee shall arise ^m another kingdom ⁿ inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

40 And ^o the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all *things*: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

41 And whereas thou sawest ^p the feet and toes, ^p

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² Or, *which was not in hands*: as ver. 45.

^c ch. 8. 25.

Zech. 4. 6.

² Cor. 5. 1.

Heb. 9. 24.

^d Ps. 1. 4.

Hos. 13. 3.

^e Ps. 37. 10,

36.

^f Isai. 2. 2, 3.

^g Ps. 80. 9.

^h Ezra 7. 12.

Isai. 47. 5.

Jer. 27. 6, 7.

Ezek. 26. 7.

Hos. 8. 10.

ⁱ Ezra 1. 2.

^k ch. 4. 21, 22.

Jer. 27. 6.

^l ver. 22.

^m ch. 5. 23, 31.

ⁿ ver. 32.

^o ch. 7. 7, 23.

^p ver. 33.

we call the Church, that everlasting dominion into which the kingdoms of this world are destined to merge (Rev. xi. 15, 17, 18).

“cut out,” or, cut off. The dream represented a colossal statue erected in a plain at the base of a rocky mountain, from the top of which a stony fragment is set loose, and rolls with destructive force against the feet of the statue.

“without hands.” Not by human design or contrivance, but by the operation of a higher power. Compare similar words, ch. viii. 25. Job xxxiv. 20. Heb. ix. 11.

35. “great mountain.” So the Church of Christ is signified in Isa. ii. 2 by the title which belonged to Zion, “the mountain of the “Lord’s House.”

36—45. Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.

40. “as iron . . . and bruise.” The power of Rome was more efficient than that of any other empire to conquer and subjugate independent nations throughout the world.

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part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

42 And as the toes of the feet *were* part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly ² broken.

43 And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave ³ one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

44 And in ⁴ the days of these kings ⁴ shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, ¹ which shall never be destroyed: and the ⁵ kingdom shall not be left to other people, ⁸ but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

45 ¹ Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain ⁶ without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass ⁷ hereafter: and the dream *is* certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

46 ¶ ^u Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that

42. "broken." Rather, brittle, as in the margin. Though Rome went on increasing in extent, and gathering into itself many nations, yet its strength did not increase; many of the new accessions to the empire, from their innate feebleness and from the constant watching which they required wasted the energy and drained the resources of Rome, were as clay added to iron.

43. "they shall mingle themselves." They shall try to unite elements which are by nature incoherent, by forcing feebler nations alien in characters to become integral parts of one worldly empire. There seems to be in the phrase a reference, as Bishop Wordsworth remarks, to the incongruous unions mentioned in Gen. vi. 2. Ezra ix. 2. Neh. xiii. 23.

46—49. Promotion of the four Jews.

46. "fell upon his face." Nebuchadnezzar in his first excitement at the supernatural recovery and wonderful interpretation of his dream pays to Daniel the honours usually offered to a Divine being. His words, however, shew that he revered the prophet only as the human agent of God. Compare the behaviour of Cornelius, Acts x. 25.

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they should offer an oblation ^x and sweet odours ^{Before CHRIST 603.} unto him.

47 The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of ^{x Ezra 6. 10.} a truth *it is*, that your God *is* a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, ^{y ver. 23.} and a revealer of secrets, seeing ^y thou couldest reveal this secret.

48 Then the king made Daniel a great man, ^{z ver. 6.} and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and ^{a ch. 4. 9. & 5. 11.} a chief of the governors over all the wise *men* of Babylon.

49 Then Daniel requested of the king, ^{b ch. 3. 12.} and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel ^{c Esth. 2. 19, 21. & 3. 2.} *sat* in the gate of the king.

CHAPTER III.

1 *Nebuchadnezzar dedicateth a golden image in Dura.* 8 *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego are accused for not worshipping the image.* 13 *They, being threatened, make a good confession.* 19 *God delivereth*

48. "gifts." In accordance with the king's promise (ver. 6).

"ruler." The office assigned to Daniel is said to correspond to that of a vizier of a province in the Turkish government. His authority as ruler did not extend over the whole empire, but only over the province of Babylon. Each province had its ruler (ch. iii. 2).

"chief of the governors." This appears to be an official title, *Rab-Sigenim*, equivalent to grand-master, or principal of a college of preceptors.

49. "sat in the gate," i. e. was in the court of the king (comp. Esth. ii. 19, 21). So the Ottoman court is called the *Porte*. The appointment conferred on Daniel's three friends was probably that of subordinate officers, who relieved Daniel of the transaction of certain affairs of the province, which would have required his presence at a distance from the court.

CHAPTER III.

The event recorded in this chapter is said to have occurred in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. In those years this powerful king had carried his victorious arms into Phœnicia, Syria, Egypt, Arabia, Media: and the Babylonian empire was now at its greatest extent in Western Asia. A standard inscription of Nebuchadnezzar has been deciphered, from which it appears that one of his first proceedings, after attaining the sovereignty over this great dominion, was to build in Babylon a temple of unequalled magnificence to Bel-Merodach, his patron deity, and to dedicate an image of the god. *Records of the Past*, v. 113 et seq.

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them out of the furnace. 26 Nebuchadnezzar seeing the miracle blesseth God.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR the king made an image of gold, whose height *was* threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

2 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains,

1—7. Nebuchadnezzar's golden image.

1. "image." This image was probably a colossal human figure. If it was in the ordinary proportion of the human form, in which the breadth is about one-sixth of the height, the image being of the proportions described in the text must have been mounted on a lofty pedestal: otherwise, the upper part only of the human form may have been represented, and the lower part of the image may have been in the form of a pillar. The temple of Bel in Babylon contained, according to Diodorus Siculus, a statue in beaten gold forty feet high. It may be inferred from the worship required to be offered to the image in the plain of Dura (vv. 6, 12, &c.), that it represented some false god of the Babylonians, probably Bel. There is no sufficient ground to conjecture that it represented either Nebuchadnezzar himself, or the colossal figure which he saw in his dream. It is evident from his inscription that he was a devoted worshipper of the Babylonian gods, and employed a large part of his wealth in building temples to their honour.

"of gold." Probably it was spread over with plates of gold like the idols to which Isa. xl. 19 refers. In like manner the altar of Merodach and the wooden portico of his temple were overlaid with plates of gold. The inauguration of an image of Merodach in the temple in Babylon is described by Nebuchadnezzar in his inscription: "A fulness of the treasures of countries I accumulated; around the city it was placed as an ornament, when at the festival of Lilmuku at the beginning of the year, on the eighth day and eleventh day, the Divine Prince, Deity of heaven and earth, the lord god they raised within it. The statue of the god El, the beauty of the sphere, reverently they bring; treasure have they displayed before it, a monument to lasting days, a monument of my life." *Records of the Past*, v. 117.

"Dura." A recent traveller, Oppert, states that this name is still given to a plain which extends from the foot of the walls of ancient Babylon. Several mounds of ruins still lie upon it, one of which appeared to him like the pedestal of some immense statue. There was another place with the same name on the east of the Tigris, near Apollonia; but that is at some distance from Babylon.

2. "princes," &c. The eight classes of officers here enumerated are described by titles mostly derived from the old Persian language: the following equivalent English terms have been suggested as perhaps representing the meaning of the titles more exactly: 1. Satraps or representatives of the monarch. 2. Commandants or military governors. 3. Pashas or prefects, or civil governors. 4. Chief justices. 5. Treasurers. 6. Recorders. 7. Magistrates or inferior judges. 8. Viziers or deputy lieutenants.

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the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

3 Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

4 Then an herald cried ² aloud, To you ³ it is commanded, ^a O people, nations, and languages,

5 *that* at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, ^{4 5} dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:

6 and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour ^b be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

7 Therefore at that time, when all the people

² Chald. *with might.*

³ Chald. *they command.*

^a ch. 4. 1. & 6. 25.

⁴ Or, *singing.*

⁵ Chald. *symphony.*

^b Jer. 23. 22. Rev. 13. 15.

4. "O people, nations, and languages." Nebuchadnezzar, like preceding monarchs, claimed supremacy over many nations. In his address to Merodach, he says, "A surpassing Prince thou hast made me, and 'empire over multitudes of men hast entrusted to me as precious lives. . . 'May thy house receive within itself the abundant tribute of the kings 'of nations, and of all peoples." *Records of the Past*, v. 134-5.

5. "cornet," &c. Of the musical instruments here named, the first, second, and sixth are wind instruments, the first being some kind of horn, and the sixth probably a kind of bagpipes: the third, fourth, and fifth are stringed instruments. It is alleged that the names of two at least of these instruments are derived from the Greek language. If it be so, this is not surprising: for there was extensive intercourse in the seventh century B.C., and even earlier, between Greece and the interior of Asia; and we learn from the Greek poet Alceus that his brother was a soldier of distinction in Nebuchadnezzar's army.

6. "furnace." Burning was a common form of capital punishment under the Chaldean kings (see Jer. xxix. 22). The Assyrian Inscriptions record instances of the execution of distinguished captives by this cruel death. The preparation of a furnace on this occasion plainly indicates that Nebuchadnezzar did not assemble his subjects simply to perform an act of worship to which they were accustomed. Probably he had a political end in view. He may have wished to consolidate his huge empire, or at least to exhibit its extent by making compulsory the worship of his own gods.

7. "Therefore at that time." This phrase, repeated at the begin-

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heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down *and* worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

c ch. 6. 12.

8 ¶ Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans ^o came near, and accused the Jews.

d ch. 2. 4.
& 5. 10.
& 6. 6, 21.

9 They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, ^d O king, live for ever.

10 Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image :

11 and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, *that* he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

e ch. 2. 43.

² Chald. *have set no regard upon thee.*

12 ^e There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego ; these men, O king, ² have not regarded thee : they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in *his* rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Then they brought these men before the king.

³ Or, *of purpose, as*
Ex. 21. 13.

14 Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, *Is it* ³ true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, do not ye serve *my* gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up ?

ning of the next verse, calls attention to the uninterrupted sequence of events—the royal proclamation—the act of worship by the multitude—and the accusation of the Jews.

8—18. Disobedience of the three Jews.

8. “the Jews.” It has been asked why Daniel himself was not accused? As the history is silent, nothing but conjectural answers can be given, of which one may suffice. Daniel may have been now, as at other times (see ch. viii. 2), absent in a distant province. His conduct subsequently (ch. vi. 10; where see *note*) is sufficient proof that no royal decree would have deterred him from doing his duty toward God.

12. “have not regarded thee.” Rather, “are paying no regard to ‘thy decree.’” Compare the terms of this accusation with that which was brought against Daniel (ch. vi. 13).

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15 Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; ^f *well*: ^fAs Ex. 32. 32. Luke 13. 9. but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; ^g and who ^g Ex. 5. 2. 2 Kin. 18. 35. is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, ^h we are ^h Matt. 10. 19. not careful to answer thee in this matter.

17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

19 ¶ Then was Nebuchadnezzar ² full of fury, ² Chald. filled. and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: *therefore* he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.

20 And he commanded the ³ most mighty men ³ Chald. mighty of strength. that *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, *and* to cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace.

21 Then these men were bound in their ⁴ coats, ⁴ Or, mantles.

15. "well." This word, though necessary to complete the sense in English, is not required by the Eastern idiom: similar instances occur (Exod. xxxii. 32. St. Luke xiii. 9).

16. "we are not careful." Rather, "it is not necessary for us."

17. "he will deliver." God had promised to Israel, with special reference to the Babylonian captivity, "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isa. xliii. 2). This promise, if not then present to the mind of the Jewish martyrs, had doubtless sunk deep into their hearts long before.

19—27. Sentence and deliverance of the Jews.

19. "than it was wont to be heated." Rather, "than it was requisite that it should be heated."

21. "their coats, their hosen, and their hats." The words thus translated are capable of various meanings. The second of them seems rather to signify a cap or head-dress which denoted the office of the

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their hosen, and their ²hats, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

² Or,
turbans.

³ Chald. *word.*

⁴ Or, *spark.*

22 Therefore because the king's ³ commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the ⁴ flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

⁵ Or,
governors.

24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, *and* spake, and said unto his ⁵ counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

ⁱ Isai. 43. 2.

^c Chald.
*there is no
hurt in
them.*

^k Job 1. 6.
& 38. 7.
Ps. 34. 7.
ver. 28.

⁷ Chald. *door.*

25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, ⁱ walking in the midst of the fire, and ^c they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like ^k the Son of God.

26 ¶ Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the ⁷ mouth of the burning fiery furnace, *and* spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come *hither*. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, came forth of the midst of the fire.

wearer; the first and third respectively the long robe and a shorter tunic.

In the Septuagint Version the Song of the Three Children, or *Benedicite* as it is called in our Prayer-book, is inserted after this verse. That noble canticle is properly placed as a historical document in the Apocrypha.

25. "I see." The king's seat appears to have been placed opposite to the mouth or open door (see ver. 26) of the furnace. His counsellors or courtiers either did not see what their king saw, or hesitated to speak until he spoke.

"the Son of God." Rather, "a son of gods." There is no definite article in the original. The Assyrian mythology gives genealogies of several families of the gods whom they worshipped. Nebuchadnezzar unhesitatingly recognized in the fourth person a Divine being sent as a messenger by that supreme God to Whom (ver. 17) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego had appealed. The observation of Hippolytus is not wholly groundless: "as the children of Israel were destined to see God "in the world, and yet not to believe on Him, the Scripture here shewed "beforehand that the Gentiles would recognize Him incarnate, Whom, "while not incarnate, Nebuchadnezzar saw and recognized in the "furnace, and acknowledged to be the Son of God."

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27 And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, ¹ upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

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¹ Heb. 11. 34.

28 *Then* Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that ^m trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.

^m Ps. 34. 7, 8.
Jer. 17. 7.
ch. 6. 22, 23.

29 ⁿ Therefore ² I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak ³ any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be ^o ⁴ cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: ^p because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

ⁿ ch. 6. 26.
² Chald.
a decree is made by me.
³ Chald.
error.
^o ch. 2. 5.
⁴ Chald.
made pieces.
^p ch. 6. 27.
⁵ Chald.
made to prosper.

30 Then the king ⁵ promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, in the province of Babylon.

CHAPTER IV.

1 Nebuchadnezzar confesseth God's kingdom, 4 maketh relation of his dreams, which the magicians could not interpret. 8 Daniel heareth the dream. 19 He interpreteth it. 28 The story of the event.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR the king, ^a unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

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^a ch. 3. 4.
& 6. 25.

CHAPTER IV.

This chapter appears on the face of it to be a copy of a decree issued by Nebuchadnezzar; much as Ezra vii. 12—26 is a copy of a letter issued by a later Eastern king. Its style is quite in accordance with that of authentic Assyrian documents. There is an anomaly, as it seems in our day, in the use of the third person instead of the first in vv. 28—33, but this may be to some extent accounted for by the less rigid observance of grammatical rules in ancient records, and by the fact that these verses cover the period in which Nebuchadnezzar had lost control over his own actions and words.

1—3. Nebuchadnezzar's proclamation.

1. "all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth." These words are more full and comprehensive than the similar words, "people, nations, and languages," in ch. iii. 4, 6; and seem to be

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2 ² I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders ^b that the high God hath wrought toward me.

² Chald. *It was seemly before me.*

3 ^c How great *are* his signs! and how mighty *are* his wonders! his kingdom *is* ^d an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion *is* from generation to generation.

^b ch. 3. 26.

^c ch. 6. 27.

^d ver. 34.

ch. 2. 44.
& 6. 26.

4 ¶ I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace :

^e ch. 2. 28, 29.

5 I saw a dream which made me afraid, ^e and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head ^f troubled me.

^f ch. 2. 1.

6 Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise *men* of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream.

^g ch. 2. 2.

7 ^g Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers : and I told the dream before them ; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof.

^h ch. 1. 7.

8 ¶ But at the last Daniel came in before me, ^h whose name *was* Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, ⁱ and in whom *is* the spirit of the holy gods : and before him I told the dream, *saying*,

ⁱ Isai. 63. 11.
ver. 18.

ch. 2. 11. &

5. 11, 14.

^k ch. 2. 48.
& 5. 11.

9 O Belteshazzar, ^k master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods *is* in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.

10 Thus *were* the visions of mine head in my bed ;

an indication that since the miracle on the plain of Dura an interval had elapsed, in which the empire of Nebuchadnezzar and his consciousness of power had increased, and his ambition was more or less satisfied by his conquests. The expressions in vv. 4, 22, 27, point to the same conclusion.

2. "I thought it good to shew." Rather, it seems to me good to make known.

4—18. Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great tree.

6. "make known the interpretation." Among the cuneiform inscriptions has been found a body of tables or rules for the systematic interpretation of dreams, unusual events, and objects.

7. "magicians." See note on ch. i. 20.

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² I saw, and behold ¹ a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof *was* great.

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11 The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth :

² Chald. *I was seeing.*
¹ Ezek. 31. 3, &c. ver. 20.

12 the leaves thereof *were* fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it *was* meat for all : ^m the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.

^m Ezek. 17. 23. & 31. 6. See Lam. 4. 20.

13 I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, ⁿ a watcher and ^o an holy one came down from heaven ;

ⁿ Ps. 103. 20. ver. 17, 23.

14 he cried ³ aloud, and said thus, ^p Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit : ^q let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches :

^o Deut. 33. 2. ch. 8. 13. Zech. 14. 5. Jude 14.

15 nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field ; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and *let* his portion *be* with the beasts in the grass of the earth :

³ Chald. *with might.*
^p Matt. 3. 10.
^q Ezek. 31. 12.

16 let his heart be changed from man's, and let

10. "a tree." As in his former vision the king's ambitious recognition of the power to which he had recently succeeded was shewn in the colossal image (ch. ii. 31); so in this, his established grandeur is represented as a full-grown tree of gigantic size. Tree-worship was one of the earliest forms of idolatry in Asia and Africa; and its prevalence, together with image-worship in Assyria, is proved by the sculptures.

13. "a watcher and an holy one." The religion of the Babylonians, of which Nebuchadnezzar was a fervent maintainer, acknowledged several hundreds of spirits of heaven and earth, subordinate to greater deities. The Hebrews from their earliest days knew of the existence of spiritual beings, agents, and messengers, i. e. Angels of God, and knew them as ever-watchful and holy creatures. See specially Gen. xxviii. 12. Deut xxxiii. 2.

14. "Hew down the tree," &c. The tree, which as he was afterwards told (ver. 22) represented Nebuchadnezzar himself, was to be suddenly brought down to the lowest stage of vitality, a bare stump confined by brass bands, clinging by its roots to life; an unseen irresistible power deprived it of the pride of its lofty stem, the strength of its far-spread boughs, the glory of its foliage, the useful boon of its fruits. Nebuchadnezzar was to be reduced by a visitation of God to a mere animal life, and that under restraint, to be humbled, powerless, despised, useless to men, and deserted by them.

16. "let his heart be changed from man's." The image of a tree is

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a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven
r times pass over him.

r ch. 11, 13.
& 12, 7.

17 This matter *is* by the decree of the watchers,
and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to
the intent ^s that the living may know ^t that the most
High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it
to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the
basest of men.

s Ps. 9, 16.
t ch. 2, 21.
& 5, 21.
ver. 25, 32.

18 This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen.
Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpre-
tation thereof, ^u forasmuch as all the wise *men* of
my kingdom are not able to make known unto me
the interpretation: but thou *art* able; ^x for the
spirit of the holy gods *is* in thee.

u Gen. 41.8.15.
ch. 5, 8, 15.

x ver. 8.

19 ¶ Then Daniel, ^y whose name *was* Belteshazzar,
was astonied for one hour, and his thoughts troubled

y ver. 8.

here abandoned, and the exact nature of the calamity—the lunacy which
was to fall on Nebuchadnezzar—is plainly stated.

“seven times.” Seven was a common number—generally symbolical
of completeness—both in the Babylonian mythology and in the Hebrew
religion. The duration of “a time” is uncertain: the expression
occurs in chs. vii. 25 and xii. 7, and is there conjecturally interpreted
“a year.” Seven years are generally supposed to be meant here.

17. “This matter . . . holy ones.” Or, as the words may be trans-
lated, “By decree of watchers *is* the word, and *by* sentence of holy ones
“the request.” Nebuchadnezzar doubtless understood that the spirits
decided and spoke as the representatives of a superior power, as is
plainly stated in ver. 24. What became their decree was first their
request to God, and God's decree to be executed by them.

“the most High ruleth.” Nebuchadnezzar was a zealous wor-
shipper of the gods of Babylon, and specially he honoured Merodach as
“the lord of all beings—who hast created me, and hast assigned to me
“the empire over multitudes of men.” *Records of the Past*, v. 115.
The king's readiness to revere what he was taught to regard as Divine
is here (and subsequently, ver. 25) directed to its proper object, the
Most High, the supreme ruler and disposer of power. Instructed by this
dream as well as by the miracle on the plain of Dura (ch. iii. 17),
and by his earlier vision (ch. ii. 28), Nebuchadnezzar frankly acknow-
ledged (chs. ii. 47; iii. 29; iv. 35) the supreme power of the God of
Daniel; and yet—so imperfect was his knowledge—he thought he could
do so without renouncing the polytheism of Assyria (ch. iv. 8).

19—27. Interpretation of the dream of the great tree.

19. “for one hour.” This expression, which occurs elsewhere (ch.
iii. 6), is indefinite. It might be translated “for a time.”

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him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, ^z the dream *be* to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies.

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20 ^a The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth ;

^z See 2 Sam.
18. 32.
Jer. 29. 7.

21 whose leaves *were* fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it *was* meat for all ; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation :

^a ver. 10, 11,
12.

22 ^b it *is* thou, O king, that art grown and become strong : for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, ^c and thy dominion to the end of the earth.

^b ch. 2. 38.

^c Jer. 27. 6,
7, 8.

23 ^d And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it ; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field ; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, ^e and *let* his portion *be* with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him ;

^d ver. 13.

^e ch. 5. 21.

24 this *is* the interpretation, O king, and this *is* the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king :

25 that they shall ^f drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee ^g to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, ^h till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and ⁱ giveth it to whomsoever he will.

^f ver. 32.
ch. 5. 21, &c.

^g Ps. 106. 29.

^h Ps. 83. 18.
ver. 17, 32.

ⁱ Jer. 27. 5.

26 And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots ; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the ^k heavens do rule.

^k Matt. 21. 23,
Luke 15. 18,
21.

27 Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and ^l break off thy sins by

^l 1 Pct. 4. 8.

26. " the heavens." This expression is plainly equivalent to the king of heaven (ch. iv. 23).

27. " break off," &c. That is, " put an end to thy ambition and

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^m Ps. 41. 1,
&c.

² Or, an
healing of
thine error.
ⁿ 1 Kin. 21. 23.
³ Or, upon.

righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; ^m if it may be ^{2 n} a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

28 ¶ All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar.

29 At the end of twelve months he walked ³ in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon.

^o Prov. 16. 18.
ch. 5. 20.

30 The king ^o spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?

“oppressive tyranny by changing thy life and entering on a course “of righteousness and beneficence.” It was, of course, impossible for Nebuchadnezzar to carry on wars of self-aggrandisement, and to erect costly and magnificent buildings by the compulsory labour of “the disobedient and the poor” (*Inscription*) without practising “sins and iniquities,” to which Daniel alludes in general terms, and to which the watcher in his dream referred (ver. 17), as a practical denial of the supremacy of the Most High. The advice is the same in principle as that which was given by John the Baptist, “Bring forth fruits worthy of “repentance.” See St. Luke iii. 7—10.

“tranquillity,” rest; the state described in ver. 4 by the same word.

28—33. Fulfilment of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.

30. “I have built.” All the buildings which Nebuchadnezzar completed are described by the king himself in the Standard Inscription, which was given to English readers for the first time by the Rev. J. M. Rodwell, in 1875, in *Records of the Past*, v. 113—135. This precious page of contemporary history, after lying unread and unnoticed for twenty-five centuries, has been deciphered and published in our time, and affords in its matter and its style a marvellous confirmation of the genuineness of the book of Daniel. Beginning with the temple of Bel or Merodach and ending with his own palace, the king enumerates and describes a variety of works in Babylon and Borsippa—temples to Nebo, Ninharissi, the moon god, the Sun, Yav, Gula, Ninip, Anna; walls, fosses, moats, embankments, with buttresses, gates, towers, and fortresses. These are the fruits of Nebuchadnezzar’s “rest,” as detailed in the *Inscription*, which is silent as to his wars and conquests, the glory of a preceding period of his life.

After a silent growth of 1600 years, “great Babylon” attained the height of its prosperity and magnificence under Nebuchadnezzar. Its period of decay began when it was taken and spoiled by Cyrus. Long afterwards it was seen by Herodotus and by Ctesias, whose descriptions are confirmed in many particulars by later writers and by the extent of its ruins. It formed an exact square, divided by the Euphrates into two triangles, which a bridge connected. The area was of the same extent as

DANIEL, IV.

31 ^p While the word *was* in the king's mouth, there fell ^a a voice from heaven, *saying*, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 570.

^p ch. 5. 5.
Luke 12. 20.
^q ver. 24.

32 And ^r they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.

cir. 569.
^r ver. 25.

33 The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' *feathers*, and his nails like birds' *claws*.

the county of Rutland; and the wall of fifty miles, which bounded it, of the same height as the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. A hundred brazen gates gave its inhabitants access to the surrounding plain: and its soldiers in times of danger could keep watch in more than twice that number of towers which surmounted the "broad" walls (see the references to these in Jeremiah li. 53, 58). The royal palace with its precincts and grounds covering a space seven miles in circumference was the principal building on the east side of the Euphrates; and on the west rose the pyramid-temple of Bel or Merodach, consisting of eight square towers placed one above the other. The houses of the citizens were arranged in parallel straight rows, which were crossed at right angles by other streets, and ended in handsome gates on the river embankments. A late writer adds that the houses, which were frequently three or four stories high, covered only about one-tenth of the area; the remainder being laid out in pleasure-grounds and fields, and otherwise cultivated.

Such was the city which Nebuchadnezzar surveyed from the height of his palace.

33. "The same hour was the thing fulfilled." Nebuchadnezzar was suddenly smitten with madness of a rare kind, but well-known to ancient and modern physicians. A man suffering under this disease believes himself to be some animal—generally a wolf or a dog—and assumes the habits and appearance of a brute. Patients remain in this state for months or even years, and are not incapable of cure. It is fully described by Dr. Pusey in his *Lectures on Daniel*, p. 428. The ample grounds of his palace may have afforded a secret place of confinement for the stricken king; and his government, in a time of "rest" (ver. 4), may have been carried on by his counsellors. No notice of this untoward event has been read in the Assyrian Inscriptions; but an ancient historian, Abydenus, records a curious Chaldean tradition, which represents Nebuchadnezzar as being on the roof of his palace, and there receiving from some god warning of an impending calamity, after announcing which the god disappeared.

DANIEL, IV.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 563.

cir. 563.

^s ver. 26.

^t ch. 12. 7.

Rev. 4. 10.

^u Ps. 10. 16.

ch. 2. 44.

& 7. 14.

Mic. 4. 7.

Luke 1. 33.

^x Isai. 40. 15,

17.

^y Ps. 115. 3.

& 135. 6.

^z Job 34. 29.

^a Job 9. 12.

Isai. 45. 9.

Rom. 9. 20.

^b ver. 26.

^c Job 42. 12.

Prov. 22. 4.

Matt. 6. 33.

^d Ps. 33. 4.

Rev. 15. 3.

& 16. 7.

^e Ex. 18. 11.

ch. 5. 20.

34 And ^s at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him ^t that liveth for ever, whose dominion *is* ^u an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom *is* from generation to generation :

35 and ^x all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing : and ^y he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth : and ^z none can stay his hand, or say unto him, ^a What doest thou ?

36 At the same time my reason returned unto me ; ^b and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me ; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me ; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was ^c added unto me.

37 Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, ^d all whose works *are* truth, and his ways judgment : ^e and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Belshazzar's impious feast.* 5 *A handwriting, unknown to the magicians, troubleth the king.* 10 *At the commendation of the queen Daniel is brought.* 17 *He, reproving the king of pride and idolatry,* 25 *readeth*

CHAPTER V.

An interval of more than twenty years elapsed between the events recorded in ch. iv and those which follow in ch. v.

Nebuchadnezzar died in the forty-fourth year of his reign, B.C. 561 ; and between that time and the death of Belshazzar four kings not mentioned by Daniel, successively filled the throne of Babylon. Evil-Merodach (2 Kings xxv. 27), the son of Nebuchadnezzar, reigned for two years, and was murdered by his brother-in-law and successor Neriglissar (Jer. xxxix. 3). After a prosperous reign of four years he left the throne to his son Labor-soarchod, a boy, who, in a few months was slain by conspirators. One of them, Nabonidus (or Labynetus) succeeded. He was not of the royal family ; but it is conjectured that he married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, as his son Belshazzar is said (Dan. v. 2) to be descended from Nebuchadnezzar. Nabonidus associated Belshazzar with himself as joint-king. When it was known that Cyrus, B.C. 539, was marching against Babylon, Nabonidus himself went forth to encounter the Medo-Persian army, but was routed and escaped to Borsippa, where he was shut up. The youthful Belshazzar and his

DANIEL, V.

and interpreteth the writing. 30 *The monarchy is translated to the Medes.*

Before
CHRIST
cir. 538.
cir. 538.
Esth. 1. 3.

BELSHAZZAR the king ^a made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.

2 Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels ^b which his ² father Nebuchadnezzar had ³ taken out of the temple which *was* in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein.

3 Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which *was* at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.

4 They drank wine, ^c and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

5 ¶ ^d In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candle-

people, confident in the strength and resources of Babylon, could look down without terror on the vast hosts of Cyrus which lay at their gates, and seemed destined to melt away there. But the experienced commander of the Persians, aware both of the character and the strength of his opponents, discerned his opportunity and made silent preparations for it. On a dark night, when all Babylon was securely celebrating a religious festival, the waters of the Euphrates were diverted into a new channel. The empty bed of the river was as available as an unguarded breach in the wall. The Persian hosts unobserved and unopposed penetrated into the heart of the slumbering city, and Cyrus thus became master of Babylon.

1—9. Belshazzar's feast interrupted.

1. "Belshazzar." This name is said to signify "Bel protect the prince." King Nabonidus, in an inscription at Uruk (*Records of the Past*, v. 147) implores a blessing on himself and on his "eldest son Belshazzar."

"drank wine before." The king sat at a separate table; and set the example of drinking at the close of the feast.

2. "vessels." The vessels already mentioned by Daniel (ch. i. 2), so long as they remained in the treasury of the idol-temple, were treated with a measure of respect as if dedicated to the service of an inferior deity; but the order of the king is to desecrate them entirely.

"father," i. e. ancestor.

4. "praised." Several Assyrian hymns of praise have been deciphered and translated. See *Records of the Past*.

5. "man." The angel Gabriel is called a man (ch. ix. 24 and elsewhere).

Before
CHRIST
cir. 538.

stick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

6 Then the king's ²countenance ³was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the ⁴⁵joints of his loins were loosed, and his ⁶knees smote one against another.

7 ^fThe king cried ⁶aloud to bring in ⁸the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. *And* the king spake, and said to the wise *men* of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with ⁷scarlet, and *have* a chain of gold about his neck, ^hand shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

8 Then came in all the king's wise *men*: ⁱbut they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof.

9 Then was king Belshazzar greatly ^ktroubled, and his ⁸countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished.

10 ¶ *Now* the queen by reason of the words of the

“**candlestick.**” A Jewish commentator has suggested that this may have been the golden candlestick with seven branches.

“**plaister.**” Stucco walls are still found among the ruins of the Assyrian palaces.

“**part.**” The extremity, or tip.

6. “**countenance was changed.**” The natural colour left his face, he grew pale. So ver. 9, and ch. vii. 28.

7. “**third.**” This is understood to mean definitely next in rank to Nabonidus and Belshazzar, the two reigning kings; it has been interpreted, with less probability, to signify one of three presidents, such as Darius afterwards appointed (ch. vi. 2).

The honourable reward offered by Belshazzar may be compared with those which were conferred by Pharaoh upon Joseph (Gen. xli. 42, 43), and by Ahasuerus upon Mordecai (Esth. vi. 8—11).

8. “**could not read the writing.**” This distinct specification seems to imply that the writing was in a character with which the wise men were unacquainted; and that they had to encounter this preliminary difficulty before attempting to explain the meaning of the heavenly message. If so, the characters were not cuneiform, in which the Assyrian inscriptions are commonly written, nor square Hebrew, such as is now used, which the Jews adopted in their captivity; but they may have been old Hebrew letters, which are now called Samaritan, which were used by the Jews before the captivity, and consequently were familiar to Daniel.

DANIEL, V.

king and his lords came into the banquet house: *and* the queen spake and said, ¹O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed:

Before
CHRIST
cir. 538.
1 ch. 2. 4.
& 3. 9.

11 ^m there is a man in thy kingdom, in whom *is* the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy ²father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy ³father, the king, *I say*, thy father, made ⁿmaster of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, *and* soothsayers;

m ch. 2. 48.
& 4. 8, 9, 18.
2 Or, grand-
father,
ver. 2.
3 Or, grand-
father,
ver. 2.
n ch. 4. 9.

12 ^o forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, ⁴interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and ⁵dissolving of ⁶doubts, were found in the same Daniel, ^pwhom the king named Belshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.

o ch. 6. 3.
4 Or,
of an inter-
preter, &c.
5 Or, of a
dissolver.
6 Chald.
knots.
p ch. 1. 7.

13 Then was Daniel brought in before the king. *And* the king spake and said unto Daniel, *Art* thou that Daniel, which *art* of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my ⁷father brought out of Jewry?

7 Or, grand-
father.

14 I have even heard of thee, that ^qthe spirit of the gods *is* in thee, and *that* light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee.

q ver. 11, 12.

15 And now ^rthe wise *men*, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing:

r ver. 7, 8.

16 and I have heard of thee, that thou canst ^smake interpretations, and dissolve doubts: ^snow if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with

s Chald.
interpret.
s ver. 7.

10—16. Daniel sent for.

11. "there is a man." If the queen was, as has been supposed, the mother of Belshazzar and daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, she was doubtless so well acquainted with the capacity and the services of Daniel that she would at once turn to him in such a difficulty as was present. Whereas both the Babylonian lords, unfavourably disposed towards the ennobled foreigner, and Belshazzar, youthful and self-indulgent, were unlikely to recognise his merits or even to remember him and his peculiar services to Nebuchadnezzar.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 538.

scarlet, and *have* a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.

17 ¶ Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy ² rewards to another ; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

² Or, *fee*, as
ch. 2. 6.

¹ ch. 2. 37, 38.
& 4. 17, 22,
25.

18 O thou king, ¹ the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour :

^u Jer. 27. 7.
ch. 3. 4.

19 and for the majesty that he gave him, ^u all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him : whom he would he slew ; and whom he would he kept alive ; and whom he would he set up ; and whom he would he put down.

^x ch. 4. 30, 37.

20 ^x But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened ³ in pride, he was ⁴ deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him :

³ Or, *to deal proudly*,
Ex. 18. 11.

⁴ Chald.
made to come down.

^y ch. 4. 32, &c.

⁵ O ; *he made his heart equal*, &c.

^z ch. 4. 17, 25.

21 and he was ^y driven from the sons of men ; and ⁵ his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling *was* with the wild asses : they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven ; ^z till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and *that* he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

^a 2 Chron. 33.
23. & 36. 12.

22 And thou his son, O Belshazzar, ^a hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this ;

^b ver. 3, 4.

23 ^b but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven ; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them ; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, ^c which see not, nor hear, nor know : and the God in whose hand thy breath *is*, ^d and whose *are* all thy ways, hast thou not glorified :

^c Ps. 115. 5, 6.

^d Jer. 10. 23.

24 then was the part of the hand sent from him ; and this writing was written.

17—24. The Prophet reproves the king.

18. "the most high." By this name God was made known to Nebuchadnezzar. See ch. iv. 17, 24, 34, &c.

DANIEL, V.

25 And this *is* the writing that was written, **MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.** Before
CHRIST
cir. 538.

26 This *is* the interpretation of the thing: **MENE**; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.

27 **TEKEL**; ^eThou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. e Job 31. 6.
Ps. 62. 9.
Jer. 6. 30.

28 **PERES**; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the ^fMedes and ^gPersians. f Foretold,
Isai. 21. 2.
ver. 31.
ch. 9. 1.
g ch. 6. 28.

29 Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and *put* a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, ^hthat he should be the third ruler in the kingdom. h ver. 7.

30 ¶ ⁱIn that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. cir. 538.
i Jer. 51. 31,
33, 57.

31 ^kAnd Darius the Median took the kingdom, ^l*being* ³about threescore and two years old. k ch. 9. 1.
l Chald. he
as the son
of, &c.
3 Or, now.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *Daniel is made chief of the presidents.* 4 *They conspiring against him obtain an idolatrous decree.* 10 *Daniel, accused of the breach thereof,*

25—31. The handwriting interpreted and fulfilled.

25. "**MENE**," &c. These words are Aramaic, and their exact meaning is "numbered, numbered, weighed, and dividings."

26. "**thy kingdom**," i. e. the years of thy reign.

28. "**PERES**." Daniel in the explanation of the word Upharsin points out that the root *Paras*, from which it is derived, has two distinct meanings, viz., to "break," or "divide," and "Persia," and thus indicates the powerful nation by which Belshazzar's reign was to be broken off.

29. "**they clothed**." It is to the credit of Belshazzar that he fulfills his word, and confers the rewards on Daniel notwithstanding Daniel's refusal of reward and his outspoken reproofs. Daniel having shewn his appreciation of Belshazzar's personal character by at once declining the proffered reward, yields at length to the command of his sovereign.

30. "**was Belshazzar slain**." Cyrus and his hosts broke into the city and slew the king. The prophecies of Isaiah, xiii and xiv, and Jeremiah, i, li, were fulfilled.

31. "**took**." This word would be more exactly translated "received," as in ch. ii. 6. He did not take the kingdom by his own power or in his own right, but as is said in ch. ix. 1, he "was made" king. The power to make a king rested with the Medo-Persian army, which was led by Cyrus; and it seems probable that this Darius was appointed by, and was subordinate to, Cyrus. He must not be confounded with the later king of Persia, Darius, the son of Hystaspes, who appears in the book of Ezra, or the Darius mentioned in Nehemiah xii. 22.

DANIEL, VI.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 538.
cir. 538.
a Esth. 1. 1.

is cast into the lions' den. 13 Daniel is saved. 24 His adversaries devoured, 25 and God magnified by a decree.

IT pleased Darius to set ^a over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom ;

2 and over these three presidents ; of whom Daniel *was* first : that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage.

b ch. 5. 12.

3 Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, ^b because an excellent spirit *was* in him ; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

cir. 537.
c Eccles. 4. 4.

4 ¶ ^c Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom ; but they could find none occasion nor fault ; forasmuch as he *was* faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

5 Then said these men, We shall not find any

CHAPTER VI.

1—3. Daniel's elevation under Darius.

1. "princes," i. e. satraps. The word is translated "princes" in Dan. iii. 2, and "lieutenants" in Ezra viii. 36. In the large Oriental monarchies, hastily formed and loosely connected, the satraps were an essential part of the system of government. They were appointed by the king of kings (Dan. ii. 37) and lived almost like kings (see Isa. x. 8) in their several provinces or cities, paying a certain tribute, and supplying, when required, a certain number of soldiers to their sovereign. Darius did not introduce a new form of government, but rearranged the old system, defined the number of satraps, and placed "presidents," as an intermediate authority between them and himself, specially with a view to financial affairs.

2. "first." Rather, "one." It appears that the three presidents were co-equal in rank. In the next verse "preferred" should be "superior," or "distinguished." His superiority was simply that of merit and ability. His two colleagues, as is evident from ver. 4, were united in regarding him with jealousy.

4—9. Intrigue against Daniel.

4. "concerning the kingdom." That is, in the administration of the business of the king (see ver. 2) which was committed to him. They tried to convict him of some moral fault in his official conduct. When they found this impracticable, they determined to attack his private conduct as a religious man, by making prayer a capital offence.

DANIEL, VI.

occasion against this Daniel, except we find *it* against him concerning the law of his God.

6 Then these presidents and princes ² assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, ⁴ King Darius, live for ever.

7 All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm ³ decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.

8 Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the ⁶ law of the Medes and Persians, which ⁴ altereth not.

9 Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree.

10 ¶ Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber ^f toward Jerusalem, he

Before
CHRIST
cir. 537.

² Or, *came tumultuously.*

^d Neh. 2. 3.
ver. 21.
ch. 2. 4.

³ Or, *interdict.*

^e Esth. 1. 19.
& 8. 8.
ver. 12, 15.

⁴ Chald.
passeth not.

^f 1 Kings 8.
44, 48.
Ps. 5. 7.
Jonah 2. 4.

6. "assembled." This word, here and in vv. 11 and 15, should be translated rushed, or, as in the margin, came tumultuously.

7. "whosoever shall ask a petition." The ancient Persians, it is said, were taught to invoke not only supernatural beings but also their national ruler and their chief priest. The proposed decree of Darius does not however go so far. It amounted to a prohibition for thirty days of prayer to any supernatural being, and allows only such requests as may be addressed to the king; but it stops short of enjoining divine honours to be paid to a living man, such as were undoubtedly claimed by Persian and Syrian kings of later date. It was capable of being represented, and perhaps was actually represented, by the conspirators, as a politic assertion of the claim of the Median king to royal honour from his new subjects in Babylon.

10—17. Daniel delivered to death.

10. "his windows . . . Jerusalem," or, "It had open windows in its upper room towards Jerusalem." "open," i. e. without cross-bars or lattice to intercept the view. The upper room to which fewer sounds of earth reached, and from which the glance of the worshipper might be freely lifted up to heaven, was always a chosen place for prayer (see 2 Sam. xviii. 33. 1 Kings xvii. 19. Acts i. 13, and xx. 8). Doubtless when Daniel chose a room which looked towards Jerusalem he remembered the prayer of Solomon, and specially those touching verses in 1 Kings viii. 46—50.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 537.

^g Ps. 55. 17.
Acts 2. 1, 2,
15. & 3. 1.
& 10. 9.

^h ch. 3. 8.

ⁱ ver. 8.

^k ch. 1. 6.
& 5. 13.
^l ch. 3. 12.

^m So Mark
6. 26.

kneeled upon his knees ^g three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

11 Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

12 ^h Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask *a petition* of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing *is* true, ⁱ according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

13 Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, ^k which *is* of the children of the captivity of Judah, ^l regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

14 Then the king, when he heard *these* words, ^m was sore displeased with himself, and set *his* heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

“three times a day.” This practice, if Daniel needed a precedent for it, was certainly as old as David (see Ps. lv. 17). But if morning and evening prayer be, as has been said, the natural habit of every ordinary believer, it cannot be otherwise than natural for such men as Daniel and David to seek God at least at one stated hour in the long interval.

13. “maketh his petition.” Lit. “asketh his petition;” a literal infringement of the decree (ver. 7).

14. “was sore displeased with himself.” The struggle in the heart of Darius was long; his decision seems pardonable in a heathen. On the one side was his personal esteem for Daniel and his conscientious conviction that Daniel was in the right: on the other side his respect for the written law and the national tradition, perhaps also unwillingness to shake its authority in the beginning of his reign. He saw that he had been outwitted by an intrigue, that he had ignorantly ratified the law, unaware of its bearing on a man who loved God so intensely that it was impossible for him to abstain from prayer and praise. Yet Darius did not recall the sanction which he had given in ignorance. Perhaps (as has been suggested) he had not sufficient strength of character or sufficient personal authority to anticipate the arbitrary declaration of one of his successors that a Persian king is superior to the law. A supreme authority which allows itself to be fettered by an unrighteous law deserves condemnation for its weakness; but the weakness of Darius has been extenuated by the suggestion that he did not sacrifice an innocent

DANIEL, VI.

15 Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that ^a the law of the Medes and Persians *is*, That no decree nor ⁿ statute which the king establisheth may be changed. Before
CHRIST
cir. 537.
n ver. 8.

16 Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast *him* into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

17 ^o And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; ^p and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel. o Lam. 3. 53.
p So Matt.
27. 66.

18 ¶ Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were ² instruments of musick brought before him: ^q and his sleep went from him. 2 Or, table.
q ch. 2. 1.

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: *and* the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, ^r is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? r ch. 3. 15.

person uncondemned by law as Herod did (St. Matt. xiv), and as Pilate did, merely to win favour.

The conduct of Daniel on this occasion is sufficient to prove that his escape from the former trial of the burning fiery furnace (ch. iii. 8) was not due to any want of courage in bearing his testimony. Daniel now, like his three friends formerly, knowingly incurs the penalty imposed by an unrighteous law. And he was ready without hesitation or complaint to submit to it, being aware that the best opposition which, in the circumstances, he could offer to the iniquity was to die the death of a martyr.

16. "den of lions." To hunt the lion was a favourite sport with the kings of Assyria; and it is likely that many lions were kept in artificial dens in the parks attached to the royal palace. The inscriptions shew that casting a criminal alive to the lions was a mode of punishment practised by the kings of Assyria.

"he will deliver thee." These words in the original appear to go no farther than a wish—may He deliver thee!

18—24. Daniel rescued.

20. "the living God." Probably in the sleepless hours of night Darius had called to mind the signs and wonders which, as Nebuchad-

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cir. 537. 21 Then said Daniel unto the king, ^s O king, live for ever.

s ch. 2. 4.
t ch. 3. 28.
u Heb. 11. 33. 22 ^t My God hath sent his angel, and hath ^u shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me : forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me ; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

x Heb. 11. 33. 23 Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, ^x because he believed in his God.

y Deut. 19. 19. 24 And the king commanded, ^y and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast *them* into the den of lions, *them*, ^z their children, and their wives ; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

z Esth. 9. 10.
See Deut.
24. 16.
2 Kin. 14. 6. 25 ¶ ^a Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth ; Peace be multiplied unto you.

a ch. 4. 1. 26 ^b I make a decree, That in every dominion of

nezzar had acknowledged (ch. iv. 2), were wrought by the God of Daniel ; there is a gradual increase in the reverence which the Median king expresses (comp. vv. 16, 20, and 26). Darius, like Nebuchadnezzar, acknowledged the power, even the supreme power of God, but yet continued to believe in the existence of other gods.

22. "shut the lions' mouths." This is probably referred to by the Apostle (Heb. xi. 33).

"forasmuch as," &c. Daniel, speaking as a prophet of God, interprets the miracle as a sign of God's approval of his conduct both as a child of God and as a dutiful subject of Darius. The king is taught that God approves both piety and loyalty.

24. "them, their children, and their wives." This severe and indiscriminate punishment was the act of an absolute king to whose religion and laws mercy was a stranger. What would seem to us the extremity of injustice was agreeable (comp. Esth. ix. 13, 14) to the spirit of that age and people. God had manifestly justified Daniel ; and the king treats his accusers as outlaws among men.

25—28. Proclamation and confession of Darius.

26. "I make a decree." The decree of Darius goes beyond that of Nebuchadnezzar (ch. iii. 29). The former forbade irreverence, the latter commands veneration towards God. In its more explicit language

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my kingdom men ^c tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: ^d for he *is* the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be ^e destroyed, and his dominion *shall be even* unto the end.

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^c Ps. 99. 1.
^d ch. 4. 34.
^e ch. 2. 44.
& 4. 3. 34.
& 7. 14. 27.
Luke 1. 33.

27 He delivereth and rescueth, ^f and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the ² power of the lions.

^f ch. 4. 3.

² Heb. *hand*.

28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, ^g and in the reign of ^h Cyrus the Persian.

^g ch. 1. 21.

^h Ezra 1. 1, 2.

it seems to gather up the whole experience which both kings had of God's great power. Both decrees stop short of any allusion to the national polytheism.

28. "prospered," i. e. found favour (comp. ch. i. 21). With this verse the historical portion of the book ends.

All the facts related in the historical chapters of Daniel seem to converge to one point, namely the manifestation of the supreme power of the true God. God was thus instructing both unbelievers and believers, both Babylonians and Jews. In the elevation of the Jewish slaves in their royal master's household (ch. i); in the supernatural dream of Nebuchadnezzar and its supernatural interpretation (ch. ii); in the miraculous deliverance of the three Jews from the furnace (ch. iii); in Nebuchadnezzar's predicted but unexpected madness and unexpected recovery (ch. iv); in the handwriting on the wall and its interpretation by Daniel (ch. v); the power and the attributes of God are manifested with a good effect in two ways: the unbeliever was startled and corrected in the hour of his triumph, in the midst of his imaginary self-sufficiency; and the dejected Jew was consoled with a gleam of Divine favour, and rescued from the torpor of despair. After the destruction of the Temple, the material emblem of God's presence among the Jews, they were encouraged by those undeniable tokens of His presence in a foreign land to pray for the peace of the land and dwell in patient hope of release after the appointed seventy years (Jer. xxix). And the same tokens of God's presence tended also to carry out His purpose in the Captivity. "I had pity for mine holy name . . . and I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen . . . and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes," Ezek. xxxvi. 23.

CHAPTER VII.

The second portion of the book of Daniel begins with the seventh chapter. It consists of four great prophecies which were revealed to Daniel immediately. They are arranged in the order in which they were revealed, and the date of each revelation is recorded; the first, vii. 1; the second, viii. 1; the third, ix. 1; the fourth x. 1.

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CHAPTER VII.

1 *Daniel's vision of four beasts.* 9 *Of God's kingdom.* 15 *The interpretation thereof.*

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^a Num. 12, 6.

Amos 3, 7.

² Chald. *saw*.

^b ch. 2, 28.

³ Or, *words*.

IN the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon ^a Daniel ² had a dream and ^b visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the ³ matters.

2 Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.

1—8. Daniel's vision of the four beasts and the little horn.

1. "In the first year of Belshazzar." This date carries us back to a period before the last two chapters. Belshazzar was probably the fourth king after Nebuchadnezzar. See introductory note to ch. v.

2. "my vision." This vision of Daniel relates to the same events as the dream of Nebuchadnezzar (ch. ii. 31—45). It is not however a mere repetition of that dream; numerous important details are added, specially the Divinity of the Human Sovereign of the kingdom of heaven. It might have been expected that the "counsels of God" would be communicated, as they were, more fully to his faithful servant Daniel than to the Babylonian king.

God, Who taught both Babylonians and Jews by facts (see *note* at end of ch. vi), taught them also by revelation, but in different degrees, as they were severally able to receive instruction. Thus, in this sixth century before Christ, it was made known, first, to the aspiring young monarch Nebuchadnezzar, and secondly, after an interval of fifty or sixty years, to the thoughtful statesman and prophet Daniel, that four great empires in succession were destined to rise and fall on earth, the second distinguished from the first by its inferior splendour, the third remarkable for the extent to which its dominion was stretched, the fourth for its crushing power; and that when the last of these empires was on the decline another kingdom should spring up, of heavenly origin, appointed, after a struggle with the remaining offspring of the fourth, to absorb all that preceded it and to stand for ever.

The inspiration of this prophecy is attested by the annals of the world in the last twenty-five centuries. Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome have arisen in their godless strength, and done their appointed tasks; and since the dissolution of the last, the shattered fragments of human power have not been combined by any earthly ruler in one dominion. The separate fragments exist, but it is, as we see in this nineteenth century, to contribute their parts to the rising authority of the growing kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this vision of Daniel, who could fail to recognize a prescience so far beyond human penetration, dream of ambition, or forecast of statesmanship, that it must be of superhuman origin? Whence could the writer of this book have derived his knowledge but from the source of inspiration, the Holy Ghost?

"the four winds." So the winds are four in Ezek. xxxvii. 9.

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3 And four great beasts ^c came up from the sea, diverse one from another.

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4 The first *was* ^d like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, ² and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

^c Rev. 13. 1.
^d Deut. 28. 49.
² Sam. 1. 23.
Jer. 4. 7, 13.
& 48. 40.
Ezek. 17. 3.
Hab. 1. 8.

5 ^e And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and ³ it raised up itself on one side, and *it had* three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.

² Or,
wherewith.
^e ch. 2. 39.

6 After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also ^ffour heads; and ^fdominion was given to it.

³ Or, *it raised up one dominion.*
^f ch. 8. 8, 22.

Their bursting forth from every side indicates the absence of peace. The sea represents the people of the world (cp. Rev. xvii. 1, 15), so far as it is given over to evil (St. Luke iv. 6).

3. "four beasts." These are four kingdoms (see ver. 17), the same as were represented by the four portions of the body or the four metals in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (ch. ii. 32). There may still be seen imaginary monsters bearing some resemblance to these beasts carved in stone among the ruins of the Assyrian cities.

4. "The first." The Babylonian empire, the golden head of the dream, is here represented as a lion-eagle; a lion in strength (Jer. iv. 7, &c.), an eagle in swiftness (Jer. xlviii. 40, &c.). Such was the character of that empire in the early days of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel, whose long life spanned the whole length of the Babylonian empire—the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar and his three successors, B.C. 604—538, beheld its beginning and watched its end. He saw the wings plucked, the career of conquest ended; the fourfooted creature placed erect and made incapable of exerting the strength which it once manifested; lastly, its heart changed into that of a weak man, its aggressive spirit subdued. The expressions seem to allude to the personal history of Nebuchadnezzar, as well as to the empire founded by him.

5. "a bear." The bear, corresponding to the silver breast and arms in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, represents the Medo-Persian empire, which may be dated from the rise of Cyrus, about B.C. 550, to the death of Darius III., B.C. 330. It raised itself up on one side, its two component parts being unequal in strength; it overwhelmed or destroyed three great kingdoms, the Lydian, Babylonian, and Bactrian; its wastefulness of human life is denoted by the all-devouring character of the bear.

6. "a leopard." The four-headed leopard corresponded to the brazen belly and thighs (ch. ii. 32), and is the type of the Græco-Macedonian empire, the rise of which may be dated from B.C. 334, when Alexander crossed the Hellespont. The characteristic features of this empire are the comparative inferiority of its origin from the petty state of Macedonia,

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^e ch. 2. 40.
ver. 19, 23.

^h ch. 2. 41.
Rev. 13. 1.

ⁱ ver. 20, 21,
24. ch. 8. 9.

7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold ^e a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it *was* diverse from all the beasts that *were* before it; ^h and it had ten horns.

8 I considered the horns, and, behold, ⁱ there came up among them another little horn, before whom

its eagerness for conflict, the concentrated force of its assault, the rapidity of its victorious career, and its division after the death of its founder, Alexander, B.C. 323, into four kingdoms—Macedonia under Cassander, Thrace under Lysimachus, Egypt under Ptolemy, and Syria under Seleucus.

7. “a fourth beast,” i. e. the Roman empire, corresponding to the legs and feet of iron and clay (ch. ii. 33). Daniel marks (comp. ver. 24) three periods in its long existence; (1) its rise and progressive aggrandizement; (2) its manifestation of ten horns = contemporaneous kings; (3) its putting forth the little horn; after which the everlasting kingdom supersedes it. Its three predecessors had been despotic governments; but its power was defined by a system of exact law. Compared with theirs, its dominion was more widely extended, and the hand of the central government was more frequently felt in all parts of the empire. It has left behind it more abiding marks of its resistless influence than any other empire. Crushing power, thorough subjugation, and consolidation are named as its characteristics (comp. vv. 19 and 23).

“ten horns.” As the Roman empire crumbled into decay, a number of smaller kingdoms gradually rose up out of it and came into prominence. They are variously named at different periods; but the number is generally observed to be ten. Hippolytus, writing A.D. 240, says, “The fourth beast is that which stands sovereign at present, which subdues and reduces all by its strength, just as iron does . . . We ought now to look for the ten horns which are to spring from it, when the time of the beast shall be fulfilled, and the little horn, which is Antichrist, shall appear suddenly in their midst, and righteousness shall be banished from the earth, and the whole world shall reach its consummation.”

8. “little horn.” This is now generally interpreted of the Papacy; not the bishopric of Rome as it was in primitive times, but the secular power of the Pope, which sprang up at Rome amongst, but later than, the kingdoms which grew out of the falling empire; the “spiritual monarchy which gradually rose to supreme power in the centre of the political system, and in the very seat of former dominion.” But it must not be assumed that the little horn means nothing but the Papacy. It may comprehend other abnormal developments (tares among the wheat) of the human element in the visible Church of Christ, acting as a coercive power with a view to worldly ends. The temporal power of the Pope, which has given authority in the Church of Christ to systematic errors and abuses opposed to the spirit of Christianity, is the most conspicuous instance of this since the extinction of the four ancient

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there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn *were* eyes like the eyes ^k of man, ^l and a mouth speaking great things.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 555.
^k Rev. 9. 7.
^l Ps. 12. 3.
ver. 25.
Rev. 13. 5.

9 ¶^m I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and "the Ancient of days did sit, ^o whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, ^p and his wheels *as* burning fire.

^m Rev. 20. 4.
ⁿ Ps. 90. 2.
ver. 13, 22.
^o Ps. 104. 2.
Rev. 1. 14.
^p Ezek. 1. 15, 16.
^q Ps. 50. 3.
& 97. 3.
Isai. 30. 33.
& 66. 15.

10 ^q A fiery stream issued and came forth from

empires, yet not the only instance: and the most conspicuous of all (2 Thess. ii. 4) remains to be developed.

"before whom there were three." Three successive kingdoms of Italy were inaugurated at Rome,—that of the Herulians under Odoacer; that of the Ostrogoths under Theodoric; and that of the Lombards under Alboin: all three were plucked up and swept away before the growing power of the Papacy.

"eyes like," &c. Eyes bright with human knowledge and vigour.

"speaking great things." These appear to be of two kinds: 1. words whose power is shewn in the destruction of the fourth empire (ver. 11); and 2. impious boasts against God; comp. ver. 25, and see the description of the man of sin (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4). Two other characteristics of the little horn are added in ver. 25, viz., oppression of saints (comp. ver. 21), and arbitrary disturbance of settled customs and rules, apparently those which appertain to the worship of God.

9—14. The Ancient of days, the judgment and the kingdom.

9. "I beheld till." The fourth empire is succeeded by the kingdom of the God of heaven (ch. ii. 34, 44) with which, as appears from ch. vii. 21, the little horn is contemporary.

"the thrones were cast down." Perhaps this is better translated "the thrones were set," i.e. in preparation for the last judgment the seats were placed ready for the judge and his assessors (comp. St. Matt. xix. 28, and Rev. xx. 4), who subsequently (ver. 10) take their seats.

"Ancient of days." So God manifested Himself in human form to Moses (Exod. xxiv. 10), to Isaiah (ch. vi. 1), to Ezekiel (ch. i. 26). "By *The Ancient of days* he means the Lord and God of all, even of "Christ Himself, Who maketh the days old and yet waxeth not old "Himself by times of days" (*Hippolytus*).

The expression "the [or, an] Ancient of days" is peculiar to Daniel. In Oriental poetry it is used to denote an old man. His age represents the eternal existence (Deut. xxxiii. 27. 1 Tim. i. 17) and majesty; His garment, holiness; His hair purity; His fiery throne, all-subduing power (Ps. l. 3).

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1 Kin. 22. 19.
 Ps. 68. 17.
 Heb. 12. 22.
 Rev. 5. 11.
 s Rev. 20. 4,
 12.
 t Rev. 19. 50.
 2 Chall. a
prolonging
in life was
given them.
 u Ezek. 1. 26.
 Matt. 24. 30.
 & 26. 64.
 Rev. 1. 7, 13.
 & 14. 14.
 x ver. 9.
 y Ps. 2. 6, 7, 8.
 & 8. 6, &
 110. 1, 2.
 Matt. 11. 27.
 & 28. 18.
 John 3. 35.
 1 Cor. 15. 27.
 Eph. 1. 22.
 z ch. 3. 4.
 a Ps. 145. 13.
 ch. 2. 44.
 ver. 27.
 Mic. 4. 7.
 Luke 1. 33.
 John 12. 34.
 Heb. 12. 23.

before him : ^r thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him : ^s the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

11 I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake : ^t I beheld *even* till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.

12 As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away : yet ² their lives were prolonged for a season and time.

13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, ^u *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to ^x the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

14 ^y And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all ^z people, nations, and languages, should serve him : his dominion *is* ^a an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed.

10. "thousand thousands." The vast number of the angelic hosts is frequently intimated in Scripture. See Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. Josh. v. 14. Ps. cxlviii. 2. St. Luke ii. 13. Heb. xii. 22.

"the books." God's books of record and of judgment are referred to in many places, e. g. Exod. xxxii. 32. Ps. lvi. 8 ; lxix. 28. Mal. iii. 16. Phil. iv. 3. Rev. xx. 12.

12. "their lives were prolonged." So in ch. ii. 44, we find that former kingdoms, though deprived of their power and place, were still extant when the kingdom of Heaven began.

13. "I saw," &c. Hitherto we have seen (vv. 9, 10) the eternal God acting as the supreme Judge and Ruler in accordance with the declarations of earlier books of Scripture, e. g. Gen. xviii. 25. 1 Sam. ii. 10. Ps. 1. 4. Eccles. xii. 14 ; xi. 9 ; iii. 14, 15, &c. Now Daniel begins to shew that God acts through His Divine Son, to Whom rule and judgment are committed, in accordance with both later Scripture, as Heb. i. 2. St. Matt. xxviii. 18. St. John iii. 35 ; v. 22. 1 Cor. xv. 27, &c., and even earlier, as Ps. ii. 8, 9. His kingdom it is which Nebuchadnezzar saw (ch. ii. 34, 44) destined to absorb the kingdoms of earth (Rev. xi. 15).

"like the Son of man." Or, like a son of mortal man ; a Man, but not a mere man. For, to come with the clouds of heaven is surely a prerogative of God, Who maketh the clouds His chariot (Ps. civ. 3) ; and they who bring Him before the Ancient of days seem to be the ministering angels of ver. 10 ; and the word which expresses the "service" universally rendered to Him is used elsewhere to imply worship (*from Dr. Pusey*).

DANIEL, VII.

15 ¶ I Daniel ^b was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my ²body, and the visions of my head troubled me.

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16 I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.

^b ver. 28.
² Chald.
sheath.

17 ^cThese great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.

^c ver. 3.
^d Isai. 60, 12,
13, 14,
ver. 22, 27,
² Tim. 2. 11,
12. Rev. 2.
26, 27, &
3. 21. & 20. 4.

18 But ^dthe saints of the ³most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

³ Chald. high
ones, that is,
things, or,
places.

19 Then I would know the truth of ^ethe fourth beast, which was diverse ⁴from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;

^e ver. 7.
⁴ Chald. from
all those.

20 and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.

21 I beheld, ^fand the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;

^f ch. 8. 12, 24.
& 11. 31.
Rev. 11. 7. &
13. 7. & 17.
14. & 19. 19.

22 ^guntil the Ancient of days came, ^hand judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

^g ver. 9.
^h ver. 18.
1 Cor. 6. 2.
Rev. 1. 6.
& 5. 10.
& 20. 4.
ⁱ ch. 2. 40.

23 Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be ⁱthe fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

15—28. Interpretation of the vision.

15. "grieved." Rather, "troubled," or "agitated," as in ver. 28, &c.

17. "kings." King is used for kingdom. The four are spoken of generally in the future tense, although the actual rising of the first was past (comp. ver. 3).

18. "the saints . . . shall . . . possess," &c. This is that inheritance of the saints so often spoken of in the New Testament, as Eph. i. 11, 18. Acts xx. 32. Rom. viii. 17. Rev. v. 10; xxii. 5.

19—22. These four verses appear to be a second inquiry addressed by Daniel to the Angel that stood by (ver. 16).

23—27. The Angel, who had previously answered respecting the earth and the heavenly kingdoms (vv. 17, 18), now answers concerning the

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^k ver. 7, 8, 20.
Rev. 17. 12.

^l Isai. 37. 23,
ch. 8. 24, 25,
& 11. 28, 30,
31, 36.

Rev. 13. 5, 6.
^m Rev. 17. 6.

& 18. 24.

ⁿ ch. 2. 21.

^o Rev. 13. 7.

^p ch. 12. 7.

Rev. 12. 14.

^q ver. 10, 22.

^r ver. 14, 18,
22.

^s ch. 2. 44.

Luke 1. 33.

John 12. 34.

Rev. 11. 15.

^t Isai. 60. 12.

^z Or, *rulers*.

^u ver. 15.

ch. 8. 27.

& 10. 8, 16.

^x Luke 2. 19,

51.

24 ^k And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise : and another shall rise after them ; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.

25 ^l And he shall speak *great* words against the most High, and shall ^m wear out the saints of the most High, and ⁿ think to change times and laws : and ^o they shall be given into his hand ^p until a time and times and the dividing of time.

26 ^q But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy *it* unto the end.

27 And the ^r kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, ^s whose kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, ^t and all ^z dominions shall serve and obey him.

28 Hitherto *is* the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, ^u my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me : but I ^x kept the matter in my heart.

fourth kingdom and its offspring, the ten kingdoms and the little horn, also concerning the warfare, the judgment, and the final prevalence of the kingdom of God.

25. "time and times and the dividing of time," i. e. the half of seven times ; in all probability a symbolical rather than a chronological period. It occurs again in ch. xii. 7, and Rev. xii. 14. In ch. iv. 16 a time would seem to be equivalent to a year (comp. ch. xi. 13, marginal reading).

28. "my countenance." Lit. my brightness was changed upon me, i. e. I grew pale. See ch. v. 6.

With this seventh chapter the Chaldee portion of the book of Daniel ends : the last five chapters (see *note* on ch. ii. 4) are written in Hebrew.

It may be observed as a *general* rule that the historical portion of the book is written in Chaldee because the facts took place in Chaldaea, and were intended in the Divine purpose for the instruction of the unbelieving Chaldaeans. And the prophetic portion *generally* is written in Hebrew, because those predictions were not only a sign to arrest the attention of some of the heathen, but also, and still more, a token and pledge of God's superintending Providence and unfailling care for His people, and as such they are given specially to the people of God in their own language. Two apparent exceptions seem to confirm this general rule. The first historical chapter (ch. i) is written in Hebrew ; and the first prophetic chapter (ch. vii) in Chaldee. The reason for those variations seems to be that the more direct manifestation of God's power to the Chaldaeans begins in ch. ii. ; and that the vision of Daniel of the four

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CHAPTER VIII.

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¹ *Daniel's vision of the ram and he goat.* 13 *The two thousand three hundred days of sacrifice.* 15 *Gabriel comforteth Daniel, and interpreteth the vision.*

IN the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar cir. 553.
a vision appeared unto me, *even unto me Daniel*,
after that which appeared unto me ^a at the first. ^a ch. 7. 1.

2 And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass,
when I saw, that I *was* at ^b Shushan *in* the palace, ^b Esth. 1. 2.
which *is* in the province of Elam; and I saw in a
vision, and I was by the river of Ulai.

3 Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and,
behold, there stood before the river a ram which
had *two* horns: and the *two* horns *were* high; but
one *was* higher than ² the other, and the higher ² Heb. the second.
came up last.

beasts is to be regarded as an appendix to and expansion of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar in ch. ii.

CHAPTER VIII.

1—14. Daniel's vision of the ram, and he-goat, and the horns.

1. "third year," &c. Two years after the vision recorded in the previous chapter Daniel was engaged, probably on some official duty, in the Babylonian fortress in Shushan, the city which was to become, a century later, the capital of Persia. In this distant city, which lay 300 miles eastward of Babylon, at the foot of the hills between Media and Persia, Daniel was probably still pondering both the future changes which had been revealed to him, and their present foreshadows, which he could not fail to observe in luxurious Babylon, and in the hardy races around Susa. Here then he is enlightened by another vision which represents in fuller detail a limited portion of the former vision, viz. the destinies of the second (Medo-Persian) and third (Grecian) empires, and the sufferings and deliverance which await the people of God in the time of those empires.

2. "Ulai." A river called Eulæus by ancient geographers. Its modern name is Kuran.

3. "ram." This ram, we are told in ver. 20, represents the Medo-Persian kingdom, which, in ch. vii. 5, was represented by a bear. Both animals are characterised by union of strength with heaviness.

"two horns." Persia, though at first dependent on Media afterwards absorbed Media, and gave its own name to the empire: so one horn is represented as coming up last and as growing higher than the other; and so the two sides of the bear (ch. vii. 5) were unequal in strength.

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^c ch. 5. 19.
& 11. 3, 16.

4 I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither *was there any* that could deliver out of his hand; ^c but he did according to his will, and became great.

² Or, *none touched him in the earth.*
³ Heb. *a horn of sight.*

^d ver. 21.

5 And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and ² touched not the ground: and the goat *had* ^{3 d} a notable horn between his eyes.

6 And he came to the ram that had *two* horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power.

7 And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.

^e ch. 7. 6.
& 11. 4.
ver. 22.

^f ch. 7. 8.
& 11. 21.

8 Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up ^e four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.

9 ^f And out of one of them came forth a little horn,

4. "pushing." The Persians conquered Lydia and Babylonia, westward; Armenia, northward; Egypt, southward. So the bear (ch. vii. 5) held three ribs in his mouth.

5. "he goat." That is, the kingdom of Grecia; the horn is Alexander the Great (see ver. 21). The leopard or panther (ch. vii. 6) and the he-goat have the common characteristic of swiftness; and also, as we shall see in ver. 8 compared with ch. vii. 6, that of fourfold division. The position of Macedonia westward from Babylon, the large extent of its conquests, and the rapidity with which they were achieved, are here indicated.

6. "fury." The irresistible progress of Grecia under Alexander, and the helpless condition of Persia under Darius Codomannus, which was brought to its end at the battle of Arbela, B.C. 331, are represented by the imagery in this verse and the next.

8. "the great horn was broken." Alexander died at Babylon in the vigour of his early manhood, leaving behind no successor competent to retain his whole empire: and the four kingdoms of Syria, Thrace, Egypt, and Macedonia, filled up the space (comp. ver. 22).

9. "a little horn." This little horn rises out of one of the divisions of the third or Grecian empire; and the reader must be careful to distinguish it from that other and later little horn which, in ch. vii. 8, rises out of the fourth or Roman empire. On comparing this ninth verse,

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which waxed exceeding great, ^stoward the south, and toward the east, and toward the ^hpleasant land.

10 ⁱAnd it waxed great, *even* ²to ^kthe host of heaven; and ¹it cast down *some* of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.

11 Yea, ^mhe magnified *himself* even ³to ⁿthe prince of the host, ^oand ⁴by him ^pthe daily *sacri-*
fice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.

^o ch. 11. 31. & 12. 11. ⁴ Or, *from him*. ^p Ex. 29, 38. Num. 28. 3. Ezek. 46. 13.

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^g ch. 11. 25.

^h Ps. 48. 2.
Ezek. 20. 6,
15. ch. 11. 16,
41, 45.

ⁱ ch. 11. 28.

² Or, *against*
the host.

^k So Is. 14. 13.
1 Rev. 12. 4.

^m Jer. 48. 26,
42. ch. 11. 36.
ver. 25.

³ Or, *against*.

ⁿ Josh. 5. 14.

with ver. 23, it becomes evident that this little horn is identical with the "king of fierce countenance."

Who is meant by this little horn is a question of great importance in the interpretation of this book. The most probable opinion is that it represents the fourth Antiochus, king of Syria, B.C. 175—164, surnamed Epiphanes, the most crafty, determined, cruel, and impious persecutor of the ancient people of God; who inflicted on the Jewish Church treatment similar to that which the Christian Church is warned to expect from Antichrist, the man of sin (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. Rev. xiii. 15). An avowed heathen, he allied himself with the false Jews, seeking through them to establish, instead of the worship of God, idolatry with himself for the idol. This passage is referred to him by the great majority of interpreters, from Josephus, Hippolytus, Theodoret, and Jerome in ancient times, to Archdeacon Harrison, Dr. Pusey, and Dr. Fairbairn in modern times.

"toward the south," &c. The power of Antiochus Epiphanes, as described in 1 Maccab. i. 16, &c., was put forth against Egypt, Persia, and Palestine, which countries seem to be here indicated.

10. "to" (rather, *against*) "the host of heaven." This title usually belongs to the stars or the Angels: here it seems to refer either to the "holy people" (ver. 24), called, in Exod. xii. 41, the hosts of the Lord, or, as is generally supposed, to the Jewish priesthood. Their ministrations has indeed been described as "warring the warfare in the service of "the Tabernacle" (Num. viii. 24, &c.); and a modern historian, advert- ing to their military organisation and character, has spoken of them as "a Praetorian guard." Such may be the meaning of the phrase here; but it is singular. It was the avowed policy of Antiochus Epiphanes to root out the worship of the true God, and, whilst he claimed for himself the title of "a god," to set up the idols of Greece throughout Syria and the rest of his dominions. Alluring the people by a display of Grecian culture and refinement, he put forth all his efforts against the Jewish priesthood, and sold the office of High-priest to the godless Jason, through whose instrumentality the subordinate priests were corrupted (2 Maccab. iv. 7—15). Then by the addition of violence to craft, the Temple was profaned, and the sacrifices were forbidden and abolished (1 Maccab. i. 45).

11. "prince of the host." That is, the God of Israel. Compare Prince of princes, ver. 25.

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q ch. 11. 31.

² Or, *the host was given over for the transgression against the daily sacrifice.*

r Ps. 113. 43, 142.

Isai. 59. 14.

^s ver. 4.

ch. 11. 28, 36.

t ch. 4. 13, & 12. 6.

1 Pet. 1. 12.

³ Or, *the number of secrets, or, the wonderful number.*

⁴ Heb. Palmont.

⁵ Or, *making desolate*, ch. 11. 31, & 12. 11. ⁶ Heb. *evening morning*. ⁷ Heb. *justified*. ^u See ch. 12. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11. ^x Ezek. 1. 26.

12 And ^a ² an host was given *him* against the daily *sacrifice* by reason of transgression, and it cast down ^r the truth to the ground; and it ^s practised, and prospered.

13 Then I heard ^t one saint speaking, and another saint said unto ³ ⁴ that certain *saint* which spake, How long *shall be* the vision *concerning* the daily *sacrifice*, and the transgression ⁵ of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?

14 And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred ⁶ days; then shall the sanctuary be ⁷ cleansed.

15 ¶ And it came to pass, when I, *even* I Daniel, had seen the vision, and ^u sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me ^x as the appearance of a man.

12. "And an host was given him." Or, "and war was levied."

"against the daily sacrifice." Idolatrous sacrifices and rites were substituted by order of Antiochus for those with which God was worshipped in Jerusalem (1 Maccab. i. 47, 54); and his orders were enforced by the most rigorous and sanguinary persecution ever suffered by the Jews. He cast down the truth in subverting the independence of the people of God, who were the depository of Divine truth.

13. "the transgression of desolation." This expression is probably equivalent to *the abomination of desolation*, and indicates in its primary sense the altar of Jupiter, which Antiochus set up on the altar of God (1 Maccab. i. 59). See note on ch. ix. 27.

14. "days." Lit. as in the margin, evening-morning. It is not quite clear whether this expression denotes as the period of desecration and persecution 2300 half-days = 3½ years, or 2300 days = 7 years.

"cleansed." The cleansing of the sanctuary and the restoration of the sacrifice took place (1 Maccab. iv. 36—59) under Judas Maccabæus B.C. 165. It is difficult to ascertain the exact date of the previous desecration under Antiochus. The interval is 3½ years according to Josephus: or 6 years according to Jerome, who appears to have had access to some historical documents which have not come down to us.

Possibly the Scripture does not intend to indicate a precise time. The 2300 evening-mornings may be equivalent to "time, times and a half" (chs. xii. 7; vii. 25), or 3½ or half seven years: and this may be a symbol of what our Lord calls (St. Matt. xxiv. 22) a shortened time, indicating as a general rule of God's Providence that He will never allow a persecution of the Church by the world to be carried out to the uttermost extreme.

15—27. Interpretation of the vision.

15. "a man." Called in the next verse Gabriel; mentioned also in the first chapter of St. Luke. See note on ch. x. 5.

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16 And I heard a man's voice ^y between *the banks* of Ulai, which called, and said, ^z Gabriel, make this *man* to understand the vision.

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^y ch. 12. 6, 7.

17 So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and ^a fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end *shall be* the vision.

^z ch. 9. 21.

Luke 1. 19, 26.

^a Ezek. 1. 28.

Rev. 1. 17.

18 ^b Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: ^c but he touched me, and ² set me upright.

^b ch. 10. 9, 10.

Luke 9. 32.

^c Ezek. 2. 2.

² Heb. *made*

me stand

up on my

standing.

19 And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: ^d for at the time appointed the end *shall be*.

^d ch. 9. 27.

& 11. 27, 35,

36. & 12. 7.

Hab. 2. 3.

^e ver. 3.

^f ver. 5.

20 ^e The ram which thou sawest having *two* horns are the kings of Media and Persia.

21 ^f And the rough goat *is* the king of Grecia: and the great horn that *is* between his eyes ^g *is* the first king.

^g ch. 11. 3.

22 ^h Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.

^h ver. 8.

ch. 11. 4.

23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors ³ are come to the full, a king ⁱ of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, ^k shall stand up.

³ Heb. *are ac-*

complished.

ⁱ Dent. 28. 50.

^k ver. 6.

¹ Rev. 17. 13,

17.

24 And his power shall be mighty, ¹ but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, ^m and shall prosper, and practise, ⁿ and shall destroy the mighty and the ⁴ holy people.

^m ver. 12.

ch. 11. 36.

ⁿ ver. 10.

ch. 7. 25.

⁴ Heb.

people of the

holy ones.

17. "afraid." Daniel's fear and subsequent trance are natural to a "son of man" conscious of the presence of spiritual beings. Compare St. Matt. xvii. 6. Eccles. v. 1—7. 1 Cor. xi. 10.

"at the time," &c. That is, the vision has reference to the last time: compare similar expressions in vv. 19 and 26. A warning seems to be implied, first, to Daniel not to look for an immediate fulfilment of the vision, and, secondly, to ourselves not to suppose that the full meaning of the vision was exhausted by that chain of events which terminated in the restoration of the Temple by Judas Maccabæus.

22. "not in his power." Not equally powerful with Alexander. Compare the expression in ch. xi. 5, "not according to his dominion."

23. "dark sentences." Rather, *wiles*, intrigues, perplexities. The two qualities which characterise Antiochus are sternness and dissimulation, described severally in the following two verses.

24. "mighty, but not by his own power." Read 2 Maccab. v. 17, &c. "So haughty was Antiochus in his mind that he considered not that the

B fore
C H R I S T
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o ch. 11. 21,
23, 24.
P ver. 11.
ch. 11. 36.
2 Or,
prosperity.
q ver. 11.
ch. 11. 36.
r Job 34. 20.
Lam. 4. 6.
ch. 2. 34, 45.
s ch. 10. 1.
t Ezek. 12. 27.
ch. 10. 14.
& 12. 4, 9.
Rev. 22. 10.
u ch. 7. 23.
& 10. 8, 16.
x ch. 6. 2, 3.
y See ver. 16.

25 And ^o through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; ^p and he shall magnify *himself* in his heart, and by ² peace shall destroy many: ^q he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be ^r broken without hand.

26 ^s And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told *is true*: ^t wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it *shall be* for many days.

27 ^u And I Daniel fainted, and was sick *certain* days; afterward I rose up, ^x and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, ^y but none understood *it*.

CHAPTER IX.

1 *Daniel, considering the time of the captivity, 3 maketh confession of sins, 16 and prayeth for the restoration of Jerusalem. 20 Gabriel informeth him of the seventy weeks.*

cir. 538.

a ch. 1. 21. &
5. 31. & 6. 28.

2 Or,
in which
he, &c.

IN the first year ^a of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, ² which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

2 in the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the

“Lord was angry for a while for the sins of them that dwelt in the city, and therefore His eye was not upon the place.”

25. “broken without hand.” Destroyed suddenly and unexpectedly. Read the account of the end of Antiochus Epiphanes in 2 Maccab. ix. 3—10.

26. “the vision of the evening and the morning.” This appears to be a reference to the terms in which the vision is described in the fourteenth verse.

CHAPTER IX.

1—2. Daniel's studies.

1. “first year,” i. e. B. C. 538 or 537: the twelve months after the accession of Darius, recorded in ch. v. 31. The visions described in chs. vii. and viii. were seen before the accession of Darius; and the delivery of Daniel from the den of lions (ch. vi) probably took place after the vision described in this ninth chapter.

“was made king.” This expression is peculiar. It implies that some superior authority had placed Darius in his high office (see *note* on ch. v. 31). Cyrus was the conqueror of Babylon, and it is probable that he was the king-maker from some motive of policy,—perhaps to conciliate his Median allies, perhaps to enable him to give his whole attention to further conquests. Josephus states that this Darius was known by another name to the Greeks; and according to Xenophon, it was for Cyaxares that Cyrus conquered Babylon.

2. “understood by books.” Rather, was attentively considering

word of the LORD came to ^bJeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

3 ¶° And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes :

4 and I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O ^dLord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments ;

^Before
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^b 2 Chr. 36. 21.
Jer. 25. 11,
12. & 29. 10.

^c Neh. 1. 4.
Jer. 29. 12, 13.
ch. 6. 10.
James 4. 8,
9, 10.

^d Ex. 20. 6.
Deut. 7. 9.
Neh. 1. 5.
& 9. 32.

in the books, i. e. the writings of Jeremiah, particularly in *cl. xxv.* and *xxix.* "Though Daniel was himself a great prophet, and well accustomed to visions from God, a great statesman, and prime-minister to "the foremost king on earth, yet he could find both heart and time to "converse with the word of God; he was a diligent student of Scripture."

"seventy." Dating from Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Judæa, B.C. 606, to the time of Cyrus, B.C. 536.

3. Daniel's fast, prayer, and intercession.

3. "I set my face." This expression seems to indicate that Daniel, whose ordinary custom was to pray thrice daily, was moved by his study of Jeremiah to set apart a season for special prayer on this occasion. The time was approaching with reference to which God had said, "I will "visit you" (*Jer. xxix. 10*); and Daniel was solicitous that he and his people should be found ready and prepared for the promised visitation and subsequent restoration. "God's promises are intended not to supersede, but to excite and encourage our prayers."

"fasting." When he prayed he fasted, and put on sackcloth and lay in ashes, the more to affect himself with the desolation of Jerusalem, which he was praying for the repair of, and to make himself sensible that he was now about an extraordinary work.

4. "I prayed." The immediate result of this great prayer of the great prophet was the wonderful revelation of the time, the circumstances and the consequences of the coming of the promised Messiah. Daniel prays not as a solitary person, but as the representative of the people of God. His prayer may be regarded as a specimen and summary of those which he had offered daily for nearly seventy years with his face towards Jerusalem, and as embodying the sentiments of every devout Israelite who in those days was expecting the end of the Captivity. Perhaps it also expresses in no slight degree the feelings of others afterwards, who in evil times "served God night and day, and looked for "redemption in Jerusalem" (*St. Luke ii. 37, 38*). Compare with it the recorded prayers of *Ezra ix. 6*, *Nehemiah i. 5*, and the Levites in *Neh. ix. 6*. The first eleven verses are a confession of sins, and the last four a supplication for the return of God's mercies: the whole prayer.

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o 1 Kings 8.
47, 48.

Neh. 1. 6, 7.
& 9. 33, 34.
Ps. 106. 6.

Is. 64. 5, 6, 7.
Jer. 14. 7.
ver. 15.

f 2 Chr. 36. 15,
16. ver. 10.

g Neh. 9. 33.

2 Or, *thou*
hast, &c.

h ver. 7.

i Neh. 9. 17.
Ps. 130. 4, 7.

k ver. 6.

l Is. 1. 4, 5, 6.
Jer. 8. 5, 10.

m Lev. 26. 14,
&c. Dent.
27. 15, &c.
& 28. 15, &c.
& 29. 20, &c.
& 30. 17, 18.
& 31. 17, &c.
& 32. 19, &c.
Lam. 2. 17.

n Zech. 1. 6.

o Lam. 1. 12.
& 2. 13.
Ezek. 5. 9.
Amos 3. 2.

5 ° we have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments :

6 f neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

7 O Lord, g righteousness h *belongeth* unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day ; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, *that are near, and that are far off*, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee.

8 O Lord, to us *belongeth* h confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.

9 i To the Lord our God *belong* mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him ;

10 k neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.

11 Yea, l all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice ; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the m law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

12 And he hath n confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil : ° for under

may be thus analysed:—confession of sin against the law and conscience (ver. 5); against the remonstrances of God's prophets (ver. 6); confession of the universal shame consequent on such sin (vv. 7, 8); confession of rebellion against the covenant with God (vv. 9, 10); confession of deserving the punishment inflicted (vv. 11, 12); confession of obstinacy amid chastisements, and of the necessity of punishment (vv. 13, 14); appeal to God by the remembrance of His ancient mercies (ver. 15); for His city's sake and the honour of His name (ver. 16); for the love of His sanctuary (ver. 17); for His attribute of mercy (ver. 18); concluding supplication (ver. 19).

5. "we have . . . wickedly." The same threefold confession occurs in 1 Kings viii. 47, and in Ps. cvi. 6.

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the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.

13 ^p As *it is* written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: ^q yet ² made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.

14 Therefore hath the LORD ^r watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for ^s the LORD our God *is* righteous in all his works which he doeth: ^t for we obeyed not his voice.

15 And now, O Lord our God, ^u that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast ³ gotten thee ^x renown, as at this day; ^y we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

16 O Lord, ^z according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, ^a thy holy mountain: because for our sins, ^b and for the iniquities of our fathers, ^c Jerusalem and thy people ^d *are become* a reproach to all *that are* about us.

17 Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, ^e and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary ^f that is desolate, ^g for the Lord's sake.

18 ^h O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, ⁱ and behold our desolations, and the city ^k ⁴ which is called by thy name: for we do not ⁵ present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.

19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, ¹ for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

20 ¶ ^m And whiles I *was* speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God;

21 yea, whiles I *was* speaking in prayer, even the man ⁿ Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision

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^p Lev. 26. 14, &c.

Deut. 28. 15.

Lam. 2. 17.

^q Isai. 9. 13.

Jer. 2. 30.

& 5. 3.

Hos. 7. 7, 10.

² Heb. *in-*

treated see

not the face

of the, &c.

^r Jer. 31. 28.

& 44. 27.

^s Neh. 9. 38.

ver. 7.

^t ver. 10.

^u Ex. 6. 1, 6.

& 32. 11.

^v 1 Kin. 8. 51.

Neh. 1. 10.

Jer. 32. 21.

³ Heb. *made*

thee a name.

^x Ex. 14. 18.

Neh. 9. 10.

Jer. 32. 20.

^y ver. 5.

^z 1 Sam. 12. 7

Ps. 31. 1.

& 71. 2.

Mic. 6. 4, 5.

^a ver. 20.

Zech. 8. 3.

^b Ex. 20. 5.

^c Lam. 2. 15,

16.

^d Ps. 44. 13,

14, & 79. 4.

^e Num. 6. 25.

Ps. 67. 1, &

80. 3, 7, 19.

^f Lam. 5. 18.

^g ver. 19.

John 16. 24.

^h Isai. 37. 17.

ⁱ Ex. 3. 7.

Ps. 80. 14,

&c.

^k Jer. 23. 29.

⁴ Heb.

whereupon

thy name

is called.

⁵ Heb. *cause*

to fall,

Jer. 36. 7.

¹ Ps. 79. 9, 10,

& 102. 15, 16.

^m Ps. 32. 5.

Isai. 63. 24.

ⁿ ch. 8. 16.

Before
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at the beginning, being caused to fly ²swiftly,
^o touched me ^pabout the time of the evening ob-
lation.

² Heb. with
weariness,
or, flight.

^o ch. 8, 18,
& 10, 10, 16.

^p I Kin. 18, 36.

³ Heb. to
make thee
skilful of
under-
standing.

⁴ Heb. word.

⁹ ch. 10, 12.

^r ch. 10, 11, 19.

⁵ Heb. a man
of desires. ^s Matt. 24, 15. ⁶ They begin from the 20th of Artaxerxes. See Num. 14, 34. Ezek. 4, 6.

22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth ³ to give thee skill and understanding.

23 At the beginning of thy supplications the ⁴ commandment came forth, and ⁹ I am come to shew thee; ^r for thou art ⁵ greatly beloved: therefore ^s understand the matter, and consider the vision.

24 ⁶ Seventy weeks are determined upon thy

20—23. Gabriel's message.

21. "at the beginning." Rather, *formerly*; the reference is to ch. viii. 16.

"the time of the evening oblation," i. e. three in the afternoon, called in Acts iii. 1 the hour of prayer. See Exod. xxix. 38, 39.

23. "greatly beloved." Lit. "desires." A similar expression is rendered "lovely" in Cant. v. 16. Read Bishop Ken's sermon on this expression. "Daniel lived greatly beloved by five mighty monarchs; greatly beloved by his own people; greatly beloved by three foreign nations; and greatly beloved by God: if you would learn Daniel's secret, he did greatly love, and therefore he was greatly beloved."

"matter." Rather, *word*.

24—27. The oracle of the seventy weeks.

24—27. These verses have been understood by the great majority of Christians in all ages as a prediction of the first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, of His death, of the admission of the Gentiles into the Church, of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the temporary casting away of the Jews. Some modern expositors refer the whole to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, or assign a part (ver. 26) to Cyrus, a part (ver. 27) to Onias, &c.

24. "Seventy weeks." Daniel had been praying for the deliverance of Israel from the seventy years' Captivity, and the forgiveness of the sins (2 Chron. xxxvi) of which that Captivity was the penalty. Gabriel now comes to reveal another deliverance and forgiveness on a much larger scale than Daniel expected, which shall take place at the end of seventy weeks of years (490 years), even the reconciliation of God and man by the incarnation and sacrifice of Messiah. The delivery of Israel from Babylon was a type of the redemption of mankind.

The fifth great kingdom, which was to come at the end of the seventy weeks, had been on two previous occasions (chs. ii. 44; vii. 14) announced to Daniel, with special reference to its superior power and its universal extent. Now it is connected with the people and the city which are dear to Daniel, and its two great spiritual features are shown to him—freedom from sin and fulness of holiness, each of which is described in this verse in three varieties of phrase.

DANIEL, IX.

people and upon thy holy city, ² to finish the transgression, and ³ to make an end of sins, ⁴ and to make reconciliation for iniquity, ⁵ and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and ⁶ prophecy, ⁷ and to anoint the most Holy.

25 ¹ Know therefore and understand, *that* ² from the going forth of the commandment ³ to restore and to build Jerusalem unto ⁴ the Messiah ⁵ the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks :

^x Ps. 45. 7. Luke 1. 35. John 1. 41. Heb. 9. 11. ^y ver. 23. Matt. 24. 15. ^z Ezra 4. 24. & 6. 1, 15. & 7. 1, &c. Neh. 2. 1, 3, 5, 6, 8. ³ Or, to build again Jerusalem : as 2 Sam. 15. 25. Ps. 71. 20. ^a John 1. 41. & 4. 25. ^b Isai. 55. 4.

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² Or, to
restrain.

³ Or, to
seal up,
Lam. 4. 22.

^t Isai. 53. 10.

^u Isai. 53. 11.

^v Jer. 23. 5, 6.

^w Heb. 9. 12.

^x Rev. 14. 6.

^y Heb.

^z prophet.

“to finish.” Or, to close transgression, i. e. by the finished sacrifice of Christ.

“to make an end of.” Rather, as in the margin, *to seal up*, i. e. to put out of sight sin by the accepted sacrifice of Christ.

“to make reconciliation,” i. e. by the atonement wrought by Christ.

“to seal up the vision,” &c. i. e. to authenticate or accredit vision and prophet by the fulfilment thereof in Christ, as by a seal. “All the prophets and the law prophesied until John” (St. Matt. xi. 13).

“the most Holy.” Lit. *a holy one of holy ones*; the same Who is spoken of in the following two verses as Messiah “the Anointed,” Who is the Son of Man, reigning supreme (ch. vii. 13, 14, 18) in the kingdom of saints.

25. “from the going forth of the commandment.” In this verse and the next, the period of seventy weeks is dated as beginning when a certain event takes place; and is subdivided into three periods—seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week. This *commandment*, literally “word,” not being designated as another “word” (ver. 2), the word of the Lord, is here taken to mean the commandment of an earthly sovereign.

Scripture records the promulgation of four decrees, all of which relate more or less to the building of Jerusalem. The first and most famous was issued B.C. 536 (Ezra vi. 3—5) by Cyrus; the second B.C. 518 (Ezra vi. 3—12) by Darius Hystaspis; the third B.C. 457 (Ezra vii. 27); and the fourth B.C. 444 (Neh. ii. 8), by Artaxerxes Longimanus. The first and second decrees provide only for the building of the Temple; the third for the restoration of proper order in the city, as well as for the adornment of the Temple; and the fourth for rebuilding the walls and gates of the city. The beginning of the seventy weeks is now generally dated from the third of those decrees, i. e. B.C. 457, the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus. According to this view, the first subdivision, the seven weeks, or forty-nine years, from B.C. 457 to B.C. 408, were spent in completing the fabric and restoring organised government in Jerusalem; the second subdivision, the sixty-two weeks, or 434 years from B.C. 408 to A.D. 26, bring us to the time of Messiah the Prince, for our Lord was baptised about the end of A.D. 26; the third subdivision, the one week or seven years, in its first half brings us to His death or cutting off, and the abolition of the typical sacrifices of the Mosaic dispensation; and in its second half to the continuation of the

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the street ² shall be built again, and the ³ wall, ^c even ⁴ in troublous times.

² Heb. *shall return and be built.*

³ Or, *breach, or, ditch.*

^c Neh. 4. 8, 16, 17, 18, & 6. 15.

⁴ Heb. *in strait of times.*

^d Isai. 53. 8.

Mark 9. 12.

Luke 21. 26.

46. ^e 1 Pet. 2. 21. & 3. 18.

⁵ Or, *and shall have nothing,*

John 14. 30.

⁶ Or, *and [the Jews]*

they shall be no more his people,

ch. 11. 17. or, *and the prince's [Messiah's, ver. 25.] future people.*

^f Matt. 22. 7. ^g Luke 19. 44.

^h Matt. 24. 2.

ⁱ Matt. 24. 6, 14.

^k Isai. 8. 7, 8. ch. 11. 10, 22.

^l Nah. 1. 8.

⁷ Or, *it shall be cut off by desolations.*

⁸ Or, *a.*

¹ Isai. 42. 6. & 55. 3.

Jer. 31. 31.

Ezek. 16. 60, 61, 62.

^m Isai. 53. 11, Matt. 26. 28.

Rom. 5. 15, 19.

Heb. 9. 28.

26 And after threescore and two weeks ^d shall Messiah be cut off, ^e ⁵ but not for himself: ⁶ and ^f the people of the prince that shall come ^g shall destroy the city ^h and the sanctuary; ⁱ and the end thereof *shall be* ^k with a flood, and unto the end of the war ⁷ desolations are determined.

27 And he shall confirm ⁸ ¹ the covenant with ^m many for one week: and in the midst of the week

preaching of the Gospel by the Apostles "to the Jews first," before going to the Gentiles.

In accepting this view of the commencement of the seventy weeks in B.C. 457 as now on the whole the most probable, we must bear in mind that another date, viz. B.C. 444, seemed at one time more likely, and that possibly further discoveries—by increasing our knowledge of ancient history—may hereafter render some other date more probable than this. Our limited acquaintance with past events hinders us from fixing the details with absolute certainty; but the main point is free from uncertainty;—the coming of the Saviour, Who brought pardon for sin and everlasting righteousness, was revealed to Daniel with supernatural precision five centuries before it took place ¹.

"troublous times." The books of Ezra and Nehemiah record the dangerous and arduous efforts by which the restoration of Jerusalem was effected. These "troublous times" constitute the first of the seventy weeks.

26. "but not for himself." The marginal translation is to be preferred, "and shall have nothing," i.e. His people, whose Prince He was previously, shall be His no longer.

"people of the prince." Rather, *people of a prince*, i.e. the Romans under Titus.

"a flood." Rather, *the flood*, the overwhelming invasion of the Roman forces.

"and unto the end." Rather, *and unto the end* (i.e. of Jerusalem) war and desolations are decreed.

27. "he shall confirm," &c. This appears to refer to the proclamation of the Gospel to Jewish people both by the personal ministry of "Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant," and by His Apostles after His Ascension, until they turned to the Gentiles. Perhaps this may be the period included in the one week.

"with many." Rather, *with the many*, meaning not with all.

¹ The English reader who may desire a full discussion of the view here adopted is referred specially to Prideaux's *Conjunction of the Old and New Testament*, part I, book v., anno 458 B.C., or to Dr. Pusey's *Daniel the Prophet*, Lect. iv. A

summary and classification of other views may be found in a special Appendix on the history of the Interpretation of vv. 24—27 in Zöckler's *Commentary on Daniel*, translated into English, and published by T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh.

DANIEL, X.

he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,² and for the overspreading of² abominations he shall make *it* desolate,³ even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured³ upon the desolate.

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² Or,
and upon
the battlements shall
be the idols
of the desolator.

² Matt. 24. 15.
Mark 13. 14.
Luke 21. 20.

³ See Isai.
10. 22. 23. &
28. 22.

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Luke 21. 24.
Rom. 11. 26.

CHAPTER X.

1 Daniel having humbled himself seeth a vision. 10 Being troubled with fear he is comforted by the angel.

IN the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel,^a whose name was

³ Or, upon the desolator.

^a ch. 1. 7.

“he shall cause,” &c. This Jesus did when He offered Himself once for all. See Heb. x. 5—18.

“and for the overspreading,” &c. This passage is otherwise translated, “*And upon the pinnacle of abominations shall be a desolator, until consumption even determined be poured out upon the desolated.*” Here the pinnacle of abominations means the polluted Temple; the desolator is the Gentile power by which Jerusalem was taken and destroyed (St. Luke xxi. 24); the consumption determined is the dispersion and blindness which Israel is still suffering. See Rom. xi. 25, and Deut. xxviii. 15—68.

The ancient translation of the Septuagint, with which the Vulgate substantially agrees, is, “*And in the sanctuary an abomination of desolations,*” &c. It is probable that the quotation of our Lord in St. Matt. xxiv. 15, is taken from this passage. There are four passages in Daniel in which the phrase *abomination of desolation* may be said to occur with a slight variation in each case: in (1) ch. viii. 13 and (2) ch. xi. 31, it appears to refer primarily to the act of Antiochus Epiphanes, placing the altar of Jupiter on the polluted altar of God; in (3) ch. xi. 31, it refers to the desecration of the Temple when Titus besieged Jerusalem; in (4) ch. xii. 11, its primary reference is probably to some event which shall happen in the time of the wilful king (Dan. xi. 36—45), of which the previous acts of desecration were prophetic types and foreshadows.

CHAPTER X.

1. The vision of truth and tribulation.

1. “**third year.**” The exact date of the accession of Cyrus as successor of Darius cannot be stated: we have at present no information how long the reign of Darius lasted. The third year of Cyrus would be B.C. 536, according to Ptolemy, who, however, takes no notice of Darius. It must have been two years after the decree for rebuilding the Temple, issued by Cyrus (Ezra i. 2, and ch. vi. 3—5). When the most zealous of the Jews returned to Jerusalem, Daniel’s great age and his official position combined to detain him in Babylon (ch. vi. 28).

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^b ch. 8. 26.
Rev. 11. 9.
^c ver. 14.

² Heb. *great*.

^d ch. 1. 17.
& 8. 16.

³ Heb. *weeks
of days*.

⁴ Heb. *bread
of desires*.

^e Matt. 6. 17.

^f Gen. 2. 14.

^g Josh. 5. 13.

^h ch. 12. 6, 7.

⁵ Heb.
one man.

called Belteshazzar; ^b and the thing *was* true, ^c but the time appointed *was* ² long: and ^d he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.

2 In those days I Daniel was mourning three ³ full weeks.

3 I ate no ⁴ pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, ^e neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

4 And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which *is* ^f Hiddekel;

5 then ^g I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and ^h behold ⁵ a certain man clothed in linen,

“thing.” Rather, *word*. The same expression occurs three times in this verse.

“true, but . . . long.” Rather, *truth and great warfare*, or, *tribulation*: a brief summary, or title of the coming vision, of which the last three chapters of Daniel are a continuous description.

2—9. The prophet and the heavenly messenger.

2. “mourning.” The grounds of Daniel’s sorrow were perhaps his unwillingness to remain behind, and his knowledge of the feebleness and the struggles of his countrymen, who had been forward to go up to build the Temple (Ezra i—iii), and the deterioration of those unpatriotic Jews who were willing to be left in Babylon.

“full weeks.” Lit. *weeks of days*, i.e. not weeks of years like those last mentioned (ch. ix. 24).

3. “I ate,” &c. Perhaps it is on account of Daniel’s increased age that his fast appears to have been less severe than on a former occasion (ch. ix. 3).

“anoint.” To abstain from the use of oil was a customary sign of mourning (see 2 Sam. xiv. 2). Perhaps this may be alluded to in the expression “of a sad countenance” (St. Matt. vi. 16).

4. “first month.” Nisan, in which fell the Passover.

“Hiddekel.” The Tigris, now called Dijleh.

5. “man.” The name of this spiritual being is not given by Daniel. It would seem that he is the speaker of all that is written from ch. x. 20 to ch. xii. 13 (with the obvious exception of ch. xii. 5—8); that it is he whose touch was so effectual (ch. x. 10, 18); and that he is at least the equal of the superior Angels, or princes, mentioned in ch. x. 13, 20. It has been conjectured that he was either Gabriel, who on former occasions (chs. viii. 16; ix. 21) was the messenger of God to Daniel, or else that He was the Son of God Himself (comp. ch. x. 5, 6 with Rev. i. 13, and ch. xii. 5, 6 with Rev. x. 2, 5, 6), and that the Angel who touches Daniel (ch. x. 10, 18) and who speaks in ch. x. 12—14 and in chs. x. 19—xii. 4, is another and an inferior being.

“clothed in linen.” The robe of a priest, typical of righteousness.

DANIEL, X.

whose loins *were* ⁱ girded with ^k fine gold of Uphaz :

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6 his body also *was* ^l like the beryl, and his face ^m as the appearance of lightning, ⁿ and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms ^o and his feet like in colour to polished brass, ^p and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.

ⁱ Rev. 1. 13.
14, 15. & 15. 6.
^k Jer. 10. 9.
^l Ezek. 1. 16.
^m Ezek. 1. 14.
ⁿ Rev. 1. 14.
& 19. 12.
^o Ezek. 1. 7.
Rev. 1. 15.
^p Ezek. 1. 24.
Rev. 1. 15.
^q 2 Kin. 6. 17.
Acts 9. 7.

7 And I Daniel ^q alone saw the vision : for the men that were with me saw not the vision ; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.

8 Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, ^r and there remained no strength in me : for my ^s comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.

^r ch. 8. 27.
^s Or, *vigour*.
^t ch. 7. 28.

9 Yet heard I the voice of his words : ^t and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.

^t ch. 8. 13.

10 ¶ ^u And, behold, an hand touched me, which ^v set me upon my knees and *upon* the palms of my hands.

^u Jer. 1. 9.
ch. 9. 21.
Rev. 1. 17.
^v Heb. *moved*.

11 And he said unto me, O Daniel, ^x ⁴ a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and ^y stand upright : for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.

^x ch. 9. 23.
^y Heb. *a man of desires*.
^z Heb. *stand upon thy standing*.

12 Then said he unto me, ^y Fear not, Daniel : for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, ^z thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.

^y Rev. 1. 17.
^z ch. 9. 3.
4, 23, 23.
Acts 10. 4.

13 ^a But the prince of the kingdom of Persia with-

^a ver. 20.

“Uphaz.” An unknown region (Jer. x. 9), perhaps identical with Ophir.

7. “saw not.” So it happened to the attendants of Saul (Acts ix. 7). Comp. Exod. xx. 18, 19.

8. “comeliness.” The natural colour of his face gave way to mortal paleness. Comp. ch. vii. 28.

9. “on my face.” Comp. ch. viii. 18, and Num. xxiv. 4, &c.

10—xi. 1. Human weakness and heavenly sympathies.

13. “But the prince,” &c. Rather, “Now the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me.”

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^b ver. 21.
ch. 12. 1.
Jude 9.
Rev. 12. 7.

² Or,
the first.

^c Gen. 49. 1.
ch. 2. 28.

^d ch. 8. 26.
ver. 1.

Hab. 2. 3.

^e ver. 9.
ch. 8. 13.

^f ch. 8. 15.

^g ver. 10.
Jer. 1. 9.

^h ver. 8.

³ O., *this
servant of
my lord.*

stood me one and twenty days : but, lo, ^b Michael,
² one of the chief princes, came to help me ; and I
remained there with the kings of Persia.

14 Now I am come to make thee understand what
shall befall thy people ^c in the latter days : ^d for yet
the vision *is* for *many* days.

15 And when he had spoken such words unto me,
^e I set my face toward the ground, and I became
dumb.

16 And, behold, ^f *one* like the similitude of the
sons of men ^g touched my lips : then I opened my
mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood
before me, O my lord, by the vision ^h my sorrows
are turned upon me, and I have retained no
strength.

17 For how can ³ the servant of this my lord talk
with this my lord ? for as for me, straightway there

Daniel, who was employed to disclose God's care and providence even of heathen nations, was commissioned to declare that two great heathen nations, Persia and Greece, were placed under the special care of two eminent Angels, princes with God, who succour and defend them, and plead their cause with the Father of all. They were good Angels seeking the welfare of their peoples, and so contending with Gabriel and Michael before God ; each, in submission to the Divine will, desiring what seemed for the good of his people, which, since their apparent interests were diverse, seemed to be contrary. *From Dr. Pusey.*

"Michael." Here first is made known to us the name of Michael (i.e. who *is* as God?), the great tutelary Angel of the children of Israel (ch. xii. 1). Possibly he is identical with the Prince of the host of the Lord (Josh. v. 14), and the Angel who was assigned specially to be the keeper of Israel (Exod. xxiii. 20), or the Angel of the Lord, who appears often in early books of the Old Testament.

"I remained there with." This expression is of doubtful meaning : here it seems equivalent to "I had the superiority over."

14. "thy people." The mourning (ver. 2) of Daniel was caused by misgiving concerning the destiny of his people and desire to know more about it than had been revealed in the previous "vision of the seventy weeks" (ch. ix). It is to instruct and strengthen the favoured prophet, and through the prophet to instruct and strengthen devout believers, as well those who are contemporaries of the predicted events as those who look back upon them, that this wonderful pledge and assurance of God's foresight and protection of His people is now about to be given. The minute historical details set forth in the following chapter are of sufficient importance to affect powerfully the condition of the Jews ; and the remote time to which the vision extends is a satisfactory pledge that God's care for His people will never fail.

16. "sorrows." Rather, *pangs*.

remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.

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18 Then there came again and touched me *one* like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me,

19 ⁱ and said, O man greatly beloved, ^k fear not: ⁱ ver. 11. peace *be* unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And ^k Judg. 6. 23, when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.

20 Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight ^l with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. ^l ver. 13.

21 But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and *there is* none that ² holdeth with me in these things, ^m but Michael ² Heb. *strengtheneth himself.* your prince. ^m ver. 13. Jude 9. Rev. 12. 7.

CHAPTER XI.

¹ *The overthrow of Persia by the king of Grecia. 5 Leagues and conflicts between the kings of the south and of the north. 30 The invasion and tyranny of the Romans.*

ALSO I ^a in the first year of ^b Darius the Mede, ^a ch. 9. 1. *even* I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. ^b ch. 5. 31.

17. "is left." Rather, *was left*. These words are best understood as spoken to the Angel.

20. "I come," or, *I am come*, as in ver. 12. The Angel recalls to Daniel what he had previously said (vv. 12—14) as to the purpose of his coming and the hindrance.

"and now," &c., i.e. And now I shall return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I go forth (to fight) then, lo, the prince of Grecia comes (to fight): nevertheless I will shew thee what is inscribed in the writing of Truth.

21. "holdeth . . . things." Rather, *strengtheneth himself with me against these* (princes).

CHAPTER XI.

1. "Also I." Rather, *As I*. This verse ought not to be separated by a full stop from the end of the former chapter.

"first year of Darius." In that year, probably, the angelic power was put forth to procure for Daniel the vision of the seventy weeks (ch. ix. 1); or to deliver him as related in ch. vi. 22.

"him." Michael, the prince of the Jews.

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2 And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than *they* all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.

^c ch. 7. 6.
& 8. 5.
^d ch. 8. 4.
ver. 16, 36.

3 And ^e a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and ^d do according to his will.

^e ch. 8. 8.

4 And when he shall stand up, ^e his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, ^f nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those.

^f ch. 8. 22.

5 ¶ And the king of the south shall be strong, and *one* of his princes; and he shall be strong

2. Persia.

2. "truth." Perhaps referring to that word in ch. x. 1.

3, 4. Grecia.

3. "three kings." The successors of Cyrus, in whose reign this vision was given, were Cambyses (B.C. 529), Smerdis the Magian (B.C. 522), and Darius the son of Hystaspes (B.C. 521). The fourth was Xerxes (B.C. 485), whose riches are famous in secular history, he having inherited vast accumulations from his father. If, as is generally supposed, he is the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther, this verse is illustrated by the description of his riches and power in Esth. i. 1, 4, and ch. x. 1. Gathering his land forces from forty-nine nations, he led (B.C. 481) an army estimated at between one and two millions into Greece.

"a mighty king." Passing over the six kings who succeeded Xerxes on the throne of the decaying Persian empire, the prophecy signalises Alexander the Great, by whom Xerxes' invasion of Greece was avenged. His vast empire extended from Macedonia to Egypt, to Assyria, and to India; and his despotic will was displayed on many occasions.

4. "when he shall stand up." When his power seemed to have reached its height, his sudden death took place (B.C. 323). His dominion (comp. ch. viii. 8, 22) was eventually portioned out amongst four of his generals; and his children were put to death.

5-9. Egypt and Syria.

5. "king of the south." Ptolemy I., Soter, who was proclaimed king of Egypt, about B.C. 304, and died B.C. 283. Throughout this prophecy the title of king of the South is given to the kings of Egypt.

"one of his princes." Seleucus Nicator, one of Alexander's generals. He annexed the kingdoms of Macedonia and Thrace to Syria, and he and

above him, and have dominion; his dominion *shall be a great dominion.*

6 And in the end of years they ²shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make ³an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and ⁴he that legat her, and he that strengthened her *in these times.*

7 But out of a branch of her roots shall *one* stand up ⁵in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail:

8 and shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, *and* with ⁶their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue *more years than the king of the north.*

9 So the king of the south shall come into *his* kingdom, and shall return into his own land.

his successors are hence described as kings of the North. His empire extended into India, so that the part of Alexander's dominion which he obtained was larger than that which fell to the share of Ptolemy, who, however, extended his territory considerably beyond Egypt, taking possession of the Mediterranean islands, and of Judaea, and bringing great multitudes of Jews into Egypt.

6. "in the end of years," &c. After many wars between the South and the North, an attempt was made (B.C. 249) to form an alliance, the pledge of which was the marriage, in that year, of Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus (son of Ptolemy Soter), to Antiochus Theus (grandson of Seleucus Nicator). But she was soon afterwards put away by Antiochus, who reinstated his former wife Laodice as queen. Antiochus was poisoned by Laodice, who also put to death Berenice with her Egyptian attendants and her son: and Seleucus Callinicus (B.C. 245), the son of Laodice, succeeded Antiochus.

7. "a branch of her roots," &c. Ptolemy Euergetes (B.C. 246—222), who sprang from the same father as Berenice, invaded the dominions of Seleucus Callinicus, and conquered a great part.

8. "and shall also carry captives," &c. Ptolemy, according to Jerome, brought back into Egypt an immense treasure of money, and precious vessels, and a great number of images of gods, in which were included those Egyptian idols which Cambyses had carried into Persia when he conquered Egypt. Seleucus, after making peace with Ptolemy, fell into various troubles, and died in exile four years before Ptolemy.

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² Heb. shall
associate
themselves.

³ Heb. rights.

⁴ Or, whom
she brought
forth.

⁵ Or, in
his place,
or, office,
ver. 20.

⁶ Heb. rec-
sels of their
desire.

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² Or,
shall war.

² Isai. 8. 8.
ch. 9. 26.

³ Or, then
shall he be
stirred up
again.

⁴ ver. 7.

10 But his sons ² shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and *one* shall certainly come, ² and overflow, and pass through: ³ then shall he return, and be stirred up, ⁴ *even* to his fortress.

11 And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, *even* with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand.

12 *And* when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down *many* ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened *by it*.

13 For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come ⁴ after certain years with a great army and with much riches.

14 And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also ⁵ the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.

15 So the king of the north shall come, and cast

⁴ Heb.
at the end
of times,
even years.
ch. 4. 16.
& 12. 7.

⁵ Heb. the
children
of robbers.

10—19. Syria and Egypt.

10. "But his sons," &c. The two sons of Seleucus, namely, Seleucus Ceraunus (B.C. 225—223) and Antiochus the Great (B.C. 221—187), began, jointly, a war in Asia with little success; but Antiochus, who survived his brother, put down rebellions throughout his dominions, and overcame (B.C. 218) the Egyptian forces in Phœnicia.

11. "the king of the south shall be moved," &c. Ptolemy Philopator (B.C. 221—203) marched out of Egypt to Raphia and there (B.C. 217) defeated Antiochus in a great battle: after which he forcibly entered the Temple in Jerusalem, and returning into Egypt cruelly persecuted the Jews in that country, and provoked by his vices a rebellion in Egypt.

13. "the king of the north." Antiochus, having assembled an incredible army, and made a league with Macedon against Egypt, invaded the Syrian territory of Ptolemy Epiphanes (B.C. 204—181), where the disaffected population received him gladly. But they were subjected, four years afterwards, to an attack (B.C. 199) by Scopas the Egyptian general, who subdued them for a time and carried away much spoil.

14. "robbers," &c. *Sons of the violent of thy people.* Jerome interprets this to refer to apostate Jews who had attached themselves to Ptolemy.

15. "So the king of the north," &c. Antiochus in the following;

up a mount, and take ² the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither ³ his chosen people, neither *shall there be any* strength to withstand.

16 But he that cometh against him ¹ shall do according to his own will, and ^k none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the ^{4 5} glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed.

17 He shall also ¹ set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and ⁶ upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, ⁷ corrupting her: but she shall not stand *on his side*, ^m neither be for him.

18 After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince ⁸ for his own behalf shall cause ⁹ the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause *it* to turn upon him.

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² Heb.
*the city of
munitions.*

³ Heb. *the
people of
his choices.*

¹ ch. 8. 4, 7.
ver. 3, 36.

^k Josh. 1. 5.

⁴ Or, *goodly
land.*

ch. 8. 9.
ver. 41, 45.

⁵ Heb.
*the land of
ornament.*

^{1 2} Chr. 20. 3.

⁶ Or, *much
uprightness:
or, equal
conditions.*

⁷ Heb. *to
corrupt.*

^m ch. 9. 26.

⁸ Heb.

for him.

⁹ Heb. *his
reproach.*

year captured Sidon with Scopas and his army, took Gaza, recovered all Syria, and repulsed the Egyptian forces.

16. "he that cometh," &c., i.e. Antiochus coming against Ptolemy.

"glorious land . . . consumed." The glorious land is Palestine. The people of Jerusalem, previously plundered by Scopas, were also constrained to support the army of Antiochus with provisions.

17. "He shall set his face." Antiochus collected forces (B.C. 196), at first with an intention of invading Egypt. But he changed his plans, and, encouraged by the arrival of Hannibal, continued his former preparations with the intention of engaging in a war with Rome. He tried to strengthen himself by forming alliances with neighbouring kings: and to Ptolemy Epiphanes he gave (B.C. 193) his daughter Cleopatra, expecting that she would be faithful to the interests of her father in preference to those of her husband; but she did not fulfil his expectation.

18. "After this." Rather, *and*.

"shall he turn," &c. Antiochus, having seized some maritime towns of Asia and certain islands, landed in Greece to engage the Roman army; but he was surprised and defeated (B.C. 191) at Thermopylæ by the Consul Acilius. Next year he suffered a decisive overthrow by the Romans under L. C. Scipio, in Lydia, near Mount Sipylus; and he was compelled to agree to pay a large sum, to withdraw from Europe, and to give up a large territory in Asia, as conditions of peace.

"but a prince," &c. This clause is capable of various translations. It may be rendered: *and a captain shall cause to cease the insult offered to himself, besides retaliating his insult upon him.* Antiochus, some years before (B.C. 196), had insultingly told the Roman ambassadors that they had no more business to meddle with the affairs of Asia than he had to meddle with those of Italy.

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ⁿ Job 20. 8.
^ps. 37. 36.
Ezek. 26. 21.
² Or, in his
place, ver. 7.
³ Heb. one
that causeth
an exacter
to pass over.
⁴ Heb.
angers.

19 Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, ^a and not be found.

20 Then shall stand up ² in his estate ³ a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in ⁴ anger, nor in battle.

21 And ⁵ in his estate ^o shall stand up a

⁵ Or, in his place. ^o ch. 7. 8. & 8. 9, 23, 25.

19. "toward the fort." After his overthrow, Antiochus fled to Antioch and to Susa, and sank into obscurity, while the Romans under Manlius pushed their conquests in Asia Minor. The great king perished, B.C. 187, by an uncertain but ignominious death, either in a drunken brawl or in an attempt to plunder a temple at Elymais.

20. "Then shall stand," &c. Rather, *And there shall stand up in his stead one who causes an exactor to pass over the glory of his kingdom.* Seleucus Philopator, the son of Antiochus, is here referred to. "The whole business of his reign (B.C. 186—176) was to collect annually "1000 talents, which he was bound to pay to the Romans." The *glory of his kingdom* may refer either to his kingly honour generally, or to the city of Jerusalem, whither he is said to have sent Heliodorus (2 Macc. iii. 7) to pillage the Temple. He fell a victim to a domestic conspiracy.

21—32. The vile prince.

21. Antiochus Epiphanes succeeded his brother Seleucus in the kingdom of Syria B.C. 175—164. He is the principal figure in the vision from vv. 21 to 31 inclusive, and in a previous chapter he appears as "the little horn" (ch. viii. 9—14), and the "king of fierce countenance" (ch. viii. 23, 24). He is the last, and in one respect the most remarkable, on the list of Syrian and Egyptian kings, persecutors of the Jews, of whom Daniel makes mention in this prophecy. Palestine, after his time, ceased to be the battle-field on which the kings of the North and the South met in conflict for the possession of it: for a mightier power than either,—the fourth or Roman empire—was now absorbing both those kingdoms, and they ceased to trouble Israel. Relieved from those its foreign oppressors, and as yet unsubdued by Rome, Palestine became for a considerable period comparatively independent under the Asmonean (Maccabean) princes, and the disturbances to which it was still liable were chiefly internal. But before the arrival of that period the people of God had to pass through a persecution the last, the fiercest, and the most deadly of all that they suffered from Syrian or Egyptian kings, the author of which was Antiochus. The sufferings of the Jews in the first seven years of his reign are described in a passage too long for transcription here, but to which the reader should refer, 1 Macc. i. 10—64. So notorious was his character for vices, cruelty, and wickedness, that his contemporaries changed his title Epiphanes (Illustrious) into Epimanes (frantic): the Jews regarded him as the most detestable of all their persecutors, and Christians see in him a type of Antichrist.

"estate." Rather, *stead.*

vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.

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22 ^P And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; ^P ver. 10.
^q yea, also the prince of the covenant.

^q ch. 8. 10,
II, 25.
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^r ch. 8. 25.

23 And after the league *made* with him ^r he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people.

² Or,
into the
peaceable
and fat, &c.

24 He shall enter ² peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do *that* which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: *yea*, and he shall ³ forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time.

³ Heb.
think his
thoughts.

25 And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him.

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cir. 170.

26 Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall ^s overflow: ^s ver. 10, 22. and many shall fall down slain.

"vile person," &c. Rather, *disreputable person, to whom royal majesty* (so the expression is translated in 1 Chron. xxix. 25) *shall not be attributed.* Though a king's son, Antiochus was for a long time a hostage in the hands of the Romans; but the chief justification of this epithet is found in his monstrous vices. His title to the throne was questionable, and was contested, and he secured it only by intrigues.

22. Lit. *And the forces of the overflow shall be overbalanced before him, and shall be shattered; and even the prince of the covenant.* Those who opposed his succession were speedily and unexpectedly overcome; and the High-priest Onias was cast into prison and was supplanted by his apostate brother Jason, or Joshua (2 Macc. iv. 7).

23. "he shall work deceitfully." Treachery was a conspicuous feature in the character of Antiochus. The allusion may be particularly to the intrigue by which Jason in his turn was supplanted by his brother Menelaus (also named Onias) as related in 2 Macc. iv. 23—26.

24. "he shall do," &c. The exactions and robberies of Antiochus as well as his profusion and extravagance were on an unprecedented scale. See for instance 1 Macc. iii. 27—30.

"forecast his devices." See 1 Macc. i. 16.

25—27. "the king of the south." Defeated by Antiochus in more than one battle, betrayed by his own family and by his subjects, Ptolemy Philometor, the young and feeble king of Egypt, was obliged to make a treaty of peace with Antiochus, in which neither king was sincere.

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² Heb. *their hearts.*

^t ver. 29, 35,
40. ch. 8. 13.

^u ver. 22.

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cir. 169.

^x ver. 23.

^y ver. 25.

Fulfilled
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^z Num. 24. 24.
Jer. 2. 10.

^a ver. 28.

^b ch. 8. 11.
& 12. 11.

³ Or, *astorisheth.*

27 And both these kings' ² hearts *shall be* to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for ^t yet the end *shall be* at the time appointed.

28 Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and ^u his heart *shall be* against the holy covenant; and he shall do *exploits*, and return to his own land.

29 At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; ^x but it shall not be as the former, ^y or as the latter.

30 ^z For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation ^a against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.

31 And arms shall stand on his part, ^b and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily *sacrifice*, and they shall place the abomination that ³ maketh desolate.

28. "Then shall he return." The return of Antiochus from his second Egyptian campaign is dated B.C. 170. Compare the history of these events in 1 Macc. i. 20—24, and 2 Macc. v. 11—21.

29. "At the time appointed." Two years afterwards Antiochus once more marched (B.C. 168) into Egypt and laid siege to Alexandria, where this campaign was unexpectedly checked.

30. "Chittim." Cyprus and the countries west of it, including Macedonia, Greece, and Italy.

"shall come." At Alexandria Antiochus was met by ambassadors from the senate and people of Rome, who, as allies of Ptolemy, peremptorily demanded that he should immediately depart out of Egypt, and intimidated him into reluctant compliance with their demand.

"have indignation," &c. Returning baffled and indignant, he was rendered furious by a revolt of the Jews, the occasion of which was a false rumour of his death (2 Macc. v. 5). He returned under the guidance of the apostate Menelaus, and committed the outrages described in 2 Macc. v. 11—21.

31. "arms shall stand," &c. Or, *forces sent from him shall stand*, &c. After quitting Jerusalem, Antiochus still continued his policy of oppression and persecution as related in 2 Macc. v. 22—26 and 1 Macc. i. 29—54.

"take away the daily sacrifice." Comp. ch. viii. 11—13 and notes.

"abomination. The Temple at Jerusalem was called by the followers of Antiochus the temple of Jupiter Olympius (2 Macc. vi. 2); sacrifice was offered on the idol altar which stood upon the altar of God (1 Macc. i. 59); swine were sacrificed there (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, xii. 5. 4), and broth made from the flesh of swine was sprinkled over the Temple, in order to violate the laws of the Jews (Josephus, *Antiquities*, xiii. 8. 2).

32 And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall be ² corrupt by flatteries : but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do *exploits*. Before CHRIST cir. 534.

33 ^c And they that understand among the people shall instruct many : ^d yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, *many* days. ² Or, cause to dissemble.
^c Mal. 2. 7.
^d Heb. 11. 35, &c.

34 Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help : but many shall cleave to them with flatteries.

35 And *some* of them of understanding shall fall, ^e to try ³ them, and to purge, and to make *them* white, ^f *even* to the time of the end : ^g because *it is* yet for a time appointed. ^e ch. 12. 10.
¹ Pet. 1. 7.
³ Or, by them.
^f ch. 8. 17, 19, ver. 40.
^g ver. 29.
^h ver. 16.

36 And the king ^h shall do according to his will ;

32. The division of the Jews into these two parties is marked in the books of Maccabees ; the Hellenizing or apostate party who had probably increased unobserved since the conquest of Alexander (1 Macc. i. 43, 52 ; 2 Macc. iv. 9—20) ; and the faithful or traditional Jews who found in the Maccabean family leaders with sufficient power to organise them (1 Macc. i. 62 ; ii. 16), and eventually to achieve their national independence.

33—35. A time of trial.

33—35. The person of Antiochus seems now to disappear from the prophecy. The people of God are here described as maintaining a struggling existence, and passing through an undefined period of persecution and purgation, in which they are not destitute of effective leaders and teachers, yet such as are liable themselves to failure, and are incompetent to give complete deliverance and restoration to Israel. This description may apply to the Jewish Church in the last years of Antiochus, and long afterwards. From the concluding words of the 35th verse we may infer that it is intended to cover a long period.

36—45. The wilful king.

36. "the king." Interpreters are not agreed as to who this king is or in what period of the world's history we are to look for him.

It is true that the last preceding reference to a king was to Antiochus Epiphanes, in ver. 32. But so long an interval is interposed by vv. 32—35 that it seems hard to carry back the reference so far. They who would do so, and who understand all the remainder of this prophecy to relate to him, are unable to account for his death in ver. 45, being immediately connected with the events which follow (ch. xii. 1—3), which belong to the end of the world. Besides, the character and actions of this king do not agree with what history records of Antiochus. Dr. Pusey enumerates his six "characteristic marks : viz. (1) self-exaltation "above every god ; (2) contempt of all religion ; (3) blasphemy against

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 and he shall ⁱ exalt himself, and magnify himself
 above every god, and shall speak marvellous things
^k against the God of gods, and shall prosper ^l till the
 indignation be accomplished : for that that is deter-
 mined shall be done.

ⁱ ch. 7. 8, 25.
^k & 8. 25.
^l 2 Thess. 2. 4.
 Rev. 13. 5, 6.

^k ch. 8. 11,
 24, 25. ^l ch. 9. 27.

“ the true God ; (4) apostasy from the god [or, the gods] of his fathers ;
 “ (5) disregarding the desire of women ; (6) honouring a god whom his
 “ fathers knew not ; ” and of these, he says, one only (the third) agrees
 with Antiochus. Further, Daniel describes this king (ver. 40) as
 attacked by the king of the North ; but in ver. 21 he is himself the king
 of the North. Moreover, the events described in vv. 41—43 are not found
 in the history of Antiochus.

In the description of Antichrist, or the Man of Sin (2 Thess. ii. 2—4),
 and of the last times (1 Tim. iv. 1), are found more than one of the distinc-
 tive features of this king. And the whole early Church, according to
 Jerome, with whom Theodoret agrees, understood all the remainder of this
 prophecy, from ver. 36 inclusive, to relate primarily, some said exclu-
 sively, to the coming Antichrist, and looked forward for the fulfilment of
 it in future ages. This view has the greatest weight of authority in its
 favour. It is however open to the objection that it makes the prophecy
 bring together too closely the time of Antiochus (vv. 21—31), and the
 times of Antichrist (vv. 36—45) ; to which it is replied, that our blessed
 Lord in St. Matt. xxiv. brings together, even with still greater inde-
 pendence of chronology, the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the world.
 Indeed it is well known that prophecy differs from history in that it
 follows the connexion of type and antitype in preference to the chrono-
 logical sequence of events.

In this view,—that this prophecy refers to a coming Antichrist, though
 perhaps not without a glance at Antiochus as a type of Antichrist,—it
 seems best to acquiesce. We must wait in patience for future events to
 fulfil this prophecy more obviously than any which have yet occurred.
 Already indeed the Antichristian leaven (2 Thess. ii. 7, and 1 St. John
 iv. 3) has been working in the Church from very early times ; but until
 “ that Man of Sin be revealed ” in his proper person, and not only
 through type and foreshadow, the Church must continue to watch for
 the complete fulfilment of the signs here written.

It may be noted here that one of the most esteemed expositors of
 Daniel, Bishop Newton, adopts in this part of the prophecy a different
 interpretation from that which prevailed before him. In ver. 31 he
 sees a prediction of the growth of the power of the Romans in the East
 after the time of Antiochus and the destruction of Jerusalem, and the
 erection—where the Temple had stood—of a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus
 A.D. 132. He refers the following vv. 32—36 to the persecution suffered
 by the early Christian Church. Vv. 37—39, according to him, relate to
 the secular power using its influence for the corruption of the Church,
 especially in the East ; and vv. 40—43 to the invasions of the East by
 the Saracens and by the Turks, and the establishment of the Ottoman
 empire. He considers that vv. 44 and 45 have not yet received any
 fulfilment.

“ do according to his will.” The same characteristic feature is

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37 Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers,^m nor the desire of women,ⁿ nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.

38 ² But ³ in his estate shall he honour the God of ⁴ forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and ⁶ pleasant things.

39 Thus shall he do in the ⁷ most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for ⁸ gain.

40 ^o And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him ^p like a whirlwind, with chariots, ^q and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, ^r and shall overflow and pass over.

41 He shall enter also into the ⁹ glorious land, and many *countries* shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, ^s *even* Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.

42 He shall ³ stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape.

43 But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be ^t at his steps.

44 But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.

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^m 1 Tim. 4. 3.

ⁿ Isai. 14. 13.
² Thess. 2. 4.

² Or, *But in his stead.*

³ Heb. *as for the almighty God, in his seat he shall honour, yea, he shall honour a god, whom, &c.*

⁴ Or, *munitions.*

⁵ Heb. *Mauzzim, or, Gods protectors.*

⁶ Heb. *things desired,* Isai. 44. 9.

⁷ Heb. *fortresses of munitions.*

⁸ Heb. *a price.*

^o ver. 35.

^p Isai. 21. 1.
Zech. 9. 14.

^q Ezek. 38. 4, 15.

Rev. 9. 16.
^r ver. 10, 22.

⁹ Or, *goodly land,* ver. 16.

² Heb. *land of delight, or, ornament.*

³ Isai. 11. 14.
³ Heb. *send forth.*

^t Ex. 11. 8.
Judg. 4. 10.

predicted of the founders of the Persian (ch. viii. 4) and of the Grecian (ch. xi. 3) empires.

37. "neither shall he regard the desire of women." This sentence has received various explanations. Some interpret it in connexion with one of the features in the last times noted by St. Paul (1 Tim. iv. 3)—"forbidding to marry."

38. "in his estate," &c., i. e. "instead of honouring the gods of his fathers, he shall honour the gods' protectors," or "the god of forces."

40. In the preceding verses of this chapter the kings of the South and North denoted the kings of Egypt and Syria; but it is difficult to suppose that they have the same signification in this verse.

41. "the glorious land." Palestine (ch. xi. 16).

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^u Ps. 48, 2.
ver. 16, 41.
² Thess. 2. 4.

² Or, *goodly*.

³ Heb,
*mountain
of delight
of holiness.*

^x 2 Thes. 2. 8.

Rev. 19. 20.

^a ch. 10. 13,

21.

^b Is. 26. 20, 21.

Jer. 30. 7.

Matt. 24. 21.

Rev. 16. 18.

^c Rom. 11. 26.

^d Ex. 32. 32.

Ps. 56. 8.

& 69. 28.

Ezek. 13. 9.

Luke 10. 20.

Phil. 4. 3.

Rev. 3. 5.

& 13. 8.

^e Matt. 25. 46.

John 5. 28, 29.

Acts 24. 15.

^f Isai. 66. 24.

Rom. 9. 21.

45 And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in ^u the ²³ glorious holy mountain; ^x yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *Michael shall deliver Israel from their troubles.* 5 *Daniel is informed of the times.*

AND at that time shall ^a Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: ^b and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time: and at that time thy people ^c shall be delivered, every one that shall be found ^d written in the book.

2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, ^e some to everlasting life, and some to shame ^f and everlasting contempt.

45. "between the seas," &c. Like Sennacherib of old, he is in the Holy Land between its two boundaries, the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean, shaking his hand against the holy mountain, Zion: and he perishes.

The very different circumstances in which Antiochus Epiphanes died in Persia are related in 1 Macc. vi.

CHAPTER XII.

1 Trouble and deliverance.

1. "at that time," i. e. the time of the end of the wilful king. The reader will remember that the separation of this verse from the last preceding it by the beginning of a new chapter is an arbitrary arrangement of modern times, and has no place in the original.

"Michael." The interposition of this Angel has a precedent in ch. x. 13, 21.

"a time of trouble," &c. These words are quoted (St. Matt. xxiv. 21), and applied by our Lord to the time which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem.

"the book." God's book of remembrance. See Exod. xxxii. 32, also Dan. vii. 10.

2—4. Resurrection, glory, and knowledge.

2. "shall awake." Compare our Lord's words in St. John v. 28, 29. It is scarcely conceivable that this verse and the next can signify anything but the general Resurrection and the everlasting life of the righteous.

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3 And ^g they that be ² wise shall ^h shine as the brightness of the firmament; ⁱ and they that turn many to righteousness ^k as the stars for ever and ever.

4 ¹ But thou, O Daniel, ^m shut up the words, and seal the book, *even* to ⁿ the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

5 ¶ Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the ³ bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank ^o of the river.

6 And *one* said to ^p the man clothed in linen, which *was* ⁴ upon the waters of the river, ^q How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?

7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, when he ^r held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him ^s that liveth for ever ^t that *it shall be* for a time, times, and ⁵ an half; ^u and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of ^x the holy people, all these *things* shall be finished.

8 And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*?

9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed ^y till the time of ^y the end.

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† ch. 11. 33, 35.
‡ Or,
teachers.
§ Prov. 4. 18.
|| Matt. 13. 43.
¶ Jam. 5. 20.
** 1 Cor. 15.
41, 42.
†† ch. 8. 26.
ver. 9.
‡‡ Rev. 10. 4.
& 22. 10.
§§ ch. 10. 1.
ver. 9.
¶¶ Heb. 1ip.
• ch. 10. 4.

††† ch. 10. 5.
§§§ Or, from
above.
¶¶¶ ch. 8. 13.
†††† Dent 32. 49.
Rev. 10. 5, 6.
††††† ch. 4. 34.
‡‡‡ ch. 7. 25.
& 11. 13.
Rev. 12. 14.
§§§§ Or, part.
¶¶¶¶ Luke 21. 24.
Rev. 10. 7.
•• ch. 8. 24.

3. "they that be wise," i. e. the men of understanding (ch. xi. 33, 35).

4. "the book." The roll containing this vision, i. e. chs. x—xii. "Every prophecy before its completion is an enigma, and full of contradictions to men; but when the time is fulfilled, and that which was predicted has come to pass, then it receives the most exact explanation" (*Irenæus*).

"shall run to and fro." That is, as Jerome explains, shall study this book thoroughly. Comp. Hab. ii. 2.

5—13. Times of fulfilment.

5. "two." That is, two Angels in addition to the speaker.

6. "man clothed in linen." See ch. x. 34.

7. "time," &c. See note on ch. vii. 25.

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^z ch. 11. 35.

Zech. 13. 9.

^a Hos. 14. 9.

Rev. 9. 20.

& 22. 11.

^b ch. 11. 33, 35.

John 7. 17.

& 8. 47. &

18. 37.

^c ch. 8. 11.

& 11. 31.

² Heb. to set

up the abo-

mination,

&c.

³ Or, asto-

nisheth.

^d ver. 9.

⁴ Or, and

thou, &c.

10 ^z Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried ; ^a but the wicked shall do wickedly : and none of the wicked shall understand ; but ^b the wise shall understand.

11 And from the time ^c that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and ² the abomination that ³ maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

12 Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

13 But ^d go thou thy way till the end be : ^{4 e} for thou shalt rest, ^f and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

^e Isai. 57. 2. Rev. 14. 13. ^f Ps. 1. 5.

10. This verse appears to describe the condition of the holy people during the three times and a half.

11, 12. The mystical numbers have entirely baffled the conjectures of interpreters: no events hitherto have explained them.

13. "rest." Comp. Job iii. 17. Isa. lvii. 2. Calvin says: "Thou shalt rest, that is, thou shalt die; thou shalt stand, that is, thy death shall not be destruction: for God will cause thee to stand in thy lot with the elect."

"thy lot." Compare the assignment of lots in the Land of Promise to the several tribes (Joshua xv. 1, &c.). "Whilst the best of the saints see heaven only through a glass darkly, and can reach no higher in this world than hope and desire and reliance on God's promise, and patient expectation, Daniel has an Angel sent by God, to assure him of his lot in a glorious eternity, and that his mansion there was prepared and brightened to receive him." *Bishop Ken.* See also a poem on "Daniel," xxxv. in *Lyra Apostolica.*

HOSEA.

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HOSEA has a name familiar and significant. It is the same as that of the great leader of Israel: "Moses called Oshea . . . Jehoshua" (Num. xiii. 16.). It is the same, too, as that of the last king of the ten tribes. It means "salvation," or (the Lord) "saves." Isaiah, "the salvation of the Lord," is only an enlarged form of it.

As in the case of Isaiah, his contemporary, we may say of Hosea himself, what he makes clear in the case of his children: "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts" (Isa. viii. 18.). Hosea uses, indeed, the verb "to save" only five times, but always emphatically (chs. i. 7; xiii. 4, 10; xiv. 3.). The topic of "salvation," however (see below), is a great characteristic of his prophecy. His name illustrates his work and mission.

It is doubtful whether we are to press the name of his father, "Beeri," into a symbolical sense; it means "my well." It is used in the song of Israel (Num. xxi. 16.): "From thence they went to 'Beer:' that is, 'the well' whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water." Compare also the Song of Solomon, where the spouse "is 'a well' of living waters" (ch. iv. 15.). It is not the same word as in Isa. xii. 3: "With joy shall ye draw water out of 'the wells of 'salvation;'" but we shall find Hosea in his language especially imitates the Pentateuch, and in the book of Genesis the word occurs frequently. There is at any rate a fitness, if the father of the prophet typifies Him, Who gives "that well of water, which springeth up into everlasting life;" and there may be also in the word a protest against Israel: "My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters, hewed them out 'cisterns,' 'broken 'cisterns,' that can hold no water" (Jer. ii. 13.). It may be noted, further, that the names of the kings in whose reigns Hosea's long ministry was to be passed, are suggestive of worldly might, sometimes without, sometimes with the help of the Lord: "Jeroboam" (whose) "people is many," notably the instance of the first; "Uzziah," "strength of the Lord;" "Hezekiah," "might of the Lord," of the last. Hosea witnesses by his name, as by his prophecy, a very different truth to that implied in "Jeroboam;" "No king 'is saved' by 'the multitude' of a host; a horse is a vain thing for 'safety'" (Ps. xxxiii. 16, 17.). On the other hand, he warns Judah that the Lord is their "strength," and the strength "of salvations" of His Anointed (ib. xxviii. 8, marg.).

Though we know a great deal of the personal history of Hosea from the one fact of his marriage, we do not know his tribe, birthplace, home.

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As is the case with the rest of the prophets in the Canon, his death is hidden from us, and its circumstances. He may have been a subject of the kingdom of Israel; but the internal evidence cannot prove this point, though it is not at all improbable. On the other hand, the length of his ministry seems sufficiently established. It commenced while Jeroboam and Uzziah were contemporaries; it reached on to, at least, the beginning of Hezekiah. "But Uzziah survived Jeroboam twenty-six years; Jotham and Ahaz each reigned sixteen; thus we have already fifty-eight years complete, without counting the years of Jeroboam, during which he prophesied, at the beginning of his office, or those of Hezekiah which elapsed before its close; . . . if we suppose . . . two years only of Hezekiah, and ten of those, in which the reigns of Jeroboam and Uzziah coincided, his ministry will have lasted seventy years. Still, not the length of Hosea's life, but his endurance, was superhuman" (*Pusey*); and this, even if the time should be a little reduced.

Every prophet, no doubt, was called to suffer. Hosea, being the man that he was (see below), probably felt this suffering very keenly; as to his peculiar trials, if he had not the outward persecution of Amos, he had even a sharper, more abiding personal sorrow, and this chiefly marks him out amongst the saints of the Old Testament.

"The beginning of the Word of the Lord" to him was, "Go, take thee a wife of whoredoms, and children of whoredoms." From youth to old age Hosea was to have a home, which was no home; children only for sorrow; himself pure and "separated to the Lord," a wife unchaste (though some deny this interpretation) before marriage, an adulteress afterwards. Hosea not only bore the name of the "Saviour," he was surely an image of "the Man of Sorrows."

In this respect we may contrast him with Isaiah. The wife of the latter is called "the prophetess" (ch. viii. 3.); the names of his children are not "Unpitied One," "Not-My People," but "the remnant-shall return" (ib. vii. 3.), "make haste-to the spoil" (ib. viii. 1.). It is as if these two great prophets divided in their personal history the two portions of the life of the Messiah; the one pointing to "the joy that was set before Him," the other witnessing to His "shame" (Heb. xii. 2.). Still Hosea, very severe as his trial was, may perhaps have had some peculiar comfort. He received special and glorious revelations. May we not suppose, also, that out of his suffering itself there came refreshing. "Joshua," we read, "saved the harlot Rahab alive," what if Hosea "sanctified" (1 Cor. vii. 14.) Gomer the adulteress? What, if bearing year by year the reproach of another, as his own, and being united to such an one as his wife, he learned to feel infirmities and sins not his own, and became himself not only a preacher of "salvation," but a witness to "the Saviour," not only by bearing His Name, and representing a part of His sorrows, but by the gift of a portion of His love and of His power. The Spirit of God seems for His various purposes to make choice of various characters and dispositions, moulded already by Himself, as He wills. Hosea has been described by one commentator, "as eminently a prophet of the tenderness of the love of God;" by another, "as the Ephraimitish Jeremiah." His book in itself, still more when contrasted with that of his brother prophet Amos, plainly shows the spirit expressed afterwards by that "Hebrew of the Hebrews," St. Paul. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved" (Rom. x. 1.). Sent to declare to Israel as a nation a

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doom complete (ch. i. 4.), prolonged (ch. iii. 4.), almost unique in its misery, and irrevocable (ch. ix. 17.); closing, as has been noticed, each division of the main part of his prophecy with a fresh message of woe, he still from time to time bursts forth into language of exulting hope, as he contemplates the spiritual blessings in store for the true repentant Israel. There is the wonderful passage about the new betrothal (ch. ii. 14—23.), the almost singular prophecy of the resurrection of Christ, and ours, in and with Him (ch. vi. 2, 3.); the triumphant cry for the “Ransom from the power of the grave” (ch. xiii. 14.); finally, the glowing picture of the restitution of all things (ch. xiv.). Hosea, like Amos, is a minister of judgment; but whereas Amos scarcely once interrupts his heavy “burden” of woe, and only “changes his voice” in the last five verses of his prophecy, Hosea opens again and again streaks of light; in the midst of chastisement magnifies, as scarce any of his brethren more, God’s love for Israel from the first, and His longing over them, though they turn from Him. (Note especially ch. xi. 1—4, 7—9; but also vi. 4; xii. 6; xiii. 4, 5; and elsewhere.) At the end he seems to have no expression for the overflowing joy of the love between the Redeemer and the redeemed, save in the images of a regenerate nature, pure and fresh as Paradise. If his language and thought mainly reflects that of Moses, for the union of God and His children, it has its parallel in the Song of Solomon.

Hosea in a word describes the true love and the false, for all time; represents one other chief feature of the Saviour, His yearning tenderness; while he denounces so solemnly the adultery of Israel, he declares the blessed “espousal” of “the chaste virgin to Christ,” “the one husband” of the soul (2 Cor. xi. 2.).

Note.—In this Commentary on Hosea, Joel, and Amos, use has been made constantly of the invaluable Work of Dr. Pusey on the Minor Prophets. What is actually taken from him is marked by inverted commas, where he is not quoted by name.

CHAPTER I.

1 *Hosea, to shew God's judgment for spiritual whoredom, taketh Gomer, 4 and hath by her Jezreel, 6 Lo-ruhamah, 8 and Lo-ammi. 10 The restoration of Judah and Israel.*

THE word of the LORD that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham,

CHAPTER I.

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The time of Hosea was "the darkest in the kingdom of Israel." Jeroboam II and Zachariah his son were the last kings whose reigns had any sanction from God (2 Kings x. 30.); afterwards all was usurpation, confusion, bloodshed. Shallum slew Zachariah; Menahem Shallum; against Menahem "came up Pul, king of Assyria." Menahem buys him off by a bribe involving severe "exaction" upon his people; Pekahiah, his son, after a two years' reign, is slain by Pekah; "In the days of Pekah came Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria." He "took" several northern towns of Israel, "and Gilead, Galilee, all the land of Naphtali," "and carried them captive to Assyria" (2 Kings xv. 10—29.). Next "Hoshea . . . slew Pekah," and "against Hoshea came "up Shalmaneser" (ib. 30; xvii. 3.). During fourteen years, a small portion only of one reign (Uzziah's), in Jerusalem, five kings reigned, one after another, in Samaria; and already three had died a violent death. Three successive "conspiracies" are recorded (chs. xv. 10, 25, 30: it is the same word in the original); three Assyrian invasions, in the space of less than fifty years, between Zachariah and Hoshea. Menahem practised in Israel the horrible brutalities first associated with the name of the Syrian Hazael (comp. 2 Kings xv. 16 with ib. viii. 12.). It needs not to show at length how all this illustrates, and is illustrated by, the words of Hosea: "There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God "in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and "committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood" (ch. iv. 1, 2.).

The Prophecy begins with "The Word of the Lord." He it is, Who is invisibly but powerfully working, and now in the spirit of Hosea. All around there is might and strength, military, political, national, individual. All around, too, there is sin, rioting. The Word of the Lord singles out, touches, constrains Hosea. Touched himself, he will shew to others the Word which has been shown to him, the strength of purity, "the salvation" that is by the Lord (vv. 1, 2.).

But in a strange and marvellous way. He will set out before his people their sin and their punishment in his own life and person. The Lord had said to him, "Take to thyself wife of whoredoms, and children of "whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing "from Me." He takes such a wife, and son and daughter and son again are born to him. The first, Jezreel. Yes, a "little while," and Israel shall be Jezreel, the "bow of strength broken," "the Prince of God," "the Scattered of God" (vv. 2—5.). The second a daughter, her name "Unpitied." Yes, now the word has gone forth, and "the Lord "God merciful ("Pitiful") and gracious" will "have pity" no more:

Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

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2 The beginning of the word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, ^a Go, ^a So ch. 3. 1. take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for ^b the land hath committed great whoredom, *departing* from the LORD.

^b Deut. 31, 16.
Ps. 73, 27.
Jer. 2, 13.
Ezek. 23, 3, 3c.

but on Judah He will have pity, and will save her, yet not in the way of her heart, but "by Himself, their Lord" (vv. 6, 7.). Yet one son more; that son is as a heathen, a stranger. He is worse—he is an outcast. The covenant is broken. Israel is lost to her God. Her God departed from her (vv. 8, 9.). But though "kingdom" shall cease from Israel, and as a people they shall remain "unpityed" without restoration, even "cast off," there shall be a marvellous blessing still, and a spiritual revival. That old promise to Abraham shall not fail; the true "seed" shall be as "the sand upon the sea shore;" for "Not-People," they shall hereafter be called "the Sons of the Living God." And what a day shall that day of in-gathering be! when the God Who "scatters" is revealed as the God "Who sows." The Sower, "the Word;" the Seed, the glorious harvest of the Resurrection (vv. 10, 11.).

1. The prophets, at the very beginning, declare that their words are not their own, but the Lord's; and this at once simply and surely. They have no doubt, make no apology. "We speak that we do know, and we testify that we have seen" (comp. St. Paul, Gal. i. 1. 1 St. John i. 1—3.).

2. The literal reality of this action of Hosea was the belief held by SS. Irenaeus, Augustine, Ambrose, Theodoret, Cyril of Alexandria, and by other ancient and mediæval commentators, and so it is by many moderns. "There is no instance," he says, "in which it can be shewn that "Holy Scripture relates that a thing was done, and that with the names "of persons, and yet that God did not intend it to be taken as literally "true. There would then be no test left of what was real, what imagin- "ary." Of such symbolical actions we have many instances (1 Kings xx. 35—43; xxii. 11. Isa. xx. 2—4. Jer. xix. 1, 10, 11. So chs. xxiv. xxvii., and elsewhere). They would more vividly impress the truth than mere words; and if they involved, as in this case of Hosea, severest suffering, they would make words, if not irresistible, at any rate above suspicion. Among those, however, who adopt the literal sense, there is a difference, some holding that a wife is taken, who, being chaste before, should prove false to her marriage vow. Some, on the contrary, that she was already unchaste, and after her marriage an adulteress. This last view has certainly some support from that chapter of Ezekiel, clearly an imitator of Hosea, which speaks of Israel as already unchaste in Egypt (ch. xxiii. 2.); it seems to account for the strong expression, "wife of "whoredoms;" and if it is correct, we have the complete history of Israel (and of the human race) from the fall in the beginning to its final redemption in Christ; and all in this one short chapter, just as in Isa. i.

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3 So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son.

e 2 Kin. 10. 11.
2 Heb. *visit.*
d 2 Kings 15.
10, 12.

4 And the LORD said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little *while*, ^e and I will ² avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, ^d and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel.

e 2 Kin. 15. 29.

5 ^e And it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.

3. "Hosea went immediately. He did not demur, as did even Moses and "Jeremiah." . . . "Accustomed from childhood to obey God, and every indication of His will, he did at once what he was bidden, however repulsive to natural feeling. So he became the more an image of the obedience of Christ Jesus, and a pattern to us at once to obey God's commands, however little to our minds."

"Gomer" means, perhaps, "completion," i. e. "complete" in lust. So St. Jerome and many moderns. "Diblaim," i. e. "a double lump of figs" (so 1 Sam. xxv. 18. 1 Chron. xii. 40. Comp. also 1 Sam. xxx. 12.), perhaps a type of "sweetness," "delicacy" (so St. Jerome), "a daughter of pleasure."

4. "Jezreel," i. e. "the Lord sows;" so ch. ii. 23: "I will 'sow' her unto Me in the earth;" and twice besides in Hosea (chs. viii. 7; x. 12.). Here, probably, "the Lord scatters." Some interpret it simply of the place "Jezreel," indelibly associated with the blood-shedding of Ahab and Jehu. Here was Ahab's palace (1 Kings xviii. 45.). "Naboth" was a "Jezreelite" (ib. xxi. 1.). For other slaughters here, comp. 1 Kings xviii. 13. 2 Kings ix. 26, 33; x. 1, 7, 11. This would be the fulfilment of an older prophecy also (Lev. xxvi. 33.).

"A little while." At once a word of comfort to the true-hearted (St. John xvi. 17.), and of awe to the sinner (Ps. xxxvii. 10. Isa. x. 25.). Not merely "the kingdom of the house" "of Jehu," but of all "Israel." Jeroboam II., with his reign of forty-one years, by far the longest of any in Israel, was then "restoring the coasts of Israel" (2 Kings xiv. 25.); "saving" his people (ib. 27.). All outwardly was strong, prosperous; let some fifty years pass, all would be ruin and desolation.

The prophet's children by their names, perhaps, too, by their guilt, are visible warnings to Israel of its doom. So the Jews witness to Christians now; so Christian nations with their plagues and their abundant sins, to one another.

5. "break the bow," so ch. ii. 18.

"valley of Jezreel," a beautiful and broad valley or plain, stretching from Mount Carmel and the sea to the Jordan. Megiddo is in the south of it, Nazareth on the north. Here Sisera and his host were overthrown; here Gideon conquered the Midianites and the Amalekites; here Saul was conquered and slain; here (see on ch. x. 14.) it may be, Shalmaneser won his decisive victory, and fulfilled the prophecy (comp. also 2 Kings xv. 29.). Perhaps there is an alliteration, as so often in Hosea and the other prophets, between "Jezreel" and "Israel:" they would be sounded very nearly alike.

6 And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And *God* said unto him, Call her name ² Lo-ruhamah: ^f for ³ I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; ⁴ but I will utterly take them away.

7 ^g But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and ^h will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen.

8 Now when she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived, and bare a son.

9 Then said *God*, Call his name ⁵ Lo-ammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your *God*.

10 Yet ⁱ the number of the children of Israel shall

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² That is,
Not having
obtained
mercy.

^f 2 Kings 17.
6, 23.

³ Heb. I will
not add any
more to.

⁴ Or, that I
should alto-
gether par-
don them.

^g 2 Kin. 19. 35.
^h Zech. 4. 6.
& 9. 10.

⁵ That is,
Not my
people.

ⁱ Gen. 32. 12.
Rom. 9. 27,
28.

7. This promise was fulfilled shortly after. "I will defend this city "to save" it, for My own sake, and for My servant David's sake. . . . That "night the angel of the Lord . . . smote in the camp of the Assyrians "185,000" (2 Kings xix. 34, 35. Comp. Zech. iv. 6; ix. 10.). Observe the rebuke also in the single phrase, "the LORD their God," as against the five words that follow, indicating the pride fostered by their military strength (comp. chs. viii. 14; x. 13.). Israel and Judah were both very weak against Assyria, but Judah the weakest; yet the word goes forth, Israel shall perish, Judah be saved. There is a deeper meaning. "A "Salvation" is coming; God shall reveal Himself as the one "Saviour" (ch. xiii. 4.); but it is by Himself alone, and for "Judah," the people that "confess" Him and "praise" Him.

8. This verse only differs from vv. 3, 6 by the mention of the "weaning." Why is this added here? We hear in Holy Scripture of "weaning" chiefly in the case of Isaac, "when Abraham made a great "feast" (Gen. xxi. 8.); then of Samuel, when "he was brought to appear "before the Lord, and there abode for ever" (1 Sam. i. 22, 24.). Then it is used in a beautiful figure (Ps. cxxxi. 2. Comp. Isa. xi. 8; xxviii. 9.). Possibly there may be a suggestion of contrast to those historical instances, and to the sacred application of the figure. "The Unpityed" was weaned, but how? and for what? Not in joy, and not for the Lord. "There was a considerable interval between childbirth and weaning" (2 Maccab. vii. 27.). Long had the people been deprived of real spiritual food; their soul was not "weaned" into lowliness and patient longing. It was devoid of nourishment, and it became lost to its God; "My people, "not My people."

9. Literally, "Ye" (emphatic) "not My people, and I" (emphatic) "am not yours" ("for you"). In six short words the covenant of God is broken (comp. Lev. xxvi. 12.). The Church sums up all her fullness of love in the words, "My Beloved is Mine, and I am His" (Song of Sol. ii. 16; vi. 3; vii. 10.). "Ye no more Mine, I no more yours" is the last woe. There is some reason for concluding the first chapter here, as in the Hebrew text.

10. Yet that old promise to Abraham (Gen. xxii. 17.), and Jacob (ib. xxxii. 12.), shall be strictly fulfilled, and the place of the rejection ("the

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^k Rom. 9. 25,
26.

^l Pet. 2. 10.

² Or, *instead
of that.*

¹ ch. 2. 23.

^m John 1. 12.

¹ John 3. 1.

ⁿ Isa. 11. 12, 13.

Jer. 3. 18.

Ezek. 34. 23.

& 37. 16,—

24.

be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; ^k and it shall come to pass, *that* ² in the place where it was said unto them, ¹ *Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are* ^m the sons of the living God.

¹¹ ⁿ Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great *shall be* the day of Jezreel.

CHAPTER II.

¹ *The idolatry of the people.* ⁶ *God's judgments against them.* ¹⁴ *His promises of reconciliation with them.*

² That is,
My people.

³ That is,
*Having
obtained
mercy.*

SAY ye unto your brethren, ² Ammi; and to your sisters, ³ Ruhamah.

“dispersion”) shall be the place of the restoration (comp. 1 St. Pet. i. 1, 2; ii. 10.). And My children, redeemed from their captivity, turned away from idols (comp. 1 Thess. i. 9.) shall “thirst for” and shall find “the living God” (Ps. xlii. 2; comp. lxxxiv. 2; see further, on next verse).

11. “The gathering together of the children,” the act of God in Christ (St. John xi. 52.), and of God alone, precedes; the acceptance of, and obedience to, Christ as their “Head” follows; man’s regenerate will co-operating with Divine grace. Then they “go up,” “ascending” with Him, “out of the land,” as out “of Egypt” (comp. same phrase, ch. ii. 15. Isa. xi. 16.), “seeking those things which are above,” “for great is ‘the day of ‘the sowing’ of God,” of “the quickening Spirit.” This prophecy has been fulfilled in a measure by the call “of Jews and Gentiles” (Rom. ix. 24, 26. 1 St. Pet. ii. 10.), who are now “one in Christ Jesus.” It awaits a larger fulfilment (Rom. xi. 25, 26.). It is in the Church of Christ that the Lord makes a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah (see especially Jer. xxxi. 31, 33. Heb. viii. 8, 10.). The strictest interpretation is the spiritual. Sonship of God by adoption, in-gathering and union of all in one Head, “freedom indeed” (St. John viii. 36.), heavenly-mindedness; these are the fruits of the Great Day of Him, Who is both “the Sower” and “the Seed,” the fruits of His Passion (Isa. liii. 10.); of His death (St. John xii. 24.); of His resurrection (Eph. iv. 8, 13—16.); but each “day” of the “life-giving “Spirit,” each day of revival, to the Church or individuals, is “the day “of Jezreel;” most of all, the day of “the restitution of all things.”

CHAPTER II.

1. This verse must be joined closely to the preceding. The children of Judah and the children of Israel seem to be addressed. “Say ye, “brother to brother, sister to sister, each to the other, what God says to “you all, we are ‘God’s people,’ ‘God hath mercy upon us.’” We are new-born, re-united to our Lord, taken into His love for ever.

2 Plead with your mother, plead : for ^a she *is* not ^{Before} **CHRIST**
my wife, neither *am* I her husband : let her there- ^{cir. 785.}

^a Isai. 50. 1.

Bp. Wordsworth applies it to the Gentiles winning the Jews by kindness and love, according to Rom. xi. 30 : "As ye in times past have not believed God, yet now 'have obtained mercy,' through their unbelief : "31, Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy, "they also 'may obtain mercy.'"

God's judgment upon Israel's sin, first generally (vv. 2—8.); then in detail (vv. 9—13.). Then His Pardon; His New Covenant; His sowing (Israel) in the earth (vv. 14—23.).

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The prophet again alters his voice, and gives a fuller description of Israel's sin (vv. 2—5.), and consequent chastisement (vv. 6—13.), then of her future pardon and salvation (vv. 14—23.). The same topics, in the same order, as in ch. i.

More particularly, stress is now laid on the idolatries of Israel : "She has gone after" (vv. 5, 13; comp. 7.) many "lovers" (vv. 5, 7, 10, 12, 13.). "The corn and the wine and the oil" (vv. 8, 22, 9.), "the wool and the flax" (vv. 5, 9.), "the silver and the gold" which God had given and multiplied to her (ver. 8.), all her abundant wealth, she has ascribed to them, not to the only Giver of good ; to those Baals she has burned incense ; and, it is solemnly added, Me she has forgotten (vv. 8, 13.). As she has sinned, so shall she suffer "shame" in the sight of her lovers (vv. 7, 10.), loss of all these bounties (vv. 9, 12.), cessation of all that false worship, that revolting holiday mirth (ver. 11.), desolation of her fruitful land (ver. 12.), "visitation" long, severe, undefined, for all those Baal days (ver. 13.).

"Therefore" the Lord "allures her" (ver. 14.). All that old punishment shall be reversed, and there shall rise up blessings more than countervailing. I made her "a wilderness" (ver. 3.); "the wilderness" shall be the place of her refreshing, where in holy calm and stillness, I, her God, "speak to her heart" (ver. 14.). I "destroyed her vines" (ver. 12.). A new "vineyard" will I give her from thence (ver. 15.). And for that "mirth" which "I made to cease" (ver. 11.), she shall "sing" to Me in loving "response," as with the joy of "her youth," as the song of Moses and Miriam (ver. 15.), yea, of the Lamb. In her misery she longed for her "first Husband" (ver. 7.), her "Husband" I will now be by a closer union ; all "fear" passed away, because "the love is perfect" (ver. 16.). Then "I visited upon her the day of Baalim" (ver. 13.), now "the very names of Baalim shall be abolished" (ver. 17.) : "in that day," where "the forest?" where, the devouring "wild beast of the field?" (ver. 12.) Lo! it is as it was in Paradise : "beast, and fowl, and creeping thing" "shall be at peace with thee" (Job v. 23.). "Bow, and sword, and battle" (comp. i. 7.) broken for ever. Israel "shall dwell safely" (ver. 18.). But there is more than this to come. Before, there was shameful "lewdness" (ver. 10.); thou hadst "many lovers," false, corrupt, corrupting ; now, "as a chaste virgin" I betroth thee to Me for ever ; dower thee with

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- fore put away her ^b whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts ;
- ^b Ezek. 16. 25. 3 lest ^c I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was ^d born, and make her ^e as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with ^f thirst.
- ^e Ezek. 19. 13. 4 And I will not have mercy upon her children ;
- ^f Amos 8. 11, 13. for they *be* the ^g children of whoredoms.
- ^g John 8. 41.

holiness, win thee with "lovingkindnesses," knit thee to Me in "faithfulness" unailing; and "thou shalt know Me," "the only true God," in My full revealed Name, in the greatness of My glory. Thou shalt be sown, as a seed of life, everywhere in the earth, "sown," not scattered; "Pitied" now, and loved with an everlasting love; "My people" now by an union inseparable; heaven and earth made new for thee, and to thee ever ministering (vv. 19—23.).

A chapter of wonderful pathos, a touching contrast between the foulness of every idol passion, and the pure adoring love of the penitent soul absorbed in her Saviour. Observe, "I will betroth thee," thrice. The whole chapter is very largely and closely imitated by Ezekiel (especially in chs. xvi., xxiii.), and in the latter part by Zechariah. Note Hosea's references to the books of Moses, and comp. ch. xiii. 4, 6, 8.

2—5. The prophet "changes" his "voice." Before that time (ch. ii. 1.), her children, apparently the remnant who "had not bowed to Baal" (1 Kings xix. 18.), are bidden to "plead" or "chide" with their mother (comp. ch. iv. 5, 6.). The faithful few, the faithful one, if he stands alone, must rebuke the sins of his nation, of his Church. Even if the mass be incorrigible, this or that soul may be saved.

2. "out of her sight." Rather, "from her face." Comp. Jer. iii. 3.

3. "lest I strip her naked, and set her." A different verb from "set her like a dry land," below; perhaps, "expose," "exhibit" ("fix her, so that she shall have no power to free herself," *Pusey*). It is used Job xvii. 6: "He 'hath made' me also a byword of the people."

"as in the day that she was born." This is commonly referred to the bondage in Egypt, which, however, is called "the days of her youth," below (ver. 15; comp. ch. xi. 1. Jer. ii. 2. Also Ezek. xvi. 3.). Perhaps her original state by nature is meant, before her Lord at Sinai "swore" unto her, and "entered into a covenant with" her, and . . . "Thou 'becamest Mine" (Ezek. xvi. 8.). The last three clauses of this verse are closely followed in Ezek. xix. 13; see that whole context.

4. Exactly; "And her children (emphatically) I will not have mercy upon, for children of whoredoms they;" as in ch. i. 6, and in pointed contrast with ch. i. 7. Six Hebrew words. I, the one Father, not pitying "children!" (comp. Ps. ciii. 13.) for "not My children," "strange" children, defiled, abominable, *they!* Once only (here) does (Hosea) give any hope that the temporal punishment may be averted through repentance. This, too, he follows up by renewing the declaration of God in ch. i. 6. We may compare for a like appeal, felt to be in vain, Amos ch. v., especially vv. 15—17. Perhaps there is a "remnant"

5 ^h For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully: for she said, I will go after my lovers, ⁱ that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my ² drink.

6 ¶ Therefore, behold, ^k I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and ³ make a wall, that she shall not find her paths.

7 And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, ¹ I will go and return to my ^m first husband; for then was it better with me than now.

8 For she did not ⁿ know that ^o I gave her corn, and ⁴ wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, ⁵ which they prepared for Baal.

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^h Isai. 1. 21.
Jer. 3. 1,
6, 8, 9.
Ezek. 16. 15,
16, &c.

ⁱ Jer. 44. 17.
ver. 8, 12.

² Heb.
drinks.

^k Job 3. 23.
& 19. 8.
Lam. 3. 7, 9.

³ Heb. *wall*
a wall.

¹ ch. 5. 15.
Luke 15. 18.

^m Ezek. 16. 8.
ⁿ Isai. 1. 3.

^o Ezek. 16. 17,
18, 19.

⁴ Heb.
new wine.

⁵ Or, where-
with they
made Baal, ch. 8. 4.

still "of Joseph," to whom "the Lord will be gracious" (ib. 15.), or, perhaps, the prophet would show that the nation is incorrigible, and therefore the Lord's "mercies" must be "restrained."

5. "my lovers" (see Introd. to this chapter), "that give me my bread and my water," i. e., what is necessary for my life; "my wool and my flax," i. e., what is graceful for ornament; "mine oil and my drink," i. e., "what makes my heart glad, and my face shine" (comp. Ps. civ. 15.). Such "lovers" would be Egypt and Assyria especially (comp. chs. vii. 11; xii. 1.); perhaps Syria also, to whose gods Ahaz sacrificed (2 Chron. xxviii. 23.). Damascus supplied "wool" (Ezek. xxvii. 18.); Egypt, "flax" (Isa. xix. 9.); "oil" here is a different word from that below (ver. 8.); it is found in the plural (Amos vi. 6.), and may mean here, as there, "costly unguents," as the rare word which follows, probably, luxurious "drinks." Israel's sin is vividly described; for the one love of God, the only "lover of the soul" of man, she seeks many, any lovers, who supply her need and . . . "deride" her (comp. ch. vii. 16.); for His grace, she seeks, east and west, any, every luxury; and, when these are poured in upon her, she says, "All is my own." "Ephraim said, I am become rich, I have found out substance for me" (ch. xii. 8.).

6—8. Her judgment follows. She that was wild, wanton, ever wandering (comp. ch. iv. 16.) shall have now "hedge of thorns," close, piercing affliction, yea, "wall" of imprisonment and captivity. Still, shall she seek and long for those vain idols, "seek and not find;" "then shall she say," but after how "many days!" (comp. ch. iii. 4, 5.) "I will go, and return to my first husband" (in manifest contrast to ver. 5.); then shall she know (comp. ver. 20.) what in her day of pride she knew not, that it was I, her God, Who gave her, as I promised of old, "corn, and wine, and oil," the constant phrase of Deuteronomy (chs. vii. 13; xi. 14; xii. 17; xiv. 23; xxviii. 51.). I Who, when she grew into a

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¹ ver. 3.

² Or, *take away.*

⁴ Ezek. 16. 37.
& 23. 29.

³ Heb. *folly,*
or, *villany.*

9 Therefore will I return, and ¹take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will ²recover my wool and my flax *given* to cover her nakedness.

10 And now ⁴will I discover her ³lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand.

kingdom, "multiplied her silver and gold;" "the gold they made into "a Baal" (as in chs. viii. 4; xiii. 2).

There is a very similar passage in Job (ch. xix. 8, 9.) which explains a part of this section: "He 'hath fenced up my way' that I cannot pass, "and He hath set darkness in my 'paths.' He 'hath stripped' me of "my glory, and taken the crown from my head." Jeremiah adopts and expands the same figure (Lam. iii. 7—9.).

Not only gross sin (as in ch. iv. 11.) but luxury "takes away the "heart." "This was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of "bread, and abundance of idleness" (Ezek. xvi. 49.). Observe, too, the curse of "the lovers of pleasure more than the lovers of God" (2 Tim. iii. 4.). They are ever seeking, never finding; without rest and joy, because "without God."

9—13. And now the punishment is described in detail; it is visibly manifested to be the hand of God Himself. Israel in her misery would "return" now, if only she could, to that "first Husband." Her offended Lord "returns" indeed to her; but how? in judgment. In five successive verses, like stroke upon stroke, He Himself takes away His gifts. There seems to run through this section the idea of a festival after the vintage, with which now the harvest is joined. It is as if the prophet had before his eyes one of "the Baal days" (ver. 13.) in Samaria. "The "year has been crowned with goodness;" "the valleys are covered over "with corn;" "the little hills rejoice on every side." All witnesses of God and of His love! All abused to a shameful idolatry! It is a high day; "incense is burning" before splendid images; everywhere there is wild mirth, for field and vineyard have been abundant above measure. "These are my rewards that my lovers have given me." One is forgotten, Who sees all this pomp and vanity, and with a word sweeps it all away. "Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim!" "The "glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be a "fading flower" (Isa. xxviii. 1, 4.). Does not the vivid picture remind us, of itself, of a great deal of our modern life? How manifold, how lavish the gifts of the All-bounteous Giver! How keen the craving for mirth, for amusement! Everywhere the world multiplies its idols. Remember we the warning against the world, "Me she hath forgotten" (so chs. viii. 14; xiii. 6. Comp. Deut. viii. 19.). All through Holy Scripture "forgetfulness of God" is the description of the worldly, self-engrossed soul. The soul need not actively rebel against God, it may simply "forget" Him, and it will fall surely into some idolatry.

10. "none shall deliver her out of Mine hand." Lit., "*man*" "shall not deliver," &c. It is the standing phrase for the irresistible power of the Lord God; first in Moses' song, to which, most probably,

HOSEA, II.

11 ^r I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her ^a feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.

12 And I will ² destroy her vines and her fig trees, ^t whereof she hath said, These *are* my rewards that my lovers have given me : and ^u I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them.

13 And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she ^x decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the LORD.

14 ¶ Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and ^y bring her into the wilderness, and speak ^{3 4} comfortably unto her.

15 And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and ^z the valley of Achor for a door of hope : and she shall sing there, as in ^a the days of her youth, and ^b as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.

16 And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD, *that* thou shalt call me ⁵ Ishi ; and shalt call me no more ⁶ Baali.

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^r Amos 8. 10.

^s 1 Kin. 12. 32.
Amos 8. 5.

² Heb. *make desolate.*

^t ver. 5.

^u Ps. 80. 12, 13.
Isai. 5. 5.

^x Ezek. 23. 40,
42.

^y Ezek. 20. 35.
³ Or,

friendly.

⁴ Heb. *to her heart.*

^z Josh. 7. 26.
Isai. 65. 10.

^a Jer. 2. 2.
Ezek. 16. 8,
23, 60.

^b Ex. 15. 1.

⁵ That is, *My husband.*

⁶ That is, *My lord.*

reference is here made : " See now that I, I am He, and there is no God " with Me : I kill, and I make alive ; I wound, and I heal : neither is " there any that can ' deliver out of My hand ' " (Deut. xxxii. 39.). We have it again (ch. v. 14 ; and Pss. vii. 2 ; l. 22 ; lxxi. 11. Isa. v. 29 ; xlii. 22, and elsewhere).

11. A very emphatic verse in the original ; just seven words. Perhaps a solemn irony : " I will make sabbath," sabbath, not of rest, but of desolation, " of all her joy, her feast day " (the Pentateuch-word for each of the three great feasts), " her new moon, her sabbath, yea, her every " day of assembly." The first and last mentioned again (ch. ix. 5.). St. Paul combines the three first (Col. ii. 16.) in the words used here by the LXX. For this and next verse comp. Lev. xxvi. 22, 30, 32, 34, 35, where there are many verbal agreements. Year, month, week—yea, every day of each, all would be joyless, dark. " Woe to them when I " depart from them ! " (ch. ix. 12. Comp. Amos v. 21 ; viii. 5, 10.).

13. " saith the Lord." A special word, meaning, perhaps, " this is " the solemn saying of the Lord." Besides in Hosea only in vv. 16, 21, below ; and ch. xi. 11 ; often in Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

14—20. And then follows the wonderful restoration, out of a depth of love still more wonderful : " Me she hath forgotten, therefore, lo ! I " allure her." Another prophet, in tenderness like Hosea, helps us to unfold this miracle of mercy : " Is Ephraim My dear son ? is he a

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17 For ^e I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name.

18 And in that day will I make a ^d covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and *with* the creeping things of the ground: and ^e I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to ^f lie down safely.

19 And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.

20 I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and ^g thou shalt know the LORD.

^c Ex. 23. 13.
Josh. 23. 7.
Ps. 16. 4.
Zech. 13. 2.
^d Job 5. 23.
Is. 11. 6.—9.
Ezek. 34. 25.

^e Ps. 46. 9.
Isai. 2. 4.
Ezek. 39. 9,
10.
Zech. 9. 10.

^f Lev. 26. 5.
Jer. 23. 6.

^g Jer. 31. 33,
34.
John 17. 3.

"pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember "him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him" (comp. Hos. xi. 8.). "I will surely have mercy upon him" (as ver. 23.) "saith "the Lord" (as ver. 13. Jer. xxxi. 20.). Compare for a similar inference Isa. vii. 13, 14. God *therefore* has mercy, not because we deserve it, but because we need it. We may divide the section, though it is really one, into three parts, by the "in that day" thrice occurring. First, there is the conversion. Her Lord takes Israel apart; in loneliness and stillness, He gently speaks to her, "to her heart" (so Isa. xl. 2.). Thy "warfare is accomplished, thine iniquity is pardoned" (do). Long, and sore, and deep has been "the tribulation" (Achor); now that dark "valley" opens, and there is brightness and "hope;" and she loathes her past sins, and in God's strength puts them away for ever (vv. 14—17.). Then there is the new and better covenant. All nature is renewed, in peace with God, and so with man; but with Israel, God's betrothal is as if she had been only pure and chaste as at the beginning, and for the ornaments of her vanity she wears now the very grace and beauty of her Lord (vv. 18—20.).

19. "And I will betroth thee unto Me." Note, it is thrice repeated, indicating to us, Christians, the wedding of redeemed human nature in Holy Baptism to the Three Blessed Persons of the one Godhead; the word is confined besides to the Pentateuch (Exod. xxii. 16. Deut. xx. 7; xxii. 23, 25, 27, 28; xxviii. 30.), and 2 Sam. iii. 14; "in," rather "with" "righteousness," and so in the other cases; the Lord God condescends to give a dowry in His betrothal, and that, His own glorious nature and His own holy attributes, so far as they may be imparted to man. These are also threefold; 1, "righteousness" and "judgment," its manifestation; 2, "loving-kindness," shewn in perpetual "mercies;" and finally, "faithfulness," whereby the unchangeableness of all this glory of God is given to man to replace his own lightness and vanity, and unstableness through sin.

20. Note, on the other hand, the one active power of the "betrothed" soul, over against all these gifts of her God. She now "knows" Him; "knows, yea follows on," unceasingly, "to know the Lord," ch. vi. 3; knows Him by ever growing love.

HOSEA, II.

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, ^h I will hear, saith the LORD, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth ;

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^h Zech. 8. 12.

22 and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil ; ⁱ and they shall hear Jezreel.

ⁱ ch. 1. 4.

23 And ^k I will sow her unto me in the earth ; ^k and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy ; and I ^m will say to *them which were* not my people, Thou *art* my people ; and they shall say, *Thou art* my God.

^k Jer. 31. 27.
Zech. 10. 9.

ⁱ ch. 1. 6.

^m ch. 1. 10.
Zech. 13. 9.
Rom. 9. 26.
1 Pet. 2. 10.

21—23. Lastly, as the covenant of peace and love and the great betrothal has been expressed in three verses, beginning with "In that day;" so there follow, in three verses, with the same beginning, the blissful consequences. God's "answer" (this is a better rendering than "hear") of mercy shall knit together what has been discovered. There is life, quickening life, penetrating now a regenerated universe. A perfect harmony unites earth and heaven. A stream of prayer and intercession mounts upward from below; a stream of grace is ever descending from the throne of God. God will hear and answer the longing of all creation; He will answer the cry of "the heavens" for rain, for which the earth thirsts; the earth with her revived fertilizing power will answer the expectant fruits of the ground, they, "the seed of God," waiting to burst forth. And that seed, the true Israel, shall be sown throughout the earth; and Jew and Gentile redeemed and finding mercy, shall become My one people, and I their One, their only God; I in them, they in Me. Comp. Zech. viii. 12: "The 'seed' shall be prosperous; the 'vine shall give her fruit, and 'the earth' shall give her increase, and 'the heavens' shall give their dew and I will cause the remnant of 'this people to possess all these things.'" Ver. 13: "And it shall come to pass, as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and 'house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing. Ch. x. 6: "I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the 'house of Joseph . . . for 'I have mercy' upon them: and they shall be 'as though I had not cast them off, for I am the Lord their God, and 'will hear' them."

22. "Jezreel," here, "God sows," or "seed of God." Hence in ver. 23, it follows immediately, "I will sow" her "in the earth," i. e. the whole earth, not merely in her own land. Note, "*the earth*" too is thrice repeated emphatically. It too is redeemed, sanctified, betrothed, raised up a "new earth," and blessed, as with the triple blessing of God; see Num. vi. 24—26.

CHAPTER III.

Israel's long waiting in desolation, and her restoration to her God.

INTRODUCTION.

This chapter has many difficulties, both as to the interpretation of particular verses, as 1, 2, and as to its exact relation, as a whole, to the

CHAPTER III.

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1 *By the expiation of an adulteress, 4 is shewed the desolation of Israel before their restoration.*

^a ch. 1. 2.

^b Jer. 3. 20.

² Heb. of
grapes.

THEN said the LORD unto me, ^a Go yet, love a woman beloved of *her* ^b friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons ² of wine.

preceding two. But, plainly, it follows the same order as they; first the sin, ver. 1; then the punishment, vv. 3, 4; then the restoration, ver. 5. Dr. Pusey says, "This prophecy is a sequel to the former, and so relates to Israel "after the coming of Christ, in which the former prophecy ends." But the last part of chapter ii. goes beyond the first Advent, and points not only to that, but to a greater consummation. Our chapter seems to describe a separate part of the final "restitution," and the preparation for it, in reference to Israel after the flesh; -namely their history in and from their first dispersion, through all these centuries, up to the present time (so Dr. Pusey also), and even to the end. Note, that in the whole of the second prophecy (ch. ii.), though Israel's sin is described, the name of "Israel" is never mentioned, and the end both of the first and of the second chapter applies, we know (Rom. ix. 24—26.), to the Church of Jews and Gentiles. But, in this third chapter, the historical Israel again appears by name.

Israel, corrupted by idolatry, is, as a people, cast off; yet for a remnant, for individuals there is hope. Love her still, says the good God to His prophet, for she is thy wife. Buy her back at a price; buy her with "barley," as in that old offering for jealousy, but keep her apart, as in widowhood. Long days and years let her wait and yearn, weaned from her sin, but not restored to her place of favour and honour, and wait thou for her. For this is her appointed portion. She must be homeless, helpless; no more a nation, no more a church; with no king to rule, no priest to make atonement, or to "enquire" for her of her God. But then she shall put off her old sins; no "image" shall she set up; in "no lying divination" shall she trust. And after the long wandering, and the long aching void, the children of Israel shall be turned to their Lord, and shall "rejoice in their king," and their king shall be "My servant "David," and their Lord sought for, for Himself, and for His exceeding "goodness."

This prophecy is still acted out before our own eyes, and is wonderfully, and to the letter, fulfilled. The bush has long burned, but it is not consumed. Israel dwells alone, and is not reckoned among the nations. There it stands; apart from the heathen, apart from the Mohammedan, and apart, alas, from Christ; its intellect very clear, and keen, and strong; its heart, faint, yet feverish; the ancient people of God, but denying His Son; free from many an old, many a modern error, but blinded still before the only Truth.

1. Mark the iteration of "love" in this verse. Here again we have the contrast between the false and the true. The love of God for man is the

HOSEA, III.

2 So I bought her to me for fifteen *pieces* of silver, and *for* an homer of barley, and an ²half homer of barley :

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3 and I said unto her, Thou shalt ^cabide for me many days ; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for *another* man : so *will* I also *be* for thee.

² Heb.
letheck.
^c Deut. 21. 13.

love of one "very near," called here "friend" or "lover" (comp. Song of Sol. v. 16.) ; it is tender from the first ; it overlasts neglect, ingratitude, defiant choice of idol of world and flesh, in contempt of Him. Think of His love, in its purity, in its "height and depth." While man all the time (in the original it is, "and *they*," emphatic, "are looking to other gods, and loving," &c.) is seeking only the sweetnesses of vanity, "dried cakes of grapes," so probably we should render "**flagons of wine,**" "clusters" soon to be found "bitter" (comp. Deut. xxxii. 32.), instead of the "good wine" "kept to the last." "**Yet**" marks here a later time than in the beginning of the second chapter . . . "**A woman**" doubtless the same "Gomer," as "the friend" is the prophet. These "cakes" apparently are some special dainties ; the word occurs besides only in 2 Sam. vi. 19, and the parallel 1 Chron. xvi. 3, and Song of Sol. ii. 5 : "Stay me with 'flagons,' comfort me with apples."

2. The wife is "bought back." It is not the word used for the great "Redemption," which is in Christ, but does it point to it? Again is there a contrast between "the wheat," which with "wine" and "oil" is the refreshment of the new "betrothed" (ch. ii. 22.), and the coarser "barley," twice mentioned, as for emphasis, upon which Israel must feed in her long bereavement ; even as "horse and mule" (whose food it was, comp. 1 Kings iv. 28.), "which have no understanding" (Ps. xxxii. 9.). "Barley" too was the offering of jealousy in the case of a wife (Num. v. 15.).

"fifteen pieces of silver, and a homer," &c. It is supposed that this may be a payment for maintenance, given to the wife on her recovery. "Thirty" shekels was paid for injury done to a man or maid-servant (Exod. xxi. 32.) ; the same is a woman's "valuation" (Lev. xxvii. 4.). Joseph is sold for twenty pieces of silver (Gen. xxxvii. 28.). The price in the text, therefore, would be small, and denote the low value to which Gomer had reduced herself.

3. Here we have the discipline, out of which, with the Holy Spirit of God to guide it, first, penitence, and at last peace may come.

"many days," just as in Num. xx. 15, "we have 'dwelt' in 'Egypt 'a long time'" (A. V.). Both here and in the next verse the words are put first, for emphasis. Long, long thy waiting, but it is "for Me" thy God. Thou shalt have no solace of earthly love, "*Thou shalt not be for a man, or husband,*" literally (that is, not united to thy husband, as before), "*and,*" literally, "*I also towards thee*" (not "for," it is a different preposition from the preceding). The word "towards" expresses regard, but distance also. A beautiful and touching picture of our Father's care, not only for blinded Israel, but for every erring soul. He is waiting to be gracious ; bending, as it were, tenderly over the child, who as yet will not return to Him ; watching and keeping it from

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d ch. 10. 3.

² Heb. a
standing,

or, statue,
or, pillar,

Isai. 19. 13.

^e Ex. 23. 6.

^f Judg. 17. 5.

^g Jer. 50. 4, 5.

ch. 5. 6.

^h Jer. 30. 9. Ezek. 34. 23, 24. & 37. 22, 24.

Mic. 4. 1.

ⁱ Isai. 2. 2. Jer. 30. 24. Ezek. 33. 8, 16. Dan. 2. 28.

4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days ^d without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without ²an image, and without an ^eephod, and *without* ^fteraphim :

5 afterward shall the children of Israel return, and ^gseek the LORD their God, and ^hDavid their king ; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the ⁱlatter days.

further and irretrievable fall and ruin, and so seeking to rekindle in it the longing to be close to Him for ever.

4. Literally, we might render it, "No king, no prince, no sacrifice," &c. No earthly power left ; "the Prince of God," now "the Scattered of God ;" no civil government (comp. ch. x. 3.) ; no longer availing "sacrifice," but still no more setting up "image, which the Lord thy God hateth" (Deut. xvi. 22.). In Hosea x. 1, 2, we have also the same word ; no "ephod," with "the breastplate of judgment and Urim and Thummin" (Exod. xxviii. 6, 15, 30.), whereby "answer may come from thy Lord" (comp. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6.) ; yet no thought anymore "to use divination," and "to consult with teraphim" (Ezek. xxi. 21 ; images used, apparently, in magical rites), in order to find out the dark, inscrutable future ; "hating them that regard lying vanities," yet not thyself, "trusting in the Lord" (Ps. xxxi. 6.). What a picture of Israel, as we see it before us now ! How like a wreck upon the waste waters ! Yet not a wreck utterly, but wonderfully preserved for a haven, in which it shall be at rest at last. Think we Christians with more grateful and adoring hearts, "how we are children of Zion," and may be "joyful in our King ;" how inestimable is that "Sacrifice" of our "High Priest," which He is ever pleading for us ; how we have in Him "the express image" of the glory of God ; how the Holy Spirit of truth and peace is given us, that we may "have a right judgment in all things." Compare Judges xvii. 5, 6 : "The man Micah had a house of gods, and made 'an ephod, and teraphim,' and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. In those days there was 'no king' in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

5. "Afterward shall the children of Israel return," . . . or, "be converted," as it is rendered (A. V. Ps. li. 13.) ; the word is closely like in letters and form to "they shall abide," verse 4, and there may be here, and ch. xiv. 7, where both are found again ("They that dwell" under His shadow, "shall return"), an intended, close relation between them. The very "abiding" helps, by God's grace, to bring about "the returning ;" the aching loneliness is turned at last into a yearning cry, "In Thee," oh, our God, "in Thee the fatherless findeth mercy" (ib. ver. 3.).

"They shall seek the Lord," i. e. as the word means, "earnestly," as before they had "sought" their lovers (ch. ii. 7.).

"and David their king," i. e. the Messiah. "The older Jews of every school explained this prophecy of Christ." Comp. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24.

"and fear towards the Lord, and towards his goodness," ex-

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CHAPTER IV.

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1 *God's judgments against the sins of the people, 6 and of the priests, 12 and against their idolatry. 15 Judah is exhorted to take warning by Israel's calamity.*

^a *Isai. 1. 18.
& 3. 13, 14.
Jer. 25. 31.
ch. 12. 2.
Mic. 6. 2.*

HEAR the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel : for the LORD hath a ^a controversy with

actly. It is either the description of a fear whereby they shall flee to Him for help from all that is to be feared ; or, "they shall tremblingly hasten to ;" "fearing to approach, but for the greater fear of "turning away" "His goodness." This is the one all-sufficient description of "the fulness of God," so awful, yet so winning. ("I had "fainted) unless I had believed to see 'the goodness' of the Lord in "the land of the living." "Oh, how great is 'Thy goodness,' which Thou "hast laid up for them that fear Thee." "How great is His 'goodness' "and how great is His beauty" (Pss. xxvii. 13 ; xxxi. 19. Zech. ix. 17.). It is a constant topic of the Psalms.

"in the latter days ;" i. e. the last dispensation of God, the time of the Gospel. The translation of the LXX. here is found in Heb. i. 1.

CHAPTER IV.

Israel is called to Judgment before God.

INTRODUCTION.

Israel's sin and punishment has been described in the first two chapters under a most striking figure ; henceforth it is to be exhibited in its bare deformity. The fourth chapter is closely related to the fifth and sixth, yet it is independent too. Though it does not admit of exact divisions, it may well be arranged as in A. V., vv. 1—5 ; 6—11 ; 12—14 ; 15—19.

Hear, Israel ; "the Lord hath a controversy with His people" (vv. 4, 6, 8, 9, 12, 14.) ; with "priest" (vv. (4.), 6, 9.) ; "prophet" (ver. 5.) ; "rulers" (ver. 18.) ; "yea, with all the inhabitants of the earth" (vv. 1, 3.). "Truth and mercy" are no more ; "there is no knowledge "of God" (vv. 1, 6 twice ; comp. vv. 10, 14.) ; and so all iniquity abounds ; "man's reproof is vain ;" only punishment remains ; it shall fall on all, "people and prophet ;" "mother and children ;" yea, the dumb animals, that serve man, with man shall also perish (vv. 1—5.).

There is no "knowledge" of God ; those even who should "keep it," reject it ; "priest" and "people," each degrades the other ; people prosper, and sin ; priest makes profit of that sin ; "like" in sin, they shall be "like" in punishment ; "the Lord unheeded," man's heart loses sense and feeling (vv. 6—11.). That hardened heart, left to itself, what does it do ? "It asks counsel," in its need, of "stock and staff ;" the shadow of its God it will not have ; it seeks instead "shadow of oak, "poplar, elm ;" it sinks deeper into sin ; "wife and daughter," home, all is defiled. And I, your God, no longer interfere now ; and "people, understanding lost, go headlong to ruin" (vv. 12—14.). Mark Judah, thy sister ; first, it was a visit to sacred places, but for a new and corrupt worship ; then, wanton defiance of My law ; then Israel sank down into idolatry, her very nature made one with it. See, she has liberty

Before
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b Jer. 4. 22.
& 5. 4.

the inhabitants of the land, because *there is* no truth, nor mercy, nor ^b knowledge of God in the land.

2 By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and

² Heb. *bloods*. ² blood toucheth blood.

now, . . . in the "wide" wilderness! "rest" now, . . . in loneliness, without God! Surely that "drink" is bitter now; that idol "love," "shame;" she that was light and wanton, is she not "caught and bound" now, the sport of the hurricane? In that day of her desolation what will be her remorse, her shame? (vv. 15—19.)

The keynote of the chapter is, perhaps, the consequence of the loss "of the knowledge of God" in aggravated sin and judicial blindness. Note here Hosea's characteristic sentences, short, vivid, forcible; so that they have become proverbs; especially vv. 7—9; the first two, each of seven words in the original; then vv. 11, 17, each only of five. Another feature of the style of Hosea is very observable here, his fondness for taking up a word from one verse into the next, or nearly the next; comp. vv. 1, 3; 5, 6; 7, 8; 8, 10; 11—14. Other instances are chs. vii. 11, 12; viii. 2, 3; 3, 5; 7, 8; 9, 10; &c. &c.

1—5. "God is here Judge Himself" (Ps. 1. 6.). He arraigns those who are still in His sight, "My people" (vv. 6, 8, 12.), "children of Israel." This familiar expression, found in chs. i. 10, 11; iii. 1, 4, 5, does not recur in Hosea, much as he dwells upon "Israel" and "Ephraim" in every chapter from this to the last. The sin is here described in general terms, yet very forcibly and definitely. It is a violation of the plainest Divine commandment; of those eternal laws which God wrote Himself for all mankind and for all time. "There is no truth," that "root" of all godliness, laid in the first four Commandments; and so "no mercy," the "good fruit," exhibited in all the rest.

1. Only by "mercy and truth" is iniquity purged, and by fear of the "Lord (men) depart from evil" (Prov. xvi. 6.).

2. "(It is)" literally, "swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery," i. e. nothing else (the last three words exactly as in Exod. xx. 13—15.), "they overflow" (or, burst all bounds), "and bloodsheds to bloodsheds join," as in one great inundation. Recollect only the history of thirty years in Israel, from the "six months'" reign of Zachariah to the end of that of Pekah, just given in outline, in 2 Kings xv. 8—31. Perhaps utter anarchy at times was added to constant revolution, and besides there were two Assyrian invasions. "Adultery" and uncleanness is the plague-spot everywhere and throughout the time, and by Hosea continually denounced; and so, perhaps, out of the order of the Decalogue, it is put here with all kinds of "bloodshed" last, for emphasis; of the other sins we hear ch. vii. 3: "They make the king glad with their wickedness, and the princes with their lies;" ch. x. 4: "They have spoken (mere) speeches, 'swearing falsely,' making covenant;" ib. 13: "ye have eaten the fruit of lies;" ch. xii. 1: "Ephraim . . . daily increaseth 'lies' and desolation;" then, ch. vi. 9: even "the priests," and in "company" too, "murder" in the way;

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3 Therefore ^c shall the land mourn, and ^d every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.

4 Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another: for thy people *are* as they ^e that strive with the priest.

5 Therefore shalt thou fall ^f in the day, and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night, and I will ² destroy thy mother.

6 ¶ ^g My people are ³ destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

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^c Jer. 4. 28.
& 12. 4.
Amos 5. 16.

& 8. 8.
^d Zeph. 1. 3.

^e Deut. 17. 12.

^f See Jer. 6.
4, 5. & 15. 8.

² Heb. *cut off*.

^g Isai. 5. 13.

³ Heb. *cut off*.

then ch. vii. 1: as of a common occurrence, "the thief" cometh in, "the troop of robbers spoil without."

3. It is one torrent of ungodliness; and the punishment shall be universal too. Zephaniah (ch. i. 2, 3.) imitates and expands our passage. "I will 'utterly' 'consume' all things from off the land, saith the Lord. "I will consume man and beast; I will 'consume' 'the fowls of the 'heaven,' 'and the fishes of the sea,' and 'the stumblingblocks' with 'the wicked.'" The language points perhaps to that used of "the Flood" (Gen. vii. 21; viii. 17.), and just after it (do. ix. 2.). "The beasts of the "field, and the fowls of heaven," with whom in the "day of restitution" there should again be "covenant" (ch. ii. 18.) now must suffer with man (see Joel i. 18—20.).

4. This verse is perhaps a parenthesis, and the connexion may be, Remember this is My "controversy;" it is "the day of My visitation" (ch. ix. 7.). "Only let not man 'hold controversy,' 'let not man re- "prove'" (not, as A.V.: comp. Amos v. 10, 13.); for thy people (comp. ver. 5, "Thou shalt stumble;") it is probably "the children of Israel" "addressed as *one man*), "are as they who hold 'controversy' with priest." The reference is to Deut. xvii. 12. Striking address, when their "priests" are immediately to be condemned! But touching reminder too of those past better days, when "the priest's lips" kept "knowledge," and they "sought" the law at his mouth (Mal. ii. 7.).

5. Now these priests "have departed out of the way, and have caused "many 'to stumble' at the law" (Mal. ii. 8.). So priest, "prophet," all "shall 'stumble' (same word) in their iniquity" (ch. xiv. 1.).

It is the lesson first to Israel, but to us all as well; God's law defied, point by point, statute by statute, flagrantly, and then, the punishment; one universal wail—one sweeping away again of all, at once, for ever; and what a change from that old riot! Not one voice any more of "rebuke;" deceiver and deceived alike confounded; a whole nation perishing, "cut off" (same verb, ch. x. 15.), "king" as well, "utterly, in a morning."

6—11. A new feature is added to the nation's sins; and the judgment is repeated more pointedly. And how has My law been utterly

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h ch. 13. 6.

i 1 Sam. 2. 30.

Mal. 2. 9.

Phil. 3. 19.

2 Heb.

*lift up their
soul to their
iniquity.*

k Isai. 24. 2.

Jer. 5. 31.

3 Heb.

visit upon.

4 Heb. *course*

to return.

l Lev. 26. 26.

Mic. 6. 14.

Hag. 1. 6.

m Isai. 28. 7.

See Eccles. 7. 7.

7 ^h As they were increased, so they sinned against me: ⁱ *therefore* will I change their glory into shame.

8 They eat up the sin of my people, and they ² set their heart on their iniquity.

9 And there shall be, ^k like people, like priest: and I will ³ punish them for their ways, and ⁴ reward them their doings.

10 For ¹ they shall eat, and not have enough: they shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase: because they have left off to take heed to the LORD.

11 Whoredom and wine and new wine ^m take away the heart.

forgotten? Those who were set "to keep it" themselves have "loathed "it, rejected it;" nay, very priests made the Lord's people to transgress (1 Sam. i. 24.), and now the salt itself is savourless. See how they corrupt, the one the other. People "increase;" wealth abounds; it is only "increase of sin." Priests look on upon that sin, and make their base gain out of it! These, remembrancers of God! "they lift up their "own heart," not to Him (the phrase is exactly the same as in Pss. xxv. 1; lxxxvi. 4; cxliii. 8.), but "to iniquity" (comp. ib. xxiv. 4.). Then in short, lightning sentences, comes the punishment. "I too will "forget you." "Your glory turn to shame;" "it shall be as with the "people, so with the priest;" Isa. xxiv. 2 is exactly the same; compare there vv. 1, 3; the curse ye shall have of that law which ye defy; "ye shall eat, and not be satisfied" (Lev. xxvi. 26.). Ye violate My first, My sacred law of marriage; ye commit whoredom, as if it was law and rule instead; and your home is blighted, ye dwindle away, die out, perish. Ye, of whom I said, "Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, "and thou shalt spread abroad" (same verb as "increase") "to the "west and east, and the north and the south" (Gen. xxviii. 14; comp. ib. xxx. 43.). Ye, whose fathers in Egypt, the more they were "afflicted" "the more they multiplied" (as "increased," ver. 7.), and "grew" (as "increase," ver. 10.). And then, a woe, just in five short words. Ah! there is worse punishment even than childless home. Your whoredom, your revelry, it eats out, dries up, turns cold and hard your very heart, dulls it, deadens it. The sin and the judgment of priest and people are here closely united; comp. Isa. xxviii. 7: "They also have erred "through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way" (same verb as "erred" here, ver. 12.), "the priest and the prophet have erred "through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine." And each has "for its glory," "shame." Compare, in the case of the priest, the striking comments (1 Sam. ii. 30. Mal. ii. 9.); of the people (Hosea ix. 11.); and of both (ch. x. 5.). Hosea revives, puts out in sharp, clear sentences the eternal moral law. Look at sin; wealth it makes woe; abundant population, greater weakness; intellect, foolishness; beauty, shame; your pride, your fall. Man defies his Maker; his heart becomes as the heart of beast (Dan. iv. 16.).

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12 My people ask counsel at their ⁿ stocks, and their staff declareth unto them: for ^o the spirit of whoredoms hath caused *them* to err, and they have gone a whoring from under their God.

13 ^p They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and elms, because the shadow thereof is good: ^q therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your spouses shall commit adultery.

14 ² I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your spouses when they commit adultery: for themselves are separated with whores, and they sacrifice with harlots: therefore the people *that* ^r doth not understand shall ³ fall.

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ⁿ Jer. 2. 27.
Hab. 2. 19.

^o Isai. 44. 20.
ch. 5. 4.

^p Isai. 1. 29.
& 57. 5. 7.
Ezek. 6. 13.
& 20. 28.

^q Amos 7. 17.
Rom. 1. 28.

² Or, *Shall I not, &c.*

^r ver. 1, 6.

³ Or, *be punished.*

12—14. Another stage of sin, and of punishment. "My people (so vv. 6, 8.) of its wood asks counsel;" each word and the order is emphatic. Those, who find My service a burden, a weariness, see! how they toil in their worship on every mountain top! Mark the sure defilement of that worship; what is all that beauty of "Nature," when "Nature's" God is disowned, denied? how is it idol first, then made, against its Creator, minister of impurity and shame! And when idolatry has been set up in the land, what becomes of "home?" But God is silent now; He "pleads" no more now; there is only ruin now.

12. "from under their God;" i.e. "from being under His authority;" comp. Ezek. xxiii. 5. "Aholah" (Samaria) "played the harlot when she was Mine" (lit. "under Me"); or, still more, "under His protection and shelter;" comp. Num. xiv. 9: "Their defence, properly, 'shadow' (as here) is departed from them, and the Lord is with us;" Ps. cxxi. 5: "The Lord is thy 'shade' (as here) upon thy right hand" (comp. also ch. xiv. 7.).

13. "oaks, poplars, elms." Perhaps there is a symbolical meaning here; as in ch. xiv. 5, 6, 8, different trees are named to represent the regeneration of Israel. "Oak" and "elm" (rather "Terebinth") are so called from their "strength," and are close akin to "El," God; "poplar," only mentioned besides in Gen. xxx. 37, possibly has the idea of "purifying" associated with it. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white (whence this word) as snow" (Iga. i. 18; so Ps. li. 7.). The irony may be continued; ye were under My shadow, your mighty God; now ye seek "strength" in "oaks," "purification" in "poplar," ye shelter yourselves under "trees." We have this play on words frequently in Hosea, as in other prophets.

14. "shall fall," or rather, "be cast headlong;" the word is only found besides in Prov. x. 8, 10. Possibly, see original, there is an alliteration between this, and the preceding word "doth not understand;" as if we said, "fool shall fall."

For God *not* to chasten, not to punish sin, this is the last woe (ch. ix. 12.). "Yea, woe also to them, when I depart from them!" "He who is

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ch. 9. 15.
& 12. 11.
Amos 4. 4.
& 5. 5.
* 1 Kin. 12. 29.
ch. 10. 5.
^u Amos 8. 14.
Zeph. 1. 5.
x Jer. 3. 6. &
7. 24. & 8. 5.
Zech. 7. 11. y Matt. 15. 14.

15 ¶ Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, *yet* let not Judah offend; ^s and come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to ^t Beth-aven, ^u nor swear, The LORD liveth.

16 For Israel ^x slideth back as a backsliding heifer: now the LORD will feed them as a lamb in a large place.

17 Ephraim *is* joined to idols: ^y let him alone.

“loved is scourged; he who is neglected is left to his sins” (so *St. Jerome*).
Comp. Heb. xii. 8.

15—19. And now “Judah” is warned by the example of “Israel;” Judah, who “stumbles” too “in iniquity” with her (ch. v. 5; comp. ib. 10, 12—14; vi. 4, 11.); with whom also “the Lord hath a con-
“roversy” (ch. xii. 2.), but whose judgment is not, like Israel’s, final, hopeless, without any relief (ch. vi. 11.). See the introduction to the chapter for a comment on this section. It is full of irony; yet perhaps not the indignant scorn of Amos, but sadness, rather, as would be natural to Hosea, is its characteristic.

15. Oh! go not you to Gilgal. It was indeed scene of the circumcision of your fathers, where the Lord by Joshua “rolled away the re-
“proach of Egypt from off you” (Josh. v. 9.). There, in the Lord’s land, you “kept” your first “passover” (ib. 10.); but there “all Israel’s
“wickedness” is now (comp. chs. ix. 15; xii. 11.). “Bethel” too, for “House of God,” is become “Beth-aven,” “house of iniquity” (comp. ch. x. 5, 8.). Nor think ye at “Beersheba” ye can now renew “the oath” of your father Abraham (Gen. xxi. 31.), “and there call on the Name of
“the Lord, the everlasting God” (ib. 33.). “Beersheba” is the “well
“of the oath,” or “swearing;” perhaps in the last clause of verse 15, the prophet refers to it. Comp. here especially Amos v. 5; viii. 14.

16. Too truly these “calves of Beth-aven” are symbols of Israel, who worships them; too surely “the broad way” she longed for is “waste
“place and desolate” (comp. Isa. v. 17.). *St. Jerome* explains the verse well. “As a heifer wanton, and casting off the yoke, so Israel slid
“away from the obedience of the Lord . . . Their captivity, in Assyria,
“and those wide plains of the Medes, is as the pasture of a flock of lambs
“in a spacious place.” The LXX. translate very rightly here, “a large
“place,” by the word found in *St. Matt.* vii. 13, “‘broad’ is the way
“that leadeth to destruction.”

17. Then in five (or four) words there is another of the wonderfully full and vivid sentences of Hosea. “Wedded to idols is Ephraim, leave
“him to his rest.”

“joined;” a very close union is meant, as of husband and wife. Comp. *Mal.* ii. 14, “she is thy ‘companion.’”

“idols;” the word often used by Hosea; it also means “toils,” “sorrows.” Hereafter Ephraim shall say, “What have I to do any
“more with idols?” (ch. xiv. 8.)

“let him alone,” or, “give him rest.” The word is constantly used of “the rest” which God gave His people in Canaan, as e.g. *Exod.* xxxiii. 14.

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18 Their drink ²is sour: they have committed whoredom continually: ^zher ³rulers *with* shame do love, Give ye.

19 ^aThe wind hath bound her up in her wings, and ^bthey shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices.

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² Heb.
is gone.
^z Mic. 3. 11.
& 7. 3.

³ Heb.
shields,
Jer. 2. 26.

Ps. 47. 9. ^a Jer. 4. 11, 12. & 51. 1.

^b Isai. 1. 29.

18. Rather, "turned is their drink; whoring they have whored" (the phrase is very emphatic in the original); "they have loved, yes, loved "shame, her noble ones." This is the view of the last clause, which must remain doubtful, taken by many commentators.

"drink;" a peculiar substantive, besides only Isa. i. 22; Nahum i. 10: and the verb only six times, and first, Deut. xxi. 20, which may be referred to: "They shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is "stubborn" (exactly same word as "backsliding" above), "and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a 'drunkard.'" Ver. 21: "And all the men of his city shall stone him . . . that he die . . . and Israel shall hear and fear."

"is sour," "turned as sour drink;" comp. Ps. xiv. 3: "They are all "gone aside;" exactly same word; "they are altogether become stink-"ing." The Hebrew word alliterates closely with that for "slideth back" (ver. 16.), and "hath bound up" (ver. 19.), and probably points to them.

"rulers," properly, "shields." Ps. xlvii. 9: "'the shields' of the "earth belong unto God." In the Psalms the Lord God is often called their "shield."

19. "The wind," &c., comp. ch. xiii. 15: "an east" (ch. xii. 1.) "wind "shall come; 'the wind' of the Lord shall come up from the wilderness," into which they have thrown themselves, "and his spring shall become "dry;" comp. ch. ix. 16: "Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up."

"they shall be ashamed," same as, "dried up," in the original.

"because of their sacrifices" (comp. ch. x. 6.): "Their sacrifices," at once the remembrancers of their apostasy, their uncleanness, their brutish folly.

Isaiah seems to imitate Hosea here, and to illustrate him; ch. i. 21: "How is the faithful city 'become a harlot!' . . . righteousness lodged "in it, but now 'murderers'" (same verb as "killing" ver. 2.). Ver. 22: "Thy silver is become dross, thy 'wine' (same as 'drink,' ver. 18.), "mixed with water." Ver. 23: "Thy princes are rebellious" (exactly as Hos. ix. 15, and as "backsliding" here, ver. 16.), "and 'companions' (s. of verb "joined," ver. 17.), "of thieves: every one 'loveth' gifts." Ver. 29: "They shall be ashamed" (exactly as ver. 19.) "of 'the oaks' "which ye have desired." . . . Ver. 30: "Ye shall be as an 'oak'" (same as "elm" ver. 13.) "whose leaf fadeth."

CHAPTERS V, VI.

The Sin of the Priests and Rulers, and their Judgment.

INTRODUCTION.

Chs. v, vi, though divided also in the Hebrew Bible from one another, should probably be considered as one; besides other links, which exist

Before
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CHAPTER V.

1 *God's judgments against the priests, the people, and the princes of Israel, for their manifold sins, 15 until they repent.*

HEAR ye this, O priests; and hearken, ye house of Israel; and give ye ear, O house of the king;

between the several chapters in Hosea, clearly vv. 14, 15, ch. v. are closely connected with ch. vi. 1, 2. In the fifth chapter the address is first, and it would seem chiefly, to the "priests" (vv. 1, 6, 7.); so in the sixth (vv. 6, 9.); but so probably in other verses of each chapter; see below. "The princes" (ch. v. 1; comp. ver. 10.), are also included; on the other hand, "the people," so often mentioned in ch. iv. are quite subordinated. Minute divisions of these two chapters have been attempted. It seems sufficient to make the following (chs. v. 1—7, 8—14, 15—vi. 3, 4—11.).

Now "the controversy" (ch. iv. 1.) has become "the judgment" (chs. v. 1, 11; vi. 5.); "hear it, ye priests, house of Israel, house of the king;" "it is for you;" ye should have been guides to My people, ye have been "snares;" nay worse, not preservers, but destroyers of life. Think ye "to go deep" and "hide" your counsel from Me, who "know you;" all the while "rebuke" you; see what your idol worship really is (vv. 1—3.), how ye are mastered by "a spirit of uncleanness," overcome with "pride" (vv. 4, 5.). In vain with your multiplied sacrifices "ye seek the Lord;" ye have been "faithless" to Him; Israel, Judah, alike; ye, and your "children, strange" to Him; your "iniquity" shall be your "fall." "Ye who consumed your portions shall be consumed." I have "freed Myself" from you (vv. 6, 7.). "Sound ye, then, the trumpet," not of "festival" any more, but of "alarm," on "lofty hill" and "high place." Desolation is the doom of you both; "oppressing" for the "oppressor" (vv. 8—11.); I waste you "as moth" first; vainly you salve your sore with remedies of your devising; soon, "I rend you as a lion," take you "away," and for ever (vv. 12—14.).

Then follows a wonderful prophecy, closely connected with what has just preceded; yet in the most general terms, with no mention of Israel or Judah. Time and affliction, under God's grace, must do their work; guilt must be felt, confessed; God must be acknowledged to be "the smiter, the healer." "After two days will He revive us, in the third He will raise us up" to life; life of ever-growing knowledge of Him, life in His light, in all the "refreshing" of His manifested presence (chs. v. 15; vi. 3.). But are "Ephraim, Judah" in this state of penitent hope and longing? "Mercy" and love in them is only a bright, passing cloud; how shall I win those unstable souls? "My kindness, My judgments, they are alike in vain. These that bring sacrifice after sacrifice, these very priests, they have only again and again broken My covenant;" "Gilead," (see below on this verse), it is only iniquity; "Shechem, a robbers' den;" "priests," are "murderers" (vv. 4—9.). "Horrible sight;" Israel, its worship, one mass of "defilement." For thee, too, oh, Judah, a "captivity" is prepared for thy sin; but for thee, there may be yet "a harvest" (vv. 10, 11.).

The repetitions (ch. vi. 7, 10, from ch. v.) mark the increased intensity

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for judgment is toward you, because ^aye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor.

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a ch. 6. 9.

of the sin; the examples (ch. vi. 8, 9.), make it more vivid, and seem to challenge denial; for similar repetitions, comp. chs. vii. 10; ix. 9; x. 9; xi. 6; xiii. 3, 4, 7; xiv. 1, and many others less full and developed.

1—7. There is now a special address to the priests, and subordinately to the rulers, of Israel. "The priests are probably the true, but corrupted, priests of God, who had fallen away to the idolatries with which they were surrounded, and by their apostasy had strengthened them." They had possessed and "rejected knowledge" (ch. iv. 6.). The stress of the description seems to lie in this. They had not utterly cast off the Lord God. Nay they even "sought" Him (ver. 6.). They kept feast day, "new moon" (ver. 7; comp. ch. ii. 11.); offered "sacrifices, and burnt offering" (ch. vi. 6.); but their heart was false, their worship was hypocrisy, "treachery" (ver. 7; ch. vi. 7.); nay, the "defilement" of a daring adultery (ver. 3; ch. vi. 10.). Very emphatically the prophet says again, "The spirit of whoredoms" (ver. 4; comp. ch. iv. 12.) is "in the midst of them" (better, "is within them," in their heart, as in Ps. lxii. 4; lxiv. 6.); "and they know not," i.e. do not, cannot "know the Lord" (ver. 4.). It seems strange, as it is "horrible" (comp. ch. vi. 10.), that God's own ministers should betray Him, insult Him, blaspheme Him. But we Christians live, as Israel lived before, though with infinitely less light of revelation, and less measure of grace, in a "spiritual" world, and there is, as "a Spirit of truth," so "a spirit of error" (1 St. John iv. 6.), and spiritual forces are the forces of mighty, living beings, penetrating, controlling, overmastering. Man must be "drawn" to his Saviour, or "he will fall into the snare of the Devil" (1 Tim. iii. 7.); and the fall of Hophni and Phinehas, the fall of Judas, must be hideous, in proportion to the light they reject, and the love they despise. Again, note how they who "have forgotten the Law of their God" (chs. iv. 6; ii. 13.) end by not "knowing the Lord." "Their doings will not suffer them to turn to their God" (so ver. 4 should be translated); much more, they of necessity " estrange them " (ver. 7; comp. ch. viii. 12.), raise up a barrier between Him and them, dull, destroy the very sense of His existence. So too our Lord taught the Jews (St. John vii. 28; viii. 55.). "To know God" is the fruit of His grace; it is accompanied with "righteousness and faithfulness" (ch. ii. 19, 20.); but sin follows sin; "pride" (ver. 5.), self-will, self-pleasing, intensifies the blindness of the soul. And Israel's "pride" was "palpable," inveterate; "I am a great people" (Josh. xvii. 14.). So they alter forms of religion, in spite of direct command of God. Why should Jerusalem give law to Samaria? They borrow "culture" from Egypt, splendour from Tyre (comp. ch. ix. 13.). And is not "pride" in man itself defiance of God? Is not its breath, sooner or later, "I will be like the Most High" (Isa. xiv. 14.). Says it not, at last, "I am God, I sit in the seat of God" (Ezek. xxviii. 2.); a God to myself. Christ is the "meek and lowly" One; Antichrist, "the lawless one," and the proud (2 Thess. ii. 4.).

1. "Mizpah." This is, perhaps, the scene of the covenant between

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2 And the revolvers are ^b profound to make slaughter, ² though I *have been* ³ a rebuker of them all.

^b Isai. 29. 15.

² Or, and, &c.

³ Heb. a correction.

^c Amos 3. 2.

^d Ezek. 23. 5,

&c.
ch. 4. 17.

⁴ Heb.

They will not give.

⁵ Or, *Their doings will not suffer them.*

3 ^c I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me: for now, O Ephraim, ^d thou committest whoredom, and Israel is defiled.

4 ⁴ ⁵ They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God: for ^e the spirit of whoredoms *is* in the midst of them, and they have not known the LORD.

5 And ^f the pride of Israel doth testify to his face:

^e ch. 4. 12. ^f ch. 7. 10.

Jacob and Laban (Gen. xxxi. 44—49.); it means, "Watch-tower" (so LXX. here). "It was in the mountainous part of Gilead" (Judges x. 17.). It became apparently a sanctuary (ib. xi. 11.); possibly, it is the place of the same name mentioned frequently in 1 Sam. vii. &c. "Samuel went in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and 'Mizpeh,' and "judged Israel in all these places" (comp. above chs. iv. 15, and xii. 4, 11.). "Tabor," perhaps "the lofty place," the mountain, in the east of the plain of Esdraelon. The particular allusions are now obscure to us; but the sense may be nearly, as in Micah iii. 1: "Hear, O heads of Jacob, "and ye princes of the house of Israel; is it not for you to know "judgment;" "but ye abhor judgment" (ib. ver. 9.). Comp. ch. ix. 8: "Should not 'the watchman' (verb of 'Mizpah') of Ephraim be with "my God; but the prophet is 'a snare' (as here) of a fowler in all his "ways." Note here the double remarkable alliteration in the original between "snare," "judgment," and "Mizpah."

2. The first clause is difficult. Probably it is, "And slaughter the "transgressors have deeply done;" or, "in slaughtering, transgressions "have they deeply done." "Slaughter" is a common word; it is used in Leviticus thirty-five times of "slaying" for sacrifice; of "slaying" men in Gen. xxii. 10. Num. xiv. 16. Comp. especially Isa. lvii. 5: "Enflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree, 'slaying'" (as here) "the children in the valleys;" and Ezekiel, in the two chapters where he imitates Hosea, remarkably, ch. xvi. 20: "Is this of thy "whoredoms a small matter?" (ver. 21.); "That thou 'hast slain' "My children" (see rest of verse); ch. xxiii. 39: "When 'they had "slain' their children to their idols, then they came the same day into "My sanctuary to profane it" (comp. also Hos. vi. 9, but there the word "murder" is different). Comp. ib. ver. 10 with ver. 3; Israel's false worship was in God's sight "whoredom."

"are profound." Comp. Isa. xxix. 15: "Woe to them 'that seek "deep'" (same word) "to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their "works are in the dark, and they say, who 'knoweth us;'" comp. ver. 3 here.

"a rebuker." "And I" (emphatic), all the while, "am a rebuke," (properly) "to them all." Comp.: "I am prayer" (Ps. cix. 4.); "I am "peace" (ib. cxx. 7.). My being, My every word, My whole intercourse with them, My revealed presence, My unseen, no less, is one living, perpetual "rebuke" to them.

5. "the pride of Israel." The original word, when used of man, is

therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them.

6^s They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the LORD; but they shall not find *him*; he hath withdrawn himself from them.

7 They have ^h dealt treacherously against the LORD: for they have begotten strange children: now shall ⁱ a month devour them with their portions.

8^k Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, *and* the trumpet

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§ Prov. 1. 28.
Isai. 1. 15.
Jer. 11. 11.
Ezek. 8. 18.
Mic. 3. 4.
John 7. 34.
h Isai. 48. 8.
Jer. 3. 20.
& 5. 11.
ch. 6. 7.
Mal. 2. 11.
i Zech. 11. 8.
k ch. 8. 1. Joel 2. 1.

almost always in a bad sense (it is used of God, Exod. xv. 7, and elsewhere), so, Lev. xxvi. 19; but especially in the prophets; we hear of the "pomp" (A.V.) of Babylon (Isa. xiv. 11.); "the pride" of Moab (ib. xvi. 6. Zeph. ii. 10.); of Tyre (Isa. xxiii. 9.); of Sodom (Ezek. xvi. 49.); of Egypt (ib. xxx. 6, 18; xxxii. 12.); of the Philistines (Zech. ix. 6.); of Assyria (ib. x. 11.); then, of Jacob (Amos vi. 8.); of Judah (Jer. xiii. 9.); of Israel (Ezek. xxxiii. 28.). Compare with ver. 5 the remarkable parallel of Isa. iii. 8, 9: "Jerusalem 'is ruined' (as 'fall' here) 'and Judah is fallen, because their tongue and 'their doings' (exactly as 'in ver. 4.) are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of His glory. The 'shew of their 'countenance doth witness against' them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they 'hide' it not" (as ver. 3 here). "Woe 'unto their soul, for they have rewarded evil unto themselves."

6. "with their flocks and their herds." Is this first clause a reminiscence of Exod. x. 9?

"to seek the Lord." "They do not" (really) "return to the Lord, 'nor 'seek' Him, for all this" (ch. vii. 10.). Vain the imagination, that we can serve the Lord God, in our own way, upon our own terms; vain the resolve, that we will repent, when *we* will! If "the Lord hath 'withdrawn Himself," what avail sacrifices, bitter tears, agony of remorse? "Seek the Lord while He may be found;" seek Him while He seeks thee.

7. "They have dealt treacherously," so ch. vi. 7, q.v. The word used once in the Pentateuch of "deceit to one betrothed" (Exod. xxi. 8.); compare it also in Jer. iii. 20 especially, and Mal. ii. 11.

"strange," as born in adultery; it is the word used of "the heathen," chs. vii. 9; viii. 7.

"a month." Rather, perhaps, "new moon," as A. V. translates the word in ch. ii. 11; the beginning of every month having its burnt offering (Num. xxviii. 11, 14.), "new moon" would well represent all their ceremonial system; and, so, "their portions," better coheres; this is used (Lev. vi. 17.) of the "priest's 'portion' of the offerings;" instead of "eating" them (ib. ver. 18.), they shall be "eaten up" with them.

8—14. And now "the judgment" (ver. 1.) is at hand; Gibeah, Ramah, Bethel, scenes of your shameful worship, are become the scenes of your terror and your flight. The "trumpet" that called to foul festival, shall call fugitives to rally together. "Have I not" long ago "made known that which shall surely be?" Am I not "the 'Faithful' God, in judgment, as in mercy (comp. especially Deut. vii.

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in Ramah : ¹ cry aloud at ^m Beth-aven, ⁿ after thee,
O Benjamin.

¹ Isai. 10. 30.
^m Josh. 7. 2.
ch. 4. 15.
ⁿ Judg. 5. 14.

9 Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke :
among the tribes of Israel have I made known that
which shall surely be.

^o Deut. 19. 14.
& 27. 17.

10 The princes of Judah were like them that
^o remove the bound : *therefore* I will pour out my
wrath upon them like water.

9, 10, where "the Faithful" God is, as "sure" here). "Thou shalt be
"a desolation," I said (Deut. xxviii. 37.); "Cursed be he that 're-
'moveth' his neighbour's 'landmark,'" I said (ib. xxvii. 17.); "Thou
"shalt be only 'oppressed and crushed' always" I said (ib. xxviii. 33.).
All this doom thou wast forewarned of; thou hast brought all on
thyself. Thou wouldest obey "the commandment" of man, Mine
thou wouldest disobey. How shall thy proud might waste away as a
garment, "moth"-eaten! Vain thy attempts to stay the inward decay,
which I work, Who art thy Waster! Thou seekest in thy distress help
of Egypt, of Assyria. There is one at hand mightier than they. I will
burst on thee as "lion" on his prey. "See now that I, even I, am He,
"and there is no God with Me; I kill and I make alive; I wound, and
"I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand" (Deut.
xxxii. 39.). The references to the book of Deuteronomy in this passage
are, surely, beyond dispute. What aggravation to our remorse to see and
feel, at last, that the Scripture of Truth, which we rejected, warned us of
every judgment that we suffer; put forth, before us, as in a picture, our
sins before they were done, if haply, we would be persuaded, and only
not do them.

8. "the trumpet;" different, in the original, from the word in ch. viii.
1; only here in Hosea; never in other prophets; once in Ps. xviii. 6,
joined, as here, with "cornet;" in every other case used in religious
service, or by priests; so, most probably, here: comp. especially Num.
x. 9, 10.

"Gibeah" (chs. ix. 9; x. 9.); mentioned with "Ramah" also Judges
xix. 13; and Isa. x. 29, a passage closely related to this; "Ramah is
"afraid, Gibeah of Saul is fled." It is a picture of "the enemy round
"about the land" (Amos iii. 11.). From "Beth-aven" (Bethel), in the
border of Benjamin, the cry would arise, "Benjamin, (the foe is) after
"thee" (the phrase is used here of Benjamin *pursued*, as it is originally
(Judges v. 14.) of Benjamin *pursuing*); from Gibeah and Ramah he
would burst upon Judah. But "Gibeah" means "hill" (as ch. iv. 13,
q.v.); Ramah, "highplace" (as in Ezek. xvi. 24, 25.). So there may be a
twofold reference here, and a bitter irony. "Blow ye the trumpet,"
still, ye priests, in "the hills" and "highplaces" of your idolatry, and
in your "new moons" (Ps. lxxxix. 3.); "in the 'house of' your vanity;"
soon shall the Avenger "blow it" in pursuit of you (comp. ch. x. 8.).

10. "remove the bound." This may have a literal, still more a
moral sense. When Ephraim lay desolate "the princes of Judah"
would enter upon, at least greedily long for, its vacant lands. But they
had removed the distinction between right and wrong, God and Paal,
even as early as the time of Jehoshaphat.

HOSEA, V.

11 Ephraim *is* ^p oppressed *and* broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after ^q the commandment.

12 Therefore *will* I *be* unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah ^r as ^s rottenness.

13 When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah *saw* his ^s wound, then went Ephraim ^t to the Assyrian, ^u and sent ^v to king Jareb: yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound.

14 For ^x I *will be* unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: ^y I, *even* I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue *him*.

15 I will go *and* return to my place, ^z till ^a they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: ^b in their affliction they will seek me early.

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^p Deut. 28. 33.

^q 1 Kin. 12. 23.

Mic. 6. 16.

^r Prov. 12. 4.

^s Or, a worm.

^t Jer. 30. 12.

^u 2 Kin. 15. 19.

ch. 7. 11.

& 12. 1.

^v ch. 10. 6.

^w Or, to the

king of Jareb: or, to

the king

that should

plead.

^x Lam. 3. 10.

ch. 13. 7, 8.

^y Ps. 50. 12.

^z Heb. till

they be

guilty.

^a Lev. 26. 40,

^b Ps. 78. 34.

41. Jer. 29. 12, 13. Ezek. 6. 9. & 20. 43. & 36. 31.

11. "the commandment," apparently of Jeroboam, "about the calves." Ephraim here, in the "judgment" of God, receives as he has done in judgment; he that "oppressed" the poor, that "crushed" the needy (Amos iv. 1.), is himself "oppressed" and "crushed."

12. "moth, rottenness." Striking image of the secret, but certain decay of Israel under the second Jeroboam, and Judah, when it had been "strengthened" by Uzziah. In six short words all that pride, all that sin, is swept away; so swift shall the Lord's work be! Note, how here, as elsewhere in Holy Scripture, the Lord God condescends to use of Himself figures utterly unworthy of His Majesty.

13. "Jareb," only here, and ch. x. 6; perhaps, "adversary," "avenger." Menahem, who first had any dealing with the king of Assyria, was by name "Comforter;" he only brought a fresh burden upon the land (2 Kings xv. 19, 20.). Ahaz "sent" to Tiglath-Pileser . . . to "save" him; (ib. xvi. 7.). He "came and distressed him, but strengthened him" (so Chron. xxviii. 20.). The Lord is the only "Healer;" four times (chs. vi. 1; vii. 1; xi. 3; xiv. 4.), Hosea so describes him. "I am the Lord" "that 'healeth' thee" (Exod. xv. 26.), was His name to them from the first; but man fallen from God knows Him not as "healer" (ch. xi. 3.), and in his pain and misery, he turns to the veriest vanity, in place of Him; to Egypt, itself full "of sickness," to Assyria, who will only "war" and "contend" with him.

v. 15—vi. 3. In this paragraph, the first two verses are closely and verbally connected together, and with ch. v. 13, 14; again, "acknowledge their offence" is the exact word already used of Judah (ch. iv. 15. A.V. "offend"); it will be used of Israel (ch. x. 2. A.V. "found faulty"); (ch. xiii. 1. A.V. "he offended"); and it is found, as so many just before, in the Book of the Law. The reference seems to be, therefore, to a restoration and conversion of Israel and Judah, that is, of the "remnant" in them. As to this sense, the parallel will be in ch. iii. 5. There, "after 'many' 'days' of bereavement and desolation, 'the children of Israel return and

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CHAPTER VI.

1 An exhortation to repentance. 4 A complaint of their untowardness and iniquity.

^a Deut. 32. 39.
¹ Sam. 2. 6.
Job 5. 18.
ch. 5. 14.
^b Jer. 30. 17.
^c 1 Cor. 15. 4.

COME, and let us return unto the LORD : for ^a he hath torn, and ^b he will heal us ; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.
2 ^c After two days will he revive us : in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.

“seek’ the Lord their God ;” here, after “He has gone away” (“with-drawn Himself ;” ch. v. 6.), “out of the depths” of a long, wasting “affliction,” “they long for His face” again, as for “morning-dawn.” “O God, Thou art my God : early will I seek Thee (exactly) ; my “soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee, in a dry and weary “land, where no water is” (Ps. lxxiii. 1.). Comp. also Isa. xxvi. 9, where the same verb is found. Even so far the picture is deeply touching, and true to the life. The merciful Lord “hides the light of His “countenance,” that “the affliction,” the bitterness of sin, the loss of grace, may be felt, and as long as the soul “keeps silence,” there is only the “agony, day and night,” “the dryness” as of decay and death ; at last, by His unseen hand, the hard heart is broken, and the tongue unloosed ; “I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord, and Thou “forgavest the iniquity of my sin” (Ps. xxxii. 3—5.). On the other hand ver. 2 of ch. vi. finds in one, and one only, event, its correspondence and its key. The “two days” of death and the grave, and the third of the resurrection, have their fulfilment in Christ, in His work, and in Him, perfectly. So, very fitly, *all through this section* (as in the other grand and parallel prophecy of Hosea xiii. 14.), the names of “Ephraim and Judah,” mentioned just before and after (ch. v. 13, 14 ; vi. 4.), here fall away. The great words free themselves from every limitation, and carry us at once to the resurrection of our Lord, and of redeemed man in and with Him, and so onward to the life eternal. Then, being “healed,” we shall be “revived ;” comp. Ps. xxx. 2, 3 for the same order of the work of grace ; “raised up,” “we shall live in “His sight,” “behold His face in righteousness” (Ps. xvii. 15 ; comp. 1 St. John iii. 2.) ; “know, follow on to know” (so it should be translated) “the Lord” (ch. ii. 20. 1 Cor. xiii. 12.). That life in Him, a “fulness of joy” (Ps. xvi. 11.) ; that knowledge, at once a calm, perfect rest, and a holy, ceaseless activity. No doubt, any more ; no questioning, any more (comp. St. John xvi. 23.) ; but fresh and fresh illumination ; “in Thy light shall we see light” (Ps. xxxvi. 9.). The obvious objection that the words, “after two days . . . raise us up,” are not true of us, is done away in the New Testament. Christ risen raised us. The members are one with the Head. “The Apostle uses these selfsame “words of the Prophet, ‘God hath quickened us together with Christ “ . . . and hath raised us up together,” &c. As in the Gospel, the resurrection unto grace and unto glory, pass the one into the other. The event alone could explain such a prophecy, but its words might rouse and sustain a hope.

HOSEA, VI.

3 ^dThen shall we know, *if* we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared ^eas the morning; and ^fhe shall come unto us ^gas the rain, as the latter *and* former rain unto the earth.

4 ¶ ^hO Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your ²goodness *is* ⁱas a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.

5 Therefore have I hewed *them* ^kby the prophets; I have slain them by ¹the words of my mouth: ³and thy judgments *are as* the light *that* goeth forth.

6 For I desired ^mmercy, and ⁿnot sacrifice; and the ^oknowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

Mic. 6. 8. Matt. 9. 13. & 12. 7. ⁿ Ps. 50. 8, 9. Prov. 21. 3. Isai. 1. 11. ^o Jer. 22. 16. John 17. 3.

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d Isai. 54. 13.
e 2 Sam. 23. 4.
f Ps. 72. 6.
g Job 29. 23.
h ch. 11. 8.
i Or, *mercy*,
or, *kindness*.
j ch. 13. 3.
k Jer. 1. 10.
& 5. 14.
l Jer. 23. 29.
m Heb. 4. 12.
n Or, *that*
thy judgments
might
be, &c.
o 1 Sam. 15.
22.
Eccles. 5. 1.
John 17. 3.

3. This is a wonderful verse; every word indicates the Lord Christ. He is the *Morning Dawn*, from the womb "of the morning," close cognate word, "Thou hast the dew of thy youth" (Ps. cx. 3.). As *prepared* in the eternal counsel of God; as "ready" to burst forth, as "surely" overspreading the world with light; so in the Psalm of the resurrection (lvii. 7, 8.); "My heart is fixed (exactly as 'prepared' here), O God, 'my heart is 'fixed'; I will sing and give praise. Awake up, my glory . . . 'I will awake *early* ('in the dawn');" unlike "the goodness" of man which "is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew, it goeth away" (ver. 4.). Then His *going forth* is "from everlasting," and "from 'Bethlehem' too, (Micah v. 2.); yea, and out of the chamber of the grave, as "the Bridegroom" (see Ps. xix. 5.); and now, unceasingly, "His going forth" is from the end of the heaven, and His circuit unto "the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof" (ib. 6.); "And *He shall come*" to us, the standing word for the Advent of Christ; "until Shiloh come" (Gen. xlix. 10.). "Behold, your God 'will come' with vengeance, even God with a recompense; 'He will come' and 'save you' (Isa. xxxv. 4; so xl. 10; lix. 20.); again (Hosea x. 12.), (a verse much to be compared with ours), "it is time to seek the Lord, 'till 'He come,' and 'rain' (as 'former-rain' here) righteousness upon 'you' (so also Ezck. xxi. 27; Mal. iii. 1.) "as the rain;" compare the striking and verbal parallel, Joel ii. 23; also Deut. xxxii. 2; Ps. lxxii. 6; and how truly to the Christian is the promise fulfilled, both of the "early and the later rain;" "Grace for grace" (St. John i. 16.); grace, "quickenings" first, and then still "renewing and restoring."

4—11. What a contrast is Ephraim! ("that dear son," Jer. xxxi. 20.); Judah (My "chosen," My "beloved," Ps. lxxviii. 68.)! All their "love," all their fair promise "passing away, as in a moment." "Therefore" (I used another way with them, . . . chastisement); "I hewed" that stony heart by My prophets; "I slew them by the words of My mouth." The phrases are unusually strong, and apparently unique. That "arm of the Lord," no longer sheltering them, but now as "it" "that 'cut' (same verb) Rahab" (Isa. li. 9.). "The words of My mouth" (the same exactly, Deut. xxxii. 1.); no longer "dropping as

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7 But they ²like men ^phave transgressed the covenant: there ^qhave they dealt treacherously against me.

² Or,
like Adam,
Job 31. 33.

8 ^rGilead is a city of them that work iniquity, and is ^spolluted with blood.

^p ch. 8. 1.
^q ch. 5. 7.
^r ch. 12. 11.

9 And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so

^s Or, cunning for blood.

“rain, distilling as the dew” (ib. 2.), but “as arrows in the heart of “the king’s enemies” (Ps. xlv. 5.); yea, “slaying them,” as with sharp sword” (comp. Isa. xi. 4; and especially Jer. xxiii. 29.). And I, Who would have “brought forth” thy righteousness “as the light” (Ps. xxxvii. 6.), now make “Thy judgments a light,” that all must see, all own to be My hand, and “that I have done it!” And what did “I “desire?” “Love of Me, love of man.” And thou thoughtest only of “sacrifice,” powerless without love, without love profane. And “they” (emphatically), these chosen ones, probably these “priests,” immediately to be spoken of again (ver. 9.), will be as “Adam,” as “man falling;” they break “My covenant,” defiantly, give Me falsehood for My truth, treachery for My faithfulness. There was a special “covenant” between the Lord God and the priests (comp. Num. xxv. 12, 13; and Mal. ii. 5, 8, especially). Is it not so? “Gilead,” that scene of “witness” between Me and Jacob and Laban (Gen. xxxi. 46—50.); Gilead, wherein I placed “city of refuge,” “that the slayer might flee thither, which “should kill his neighbour unawares” (Deut. iv. 42, 43.), what have ye made it (ye priests)? the “city of workers of iniquity” (comp. ch. xii. 11.); “of treachery, of blood?” At “Shechem” too, that “other “city of refuge” (Josh. xx. 7.), whither the way should be “prepared” (Deut. xix. 3.), “clear, open,” without let or hindrance to the guiltless fugitive, to save his life, ye priests have obstructed the way, to rob and destroy;” priests, “a band of robbers, lying in ambush!” priests, “murderers!” priests, “committing lewdness!” sight of horror! revolting sight! there, in such holy places as these; there, and by them, priests and ministers of God, “Israel is defiled.”

Yes, Judah! and for thee too, “My people,” what “a captivity” is at hand; though for thee there is “a return,” for thee, after sore suffering, relief at last.

7. “there have they dealt treacherously.” “There, to Israel, “was not only Bethel, or Dan, or Gilgal, or Mizpah, or Gilead, or any “or all of the places, which God had hallowed by His mercies, and “they had defiled . . . It was every spot of the Lord’s land which “they had polluted.” It is “there, there, there.” So again, in (ver. 10.).

8. “polluted.” Some translate, “tracked’ with blood,” i.e. “stained “with the bloody footsteps” of those “workers of iniquity;” but it may be, “‘treacherous’ (deceitful), with blood,” as in the only other place, where this adjective is used (Jer. xvii. 9.), we have the verb in ch. xii. 3, “he took” his brother “by the heel.”

9. A very hard verse. Perhaps, in the order of the Hebrew, “and as “there wait for a man troops of robbers,” so “the company (or conspiracy)

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¹ the company of priests murder in the way ² by consent: for they commit ³ lewdness.

10 I have seen ⁴ an horrible thing in the house of Israel: there is ⁵ the whoredom of Ephraim, Israel is defiled.

11 Also, O Judah, ⁶ he hath set an harvest for thee, ⁷ when I returned the captivity of my people.

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¹ Jer. 11. 9.
Ezek. 22. 25.
ch. 5. 1, 2.

² Heb. with
one shout-
der, or, to
Shechem.

³ Or,
enormity.

⁴ Jer. 5. 30.

⁵ ch. 4. 12,
13, 17.

⁶ Jer. 51. 33.
Joel 3. 13.

Rev. 14. 15.

⁷ Ps. 126. 1.

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CHAPTER VII.

1 A reproof of manifold sins. 11 God's wrath against them for their hypocrisy.

THEN I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the

“of the priests in the way murder, towards Shechem.” The rendering of A. V. “by consent” seems to be wrong. Shechem would, not unnaturally, be mentioned with “Gilcad” (see above). Again, “Gilcad” and “Shechem” are, one on the east, the other on the west of the Jordan (comp. ch. v. 1, “Mizpah and Tabor”), to mark the universality of the corruption.

“lewdness.” The word is only here in Hosea, constantly in the Pentateuch. The places mentioned (vv. 8, 9.), the reference to “the covenant,” the legal words, “lewdness,” “defiled,” all lead our thought to the first “youth” of Israel, her “espousal” to her God (Jer. ii. 2.). And shall the land be a Canaan again? Of old “it was defiled” (Lev. xviii. 27.) by the heathen. Israel is the heathen now.

11. This is also a very difficult verse. It may be a condensed expression for this: “Thou too, Judah, shalt be punished (‘captivity’)” (above, ver. 4: “Ephraim and Judah” seem to be alike in their sin; comp. also ch. v. 5.): but “for thee, My people,” though I define not the time, there shall be a harvest of joy, when I restore thee.

CHAPTER VII.

“Like people, like king;” Ephraim rebels against God, calls to Egypt for help, and by Egypt is derided.

INTRODUCTION.

These two mottoes may characterise this chapter, which has its links with chs. v, vi, and viii. The first section seems, like the last, to develop the general description of the national sin; here, of the five transgressions, named in ch. iv. 2, “swearing,” “lying,” “stealing,” “killing,” “committing adultery,” all but the first are referred to, and except “killing,” verbally. But now not only some of these sins are detailed, but the actors and the place are brought, as in a picture, before us. Twice we hear of “the king” (vv. 3, 5.); a specimen, only the most contemptible and base of “all their kings” (ver. 7.); thrice “of the princes” (vv. 3, 5, 16.). “Samaria” too is first introduced, with “its wickednesses” (ver. 1.).

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² Heb. *evils*.

^a ch. 5. 1.
& 6. 10.

³ Heb.
strippeth.

⁴ Heb.
say not to.

^b Jer. 17. 1.

^c Ps. 9. 16.
Prov. 5. 22.

^d Ps. 90. 8.

^e Rom. 1. 32.

² wickedness of Samaria: for ^a they commit falsehood; and the thief cometh in, *and* the troop of robbers ³ spoileth without.

2 And they ⁴ consider not in their hearts *that* I ^b remember all their wickedness: now ^c their own doings have beset them about; they are ^d before my face.

3 They make the king glad with their wickedness, and the princes ^e with their lies.

"Samaria" is the capital, over against Jerusalem, comp. Micah i. 1, 5. There the worship of the calves (chs. viii. 5, 6; x. 5.) finds really its centre, its splendour; there the king not reigns, but riots; there, from "the mountains" that overhang it, you may see the mad "turmoil in the midst thereof, the oppressions in the midst thereof." Those who do not any longer "know to do right, there store up violence and robbery in their palaces" (Amos iii. 9, 10.). There, in that "crown of pride," are "the drunkards of Ephraim" (Isa. xxviii. 3.), just as they appear in this portion of Hosea's prophecy. The Lord God is again introduced as longing to "heal" (comp. on ch. vi. 1.); but so only the "wickedness" (twice, vv. 2, 3; comp. ver. 1.) of the doomed people "is laid bare;" it is "within" and "without;" everywhere there is "deceit," everywhere "falsehood;" "violence" to the poor (ver. 1.), "violence" soon to visit the highest (ver. 7.). Wickednesses of every kind are their homage to their king; their own "besetting" companions, their witnesses, "going before them to judgment" (vv. 1—3.); then follows, a lifelike scene, which may have been an actual incident in the court of a Zachariah. It is king's high day. "All are adulterers;" the heart of all "like an oven;" one evil one, more subtle than the rest, lays the fuel, and the "heaven" works. "Princes are inflamed with wine;" "king" trifles with "scorners;" there is a "lying in wait" in the night. "In the morning the fire" bursts forth; "the king," as after him his successors, perishes. In that crowd of maddened sinners, "not a voice cries for help to its God" (vv. 4—7.). Whence comes this blindness of God's people? "Ephraim has mixed himself with the heathen;" his whole nature spoilt, his strength exhausted, "he knows not" what he has become, yea, he is "proud" of his shame. Ruin is hanging over them; they think not of succour from God; they can have it "from Egypt," "from Assyria" (vv. 8—11.). "My net" is closing in upon them. Against Me, their "redeemer," their "chastener;" against Me, Who gave them their "strength," they rebel, they rage. I pronounce their destruction; and Egypt, even Egypt, in whom they trusted, shall mock at their fall.

1—3. I sought "to heal," and their "iniquity" burst out more violently. My truth exasperated that world of "falsehood." My mercy set "fraud" and "rapine" more eagerly to work. See Israel in its mad career. There is no sense, no feeling now (comp. Eph. iv. 19.), that "I remember every sin." Yet these sins are fastening round them, like deadly foes. One by one they come up "before Me." "In the light of "My countenance" (Ps. xc. 8.) "they endure" (the last two clauses of

4 ^fThey are all adulterers, as an oven heated by the baker, ² who ceaseth ³ from raising after he hath kneaded the dough, until it be leavened.

5 In the day of our king the princes have made him sick ⁴ with bottles of wine; he stretched out his hand with scorners.

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^f Jer. 9. 2.

² Or,
the raiser
will cease.

³ Or, from
waking.

⁴ Or, with heat through wine.

ver. 2 are very emphatic). And they make sport of them; make them offering of service to their "king;" yea, invent fresh sins to find him amusement. This chapter gives a lifelike picture of sin; tells, so to say, its whole history. First, "God, 'the God of truth,' is not in the "thoughts" (Ps. x. 4.). Men make for themselves an atmosphere of unreality, "of falsehood." Belief in an all-knowing Being, in an all-searching Judge, of absolute purity, of perfect truth, is too great a restraint. Wrong deeds are done; soft speeches are made for them (comp. Eph. v. 6.). The heart, not seared yet, upbraids; the warning is silenced of that solitary hour. The same society is sought again, and that pang is forgotten. Perhaps there is some great one to be imitated, to be courted; they can please him, if only they are merry, without scruple, without too much delicacy. Let them be adroit; let them know the latest discovery of self-indulgence; the most skilful embellishment of "the lie." They have succeeded; they are established as his friends, his boon-companions.

4—7. There follows a crisis of the sin. It is a feast day. "Our "king's anniversary!" "All are hot," "as an oven." "All are adulterers" (so exactly Jer. ix. 2, q.v.); those pliant, easy souls, they have all been worked up long, completely. The excitement is high; the sympathy full, eager. "All night long" there is fascinating dissipation, choice wit, delightful "abandonment" to the rich variety of pleasure; there is wine and revelry. Will those absent ones reprove? They are "scorned." One is looking on, no one knows it, whose name is "Tempter;" one whose whole thought and labour is, "Let man only forget his God." If days and nights are thus spent, is it not sin? is it not death? That "fire" of wild passion, does it not eat up the life of God in the soul? What has not been the ruin of such a gathering? "The night" has passed, what of "the morning?"

4—7. It is one great paragraph; note the repetitions, no doubt for emphasis. "All of them" (vv. 4, 7.); "oven" (vv. 4, 6, 7.); "heated," rather "burning" (ver. 4, and so ver. 6.); "heat" through "wine" (as *margin*.; there is no authority for "bottles") (ver. 5.); they "are" all "hot" (ver. 7.); "baker" (vv. 4, 6.); between this word and that for "adulterer" there is a marked alliteration; "who ceaseth from raising;" the *margin*. is more correct: "the raiser," he who is raising up, exciting all this, "will "cease, or rest," for a while; "he will sleep all the night" (ver. 6.); after he has set all in order. "The oven" is explained to be "the heart" (ver. 6.); the kneading of the dough, the leaven, sufficiently explain themselves. The first, the particular attraction, be it what it may; the last, the secret evil, and wickedness that is in it. The baker represents one chief author of the temptation; a king, like Jeroboam I; a priest, like Amaziah (Amos vii. 10.)—at any rate some instrument of Satan.

5. Rather; (it is) "day of our king; made (themselves) sick have

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² Or, *applied*.

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⁵ ch. 8. 4.

^h 2 Kin. 15. 10,
14, 25, 30.

ⁱ Isai. 64. 7.

6 For they have ² made ready their heart like an oven, whiles they lie in wait: their baker sleepeth all the night; in the morning it burneth as a flaming fire.

7 They are all hot as an oven, and have devoured their judges; ⁵ all their kings ^h are fallen: ⁱ *there is* none among them that calleth unto me.

“princes, (with) heat, (fever) through wine; he hath stretched out,” &c. Comp. St. Mark vi. 21, 22: “Herod on his birthday made a supper to “his lords, high captains, and chief estates;” “the daughter of Herodias “came in and danced;” “king and princes” as before (ver. 3.) are together; they maddened with drink; he club-fellow “with scorners.” Some further sin is prepared: it may be the murder of the Baptist, or, as in this case, perhaps a treason against “the king.”

6. Rather perhaps: “For they have applied, like (as it is) to an oven, “their heart to their snares;” or “brought it near,” prepared it for the sin the moment the occasion should arise. The ninth chapter of Jeremiah (vv. 1—8.), in which already a phrase of Hosea here is quoted, may illustrate our verse. “Their tongue . . . speaketh deceit” (compare this, and also ver. 3 of the same chapter, with ver. 16 below); one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but in his “inward part” he layeth “his wait,” (as “snares”); a substantive only found in these two places.

“The baker” has done his work, and is asleep; the deceived and deceivers have drunk in the poison; the fever of rage and cruelty is in them, ready to burst forth; in the morning they rush as “a burning “fire” upon their poor dupe and victim. It is a scene such as was constant in Samaria. Perhaps it is the murder of Zachariah, after his six months “of evil,” when “Shallum conspired against him, and smote “him before the people, and slew him.” Perhaps it is Shallum’s “full month” of reign, and his slaughter by Menahem (2 Kin. xv. 10, 13, 14.). Clearly the feast is the preparation for, the occasion of, the murder. The one chapter just referred to strikingly confirms the words, “All “their kings are fallen.”

7—11. “there is none among them that calleth unto Me.” That is the account of that overthrow through sin. But, subordinate to this, there is another. “Ephraim hath mixed himself up with the nations,” “and learned their works” (Ps. cvi. 35.). “Simplicity,” said the great historian of a period of gross corruption in Greece, “which is such a “powerful element in real nobleness, was laughed to scorn and dis- “appeared.” This isolation from the world—men say,—it is a narrow thing; it is narrowing; this severe orthodoxy, it is ignorant, the parent of further ignorance. Weariness of God’s strict service, fretting and chafing against His exclusive worship, gives the impulse. “Pride” of power, of independence, insists on casting off restraints. And “the “strangers eat out the strength,” the life that remained. The process is rapid and insensible. It is really the same in a people and an individual. But it is more clearly traced in a single soul. Prayer is given up (ver. 7.). “God’s Word is counted a strange thing” (ch. viii. 12.),

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8 Ephraim, he ^k hath mixed himself among the people ; Ephraim is a cake not turned. Before
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9 ¹ Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth *it* not : yea, gray hairs are ² here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not. k Ps. 106. 35.
1 ch. 8. 7.
2 Heb.
sprinkled.

10 And the ^m pride of Israel testifieth to his face : and ⁿ they do not return to the LORD their God, nor seek him for all this. m ch. 5. 5.
n Isai. 9. 13.

11 ^o Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart : ^p they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria. o ch. 11. 11.
p See 2 Kings
15. 19. & 17. 4.
ch. 5. 13. &
9. 3. & 12. 1.
q Ezek. 12. 13.

12 When they shall go, ^q I will spread my net upon them ; I will bring them down as the fowls of

obsolete, dull. The novelty of a foreign land is all attractive. There is a sense of freedom ; there is a wonderful enlargement of mind. So old principles are yielded one by one, and with them passes away "the strength" of hearty faith, and the fervour of the "first" loyal "love." "No calling upon God." "Calling" instead "to Egypt" (vv. 7, 11.). What "culture" is *there!* what pleasure ! what unceasing interest !

8. "mixed himself," so as to be confused, contaminated ; another conjugation of the verb often found in the Pentateuch (this, only here), in the phrase, "cakes (different) 'mingled with' oil;" so the next figure is naturally introduced. For "cake" here, compare Gen. xviii. 6 ; after "kneading" of the meal it was made on the hearth (l. c.) ; and Exod. xii. 39, "they 'baked' unleavened 'cakes' of 'the dough' which 'they brought forth out of Egypt;" so the connection is plain with ver. 4, and the rest of that paragraph. The "cake," long unturned, would be spoilt. And so Ephraim, "to whom God would have 'turned' " (lit., changed) 'another heart,'" but he refused his "chastening" (ver. 15.). Comp. 1 Sam. x. 9.

9. "Strangers;" i. e. here, "the heathen," "the peoples," of the last verse ; so chs. v. 7 ; viii. 7, where comp. ver. 8. It is a verse at once full of force and pathos. All seems prosperous, joyous, strong . . . there is unceasing decay (comp. ch. v. 12.), and the poor victim "knoweth it not;" he is "proud," "boastful," on the brink of his ruin. Isaiah ix. 12, 13, is a close commentary on this and the next verse.

11. "silly, without heart;" properly, "easy to be seduced, misled." Comp. Deut. xi. 16, "take heed that your 'heart' 'be' not 'deceived;'" the same word. "Egypt," "Assyria," comp. Jer. ii. 18, 36.

12—16. But the punishment falls at last ; and then it is complete, in an instant ; and just exactly as it was foretold to them (ver. 12.). "Woe unto them !" They have fled, "wandered," "from Me;" "as a bird" (of which the word is constantly used) "that wandereth from her nest" (Prov. xxvii. 8.) ; (they shall be "wanderers" (same) "among the "nations," ch. ix. 17.) ; "they have transgressed 'against Me,'" Who gave them alone My law to guide them ("trespassed," ch. viii. 1, q. v.) is exactly same word ; "I" (emphatic) "am ever redeeming them," "they" (emphatic) "speak against Me"—the God of Truth and Love

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the heaven; I will chastise them, ^ras their congregation hath heard.

^r Lev. 26. 14, &c.
Deut. 23. 15, &c. 2 Kings 17. 13, 18.
² Heb. *spoil.*
^s Mic. 6. 4.
^t Job 35, 9, 10. Ps. 78. 36. Jer. 3. 10. Zech. 7. 5.

13 Woe unto them! for they have fled from me: ²destruction unto them! because they have transgressed against me: though ^sI have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies against me.

14 ^tAnd they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they assemble themselves for corn and wine, *and* they rebel against me.

³ Or, *chastened.*

15 Though I ³have bound *and* strengthened their arms, yet do they imagine mischief against me.

^u ch. 11. 7. 16 ^uThey return, *but* not to the most High:

“—lies.” Comp. 1 Kings xii. 28, “The king took counsel” (comp. ch. x. 6.), “and made two calves of gold,” and said, . . . “Behold thy gods, O Israel, *which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt* ;” also Amos ii. 4, “They have not kept His commandments, and their ‘lies’” (as here) “caused them to err” (ver. 13.). And (in their distress) “they cry not **to Me with their heart**” (“they will cry soon, but in vain,” ch. viii. 2, the same word); “that they howl upon their beds” (comp. St. James v. 1.), is only because of their pain and unrest. See, it is “for corn and wine” (as ch. ii. 8.) they “gather so tumultuously;” perhaps, in their idol worship, and with cries to Baal; to the last, “turning aside against **Me**” (ver. 14.). “**I**” (emphatic) “chastened them” (*margin* is right), and then, in their weakness, “strengthened them,” and against Me, such the madness of their ingratitude, of their unbelief, “they imagine **evil**” as very heathen (ver. 15.).—comp. Nahum i. 9, 11, for the same words and thought. “**They turn**” hither and thither, to and fro; never “upward.” They aim in their misery at every mark, which policy bids or despair. All fails, and “those princes rage” in their very fall; and “Egypt” looks on and “mocks” (ver. 16.). Mark in this section the exceeding emphasis, “against Me,” &c., Me, six times repeated; then, how sin grows in intensity of desperation. First the corrupted soul “flies from God,” its only shelter, for it is afraid of His presence; then openly, defiantly “breaks His law;” then “denies, belies Him;” in its trouble “cries” out, not in repentance, but because of bitter disappointment; and, when all is lost of the world, its pleasure, its wealth, its power, only bursts out into more frantic “rebellion” and impotent blasphemy against its “redeemer,” its benefactor, the most merciful God. He who was a servant of the Lord is worse now than heathen; the apostate, even in the eyes of the world, is now a very fool. Note the first and last words of this chapter. “Healer of Israel,” the Lord would have been still; Israel despises him, and is “derision of Egypt.”

12. “as their congregation hath heard.” The reference is supposed to be to the perpetual threatenings of the law. Many commentators refer to Lev. xxvi. 14, &c.; Deut. xxviii. 15, &c.

16. “They return, not to the most High.” This last is a very doubtful translation; it is safest to take it as above; we have the same

^x they are like a deceitful bow: their princes shall fall by the sword for the ^y rage of their tongue: this *shall be* their derision ^z in the land of Egypt.

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^x Ps. 73. 57.

^y Ps. 73. 9.

^z ch. 9. 3, 6.

word (ch. xi. 7.), where the first clause illustrates "the turning" here; it was only "backsliding" (subst. from the same verb).

CHAPTER VIII.

"The broken Law avenging itself."

INTRODUCTION.

The punishment is close at hand (comp. "now," vv. 8, 10, 13.), it is denounced more terribly. "Sound," My prophet, "the trumpet;" "the eagle is ready to swoop down;" "the covenant," which Israel has "transgressed" (ch. vi. 7.), is abolished; "the Law," "they count "a strange thing" (ver. 12.), shall now be felt in vengeance.

Vain is "Israel's cry;" "Israel loathed good," would "not 'pursue' "it." Evil, by a cruel "enemy," "shall pursue" it now (vv. 1—3.). What did they loathe and cast off? Me, their King, Me, their God. In place of Me, against Me, they took those self-chosen kings, those gods of silver and gold. And for what was all this toil and sin? That one and all they might be "cut off" (ver. 4.).

"Thy own calf, Samaria, loathes thee now," "broken to shivers" it becomes witness of My wrath, and that wrath how long shall it last? "when shall I hold thee guiltless?" (Deut. v. 11.). Thou who hast lifted up thy soul to vanity (see Ps. xxiv. 4.), put the "work of the "craftsman" in place of (ver. 14.) thy "Maker" (vv. 5, 6.).

"Wind they have sown, whirlwind shall they reap." See that seed of sin. "No stalk left!" or, "bud without meal!" or "meal to be swallowed "up by strangers!" "Swallowed up is Israel," given up to the heathen it "loved," only to be despised by them; see them in those plains of Assyria; they went up there "of themselves," lawless, wanton, solitary, as a "wild ass" of the desert; they shall be "gathered" again, not in mercy, but for further punishment. For that "burden" of heathen "hire" "king and princes shall sorrow soon" (vv. 7—10.). "Ephraim "multiplied altars," "sacrifices," "temples;" only "the manifold" beauties "of My Law it counted strange:" only Me, her God, she forgot. But "I remember her iniquity." I recall the threatenings of the Law they despise. "I will bring thee into Egypt again" (Deut. xxviii. 68.). I will be to thee "consuming fire" (ib. iv. 24.), yea, to Judah also (vv. 11—14.).

The punishment is more detailed than in the last chapter, to which, as to earlier ones, there are several references; their one master-sin, idolatry, now being chiefly the subject; their wilfulness in setting up kings, the next, and dependent upon this (comp. ch. x. 1, 2, and 3; ib. 5, 6, and 7.). It seems not unlikely that the Pentateuch is especially the basis for the description; and most of all, the original delivery of the Law, and the first idolatry. As the "trumpet" blew loud at Sinai for the giving of the "Law" and "Covenant" (Exod. xix. 16. Deut. v. 2.), so now, for punishment upon its "transgression." As God said then, "I bare you on eagles'

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CHAPTER VIII.

1, 12 Destruction is threatened for their impiety, 5 and idolatry.

^a ch. 5. 8.

² Heb.
the roof of
thy mouth.

^b Deut. 23. 49.

Jer. 4. 13.

Hab. 1. 8.

^c ch. 6. 7.

^d Ps. 73. 34.

ch. 5. 15.

^e Tit. 1. 16.

SET^a the trumpet to ² thy mouth. *He shall come*
^b as an eagle against the house of the LORD, be-
cause ^c they have transgressed my covenant, and
trespassed against my law.

² ^d Israel shall cry unto me, My God, ^e we know
thee.

³ Israel hath cast off *the thing that is good*: the
enemy shall pursue him.

"wings" (Exod. xix. 4.), so now another "eagle" (Deut. xxviii. 49.) shall take them away. Then "they cried . . . by reason of bondage" (Exod. ii. 23.) and God "remembered His Covenant" (ver. 24.); now, they shall "cry," we are "Thy Israel," in vain. Then "the enemy" said, "I will pursue, I will overtake" (Exod. xv. 9.). That enemy was "swallowed up" (do. 12.). Now Israel is "swallowed up," Israel is "cut off," (constantly in the Pentateuch) because they have "made with me gods" of "silver," gods of "gold" (Exod. xx. 23.). As then, thou hast made "a calf" (Exod. xxxii. 4.); as then, only more terribly, "Mine anger is kindled" against thee (do. chs. xxii. 24; xxxii. 10, 11, 19, 22.). Then "I blew with my wind" (do. ch. xv. 10.), and thy enemy perished. Thou hast sown thy "wind," and there comes a "whirlwind:" then "sorrow" "took hold of the heathen" (do. 14.). Now "thy king and princes" "shall sorrow." Thou hast despised My "Law" "as a strange thing." Said I not in that Law, "I will visit iniquity" (do. chs. xx. 5; xxxii. 34.). Israel hath forgotten his "Maker" (Deut. xxxii. 6, 15, 18.), so I foretold by My servant Moses the sin, and so I foretold the punishment (do. ch. xxviii. 68, above).

Observe, 1. This chapter, as others, but more markedly, takes up words preceding (see Introduction, ch. iv.).

Observe, 2. "The Law" occurs only in this chapter (twice), except ch. iv. 6. "The eagle," except Lev. xi. 13, and the parallel of Deuteronomy, only in Exodus and Deuteronomy. Even the common expression, "God's wrath was kindled," occurs first in Exodus, and especially in ch. xxxii. But Jeremiah, who has been called "the Hosea of Judah," seems especially to imitate our prophet here; compare his second chapter throughout, especially verses 8, 18, 24, 25, 26, 28, 32, 33, 35, 36; again, the figure, "vessel wherein is no pleasure," is found only in Jeremiah besides, chs. xxii. 28; xlviii. 38. Again, in the Lamentations, ch. ii, five times over, he applies "swallowing up" to the judgment of Judah; that chapter also is a commentary on this.

1—3. God's prophet must witness that truth which man despises; hold up "the terrors" of that eternal "Law;" "cry aloud, spare not, lift up his voice like 'a trumpet,' and shew My people their transgression, the house of Jacob their sins" (Isa. lviii. 1.). Then, as if "the eagle's" swoop was already heard, as if Shalmaneser was at the

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4 ¶ They have set up kings, but not by me : they have made princes, and I knew *it* not : ^g of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off.

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f 2 Kings 15.
13, 17, 25,
Shallum,
Menahem,
Pekahiah.

g ch. 2. 8.
& 13. 2.
h Jer. 13. 27.

5 ¶ Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast *thee* off ; mine anger is kindled against them : ^h how long *will it be* ere they attain to innocency ?

city gates, we have "Israel's cry" of despair, and the Lord's answer of doom, each in five short words. The first, as in broken accents. "To Me they cry" (now), O "my God, we know Thee" (it is) "Israel." "Loathed hath Israel good" (yea, the good God). "Let the enemy pursue him." As if God had said, "Let him know what another Lord is ; what the evil is which he has chosen." The two words of judgment are very impressive. We have the whole picture in Ps. vii. 5 : "Let the enemy persecute" (exactly as here) "my soul, and take it ; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust." The doom of Israel is a prophecy of the final one (comp. especially Isa. xxiv. 4, 5.). And what a history of a lost soul is condensed into the two words, "We know Thee, . . . Israel." "We knew Thee once, we were Thine ;" and then, forgetting in that last agony a whole life's rebellion,— "we know Thee still." "Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you" (St. Matt. vii. 23.).

4—6. Then the sin and the punishment is exhibited more fully. The one master-sin was self-will ; "They cast off good." "Of themselves ;" ("they," ver. 4, is emphatic, and the first word of the sentence, so below, ver. 9, so in the last clause of ver. 13.), "asking no counsel of Me" (Isa. xxx. 1.), "they set up kings and princes," "they made them their idols ;" yes, knowing that eternal Law against idolatry, knowing that old judgment in the wilderness (see Exod. xxxii. throughout.) It is "thy own calf" that "casts (thee) off with loathing" now. Thy sin finds thee out ; thy sin is thy punishment. "Mine anger is kindled" *now*, there is no one to intercede for thee *now*. Oh, those bloodstained hands, that lying tongue ! (ch. vii. 13.), "how long before they attain to innocency?" (see below). For it was Israel's own making, that calf ; Israel's, after all that warning, that judgment ; after those innumerable acts of mercy from their God. "Craftsman made It" (emphatic, comp. ch. xiii. 2.). Not God ("Devil in place of God"), "It" (comp. Deut. xxxii. 17.). Look, fragments shall it become ; "These be thy gods, O Israel."

All those 253 years of the kingdom of Israel, with the exception only of Jeroboam I and Jehu and his house, their kings were set up, without a thought of consulting God ; and king-making, when "God was their King," was no less impiety and profaneness, than their formal idolatry. See how both acts are united, as here, chs. x. 1—3, 5—7 ; xiii. 2, 4, 10, 11.

4. Literally, "that he," every one, "may be cut off." "It is a fearful description of obstinate sin, that their very object in it seemed to be their own destruction."

5. "Mine anger," &c. See Introduction to the chapter ; in these

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6 For from Israel *was* it also : the workman made it ; therefore it *is* not God : but the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces.

ⁱ Prov. 22. 8.
ch. 10. 12, 13.

² Or, *standing corn.*
^k ch. 7. 9.

7 For ⁱ they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind : it hath no ² stalk : the bud shall yield no meal : if so be it yield, ^k the strangers shall swallow it up.

^l 2 Kin. 17. 6.

^m Jer. 22. 28.
& 48. 38.

8 ^l Israel is swallowed up : now shall they be among the Gentiles ^m as a vessel wherein *is* no pleasure.

words, as in those of the next verse, the same sin and punishment of their forefathers seems pointedly referred to. "How long will it be?" &c. The precise connection of these words is difficult. Perhaps the "purity" required of the true worshipper is tacitly contrasted with the foul impurity of that idolatry of Samaria. Twice in the Psalms (xxvi. 6 ; lxxiii. 13.) we have the phrase "I will wash my hands in 'innocency'" (exactly), and in the first case it is added, "so will I compass Thine altar, O Lord." Or perhaps, as Jeremiah, in the second chapter of his prophecy, seems to have this chapter of Hosea constantly before his mind, it may be a rebuke of the blindness of the people, who now knew not their sin. "Yet thou sayest, because 'I am innocent,' 'surely His 'anger' shall turn from me. Behold I will plead with 'thee, because thou sayest I have not sinned'" (Jer. ii. 35.). At any rate, the "how long" is very emphatic to "Israel," outcast for ever.

6. Mark, "It," three times repeated of their idol, as in derision. Comp. Dent. xxxii. 37—39, where in contrast with the false "gods" "I" is four times said (ver. 39.) of God.

7—10. The punishment is described more at length, and in all its terribleness : see Introduction to this chapter.

7. "wind they have sown, and whirlwind shall they reap" (comp. ch. xii. 1.). These are Hosea's own, wonderfully powerful words, just four : Prov. xxii. 8 ; Job iv. 8, are not so strong.

"it hath no stalk," &c. That sowing and harvest is drawn out in its contemptible failure. The force of the language of this verse, full of alliterations, can only be seen in the Hebrew. One clause, it has been attempted to reproduce in English : "Shoot yields no fruit."

"swallow it up." See Introduction. The word used of the overthrow of Dathan and Abiram (Num. xvi. 30, 32, 34 ; xxvi. 10. Deut. xi. 6. Ps. cvi. 17.).

8. Literally, "now have they become among the Gentiles." This condition alone is punishment enough for *Israel*, the people of the Lord ; but even by the Gentiles they are used only for their purposes and . . . despised, "a vessel wherein is no pleasure" (comp. Rom. ix. 21.).

"Swallowed up," not destroyed, "among the nations," yet not of them ; despised and mingled among them, yet not united with them. A verse of eight short words ; the history, strict and precise, of 2500 years and more since they were spoken. Jeremiah applies them further to Judah also. "The Lord was an 'enemy : ' 'He hath swallowed up'

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9 For ⁿ they are gone up to Assyria, ^o a wild ass alone by himself: Ephraim ^p hath hired ² lovers.

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10 Yea, though they have hired among the nations, now ^q will I gather them, and they shall ³ sorrow ⁴ a little for the burden of ^r the king of princes.

n 2 Kin. 15. 19.
o Jer. 2. 24.
p Isai. 30. 6.
Ezek. 16. 33,
34.

11 Because Ephraim hath made ^s many altars to sin, altars shall be unto him to sin.

2 Heb. loves.
q Ezek. 16. 37.
ch. 10. 10.
3 Or, begin.
s ch. 12. 11.

⁴ Or, in a little while, as Hag. 2. 6. ^r Isai. 10. 8. Ezek. 26. 7. Dan. 2. 37.

“Israel: ‘He hath swallowed up’ all her palaces. . . . The Lord ‘hath ‘cast off’” (as vv. 3, 5, here) “His altar” . . . Her “king and her ‘princes’ are “among the Gentiles” (Lament. ii. 5, 7, 9).

9. “For they,” i. e. of themselves, with the old wilfulness (comp. above on 4—6.), “are gone up to Assyria,” i. e. for help, in homage: it is a different word from that in chs. v. 13; vii. 11, “a wild ass alone for” (not “by”) “himself;” i. e. following only his own will (comp. the description, Job xxxix. 5—8, and Jer. ii. 24.). The figure binds together the first clause and the last of the verse. “Wild ass,” the original word very likely alliterates with “Ephraim.” Israel is become Ishmael (comp. Gen. xvi. 12.).

“hath hired lovers” (comp. the subst. ch. ii. 12.). “These are my ‘rewards’ which my ‘lovers’ have given me” (also ch. ix. 1.).

10. “I will gather them.” The same word as in ch. ix. 6. Egypt “shall gather them, Memphis shall bury them.” “The gathering” is not for shelter, but for destruction.

“They shall sorrow a little,” &c. This whole clause is very hard: there is a different reading for “they shall sorrow.” Perhaps it is the same verb as in ch. vii. 5, “they have made (themselves) sick:” “the ‘burden’ would seem to be that which resulted from the “hire” of Assyria (comp. 2 Kings xv. 20.). We may perhaps render the words “they shall sorrow” (or be sick), “soon” (as in ch. i. 4, “a little “while”) “for the burden, king (and) princes,” i. e. both of them. These last two words are several times joined together by Hosea, besides the last chapter.

11—14. Once more their sin of sins is brought in all its deformity before their eyes; and their punishment, and Judah’s too, distinctly declared. See Introduction. Man will have none of “the good” which his God offers him; he builds up his own policy, worship, alliances; temple, fenced city, palaces; all that skill and labour can effect, a vast monument of his strength of will, and . . . of its utter feebleness. “He forgets his God,” and . . . he perishes.

11. “made many altars;” better, “multiplied:” it is exactly the same word as in ver. 14; so in ver. 12, “the great things of My law” is better rendered the “manifold” things. It is a strong contrast. See Israel with its “multitude” of altars (comp. chs. x. 1; xii. 11.) only multiplying transgression (Amos iv. 4.); see Judah “multiplying” its fenced cities, and “My law,” with its “manifold” wisdom, with its “multitude “of” offered “mercies,” is thought a “strange” thing; despised at heart,

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12 I have written to him ^t the great things of my law, *but* they were counted as a strange thing.

^t Deut. 4. 6, 8. Ps. 119. 18. & 147. 19, 20. 13 ^u ^v They sacrifice flesh *for* the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat *it*; ^x *but* the LORD accepteth them not; ^y now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins: ^z they shall return to Egypt.

^u Jer. 7. 21. Zech. 7. 6. 14 ^a For Israel hath forgotten ^b his Maker, and ^c buildeth temples; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities: but ^d I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof.

^x Jer. 14. 10, 12. ch. 5. 6. & 9. 4. Amos 5. 22. ^y ch. 9. 2. Amos 8. 7. ^z Deut. 28. 68. ch. 9. 3, 6, & 11. 5. ^a Deut. 32. 18. ^b Isai. 29. 23. Eph. 2. 10. ^c 1 Kin. 12. 31. ^d Jer. 17. 27. Amos 2. 5.

as those very heathens and "strangers," whom, instead of Me, they pretend to "love."

13. Better, "sacrifices of" or, "for, My gifts!" the last word is unique here, and its exact force is not known: from its form, it would appear to be an intensive word, and may therefore carry on the idea of "multitude" of altars (ver. 11.): "they sacrifice (only) flesh, and eat." "Memorials," these, only of sin, unconfessed, unatoned; not of safety for you, through your God, but for His judgment (comp. Num. x. 10.).

14. "buildeth temples;" as, it may be, at Bethel, Gilgal, and elsewhere, as well as Samaria; they would doubtless be vast and splendid, as in rivalry with the temple at Jerusalem: "fenced cities;" first spoken of in reference to the Canaanites (Num. xiii. 28. Deut. i. 28; iii. 5; ix. 1. Josh. xiv. 12.). In Israel, as early as the time of David (2 Sam. xx. 6.); even Jehoshaphat "placed forces in them" (2 Chron. xvii. 2.). Uzziah probably carried the science of fortifying them further than any one before (ib. ch. xxvi. 9, 15.). Hezekiah maintained them (2 Kings xviii. 13.), and Manasseh, after his repentance (2 Chron. xxxiii. 14.). They are threatened also in Isa. xxvii. 10; Zeph. i. 16. They are at once symbol of heathen power and pride, and, in God's people, of trust in earthly means of defence (comp. Isa. xxii. 11; Jer. v. 17.). For the fulfilment of the last words, comp. 2 Kings xviii. 13; xxv. 8, 9. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19. It is the phrase so frequent in Amos (chs. i. and ii. 5.).

CHAPTER IX.

Israel's punishment continued; they shall be "without sacrifice," without festival; the fruitful one barren; "the household of God outcast wanderers."

INTRODUCTION.

"Rejoice not," Israel, as others; rejoice no more, as thou wast bidden of old, after "thou hadst gathered in from floor and from winepress" (exactly, Deut. xvi. 13—15.). These thou hast abused to shame, these shall fail thee now. No more for thee "the Lord's land," or "the House of the Lord." Thou art "unclean" now: in Assyria, thy home now, "thou shalt eat what is unclean." Thy "wine offering," no longer token of holy joy and gratitude, thy meat offering, now even "as

The distress and captivity of Israel for their sins and idolatry.

REJOICE not, O Israel, for joy, as *other* people : for thou ^a hast gone a whoring from thy ^a ch. 4. 12. & 5. 4, 7.

“bread of mourning” (vv. 1—4.). Yes, it is a contrast: those “feasts” and “solemn days,” and this “desolation:” thy “gathering” now, only for “burial;” thy resting place, idol city in Egypt; “thy own pleasant places waste” (Isa. lxiv. 11.); “nettles, inheritors” now of the good land; everywhere decay and death, even in thy sanctuaries (vv. 5, 6.). It is the day of the Lord’s vengeance, the day that “He visits” at last “the iniquity of thy fathers, even that old clinging defilement of Gibeah” (Judges xix. 22, &c.), upon the children of them that hate Him.” And “Israel shall know” then “the folly of her prophets,” the “madness” of her “watchmen” (Micah vii. 4.); how they are only “a snare,” only “very hatred” against God, against man (vv. 7—9.). And this is the end of all My love and care! Israel was to Me as “the grape found in “the wilderness,” fresh, pure, full of sweetness; but they changed their “glory to shame.” Ephraim was “fruitfulness;” now it is only desolation, bereavement. Ephraim was in land of beauty, in rich pasture; now it rears offspring only to be slain. Give them, O God, curse for blessing; yea, withdraw the blessing Thou gavest to Joseph their forefather (see note) (vv. 10—14.). For there is no help; their *religion* is wickedness, “their rulers rebels.” So for that especial “love,” I am turned to “hatred;” they have been as Canaanites in My house, I “drive” them forth for ever. That tree of my “planting” (ver. 13.), it is “smitten from the root.” Ephraim is Ephraim no more; “the land “of ‘fruit’ is barrenness” (Ps. cvii. 34.). They chose for Me “the “nations;” they shall be mingled among those nations, and among them “ever wanderers” (vv. 15—17.).

Observe (1) in this chapter the especial emphasis upon the name “Ephraim” six times repeated. (2) The first section (vv. 1—9.) is closely connected with the last chapter (vv. 9—14.); there are verbal repetitions; two verses, 6, 9, prepare the way for the next (ch. x. 8, 9.).

1—9. See introduction to the chapter. The prophet speaks as if he saw, on a sudden, some great assembly of Israel, close to one of their splendid “temples” (ch. viii. 14.), at Bethel, or Samaria. It may be a day of Tabernacles, after the ingathering of the fruits of the land. Sacrifices are offered (chs. viii. 13; ix. 4.). All are “rejoicing,” the very word of Deuteronomy for such a time (ch. xvi. 14, 15; so in similar cases, ib. chs. xii. 7, 12, 18; xiv. 26; xvi. 11.). Hosea cries, “Rejoice not.” Let the “nations” rejoice before their idol gods, in days of harvest; they are ignorant; compared with thee, innocent; thou art shamefully, basely ungrateful to the living God, thy known benefactor. Joy in thee is only fresh, aggravated sin. The one point in all this section is the idolatry of Israel, and the punishment of it; upon themselves, in the strangers’ land; upon their own land, lying desolate. “Lo! they are gone, because of “destruction,” that “destruction” which the Lord God had threatened (ch. vii. 13.). What a judgment that is, that falls on long, persistent, daring sin! God’s gifts abused, then turned by God into bitterness. Religion corrupted by man, and then by God emptied of life, of peace, of

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God, thou hast loved a ^breward ²upon every corn-floor.

^b Jer. 41. 17. ch. 2. 12.
² Or, *in, &c.*
^c ch. 2. 9, 12.
³ Or, *winefat.*
^d Lev. 25. 23. Jer. 2. 7. & 16. 18.
^e ch. 8. 13. & 11. 5.
Not into Egypt itself, but into another bondage as bad as that.
^f Ezek. 4. 13. Dan. 1. 8.
^g 2 Kin. 17. 6. ch. 11. 11.
^h ch. 3. 4.
ⁱ Jer. 6. 20. ch. 8. 13.
^k Deut. 26. 14.
^l Lev. 17. 11. m ch. 2. 11.
ⁿ Heb. *spoil.*
^o ch. 7. 16. ver. 3.
^p Or, *their silver shall be desired, the nettle, &c.* ^q Heb. *the desire.* ^r Isai. 5. 6. & 32. 13. & 34. 13. ch. 10. 8.

2 ^oThe floor and the ³winepress shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fail in her.

3 They shall not dwell in ^dthe LORD's land; ^ebut Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and ^fthey shall eat unclean *things* ^gin Assyria.

4 ^hThey shall not offer wine *offerings* to the LORD, ⁱneither shall they be pleasing unto him: ^ktheir sacrifices *shall be* unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted: for their bread ^lfor their soul shall not come into the house of the LORD.

5 What will ye do in ^mthe solemn day, and in the day of the feast of the LORD?

6 For, lo, they are gone because of ⁿdestruction: ^oEgypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them: ⁵⁶the pleasant *places* for their silver, ^onettles shall possess them: thorns *shall be* in their tabernacles.

refreshment; its "power" gone, its "form" remaining (2 Tim. iii. 5). Egypt idolized, and then found "pollution." And then the full flash of "knowledge" at last upon the conscience. "That multitude of my "iniquity," that "great hatred" of the truth; oh, what miserable misleading it was, what desperate "folly!"

1. "thou hast loved a reward," &c. "These are my "rewards" (closely cognate word) "that my lovers have given me" (ch. ii. 12.); i. e. "corn, and wine, and oil" (ib. 8.); the "hire" of his idol-service; and with this outward plenty he is satisfied.

3. "they shall eat unclean things in Assyria." This may refer to such trials as Daniel's (ch. i. 8.); but "in a polluted land" (Amos vii. 17.), (this and "polluted," ver. 4, is the same as "unclean," here), they could not practise their ceremonial purifications. So it follows in ver. 4. They had been as heathens, in the land of the Israel; they should be put to shame, as Jews, in Egypt, in Assyria.

4. "as the bread of mourners;" which was unclean: see Deut. xxvi. 14, where we have the same word; "I have not eaten thereof in my "mourning."

"their bread for their soul." This is explained, "their bread, "which is really, for their own appetite;" so "soul" is used elsewhere, but the words are obscure.

6. "Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them." The two words are exactly the same in Hebrew, save one letter; the "gathering up" is for "burial."

"the pleasant (places) for their silver." The same word occurs in

HOSEA, IX.

7 The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come; Israel shall know *it*: the prophet *is* a fool, ^p the ² spiritual man *is* mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred.

8 The ¹ watchman of Ephraim *was* with my God: *but* the prophet *is* a snare of a fowler in all his ways, *and* hatred ² in the house of his God.

9 ¹ They have deeply corrupted *themselves*, as in the days of ² Gibeah: ³ *therefore* he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins.

10 I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I

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^p Ezek. 13. 3.

&c.

Mic. 2. 11.

Zeph. 3. 4.

² Heb. *man of the spirit.*

^q Jer. 6. 17.

& 31. 6.

Ezek. 3. 17.

& 33. 7.

³ Or, *against.*

^r Isai. 31. 6.

ch. 10. 9.

^s Judg. 19. 22.

† ch. 8. 13.

Ezek. xxiv. 21, "I will profane My sanctuary . . . 'the desire' of your 'eyes';" in the plural (ver. 16 below), "the desires of their womb;" and in Isa. lxiv. 11: "Our holy and our beautiful house . . . is burned "up with fire, and all our 'pleasant things' are laid waste;" so it may be here, in scornful irony; "that desired place," not of God, but "for" (made "for") thy silver and a god of silver (comp. chs. viii. 4; xiii. 2.), that sanctuary of thy foul worship, "nettles shall possess or inherit them;" the word constantly used in Deuteronomy and elsewhere, for Israel "inheriting" the land of promise. Thus "tabernacles" well coheres in the last clause.

7. "the spiritual man is mad." Literally, "the man of the spirit" here (as in Micah ii. 11.), "a man walking in 'the spirit' and falsehood;" is "maddened." The word is in two places said of true prophets by those who derided them (2 Kings ix. 11; Jer. xxix. 26.); it is now retorted in bitter reproach upon the deceiver.

8. "The watchman of Ephraim (was) with my God;" so A. V., but wrongly. Rather, (What!) "watchman, Ephraim, with my God!" The indignant exclamation of the prophet (comp. "my God," ver. 17.) at the remembrance of all that long system of deceit (comp. for the connection, Micah vii. 4.), "The day of thy 'watchmen,' (and) thy 'visitation' cometh." Ephraim, "put far away the evil day" (Amos vi. 3.); the false prophets would say of the true, "He prophesieth of times far off" (Ezek. xii. 27.); Hosea bursts in: What, Ephraim daring to be "watchman" (the word constantly used of the prophets); "Watchman, with my God," sharing this divine function with Him! he, who is only "a snare" (ch. v. 1.) "over all his (people's) ways, (and) in the house of his God" only "hatred" of the true God, "a Satan."

9. Literally, "they have gone deep" (exactly as ch. v. 2, "are profound"), "they are corrupted;" the precise word used of Israel in its first calf-worship (Exod. xxxii. 7. Deut. ix. 12; so do. xxxii. 5.).

10—17. See introduction to the chapter. This paragraph contrasts the noble promise of the tribe of Joseph with the bitter catastrophe. Note Ephraim, four times repeated (vv. 11, 13, 16.), and "children" (vv. 12, 13; also vv. 11, 14, 16.); how was Ephraim a name, a history of wonderful fruitfulness and prosperity! "His glory like the firstling "of his bullock, his horns, the horns of unicorns . . . they are the ten

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^u Isai. 28. 4.

Mic. 7. 1.

^x See chap.

2. 15.

^y Num. 25. 3.

Ps. 106. 28.

^z ch. 4. 14.

^a Jer. 11. 13.

See Judg.

6. 32.

^b Ps. 81. 12.

Ezek. 20. 8.

Amos 4. 5.

^c Job 27. 14.

^d Deut. 28.

41, 62.

saw your fathers as ^u the firstripe in the fig tree ^x at her first time: *but* they went to ^y Baal-peor, and ^z separated themselves ^a unto *that* shame; ^b and *their* abominations were according as they loved.

11 *As for* Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception.

12 ^c Though they bring up their children, yet ^d will I bereave them, *that there shall not be* a man *left*: yea, ^e woe also to them when I ^f depart from them!

^e Deut. 31. 17. 2 Kin. 17. 18. ch. 5. 6. ^f See 1 Sam. 28. 15, 16.

"thousands of Ephraim; and they are the thousands of Manasseh" (Deut. xxxiii. 17.). And now the home, the nation is barren of children altogether, or bereaved of its young men (comp. Amos iv. 10.); the new generation only born for speedy death (vv. 12, 13.). There is a blight, a curse upon them, "Root and fruit;" yes, My curse. Not Jacob are they any more, but "Esau whom I hated;" not Joseph any more, "separated from," or "the consecrated one of, his brethren" (Deut. xxxiii. 16.); these are "separated (same word) to shame" (ver. 10.); not Israel any more, but as Canaanites, "driven out" of the land, which they too have defiled (comp. Lev. xviii. 28.); for My love, for My favour, My presence, what have they, what are they now? as Cain, they are "wanderers."

10. "the firstripe." So exactly, Micah vii. 1, "My soul desired 'the firstripe fruit,' and that in its full freshness;" comp. Exod. xxiii. 19, "the first of 'the firstfruits' of thy land shalt thou bring into the 'house of the Lord thy God.'" So the loving Father took Israel to Himself, and made her, in His mercy, dedicate herself to Him "in her youth," with the love of a blessed "espousal," that she might be "holiness unto 'Him,' 'the firstfruits' of His increase (Jer. ii. 2, 3; comp. St. James i. 18.).

"they went to Baal-peor." They, emphatic; these very same persons, so loved, so cared for, "separate themselves to shame;" literally, "became Nazarites to" (devoted themselves to) "shame;" it is the verb used of the Nazarite (Num. vi.); and "became abominations like 'their love'" (as in Deut. xxix. 17, "Ye have seen their 'abominations' 'and their idols');" so it is best translated; like idol, like idolater (comp. Ps. cxv. 8.). "What a man's love is, that he is. Lovest thou earth? Thou 'art earth'" (St. Augustine).

11. "their glory," see ch. iv. 7; i. e. their "increase," their "numbers," of which they were so proud (comp. Isa. xvii. 4.). This should flee away, "like a scared bird" from its nest, in each stage of natural development. The children should perish as soon as born, or in their mothers' womb, or to the womb God would not give conception. The seven words of the doom mark its rapidity, its completeness.

12. There is a further threat. If the children grow up, yet will "I bereave" thee of them, then; so, long ago, God had warned them (Lev. xxvi. 22.); so it happened afterwards to Judah as well; "abroad," the sword "bereaveth;" "at home, there is as death" (Lam. i. 20.). There is

HOSEA, IX.

13 Ephraim, ^g as I saw Tyrus, *is* planted in a pleasant place : ^h but Ephraim shall bring forth his children to the murderer.

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14 Give them, O LORD : what wilt thou give ? give them ⁱ a ² miscarrying womb and dry breasts.

^g See Ezek.
26, & 27, &
28.

15 All their wickedness ^k *is* in Gilgal : for there I hated them : ^l for the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of mine house, I will love them no more : ^m all their princes *are* revolters.

^h ver. 16.
ch. 13, 16.
ⁱ Luke 23, 29.

² Heb. *that*
casteth the
fruit.

^k ch. 4, 15.
& 12, 11.

^l ch. I. 6.

^m Isai. I. 23.

a more terrible woe to come ; “ Woe to them, when I,” Myself, their true “ glory,” “ depart from them.”

13. This verse is very difficult. Perhaps we may translate it. “ Ephraim, “ as I saw it (exactly as ver. 10 above), (was) a Tyre, planted in (its) “ home, and Ephraim is to (i.e. is doomed to) bring forth to murderer “ its children.” The comparison to Tyre, as above, is adopted by St. Jerome : “ so beautiful was it . . . so fortified by the protection of God, “ as Tyre is girt with the sea ; ” so the Vulgate also translates, and others, Ezekiel says (ch. xxvii. 3.), “ O thou, that art situate at the entry of the “ sea, a merchant of the people for many isles, Thus saith the Lord God ; “ O Tyrus, thou hast said, I am of perfect beauty.” Still we may ask, why this particular comparison, if it be one ? It was, of course, in one way, disparagement to compare a tribe of Israel with a heathen city, even the greatest. The connection of Tyre with Israel at this time, may be seen in Isaiah xxiii. 1 ; Amos i. 9 ; Joel iii. 4. Of course it was only at a short distance from Samaria. For the beauty of Ephraim (Samaria) comp. Isa. xxviii. 1.

“ planted.” “ Always used of planting carefully, and with choice of “ situation.”

14. The prophet, in holy zeal, and in full knowledge of the desperate sinfulness of Ephraim, intreats the Lord to make an end ; in the words of Ps. xxviii. 4, “ Give them ” (exactly) according to their deeds, and according “ to the wickedness of their endeavours ” (exactly as ver. 15.). “ Give them after the work of their hands.” He calls to mind that old blessing of Joseph, their great forefather ; and, for God’s glory, he prays for its reversal. Bless them no more ; take away the blessing “ of the “ heavens above, and of the deep that lieth under ; the blessings “ of the “ ‘ breasts ’ (exactly), and ‘ of the womb ’ ” (exactly) (Gen. xlix. 25.). “ Womb ” here is a different word from that in vv. 11, 16.

15. All the words of this verse are very strong and weighty. “ All “ their ‘ wickedness ’ (as here) I remember ; their own ‘ doings ’ (as here, “ i. e. bold, bad deeds), ‘ have beset them about ’ ” (ch. vii. 2.) ; and all is done “ in Gilgal,” that scene of My mercies. “ All their princes rebels ; ” the same words are adopted by Isaiah (i. 23.) ; it is a marked alliteration ; as we might say, all their leaders, misleaders. It is the same word translated, “ backsliding ” (ch. iv. 16.), and the reference here, as there, is to Deut. xxi. 18, They are “ a ‘ stubborn ’ son, which ‘ will not obey ’ (just “ as ‘ did not hearken,’ ver. 17.) the voice of his father.” And observe the judgment is in stronger words also than before. “ There,” therefore, at Gilgal, because of their continued, inveterate profaneness, “ I hated

16 Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit : yea, ⁿ though they bring forth, yet will I slay *even* ² the beloved *fruit* of their womb.

17 My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him : and they shall be ^o wanderers among the nations.

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ⁿ ver. 13.
² Heb. the
desires,
Ezek. 24. 21.

^o Deut. 28.
64, 65.

“them;” “I drove them forth” out of My house.” This word, only here in Hosea, is used, of the “driving” of Adam out of Paradise (Gen. iii. 24.); of Cain (ib. iv. 14.), where “vagabond” is closely cognate to “wanderers” here (ver. 17.); of Ishmael (ib. xxi. 10.); especially of the Canaanites before Israel (Exod. xxiii. 28—31; xxxiii. 2. Deut. xxxiii. 27. Ps. lxxviii. 55, &c.). I will no more love them, no more give them that abundant love, as of old, that Father’s love; for these are obstinate, obdurate children.

16. “smitten is Ephraim” (i. e. by God; comp. ch. vi. 1.); “their root is dried up,” as in Ps. cii. 4. My heart “is smitten” (exactly) as grass, and “withered.” Comp. ch. xiii. 15.

“fruit;” in reference to the name Ephraim, “fruitful.” It is, as it were, the blotting out of the name “Ephraim,” and all that belongs to it, its whole history.

17. “cast them away;” “reject,” as ch. iv. 6, and 2 Kings xvii. 20, q. v. Comp. ib. ver. 14, ch. xviii. 12, for “did not hearken.”

“wanderers.” Participle of verb (ch. vii. 13.) “they have fled.” It is said of an abiding state. This shall be their character, their history; they shall be perpetually “wanderers.” It is the mark written upon Israel to this day. The history of Israel, as a kingdom, ends with the same words, fulfilling the prophecy. “They are rejected.” The same word is the last expression of misery in the “Lamentations.” “But Thou hast utterly rejected us; Thou art very wroth against us” (v. 22.). Israel is “hid from” God’s presence, as Cain; as he, “a wanderer” upon earth. What is the lesson for us Christians? “He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit . . . If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered.”

CHAPTER X.

Israel “without sacrifice, without Image,” “without King.” The Calf-worship and Kingdom abolished.

INTRODUCTION.

Israel is only “a wasting vine,” the more fruitful, only the more wild and wanton. That land of richness from God, it is covered with “altars,” with “images.” But punishment is at hand for that “smooth,” false “heart.” “Soon shall they say,” in their despair, when “altars,” “images,” are utterly destroyed, and “the king” who is bound up with them (comp. ch. viii. 4, and below vv. 7, 15.), we would not have “God for our king;” and the “other king, what can he do for us now?” (vv. 1—3.). False indeed have they been to God, to man; false to the last; “judgment and justice they have turned into deceit and bitterness.” Over

CHAPTER X.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 740.*Israel is reproved and threatened for their impiety and idolatry.*

¹ Nah. 2. 2.
² Or, a vine
emptying
the fruit
which it
giveth.

ISRRAEL is ^a2 an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of

that house of iniquity and falsehood they are "mourning," "trembling" now, that "people of the calves," "those idol priests." . . . See that procession; their god "is carried away," votive "offering" to "oppressor king," and "Ephraim" instead, receives, and bears the fulness of his "shame." And their own "king," he has perished as in a moment; cast forth "like" broken "splinter" upon the tossing "waters." And "the high places" are pulled down at last, all that "vanity," all that "sin;" "thorn and thistle" now, in place of smoke of sacrifice, upon those "altars;" and to those "mountains and hills" (comp. ch. iv. 13.), memories of shame, oh "cover" us, they cry now, from this open scorn and derision (vv. 4—8.).

"From the day of Gibeah" (the city of "the hill") "thou hast sinned;" "shall not" a more terrible "battle" (comp. ver. 14.) "overtake" this more corrupted Israel? "Yea, I even long to chastise them, to gather against," not one offending tribe, but against all, the avenging "nations." Ephraim was wanton as "a calf," but that proud "neck" I will tame (Micah ii. 3.); hard and weary work it shall do, and oh! that "the fallow ground might be broken up," and "the Lord sought," at last, "that He might sow there His righteousness" (vv. 9—12.). No! ye have laboured only for evil, and your fruit is a "lie;" "your own ways, your trust;" "your mighty men," your pride. They shall be tried; "the spoiler" shall come upon you; that profaned "house of God" (Bethel) shall be "the house of the lying in wait" to destroy ("Beth-arbel"). "Oh! the wickedness of your exceeding wickedness" (ch. ix. 15.). "It is the morning dawn," think you? For you "the Lord maketh it darkness" (Amos iv. 13.). Bethel, "king's chapel" and king (ib. ch. vii. 13.) both pass away, cut down for ever (vv. 13—15.).

The chapter seems to point to the very last days of the kingdom, and the King Hoshea. There is a marked similarity, not only in subject-matter, but in language to 2 Kings xvii. 1—23. There we hear of "Shalmaneser;" twice there of "presents" given, and not given to the king of Assyria; there, king of Assyria "bound" (comp. ver. 10 here) "Hoshea in prison." We have there "he carried Israel away" (comp. ver. 5.); "High places," "images," "two calves," occur there also; other resemblances to this same chapter, we have already had, and shall meet with again.

But it admits of a deeper illustration from our Lord's citation of the words in ver. 8. "We have no king," said the Jews, "but Cesar" (St. John xix. 15; comp. ch. x. 3.). "In the morning, the true 'King' 'of Israel' was cut off" by His own people, He who was the true "Hoshea," their 'salvation.'

And then came the Roman eagle, as before the Assyrian; upon those who "completely filled up their sins, . . . the wrath to the uttermost" (1 Thess. ii. 16.). Is not the growing, desperate wickedness of the nation in its last days fitly paralleled by what we read throughout Hosea and

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b ch. 8. 11.
& 12. 11.
c ch. 8. 4.

2 Heb.
statues, or,
standing
images.

3 Or, *He*
hath divided
their heart.

d 1 Kin. 18. 21.
Matt. 6. 24.

4 Heb.
behead.

e ch. 3. 4.
& 11. 5.
Mic. 4. 9.

ver. 7. f See Deut. 29. 18. Amos 5. 7. & 6. 12. Acts 8. 23. Heb. 12. 15.

his fruit ^b he hath increased the altars ; according to the goodness of his land ^c they have made goodly ² images.

2 ³ Their heart is ^d divided ; now shall they be found faulty : he shall ⁴ break down their altars, he shall spoil their images.

3 ^e For now they shall say, We have no king, because we feared not the LORD ; what then should a king do to us ?

4 They have spoken words, swearing falsely in making a covenant : thus judgment springeth up ^f as hemlock in the furrows of the field.

in this chapter of its earlier sin and judgment. Did not many say in that last siege, "Ye hills, cover us:" shall it not be the cry of all, before "the wrath of the Lamb," who have lived and died impenitent? (Rev. vi. 16.)

1—8. See, above, the Introduction to the chapter.

1. "empty." Rather (see *marg.*), "emptying out" (itself); "full of tendrils" is the paraphrase of LXX., "pouring out itself into leaves . . . empty of fruit;" to the same effect St. Jerome.

"he bringeth forth . . . to himself." The precise meaning here is doubtful; perhaps, "fruit it maketh like" (a frequent meaning of the word) "to itself;" i.e. "promising, but worthless."

"images." So in next verse, the same word (sing.), ch. iii. 4. Comp. for the reversal of this; ch. xiv. 8, 9, "they shall blossom" as "the vine . . ." From Me is thy "fruit" found.

2. "is divided." Rather, "is smooth," i.e. false (comp. ver. 4, below).

"now," i.e. very soon (as ch. viii. 8, 10, 13.).

"shall they be found faulty." Rather, guilty; i.e. before God, and by Him judged and punished; so, perhaps, there follows, He, emphatically; i.e. not merely, the enemy; but their offended God, He will (literally) "break the neck of their altars," perhaps in reference to the "horns of the altar" (comp. Amos iii. 14.).

"spoil." "Utterly ruin" that which they had made so good; another conjugation (ver. 14.), "as Shalmaneser 'spoiled' Betharbel." The words are very strong.

3. "no king, for us." At the overthrow of the kingdom, now rapidly approaching, they shall say the very words, which are partly to characterise all their future history, "No king!" Comp. ch. iii. 4.

4. "They have spoken speeches," i.e. merely such, "swearing falsely;" "striking covenant;" "covenant-breakers," they have been both against God (chs. vi. 7; viii. 1.), and against man (comp. ch. xii. 1; 2 Kings xvii. 3, 4.); such "swearing" was, however, one of their habitual sins (ch. iv. 2.)

"and there springeth up judgment as hemlock," i.e. "wrong, false 'judgment' proceedeth" (Hab. i. 4.), for they turn "judgment" into "gall" (as "hemlock," here) (Amos vi. 12.). "Judgment," which should

HOSEA, X.

5 The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear because of ^s the calves of ^h Beth-aven: for the people thereof shall mourn over it, and ² the priests thereof *that* rejoiced on it, ¹ for the glory thereof, because it is departed from it.

6 It shall be also carried unto Assyria *for* a present to ^k king Jareb: Ephraim shall receive shame, and Israel shall be ashamed ¹ of his own counsel.

7 ^m *As for* Samaria, her king is cut off as the foam upon ⁷ the water.

8 ⁿ The high places also of Aven, ^o the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed: ^p the thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars; ^q and they

p ch. 9. 6. q Isa. 2. 19. Luke 23. 30. Rev. 6. 16. & 9. 6.

Before
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1 Kings 12.
28, 29.
ch. 8. 5, 6.

h ch. 4. 15.

2 Or,
Chemarim.
2 Kin. 23. 5.

Zeph. 1. 4.

1 Sam. 4.

21, 22.

ch. 9. 11.

k ch. 5. 13.

1 ch. 11. 6.

m ver. 3, 15.

3 Heb.

the face of

the water.

n ch. 4. 15.

o Deut. 9. 21.

1 Kin. 12. 30.

be "faithfulness," "equity," is only another name now for "mistrust," "bitterness." Comp., especially, Isa. lix. 13, 14.

"in the furrows of the field." Repeated ch. xii. 11; i.e. apparently, in the prepared ground of their "smooth," false heart.

5. Rather, "For the calves of Bethaven" (below, ver. 8; ch. iv. 15.), "they shall be frightened" (as one man), "the inhabitants of Samaria; because over it, its people is mourning; and its ministers over it shall tremble, over its glory, because it is departed from it" (exactly as 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22, to which, no doubt, reference is made). A very expressive verse, full of scornful irony. As for living beings carried away from their home, or killed, so all Samaria is now in terror, for its calves; because, "its people," i.e. "the people," not of God any more, "but of the calf" (comp. Num. xxi. 29: "the people of Chemosh," i.e. Moab), are in mourning over them, and its ministers ("Chemarim," in the original, only twice besides, 2 Kings xxiii. 5. Zeph. i. 4; nothing certain can be said of the meaning of the word) "are trembling over it; yes, over its glory," probably, "its golden ornaments, its splendours," "for *that* is going into captivity" (the strict meaning of "is departed," here).

6. "It shall be also carried." It is more emphatic: "Yea, itself," i.e. "the calf, to Assyria is carried," perhaps, "in procession!" (so the word commonly means;) "a votive offering." And what have its people in return? "Shame," only "shame," bitter remorse, by-and-bye, for all was their own policy, their own "counsel" (comp. ch. xi. 6.). "Jero-boam," we read, "took counsel" (verb of our subst.), "and made two 'calves'" (1 Kings xii. 28; comp. Micah vi. 16; also, above, ch. iv. 7, 19.).

7. "cut off." Same word below, ver. 15, and ch. iv. 5, 6.

"as the foam." Rather, "as splinter" (so LXX., and other ancient versions). The short verse, just seven, or six words, marks the instantaneous overthrow. See a like instance in Ps. xlvi. 4, 5.

8. "The high places . . . shall be destroyed." So Lev. xxvi. 30 would be fulfilled.

"the thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars." "Thorn

Before
CHRIST
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shall say to the mountains, Cover us; and to the hills, Fall on us.

¹ ch. 9. 9.

² See Judg. 10.

³ Deut. 23. 63.

⁴ Jer. 16. 16.
Ezek. 23. 46,
47. ch. 8. 10.

⁵ O, when I shall bind them for their two transgressions, or, in their two habitations.

9 ^r O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah: there they stood: ^s the battle in Gibeah against the children of iniquity did not overtake them.

10 ^t *It is* in my desire that I should chastise them; and ^u the people shall be gathered against them, ² when they shall bind themselves in their two furrows.

"and thistle," exactly as in Gen. iii. 18, where only besides the word "thistle" occurs; "thorn," not again in Hosea; ch. ix. 6 is different.

"come up." The word constantly used of "offering" of a sacrifice, and of "the going up" of the smoke from it. The last clauses are quoted in St. Luke xxiii. 29, 30. We must remember the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel was a great and most signal judgment upon long, inveterate sin (comp. ver. 15.), the like to which, in the carrying away of all the people captive, there had never been before. It leads the prophet back in thought to that horrible sin, and terrible overthrow of "the days of Gibeah;" and the desolation of the land, to that first curse upon it. The cry of Israel's despair is, we know, the forerunner, not only of that "of the day of Jerusalem," but of the last day (Rev. vi. 16.).

9—11. See the Introduction to the chapter.

9. Rather, "from the days of Gibeah, thou hast sinned, O Israel; there they stood (then); shall there not overtake them, in Gibeah, battle against the children of iniquity?" The first clause is resumed from the last verse, "the hills" of unclean sacrifice suggest again "Gibeah," i.e. "hill," the same word; the national, and present "sin of Israel," its calf-worship, that older, that parent sin, committed there. "There," in Gibeah, the Israel of that day "stood," persevered in its sin; perhaps "there" the Israel of this day, stood also, for are not they like, yea, worse than their forefathers? Comp. ch. xii. 4: "We found Him in Bethel, and there He spake with us." "And shall there not overtake them," in this very Gibeah, in the "hill" and home of their idolatry, battle "more terrible," against such children of obstinate iniquity? (comp. vv. 14, 15, below.) Such "a battle" as Shalmaneser's with them, such as that of their final overthrow, yea, more, "the curse of their God." Comp. Deut. xxviii. 15.

10. "It is in my desire," &c. A very hard verse. Perhaps, "With My (properly, 'passionate') longing, I will even chastise them, and gathered against them shall the peoples be, when I bind them" (i.e. make them captives), "for (their) two transgressions." For the first clauses, comp. Deut. xii. 15, and ch. vii. 12, 15, where we have the same verb; "re-buker" (ch. v. 2.) is the substantive from it. For the second, we may perhaps compare the same verb (Judges xx. 11.): "All the men of Israel 'were gathered' against the city (Gibeah), knit together as one man." Then, against one tribe of Israel all the other tribes rose, now, against Israel all the "nations." "When I bind them," &c. (so *margin.*); the

HOSEA, X.

11 And Ephraim is as ^x an heifer *that is taught*, and loveth to tread out *the corn*; but I passed over upon ²her fair neck: I will make Ephraim to ride; Judah shall plow, and Jacob shall break his clods.

¹ Before CHRIST
cir. 741.

^x Jer. 10. 11.
Mic. 4. 13.

² Heb. *the beauty of her neck.*

^y Prov. 11. 18.

12 ^y Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in

consonants of this word are exactly the same as in "I will chastise them;" probably this word refers back to that, and so is said also of the Lord God. Further, it is the word used (2 Kings xvii. 4.) of the "binding" (making prisoner) of King Hoshea. "For their two transgressions" (so also *marg.*, the ancient versions, and St. Jerome). There is really no authority for "furrows." These are either (so St. Jerome, and many moderns) "the two calves" (comp. "the sin of Israel," ver. 8, and 2 Kings xvii. 16.); or, as he also suggests, they mean (as in Jer. ii. 13.): "My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out . . . broken cisterns." Perhaps the first interpretation is the simpler, and more in keeping with the context.

11. This too is a hard verse. Apparently two things are brought before us; first, the wantonness, wilfulness, and self-pleasing of Ephraim; then, the severe discipline which God would inflict upon her. "Israel" has already been compared to a heifer (ch. iv. 16.), but here the word is different. "Calf" she is herself, in her ignorance (like "the calves" she worships, above ver. 5.), "but she is taught" (in irony perhaps) one thing, she loveth "to thresh;" that work was not hard, and as the bullock had "no muzzle then" (comp. Deut. xxv. 4.), it was even pleasant. That has been all her training, all her love, to do her own pleasure. "And I," it is emphatic, "I (now) have passed," i.e. with My yoke, and that one of pain and suffering, "over the beauty of her neck;" over her pride and wantonness. "I will make Ephraim to carry," i.e. burdens (not "to ride"). "Plough shall Judah also, Jacob break for himself the clods." All these last, different forms of hard, continued toil. Comp. Jer. xxxi. 18: "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast 'chastised me' (as ver. 10.), and 'I was chastised,' as 'a bullock' (sing. 'of 'heifer' here), not accustomed (as 'taught' here) to the yoke."

12—15. Oh! ye, who have "sown" the wind, and are "reaping" the whirlwind (ch. viii. 7.), "sow" ye yet; break up, again and again, that hard ground of your hearts; "it is time to seek the Lord" (there is still "righteousness," still "mercy," for man); till "He come" Who will perfectly "teach you His ways" (comp. Isa. ii. 3.), bring in perfect "righteousness." A plain prophecy of our Lord Jesus Christ. Alas! I cry in vain; ye are only earnest, laborious in evil; ye "plough, sow, eat the fruit," it is only service of "falsehood." "Thou trustest" in thy own "way" (comp. Prov. i. 31.), "way" of Egypt; "way" of Assyria (Jer. ii. 18.), in thy mighty armies. And "the tumult" of battle comes (Amos ii. 2. Isa. xiii. 4.), and the utter "wasting of thy fortresses" (comp. for same phrase, Amos v. 9.). Thy warning has been given. What "Betharbel" was, shall "Bethel" be. "Mother and child" perished then by terrible death (apparently a proverb for complete destruction, comp. Gen. xxxii. 11.). No "dawn" of brightness and hope is there for you. Your "wickedness" upon "wickedness," it is full, overfull. "King" and kingdom have passed utterly away.

Before
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* Jer. 4. 3.

^a Job 4. 8.
Prov. 22. 8.
ch. 8. 7.
Gal. 6. 7, 8.

^b ch. 13. 16.

^c 2 Kings 18.
34. & 19. 13.
^d ch. 13. 16.

² Heb.
*the evil of
your evil.*
^o ver. 7.

mercy; ^z break up your fallow ground: for *it is* time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

13 ^a Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men.

14 ^b Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled, as Shalman spoiled ^o Beth-arbel in the day of battle: ^d the mother was dashed in pieces upon *her* children.

15 So shall Beth-el do unto you because of ² your great wickedness: in a morning ^o shall the king of Israel utterly be cut off.

12. This is one of the four verses (in the chs. from iv. to xiii. inclusive) in which only the Prophet, apparently, himself, addresses his own people Israel; in two, expostulating with them (ch. ix. 1, 5; here, and ch. xii. 6.), calling them to repentance.

"in mercy," properly, "in the proportion of mercy," i.e. "net in proportion to what ye have sown . . . but beyond all deserts."

"till He come." See on ch. vi. 3.

"and rain righteousness." Rather, "teach," the usual meaning of the word. Comp. Joel ii. 23: "Rejoice in the Lord your God, for He hath given you a 'teacher'" (so *margin*. there; it is the same word, as here) "of righteousness."

14. "against thy peoples," properly. The plural is almost invariably used of "the Gentiles" (as ch. vii. 8.); perhaps, here the prophet means, Israel was no more one people, but many; such, no doubt, would be a kingdom rent by continual conspiracies, revolutions, murder by priests, murder of kings, foreign invasions, internal strifes.

"Betharbel," i.e. "house of the ambush, lying in wait, of God; there was, Josephus tells us, such "a city in Galilee;" and other authorities place it in the famous "plain of Jezreel" (comp. Hosea i. 5.). There it would seem Shalmaneser, in his first invasion (2 Kings xvii. 3.), must have defeated Israel in some terrible "battle."

"the mother was dashed in pieces upon her children." So it would be in the destruction of Samaria (see on ch. xiii. 16.). It seems to have been one of the outrages of those Eastern conquerors, comp. Isa. xiii. 16. Nah. iii. 10; and especially 2 Kings viii. 12. The word is the same in all the instances.

15. "the wickedness of your wickedness;" literally. Hosea had dwelt upon this word (ch. vii. 2, 3.), now he doubles it, to mark the intensity and fulness of Israel's sin.

"in the dawn;" literally. There is an allusion, possibly, to the name of the last king, Hoshea, i.e. salvation, for whatever reason he was so called. The alliance with "So," the great king of Egypt (2 Kings xvii. 4.), would kindle in king and people fresh hopes of deliverance from Assyria; of prosperity, as of old (comp. above, ver. 13.). And against all

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CHAPTER XI.

Before
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1 *The ingratitude of Israel unto God for his benefits.* 5 *His judgment.*
8 *God's mercy toward them.*

WHEN ^a Israel was a child, then I loved him, ^a ch. 2. 15.
and ^b called my ^c son out of Egypt. ^b Matt. 2. 15.
^c Ex. 4. 22, 23.

this policy, and pride, and self-glory, stood the true Hosea, with the word he had uttered, from the Lord, at first. "I will not 'save' by bow, nor "by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen" (ch. i. 7.).

CHAPTER XI.

"The Love of God for Israel, one, and unchangeable."

INTRODUCTION.

How "loved" I Israel, when "a child;" "I called him Myself out of "Egypt." I "called" him again, and again by others; "taught him to go," "drew him with bands of love," "gently gave him food" from heaven. "He went away from Me," went after Baal instead, would not "know Me "as his healing God," thought of Me as a hard master (vv. 1—4.). "Shall "he not turn back to Egypt," who would not "turn" to Me? "Shall not "the sword descend upon his cities and devour," because they "only turn "away from Me," resist every "call to Me," as "one man," refuse Me every honour? (vv. 5—7.) "But how shall I give up Ephraim?" how "shall I turn to destroy him?" how make him as those "cities of the "plain?" I, Who "yearn" for him; I, Who am "God, not man," "the "Holy, Faithful One, the Saviour in thee" (see note on ver. 9.). "I will "not enter the city as Avenger" (vv. 8—9.). I will call them more loudly, with a voice, "as a lion," to make them "tremble," but to return too, at last. Out of Egypt, out of Assyria, they shall come, those "child- "dren," as a little trembling bird, as a weary dove, to their rest. The "word" is Mine, it is sure (vv. 10—11.).

A wonderful description of the "love" of God; it is the prophecy of the love, "manifested" (1 St. John iv. 9.) in "the Man" (ver. 4.) Christ Jesus, "drawing" men to Him, by His Cross, "yearning" (ver. 8.) "after His brethren," as the true Joseph (comp. Gen. xliii. 20.); His "soul" and "spirit" "troubled" in Him (St. John xi. 33; xii. 27; xiii. 21.), until "'Mercy and Truth' meet together." It comprehends the long story of man's "redemption," and first "election," till his "regeneration" in the last day. It begins with the leading of that "beloved son" "out of Egypt," when all around there was the "cry" of death, and it ends with the Judgment Voice of Him, Who is at once a "Lion" and a "Lamb" (Rev. v. 5, 6.), "the refuge of His people" (Joel iii. 16.) "in that day."

The chapter looks back to ch. ii. 13—23, with which it is directly connected by the "saith the Lord" (ver. 11.), only found here, and in that section, in Hosea; (comp. ver. 2 with ch. ii. 13; ver. 3 with ch. ii. 14; ver. 4 with ch. ii. 8; ver. 6 with ch. ii. 18, "sword;" ver. 11 with ch. ii. 14: "I will make them lie down safely.") It looks onward to ch. xiv. Comp. with vv. 3, 7, and 4, 9: "I will heal their backsliding," "I will "love" them freely; Mine anger is turned away from him" (ch. xiv. 4.). Thrice we hear of the "call" of God, direct or through His

Before
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2 As they called them, so they went from them :
 a they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to
 graven images.
 3 e I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by
 their arms ; but they knew not that f I healed
 them.
 d 2 Kings 17.
 16. ch. 2. 13.
 & 13. 2.
 e Deut. 1. 31.
 & 32. 10, 11,
 12.
 Isai. 46. 3. f Ex. 15. 26.

messengers (vv. 1, 2, 7.) ; thrice, "Ephraim," "the dear son," is called by name ; thrice (vv. 5, 7.) is repeated his "backsliding," his "refusing to return," "returning to Egypt," which land of bondage is also thrice mentioned (vv. 1, 5, 11.). There are other links which bind the verses together.

It would seem we should follow the Hebrew Bible, and end the chapter after ver. 11. The next verse marks a change of subject, and is closely connected with ch. xii. 1.

1—4. The Lord God reminds Israel of His tender, of His exceeding love. When Israel was a child I loved him, called him out of his bondage, called him My son. Myself (it is emphatic, in ver. 3.), I taught him to walk, took him up in My arms (comp. Deut. xxxii. 10—12.). With cords of human sympathy I drew, have been ever drawing him, with strong bands of love ; when he fretted and chafed in spite of this care, "I bent as a father towards him," tenderly still, "gave him food." Observe in this touching description of God's marvellous love to Israel, not only its condescension, but its gentleness, in not saying one severe word of Israel's base and shocking ingratitude towards God Himself ; of those constant "murmurings," "backslidings," corruptions, idolatries. It is only, "they knew not that I healed them." Comp., "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Only, "I am drawing them nearer and nearer to Myself ; and they, thinking that I was only "lifting up yoke, and bridle in it, to place on their jaws!" The second verse seems an objection to this view ; perhaps it rather confirms it. It is as if the loving Father said : That first call was repeated again and again ; I made it by Moses, My servant, by judges, by prophets ; they did turn away from that call to their Baals, their images ; but I pass by all those transgressions now ; they knew not those calls too were from Me. My love is an everlasting love ; My love is the love of a father, "who pitieth his own children."

1. "called My son out of Egypt." The explanation of these words in their reference to our Lord belongs to the interpretation of St. Matthew ii. 15. Israel is plainly a type of Christ ; as plainly to quote St. Jerome here, "Those, who were partly types of Christ, are not to be supposed to have done all they did as types of Him. A type indicates something partial ; if the whole had gone before in the type, then it would have been not type, but reality."

2. "sacrificed . . . burned incense." Exactly as ch. iv. 13.

"graven images." Only here in Hosea ; the word in chs. iii. 4 ; x. 1, 2, is different ; this is found in Deut. vii. 25 ; xii. 3, and a close cognate word in the language of the second Commandment.

3. "taking them by their arms." Rather, "He took them up in

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4 I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and ^s I was to them as they that ² take off the yoke on their jaws, and ^h I laid meat unto them.

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^s Lev. 26. 13.

² Heb. *lift up*.

^h Ps. 78. 25.

ch. 2. 8.

ⁱ See ch. 8. 13. & 9. 3.

“His arms.” The Lord God not only likening Himself to a nurse, “sets Israel on his feet,” but when he was weary, “took him up;” there may be a reference to Deut. xxxii. 11: “As an eagle . . . fluttereth “over her young . . . ‘taketh’ them, beareth them on her wings.” The change of person—“I” . . . “He took”—seems abrupt to us. Perhaps the prophet bursts in with his own rapturous adoration of the tenderness of the Lord.

“I healed them.” “I am the Lord that ‘healeth’ thee,” was the revelation at Marah. Comp. Exod. xv. 26; and see above ch. vi. 1. So the great Apostle in the infancy of the Christian Church was “gentle” among his converts; “even as a nurse cherisheth her children” (1 Thess. ii. 7.). But the Good Shepherd’s example (Isa. xl. 11.) is the rule and pattern of all pastoral work (Ezek. xxxiv. 4.).

4. “with cords of a man.” Yes; with “cords, and bands,” the two same words in Isa. v. 18, i.e. mightily, indeed, but yet as a man, as a father, draweth (comp. ver. 3.); as the true “Adam” draweth, “the “Man, Christ Jesus.” Comp. Jer. xxxi. 3: “I have loved thee with an “everlasting ‘love;’” therefore with lovingkindness have “I drawn” thee; also, Song of Solomon i. 4; and St. John xii. 32.

“I was to them . . . take off.” Rather, “I became to them;” I was regarded by them, “as they that lift up the yoke” (and place it) “upon “their jaws;” such appears the meaning of a hard phrase. The figure of cords, &c., is continued to the yoke: “It is good for a man to bear it “in his youth” (Lam. iii. 27.). They thought it, and “the bridle” attached to it, were only laid in hard constraint “upon the jaws.” Comp. Isa. xxx. 28. Then, as rebuking the ungrateful, rebellious thought, the Lord adds, “and I, all the while, am bending down towards him; giving “him (food) to eat.” So probably the last words are to be rendered, where the change of person (“towards him”) may be meant to carry us back to the figure of the anxiously nursed child.

5—7. Then, in three verses, we have again the story of that inveterate sin, and just a glimpse, as it were, of the long captivity; but here, too, there is wonderful tenderness in the language. “Shall Le not return to “Egypt?” this seems the right rendering, “and Asshur, he (emphatic) “be his king.” So the phrase is here, as in chs. viii. 13; ix. 3; and, as in the last of these cases, this typical Egypt, and bondage there, is explained by “Assyria,” which follows. “Shall not Israel have his “way, and learn by a king from among the nations, what was My “rule over him?” “Have I not sent to them prophets and seers, saying, “Turn ye from your evil ways” (2 Kings xvii. 13.), and “they refused “to return” to Me (comp. Amos iv. 6, 8, &c.); “is it not their own “counsel?” “Oh! My people” (ver. 7.), how is it “ye are bent to “backsliding from Me;” (My prophets) “call you to the most High; as “one man ye will not exalt Him.” The merciful God does not denounce here their shameful sin, their horrible profaneness, their deliberate

Before
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but the Assyrian shall be his king, ^k because they refused to return.

^k 2 Kings 17.
13, 14.
cir. 728.

6 And the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and devour *them*, ¹ because of their own counsels.

They became tributaries to Salmanser.

¹ ch. 10. 6.

7 And my people are bent to ^m backsliding from me : ⁿ though they called them to the most High,

^m Jer. 3. 6,
&c. & 8. 5.
ch. 4. 16.

² none at all would exalt *him*.

ⁿ ch. 7. 16. ² Heb. *together they exalted not.*

apostasy. It is the pleading of a Father. It is not, ye are no more sons, but strangers, but still, "My people!" "called" they are again and again, and they refuse to sing My praise, to "exalt" Me (as in Exod. xv. 2.) for My salvation. And the punishment is here briefly declared, and certainly in words not so strong as we have had before (chs. v. 14; viii. 5; x. 15.). It is the destruction of his cities, not "the perpetual "wandering" of the people (ch. ix. 17.). It is indeed "the sword" without (Deut. xxxii. 25.); but it is not here—"woe, when I depart from "them" (ch. ix. 12.).

5. "they refused to return;" i.e. to Me: so directly, it would seem, from Hosea, Jer. v. 3; and again in ch. viii. 4, 5: "Thus saith the Lord; "Shall they fall, and not rise? shall he turn away, and not return? Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual "backsliding?" they hold fast deceit, "they refuse to return." Still both these passages are much stronger in their description of the sin than Hosea is here. Jeremiah seems to take from Hosea his word "backsliding Israel" (ib. iii. 6—8, 11, 12.).

6. "abide." Rather, "be whirled upon." So Jeremiah, in a verse which explains the word: "Behold, a whirlwind of the Lord is gone forth "in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall 'fall grievously' on the "head of the wicked" (ch. xxiii. 19.).

"his branches." Rather, perhaps, "staves;" the word constantly used in the Pentateuch for "the staves" to bear the ark. Probably, here, a metaphor, for the princes and rulers, who should have been the support of Israel. They are called "shields" (ch. iv. 18.).

"their own counsels." Very emphatic in the original, ending the verse as in Ps. lxxxii. 12, which illustrates it: "I gave them up unto "their own hearts' lust, and they walked in their own counsels. Oh, "that My people had hearkened unto Me, that Israel had walked in My "ways."

7. "are bent to backsliding from me." Lit. "are hung upon backsliding." "Backsliding" (see above on ver. 5.) was, so to say, the very principle of the kingdom of Israel; "a thing 'hung to,' or 'on' "another, sways to and fro, within certain limits, but its relation to that "on which it is hung remains immovable. So Israel, so the sinner, "however he veers to and fro in the . . . circumstances of his sin, is fixed "and immovable in his adherence to his sin itself."

"Most High," or, perhaps, "upward," in the same sense; as in ch. vii. 16.

"none at all;" lit. "together," (or, "as one man"), "they do not exalt "Him."

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8 ¶° How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? *how* shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as ^p Admah? *how* shall I set thee as Zeboim? ^o mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.

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Jer. 9. 7.
ch. 6. 4.
Gen. 14. 8.
& 19. 24, 25.
Deut. 29. 21.

Amos 4. 11. ¶ Deut. 32, 36, Isai. 63. 15. Jer. 31. 20.

8—11. And so, in the foreknowledge of that terrible, prolonged misery, of age after age, the loving Father utters words of still deeper, more wonderful tenderness: "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?" how make thee as those cities of the plain, "brimstone, and salt, and burning;" "a land that is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein?" the great passage (Deut. xxix. 22—24.) is clearly referred to. "My heart is troubled;" as "mothers" over a sick or dying child, all My compassions, all the depths of My love, go forth, as in one torrent, upon thee. "I will not return" to thee, "to destroy" thee. "I am God, and not man." "Man" is a different word from that in ver. 4; I am the Holy One, the Faithful, Who shew My greatness, My glory, in compassion. Comp. Isa. xii. 6 with xli. 14. And then, with some abruptness, as we should say, but, rather, because it is the Divine work, the work of the mercy of Him alone, Who is so holy, so loving, so "mighty to save," with the certainty, with the assurance of omniscience; "after the Lord,"—they are the first words of the great prophecy—"after the Lord," weary of the world, weary of man, weary of every falsehood, every idolatry, weary of themselves, "after the Lord they shall walk" (comp. ver. 2.). His voice of majesty, His voice of judgment they shall heed; and tremblingly, but without a moment's delay they shall follow it, "those children." "For in Thee"—they know it now—"in Thee the fatherless findeth mercy" (comp. ch. xiv. 3, and with the whole, ch. iii. 5.). Yes, tremblingly, eagerly shall they come, no more like a dove, "silly and without heart," flitting to Egypt, to Assyria (ch. vii. 11.), but "fleeing away from storm and tempest;" fleeing to their home—even My altar; fleeing to Me, that "I may give them rest" (comp. Pss. lv. 6, 8; lxxxiv. 3.). It is the "recovering" of the remnant . . . "from Assyria, and from Egypt" . . . and from the islands of the "sea" (Isa. xi. 11.). It is His "sure word of promise" Who said, "ye shall be gathered one by one, ye children of Israel. In that day the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come, which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord—at Jerusalem" (ib. xxvii. 12, 13.). All this had a fulfilment in the day of Pentecost; it has from age to age a growing fulfilment; but surely it awaits a greater.

8. "Admah, Zeboim" (Gen. x. 19; xiv. 2, 8; Deut. xxix. 23.), two "cities of the plain," overthrown with Sodom and Gomorrah; the etymologies are unknown.

"is turned within me," i. e. lit. "overturned;" apparently used of vehement emotion, and distress. So exactly Lam. i. 20: "I am in distress; my bowels are troubled; 'mine heart is turned'" (see Vulgate there) "within me."

"my repentings . . . together." Better, "at once, or, altogether yearning are my strong compassions." "Yearning, besides (and exactly as

Before
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r Num. 23. 19.
Isai. 55. 8, 9.
Mal. 3. 6.

s Isai. 31. 4.
Joel 3. 16.
Amos 1. 2.

t Zech. 8. 7.

9 I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: ^r for I *am* God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city.

10 They shall walk after the LORD: ^s he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble ^t from the west.

here) Gen. xliii. 30: "His (Joseph's) bowels 'did yearn' upon his brother." 1 Kings iii. 26: "Her bowels 'yearned' upon her son;" the only other instance of the word is Lam. v. 10.

"together." The same word in Hebrew as in the last verse; see *margin*, to which it seems directly to refer. Israel "altogether," "one and "all," turning away from his Lord; and the Lord, with all the "oneness" of His Being, with all the intensity of His everlasting love, yearning upon His Son. Jer. xxxi. 20 is an inspired commentary on the whole verse: "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." It is as if, such is this wonderful verse, such the human words which we can only use, there was in the Divine heart a struggle between justice and mercy, till mercy overcame, at the sight of man's misery. Such language, as we have here, expands, and, in a degree, explains, some of the struggles of our Incarnate Lord, as in St. Luke xii. 49, 50. St. John xi. 33; xii. 27.

9. "I will not return to destroy Ephraim." The first word, as in ch. ii. 9; apparently, make My presence again felt, by destroying; the second is used (Gen. xix. 13, 29.) of God "destroying the cities of the "plain;" and, in another conjugation, but with the same sense (ib. xviii. 28: "Wilt Thou destroy" all "the city," for lack of five? So again ib. vv. 31, 32; and so, by reference to this place, and the context here, we may perhaps explain the hard phrase which follows, "I will not "enter into the city;" i.e. for a full, complete judgment; though the words have a general, as well as a particular sense (comp. Joel ii. 9; Amos iii. 6.).

"the Holy One in the midst of thee." Exactly the same words Isa. xii. 6; and thrice in Zeph. iii. 5, 15, 17, who explains them: "The "just Lord is 'in the midst' thereof; He will not do iniquity." "The "King of Israel, even the Lord, is 'in the midst' of thee; thou shalt not "see evil any more." (Comp. Micah iii. 11: "Is not the Lord 'among us;' "none evil can come upon us.") "The Lord thy God 'in the midst' of "thee is mighty: He will save; He will rejoice over thee with joy."

10. "after the Lord they shall walk;" as in their "youth." Jer. ii. 2, where there is the same phrase; whereas, before "they 'went after' " (same) their lovers" (ch. ii. 5.); "went" (same, above ver. 2.) from those who "called them."

"He shall roar like a lion." Compare, especially, Joel iii. 16; Amos iii. 8.

"the children," i.e. "the sons indeed" (comp. ver. 1.).

"shall tremble;" so exactly in the next verse; i.e. "come tremblingly;" in eager haste, yet with holy awe. So Isa. xli. 5: "The

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11 They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, ^{Before} and as a dove out of the land of Assyria: ^{CHRIST} and I ^{cir. 728.} will place them in their houses, saith the LORD. ^{u Isai. 60. 8. ch. 7. 11.}

^{x Ezek. 28. 25, 26. & 37. 21, 25.}

"isles saw, and feared; the ends of the earth 'were afraid' (exactly), "drew near, and came."

"from the west." Lit. from the sea, i. e. Mediterranean, at the west of the Holy Land; the south and east are indicated (ver. 11.).

11. "I will place them." Rather, "make them to dwell," as the same word is translated in ch. xii. 9. So, in Zech. x. 6, who explains our verse, "I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and 'I will bring them again to place them' (as here); for I 'have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast 'them off' (comp. there also vv. 10—12.).

"in their houses;" perhaps, "in their homes." It may be only an equivalent phrase to the following, in the same class of prophecies, Jer. xxiii. 8: "They shall dwell 'in' their own land." Comp. 3: "I will 'bring them again to their folds." We are reminded of the frequent phrase (Lev. xxv. 18, 19, &c.), "Ye shall dwell in the land safely."

"saith the Lord." See introduction to the chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

The contrast between Jacob and his descendants.

The certain "recompence" of Ephraim.

INTRODUCTION.

But what is Ephraim now? false on every side, full of "lies and deceit" to God, and so to man also; even "with Judah the Lord hath a controversy;" yet now at least he is "faithful;" but for "Jacob there is "only 'punishment'" (chs. xi. 12; xii. 1, 2.). And yet the craft of their father Jacob, how wise it was, and his "strength," how mighty! "In the womb" he struggled for birthright, in his "strength of prayer," he "prevailed" with God. "He found God in Bethel," and "there "He spake with us," too; He our God, the Lord of all, and in love unchangeable. Oh, then, "turn thou, My people, to thy God;" "keep "thou too mercy and justice;" "wait thou (as thy father) on thy God" (vv. 3—6.).

What! "Canaan," merchant, "turn?" He who is all "deceit." He who does not "supplant" by earnest zeal, but simply "loves to oppress" (ver. 7.). Says he not, I have "only" made me "rich:" "in my "weal" where "findest" thou "woe?" And I, all this time, have been "thy God" (for the third time, comp. ver. 6.), "from Egypt" ever onwards; "with "whom thou wast a sojourner" (Lev. xxv. 23.), in tent and booth; with whom, (though after how long a captivity,) thou shalt dwell again. Yea, as "I spake at Bethel," "I have spoken by prophets." Whilst thou "multipliedst" thy "lies and desolation," I have multiplied visions to thee (vv. 8—10.). But "Gilead" (comp. "Bethel," ver. 4.), "Gilgal," the one, thy forefather's "heap of witness," the other, "the rolling away" of thy "reproach" (comp. ver. 15.), what have they become? "Iniquity," "vanity," "heaps" of ruins. And "Jacob," how different! "He fled"

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12 ^y Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit: but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful ² with the saints.

^y ch. 12. 1.

^z Or, with the most holy.

from idolatry "for a chaste wife;" "he kept" all entrusted to him; and My "prophets!" how once they laboured not in vain; when by them Israel "was kept" safe, "brought out of Egypt." But Ephraim "has provoked to the uttermost;" "his bloodshedding shall be on his own head;" "his reproach return upon him" (vv. 11—14.).

Note in this chapter the many resemblances to chapters iv, vii, x, and how by ver. 9, it is linked on to ch. xiii. 4. Perhaps we have in vv. 8, 9, the very form of "the controversy" (ver. 2.). Comp. the form of the renewed covenant (ch. xiv. 8.). Especially observe, how very closely in vv. 3, 4, 6, 12, 13, 14, the language of Genesis is woven in, and of Deuteronomy, as so often before; and how the prophets Amos and Micah here illustrate Hosea.

xi. 12—xii. 2. And now, again, the Lord turns from that far distant future of blessing for a remnant of Israel to the sure "recompence" (vv. 2, 14.) of punishment, which He will make speedily. Ephraim is only "deceit" (chs. xi. 12; xii. 7.) towards God, towards man. What does my true worshipper? "I will wash my hands in innocency, so 'will 'I compass' (as here) Thy altar" (Ps. xxvi. 6.). Ephraim "compasseth me with lies!" Judah knows Me still, at least, "as the 'Mighty God;'" as "the Most Holy," He fears me. Ephraim's whole life is "a lie;" his policy, his trade (ver. 7.) a web of falsehood; his talent now fertile only in fraud; to Assyrian first, and then to Egypt. There is "controversy" for Judah, but on Israel that long-threatened punishment must fall. Hosea has referred several times to the great judgment song of Moses (Deut. xxxii.), besides other places, in the last chapter; he will refer to it again in this. So perhaps he is calling to mind now the words: "If I whet My glittering 'sword' (ch. xi. 6.), 'and Mine hand take hold on judgment; 'I will render' (as here) vengeance to Mine enemies, and will reward them that hate Me" (ib. 41.). "He will render" (as here) "vengeance to His adversaries" (ib. 43.).

xi. 12. "compasseth Me about with lies." "Their own doings" (as below ver. 2.) "have beset" them "about" (same word in ch. vii. 2.). Mark the condescension of the holy Lord God: for "evil cannot dwell" with Him (Ps. v. 4.). Mark the daring impiety of man; his religion, his life, a lie; and that, offered not only to "king and princes" (ch. vii. 3.), but to the King of kings.

"Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints." There is great difficulty about this. "Ruleth" is a conjecture upon at least plausible grounds.

"with the saints." Should rather be, "with the Holy One" (same as ch. xi. 9, but in the plural, as in Josh. xxiv. 19.). But how can "Judah," "with whom the Lord has a controversy" (exactly as ch. iv. 1.) be thus described? According to the common chronology, when king Hoshea was overthrown, Hezekiah had not long begun his reign. So, in spite of the wickedness of the last king, Abaz, Judah was "still" on God's side, and, as compared with Israel, even "faithful." Though she too "the faithful city," was warned immediately, "how is she become a harlot!"

CHAPTER XII.

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1 *A reproof of Ephraim, Judah, and Jacob.* 3 *By former favours he exhorteth to repentance.* 7 *Ephraim's sins provoke God.*

^a ch. 8. 7.
^b 2 Kin. 17. 4.
ch. 5. 13.
& 7. 11.
^c Isai. 30. 6.
& 57. 9.
^d ch. 4. 1.
Mic. 6. 2.
² Heb.
visit upon.
^e Gen. 25. 26.
³ Heb. *was a prince, or, behaved himself princely.*
^f Gen. 32. 24, &c.

EPHRAIM ^a feedeth on wind, and followeth after the east wind: he daily increaseth lies and desolation; ^b and they do make a covenant with the Assyrians, and ^c oil is carried into Egypt.

2 ^d The LORD hath also a controversy with Judah, and will ² punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will he recompense him.

3 He took his brother ^e by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he ^{3 f} had power with God:

(Isa. i. 21.) The alternative rendering adopted by some is, "Judah wanders at will, with, i.e. before, God, and with the Holy One (Who 'is) faithful." But this last clause, so rendered, is both strange itself, and (see the Hebrew) harsh as to its construction. It may be mentioned as a slight help, where the interpretation must remain uncertain, that "yet" (so below, ver. 9; chs. i. 6; ii. 17; xiv. 3, 8.) seems to support the A.V.; a different particle is used when Judah's offence is compared with Israel's, as in chs. v. 5; vi. 11.

xii. 1. "feedeth on wind, followeth after east wind." Much the same as ch. viii. 7, only more strongly pointing to the folly of thus living on "lies," and courting "desolation;" "he increaseth." So chs. viii. 11; x. 1: Ephraim "increased" his altars; the vigour and fertility of his nature is only active, intense in sin.

"a covenant . . . and oil is carried into Egypt." The reference may be to Hoshea's acts (2 Kings xvii. 3, 4.). Comp. Isa. lviii. 9: "Thou wentest to the king with 'ointment' (as 'oil' here) . . . and didst send thy messengers far off."

2. "He will punish." Lit. "He hath (set Himself) to visit;" "He must visit." The rest of the verse is almost exactly as ch. iv. 9.

"Jacob." Only before (ch. x. 11.), and in this chapter; a name for the ten tribes; here introducing the contrast with the great Patriarch.

3—6. And think of Jacob, your great forefather. "He had princely power with God, and with man;" by the favour of God, by his own earnest zeal; power, wonderful, in that mysterious infancy of election; wonderful, in that mysterious struggle of faith and prayer; in that strong crying and "tears" (Heb. v. 7.). How did the Lord God consecrate to him Bethel! how did he there make it "God's house!" (Gen. xxviii. 22; xxxv. 7.); in his prosperity, fulfil the vow made "in his distress" (ib. chs. xxviii. 20; xxxv. 3, 7, 14.); still to old age, to the last, "wait for My salvation" (ib. ch. xlix. 18.). So "I was with" him "in the way," "in the which" he "went;" so at Bethel, "I talked with him;" yea, with you his children; and gave you your rich promise, "Be fruitful, and multiply;" "Israel is thy name; I am God Almighty" (ib. ch. xxxv. 3, 10, 11, 13.). But not only Lord of all power; I am "abundant in goodness," in mercy and judgment; thy God. "Oh, thou! oh, turn thou

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- 4 yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed :
he wept, and made supplication unto him : he found
him *in* ^s Beth-el, and there he spake with us ;
- ^g Gen. 28. 12, 19. & 35. 9, 10, 15.
- 5 even the LORD God of hosts ; the LORD *is* his
h memorial.
- ^h Ex. 3. 15.
- 6 ⁱ Therefore turn thou to thy God : keep mercy
and judgment, and ^k wait on thy God continually.
- ⁱ ch. 14. 1.
^j Mic. 6. 8.
^k Ps. 37. 7.

“yet to me.” “Keep,” what I gave thee; “wait,” as I bid thee; “keep” My commandments; “wait” for My promises; “watch, wait.” Such was the life of thy forefather; such is the life of My saints.

3. “In the womb he supplanted his brother, and in his might” (that of the first-born; comp. the same word, Gen. xlix. 3; Deut. xxi. 17.) “he had power with God.” “Supplanted,” the verb of “Jacob.” Comp. Gen. xxvii. 36, and for the facts here, *ib. chs.* xxv. 26; xxxii. 25, 28, from which last “had power” and “prevailed” are derivcd. The good side of Jacob’s character is commemorated. He was, from the first, while yet unborn, mysteriously eager for a blessing; early, “he had power with man,” though the act was stained with craft; in his matured strength, and in his persevering faith, he had also with God.

4. “yea, he had power over the angel.” At once a repetition, for emphasis, and an explanation of the preceding clause.

“he wept.” An act not recorded by Moses, but in harmony with his account (*Pusey*), (Gen. xxxii. 26.).

“he found Him,” i. e. Jacob found God; so St. Jerome. It may be “God found Jacob,” but the first seems best; it is the phrase, Deut. iv. 29, and often: of course man must first be found of God, before he can find Him.

“there He (i. e. God) spake with us;” not only with him. Both revelations at Bethel are probably referred to (Gen. xxviii. 10—19; xxxv. 9—15.). In this last “God blessed Jacob again, and ‘talked’ (as “here) with him;” the word is thrice repeated (*ib. vv.* 13—15.). Jacob is the type of persevering prayer, and its success. “I can do all things “in Christ, who strengtheneth me.”

5. “even the Lord;” to explain, “He spake with us.” He who is the Lord alone, the ever-existing One; He who is “God of hosts,” the Lord of Angels, the Lord of all created things; “the Lord,” His Name for ever, “the Lord, His memorial” (as here) “to generation and “generation” (Exod. iii. 15; Ps. cxxxv. 13.). “The Lord” unchangeable; and therefore, because of His covenant with His people, His name of unchanging mercy; “I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons “of Jacob are not consumed” (Mal. iii. 6.). “The God of hosts,” His name of supreme majesty, and power, but of grace too (see Amos v. 15.); but above all, “The Lord,” so will He be ever in your thought, in your meditation, Perfect love, Perfect holiness; the Eternal. “God of hosts,” so often in Amos, is only here found in Hosea, never in Joel.

6. A weighty verse, yet only three clauses, each of three words: “And thou too (emphatic), turn, and rest in thy God.” Turn from thy “backsliding,” and stay thyself in that God of unchangeableness. “Mercy and judgment,”—they are His attributes (Ps. ci. 1; xxxvi.

HOSEA, XII.

7 ¶ *He is* ² a merchant, ¹ the balances of deceit *are* Before
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in his hand: he loveth to ³ oppress.

8 And Ephraim said, ^m Yet I am become rich, I ² Or, *Ca-*
have found me out substance: ⁴ *in* all my labours naan: See
Ezek. 16. 3.
they shall find none iniquity in me ⁵ that *were* sin. ¹ Prov. 11. 1.
Amos 8. 5.

³ Or, *deceive.* ^m Zech. 11. 5. Rev. 3. 17. ⁴ Or, *all my labours suffice me not:* he shall have
punishment of iniquity in whom is sin. ⁵ Heb. *which.*

5, 6.)—they are the duties He requireth of thee (Micah vi. 8.); “keep” them with the clinging hold of thy forefather, comp. below, ver. 12, the same word used of Jacob: “and wait on thy God,” and for His salvation, as he “waited;” yea, “continually;” a word very common, but only here in Hosea, and in him, probably, a reminiscence of the Law. Let thy longing love be as the lamp “always” burning (Exod. xxvii. 20.). Thy body, soul, and spirit, as “the ‘continual’ burnt offering,” “morning and evening” (Num. xxviii. 6, 23, 24.).

7—14. Oh! vain such a call! Israel is become Canaan. Not “mercy” but “oppression” he loves. Jacob “found Me” in Bethel; Ephraim is satisfied without Me; “I have found me wealth.” Jacob by his earnest “might” had power with Me; Ephraim has his “might” of himself. (Jacob said, “I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all “the truth, which Thou hast showed Thy servant,” Gen. xxxii. 10.); Ephraim says before Me, let Thy prophets “try me;” they “shall find “nothing” (Ps. xvii. 3.). My wealth, it is due fruit of my “labour;” my success, how call ye it “sin?” The Lord answers: Yes; and all through this thy history, from Egypt to this day, “I am the Lord thy “God, thy Saviour” (ch. xiii. 4.). And “yet” I will restore to some of you My favour; but after what long generations! I have ever been sending to thee My prophets; using “manifold” ways of My wisdom to win thee, to teach thee. Yet once more; look at Gilead, look at Gilgal, east and west, throughout thy land, how hast thou requited Me. It is one universal iniquity; one great apostasy from Me to vanity; the scenes of My mercies, the scenes of thy shame! Thy father fled from idolatry, from wife of idolatry (Gen. xxviii. 1, 2, 6, 8.), at his father’s bidding; in that will of his father, he “laboured” on and on: “he “kept” faith and trust; what hast thou done? “By prophet” I led thy forefathers; I saved them out of Egypt. (How hast thou treated My prophets?) Thy doom is fixed. Bitterly thou hast provoked thy God. “The reproach” wherewith “thou hast reproached Me, I will return,” I, no longer thy God; I thy Sovereign, thy Judge (comp. Ps. lxxix. 12.).

7. “He is a merchant.” In the original “Canaan.” Both the name of the son of Ham, and most probably here (as in Isa. xxiii. 8.), “mer-“chant,” which we know the Phœnicians (Canaanites) at this time pre-“eminently were.

“balances of deceit.” Comp. especially Amos viii. 5, and Micah vi. 11, 12.

“oppress.” As Amos iv. 1, q. v.

8. Rather, “Then said Ephraim” (“he plainly tells us who that “‘Canaan’ is,” *St. Jerome*): “Only,” or merely, “I am become rich. I “have gotten me goods; all my gains have gotten me no evil, no sin.”

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n ch. 13. 4.
o Lev. 23. 42,
43.
Neh. 8. 17.
Zech. 14. 16.
p 2 Kin. 17. 13.
2 Heb. by
the hand.
q ch. 5. 1.
& 6. 8.
r ch. 4. 15.
& 9. 15.
Amos 4. 4.
& 5. 5.
* ch. 8. 11. & 10. 1.

9 And ^aI *that am* the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt ^o will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feast.

10 ^pI have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, ² by the ministry of the prophets.

11 ^aIs there iniquity in Gilead? surely they are vanity: they sacrifice bullocks in ^rGilgal; yea, ^stheir altars *are* ^oas heaps in the furrows of the fields.

The force of the Hebrew can hardly be given in English. It is a verse of marked antithesis. There is besides one certain, and one scarcely doubtful alliteration; the first, between "goods" and "evil," very marked in the original; then, the words "oppress," "become-rich" differ only in the last of their three letters.

9. "And I" (emphatic), &c. The connexion here is not quite clear; and there is a difficulty in the word "tabernacles," properly, "tents;" which is never, it is believed, used of what we call "the Feast of Tabernacles," properly of "booths," to which feast, however, allusion is generally supposed to be made here. The connexion, perhaps, is explained by vv. 5, 6; xiii. 4, and by a remarkable parallel of Amos ii. 9—11—after a similar denunciation (as above) of Israel's sin (ib. vv. 6—8.). "Such thou hast become; yet I am (still) the Lord thy God, as I was, when I delivered thee out of Egypt; I have spoken also by the prophets;" such My constant care. Then—"yet"—("still") it is the first word, emphatically, "will I make thee dwell in tents, as in the days of solemn feast," or assembly. The promise is the same as in ch. xi. 11, and therefore distant; but for "houses" or "homes" there, we have "tents." Why the difference? Is it a reference again to Jacob, their forefather, described to us "as a plain man, dwelling in tents," as here (Gen. xxv. 27.); and so also to Abraham, who by faith sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, "dwelling in tabernacles" (comp. here LXX. in this place), with Isaac and Jacob. Have we thus, further, a contrast between the snares and corruption of "riches," and a life of simplicity, and contentment with a little; and, yet more, another warning that this rest shall only come to a remnant, after long wanderings in the wilderness of the world? The last words chiefly would remind us of that great feast, where the living in tents, their usual life, of old was exchanged for a living "in booths," with "rejoicing" (Lev. xxiii. 40—44.).

10. "I have also spoken by the prophets." In continuation of that "speech" from Himself (ver. 4.).

"vision." As in Isa. i. 1; ii. 1; xiii. 1. Amos i. 1. Micah i. 1. 1 Chron. xvii. 15, &c.

"used." Rather, "use" similitudes; as Isa. v. 1, 7; those of Amos, chs. vii, viii, &c.

11. Rather, "Is not Gilead iniquity?" not merely "a city of them" "that work 'iniquity'" (ch. vi. 8.), but only another name for "iniquity" and "vanity;" so the word also means. "Merely vanity have they become;" as ch. ix. 10: "They have become abomination as their

HOSEA, XII.

12 And Jacob ^t fled into the country of Syria, and Israel ^u served for a wife, and for a wife he kept *sheep*.

13 ^x And by a prophet the LORD brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved.

14 ^y Ephraim provoked *him* to anger ² most bitterly: therefore shall he leave his ³ blood upon him, ^z and his ^a reproach shall his Lord return unto him.

bitternesses. ³ Heb. *bloods*: See Ezek. 18. 13. & 24. 7, 8. ^z Dan. 11. 18. ^a Deut. 28. 37.

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^t Gen. 28. 5.
Deut. 26. 5.
^u Gen. 23. 20,
28.
^x Ex. 12. 50,
51. & 13. 3.
Ps. 77. 20.
Isai. 63. 11.
Mic. 6. 4.
^y 2 Kin. 17.
11,—18.
^z Heb. *with*
^a Deut. 28. 37.

“love.” “In Gilgal they are ever sacrificing bullocks;” “yea, their “places of sacrifice (altars) are as heaps,” &c. Here too the history of Jacob is referred to: “And Jacob said . . . gather stones . . . and they “made ‘a heap.’ . . . Jacob called it ‘Gal-eed’” (Gen. xxxi. 46, 47.). The word “heap” also means “ruins” (Isa. xxv. 2.); and in the original it is a play upon both words, Gilead and Gilgal. The mention of Gilead at once suggests again the contrast of Jacob.

12. “And Jacob fled into the country of Syria.” “Fled,” the precise word of his “flight” to and from Laban, and from Esau (Gen. xxvii. 43; xxxi. 22, 27; xxxv. 1.).

“country.” Probably, “plain-country,” i. e. Mesopotamia; another word of the book of Genesis.

“served for a wife.” The word used in Gen. xxix. 18, 20, 25, 27.

“he kept” (sheep). So Gen. xxx. 31. How many reminiscences of that book in a verse of nine words!

13. “was he preserved;” kept safe. The same verb as in vv. 6, 12.

14. “provoked to anger.” Constantly in Deuteronomy in this connection; comp. especially ch. xxxii. 16, 21; also 2 Kings xvii. 11, 17.

“most bitterly.” This and the *margin* are both good renderings; there is a reference, perhaps, to Deut. xxxii. 32: “Their grapes are grapes of “gall, their clusters are ‘bitter.’”

“leave.” Rather, “cast down” in terrible judgment. Comp. another conjugation of the verb, Amos v. 2; comp. Jer. xxiii. 39, 40: “I “will ‘forsake’ you (rather, ‘cast you away’) . . . out of My presence, “and I will bring an everlasting ‘reproach’ upon you.”

“his blood,” i. e. bloodsheddings, “upon him.” See chs. iv. 2; v. 2; vi. 8, 9. Do not the words point to a more terrible woe after more terrible sin? “His blood be upon us, and upon our children.”

“his Lord.” His sovereign Lord and Judge; “Adonai,” only here in Hosea. It is the last word in the verse.

CHAPTER XIII.

**Ephraim’s “guilt” and “death;” his self-chosen
“Saviours,” real “Destroyers;” man’s only “Saviour,”
and “Deliverance from Death.”**

INTRODUCTION.

Ephraim was a mighty tribe once. “He became guilty,” an idolater, and “he died.” This is the subject and summary of the chapter, comp. last verse (16.). So all that beauty of his promise shall pass away, it shall

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CHAPTER XIII.

1 *Ephraim's glory, by reason of idolatry, vanisheth.* 5 *God's anger for their unkindness.* 9 *A promise of God's mercy.* 15 *A judgment for rebellion.*

WHEN Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but ^awhen he offended in Baal, he died.

^a 2 Kin. 17.
16, 18.
ch. 11. 2.

be as "chaff" before wind, as "smoke" vanishing utterly (vv. 1—3.). And I was "thy God, from out of Egypt," so I revealed Myself to thee in My Law; "I taught thee to know Me," as thy one God, thy only Saviour; "I knew thee" in all thy affliction as My child (vv. 4, 5.). In thy "fulness" and plenty, "thine heart was exalted," and "thou hast forgotten Me;" so I "will rend that 'closed' heart," watch over thee for evil, as I watched over thee for good (vv. 6—8.). "Oh! Israel, thy destruction is in thyself, thy help in Me." "Where is thy 'king,' thy self-chosen saviour? (Is this a reference to the last king "Hoshea?") "In anger, first and last, I have been ever giving him, in wrath I take him now away" (vv. 9—11.). "Thy sin is 'treasured up with Me;" "thy pangs shall come;" pangs, which may be the death of all, which may be, to some, deliverance. For I "redeem from death;" "death" has no power before Me (vv. 12—14.). But (this victory is hereafter), "the east wind shall come to thee," "that which thou hast followed" (ch. xii. 2.); it shall come upon thy "fruitfulness," scorching, "withering." "He," the appointed one, shall "spoil," "lay 'desolate 'thy land' of desire." "Samaria shall fill up her guilt;" as she has done (2 Kings xv. 16.), it shall be done to her; every form of cruel death; to young man and suckling, to mother and child (vv. 15, 16.).

This chapter describes, more emphatically still than even before, the sin and the punishment of Samaria. It has a "fruitfulness" of sin (vv. 1, 2, 6.); it heaps it up, and stores it as a very treasure (ver. 12.); it has been showing continued, aggravated ingratitude, "rebellion," though so favoured a child, against "its own" Father and "God" ("rebelled," ver. 16, has never been used before, and is stronger than the words ch. vii. 13—15.); not only is Ephraim smitten, with root dried up (ch. ix. 16.), but its "fountain of life has become 'a fountain' of poison and death;" and so the punishment is expressed in more forcible terms (comp. vv. 7, 8 with ch. v. 14, and especially the two last verses here, which renew the threatening at the end of chs. vii, ix, x, xii, add to them one further horror of suffering, and contain the supreme sentence — "Doomed, 'desolate is Samaria." On the other hand, we have the unique promise of ver. 14 preparing the way for the next chapter.

Note the many short emphatic verses of the chapter, vv. 5, 6, 7, 11, but especially vv. 9, 12. The end of the judgment is like the beginning; comp. ch. iv. throughout, especially ver. 7 with ch. xiii. 6; ver. 19 with ch. xiii. 15; ver. 14, last clause, with "he is not wise," ch. xiii. 13. Isa. xiii. 6—19 should be read with this chapter; vv. 8, 15, 16, contain marked verbal correspondences. But Isaiah brings out more distinctly that the fall of Babylon, as this of Samaria, is the day of the Lord, a type of the last judgment. Hosea here, as before, has the book of Deuteronomy clearly in his thoughts.

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2 And now ² they sin more and more, and ^b have made them molten images of their silver, *and* idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let ³ the men that sacrifice ^c kiss the calves.

3 Therefore they shall be ^d as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away, ^e as the chaff *that* is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney.

4 Yet ^f I am the LORD thy God from the land of

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² Heb. they
add to sin.

^b ch. 2. 8.
& 8. 4.

³ Or, the
sacrificers
of men.

^c 1 Kin. 19. 18.

^d ch. 6. 4.

^e Dan. 2. 35.

^f ch. 12. 9.
Isai. 43. 11.

1—3. Look at Ephraim yet once more, in his power, his wealth, his success, his "fruitfulness;" how bright that promise of life! see its end, what desolation, what death! because of his sin and his guilt. He would be Baal-worshipper (chs. ii. 8, 13; xi. 2.), those long, long years ago; (we may reckon them roughly at two hundred, between Ahab, see 1 Kings xvi. 31, 32, and Hoshea). That one deep heart-sin, how has it corrupted, defiled! and how has it multiplied itself! Ever since, the richer he became, the more costly . . . his molten image; the sharper his intellect, the wider his experience, the more elaborate . . . his idols. And now, this mighty Ephraim, so low, so base; this "man" among men, "kissing" brute, . . . in worship! Mark his punishment: all that brightness, that might, passed away, as if it had never been; "like morning cloud and early dew;" no tree by the waters he! (comp. ver. 15.) but because he is "ungodly," as chaff dry, driven before the whirlwind (Ps. i. 4; Zech. vii. 14.); as smoke scattered, because he is enemy of God (Ps. lxxviii. 1, 2.). "Kiss the Son," O man, worship Him, and be blest; forsake Him—thou wilt kiss the calves! become vile, degraded below thy idol.

1. "spake trembling." Rather, it seems, "trembling" (there was), i. e. in the other tribes. The word occurs here only, and so there is naturally a difficulty; but the general sense of the verse is not affected; comp. Josh. xvii. 14. Judges viii. 1, 2; xii. 1; and chs. v. 5; vii. 10; "two conditions of Ephraim are contrasted: his prosperity he owed to "the undeserved mercy of God, his destruction to his own sin."

2. "molten image." This word (as in Deut. ix. 12, &c.) has not occurred in Hosea before. He speaks in scornful irony; lit., "they have "made them molten-idol" (exactly as 2 Kings xvii. 16, where follows (even) "two calves") "of their silver; according to their discernment" (or skill, as Exod. xxxvi. 1.) "figures; work of craftsman, all of them" (nearly as Ps. cxv. 4.); "of these, they (emphatic) are saying, the sacrificers of (i. e. among) men, calves let them kiss." The juxtaposition of the words is to be noted. And so, Ephraim drew on himself the curse (Deut. xxvii. 15.): "Cursed be the man that maketh graven or 'molten image,' "an abomination unto the Lord, 'the work' of the hands of 'the craftsman'" (comp. Exod. xxii. 20.).

4—8. This depth of sin, how came it? From contempt of My first, My plainest Commandment; "I am the Lord thy God 'which' brought thee "out of the land of Egypt," thou shalt have, "thou shalt know, 'no other " 'gods' before Me" (Deut. v. 6, 7.). "In that wilderness," where 1

B. fore
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Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me : for
^g *there is no saviour beside me.*

^g Isai. 43. 11.
& 45. 21.

^b Deut. 2. 7.
& 32. 10.

ⁱ Deut. 8. 15.
& 32. 10.

² Heb.
droughts.

^k Deut. 8. 12,
14. & 32. 15.

^l ch. 8. 14.

^m Lam. 3. 10.
ch. 5. 14.

ⁿ Jer. 5. 6.

5 ¶^h I did know thee in the wilderness, ⁱ in the
land of ² great drought.

6 ^k According to their pasture, so were they filled ;
they were filled, and their heart was exalted ;
therefore ^l have they forgotten me.

7 Therefore ^m I will be unto them as a lion : as ⁿ a
leopard by the way will I observe *them* :

spake thus to thee, " I knew thee," cared for thee ; in a land of burning drought nourished thee (" Thou didst lack nothing," Deut. ii. 7.) ; yea, all the time afterwards until now. " As I fed them they were filled, " they were satisfied ! " Satisfied with " food," " herds and flocks," " silver and gold," with their abundance, their prosperity ; and, just as I forewarned them, " heart was lifted up." Me, Who " gave them power " to get wealth ; " Me, their God, their Saviour, they have forgotten (see note below, and comp. chs. ii. 13 ; viii. 14.). And " I will be to them " no more " Saviour, but destroyer." Those wild beasts of the desert they know ; I will unite in My wrathful judgment the terrors of each of them. " Watch " over them, for evil ; " meet " them with fury ; " rend " open " that thick, gross heart ; " tear in pieces," " devour." It is as if that wilderness, scene of a tender, forty years' long protection, was the place of their punishment, and all its wild creatures let loose upon them. It is one of the most striking pictures of destruction in Holy Scripture, going beyond Amos v. 19 ; and even Jer. v. 6.

4. " I (emphatic), . . . Egypt ; " exactly as the first Commandment (Exod. xx. 2 ; Deut. v. 6.) ; " which brought thee " only omitted ; " but " Me," as in the parallels of Isaiah xlv. 5, and 21, especially.

5. " great drought." Perhaps " of burning heats." The exact force of the word, it only occurs here, is unknown ; but, no doubt, it is weighty, like those three words of Deut. xxxii. 10 : " waste, howling wilderness ; " see that verse.

6. " According to their pasture." Comp. ch. ix. 2 : " the floor and " the wine-press shall not ' feed ' them," the verb of this substantive (comp. also ch. ii. 5.) ; the verse condenses into one vigorous description of seven words Deut. viii. 10—14 : " When thou hast eaten, and " ' art full,' then thou shalt bless the Lord, . . . for the good land, which " He hath given thee. Beware that ' thou forget ' not the Lord thy God . . . " lest when thou hast eaten, and ' art full ' . . . and when thy herds and " thy flocks multiply . . . then ' thine heart be lifted up,' and thou " ' forget ' the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of " Egypt " (comp. also ib. xxxii. 15.). It represents also, in one single point of view, all that long history of the kingdom of Israel ; abundance of wealth, pride of power, utter forgetfulness of God, utter ingratitude.

7. " as a lion ; " " tearing in pieces " (ch. v. 14.).

" as a leopard ; " " watching (different verb) over them " (Jer. v. 6.) ; " swift as horse " (Habak. i. 8.) to spring upon them.

" observe." Better, " lay wait " (as A.V. Jer. v. 26.) ; in a good

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8 I will meet them ^o as a bear *that is bereaved of her whelps*, and will rend the caul of their heart, and there will I devour them like a lion: ² the wild beast shall tear them.

9 ¶ O Israel, ^p thou hast destroyed thyself; ^q but in me ³ is thine help.

10 ⁴ I will be thy king: ^r where *is any other* that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom ^s thou saidst, Give me a king and princes?

11 ^t I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took *him* away in my wrath.

2 Kin. 17. 4. r Deut. 32. 38. ch. 10. 3. ver. 4. s 1 Sam. 8. 5, 19. t 1 Sam. 8. 7. & 10. 19. & 15. 22, 23. & 16. 1. ch. 10. 3.

sense, ch. xiv. 8. Each animal, here and ver. 8, probably represents a distinct feature in the punishment.

8. "I will meet them as a bear bereaved" (of her whelps); just as Prov. xvii. 12; this was the great example, among wild beasts, of ferocity (so 2 Sam. xvii. 8; comp. also Amos v. 19; Lam. iii. 10.).

"the caul." Lit. "that which incloses." That heart "shut up" (1 St. John iii. 17.), against mercy; "inclosed" (verb of this substantive) "in its own fat" (Ps. xvii. 10.).

"there," i. e. where they sinned (ch. vi. 7.).

"like a lion." Different word from that in ver. 7; perhaps "lioness," and so named for its "voracity;" comp. Deut. xxxiii. 20.

"beast of the field," as ch. ii. 12.

"shall tear." In another conjug. (ver. 16.), "shall be ripped up."

9—11. Where now thy help, in the day of thy self-made doom? Can thy king save thee? Emblem, he . . . of thy long persevering rebellion, . . . of My displeasure.

9. Literally, it seems, "It hath destroyed thee (laid thee low) Israel, "that (thou art), against Me, against thy help." We have had the first word (chs. ix. 9; xi. 9.); it is found Deut. xxxii. 5; the last suggests Deut. xxxiii. 26: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth "upon the heaven, 'in thy help,'" exactly; comp. ib. 29: "Happy art "thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people, 'saved' (same verb, "ver. 10.) by the Lord, the shield of 'thy help.'" Whence we have, probably, the great refrain (Ps. cxv. 9—11.). The A.V. (and Vulgate) gives a very good paraphrase.

10. "I will be thy King." Rather, as in *marg.*, "Where (now) is thy "king, that he may save thee in all thy cities?" "from which one cry "for help would go up" (comp. Deut. xxxii. 37—39.).

11. "I gave . . . took away." It is the present tense in both cases, in reference to the acts, as from time to time repeated. Saul's election, in their self-will, and his speedy rejection, was only a type and forerunner of Jeroboam's; his, of all that followed in Israel. The man "who fears God, and eschews evil," can say in every sorrow, "the Lord "gave," and the Lord 'hath taken away;' blessed be the name of the "Lord" (Job i. 1, 21.). To the irreligious, gain and loss alike may be

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^o 2 Sam. 17. 8.
Prov. 17. 12.

² Heb.
*the beast of
the field.*

^p Prov. 6. 32.
ch. 14. 1.
Mal. 1. 9.

^q ver. 4.

³ Heb. *in
thy help.*

⁴ Rather,
*Where is thy
king? King
Hoshea be-
ing then in
prison,*

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12 ^u The iniquity of Ephraim *is* bound up; his sin *is* hid.

^u Deut. 32. 34. Job 14. 17. 13 ^x The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come

^x Isai. 13. 8. Jer. 30. 6.

only signs of the displeasure of God; sorrow, without His comfort; joy, without His favour.

12—16. "But, thy sin is laid up in store" with Me "for vengeance" (Deut. xxxii. 34, 35.). Thy judgment "is ready to come" (vv. 13, 15.). And shall those travail pangs of suffering be only for death, or shall there be the new birth of "a son?" No! Ephraim is "son, most unwise;" he breaks not forth (is there a reference to their forefather, Jacob, ch. xii. 3?). "Mother and child" (ch. iv. 5.), they must die; "from grasp of death and the grave I only redeem. This is My Word, "sure, certain; I will not repent."

This triumphant hymn (ver. 14.) for the victory over death, this prophecy of Christ's Resurrection, and of the great consummation, when "this corruptible shall put on incorruption" (1 Cor. xv. 54, 55.), stands between two verses, describing the very opposite, final "vengeance" in this life over obdurate sin, and therefore the terror of, it may be, "the second death." It is as if the prophet said, "The Lord, He *is* Saviour, "the only One" (ver. 4.), though Ephraim, though impenitent sinners, refuse to be saved. All that might exerted in destruction (ver. 8.), becomes, as in a moment, for so He wills, so He desires, the might of a blessed deliverance. Ephraim must "die" (ver. 1.); his whole life has been "a dying," loss of grace, loss of God. But death hath no power over Me, I overcome it; "I redeem them," i.e. perhaps, all who trust Me, all who will be redeemed, "with a price." "I pay the ransom of "a brother."

The "them" is, no doubt, difficult in point of form. It may be, in contrast with "Ephraim," described throughout (vv. 9—13.) in the singular. But for Ephraim, there is no hope of recovery; for him "the Spirit of the Lord comes," not "to cleanse" (Jer. iv. 11.); but to destroy. "The fountain" of his life is "dried up." "And he," that destroyer, how "shall he spoil" that "treasury" of wealth, of "all its vessels of beauty." There, in her "guilt," in her "desolation," is Samaria, she who "rebelled against her God!" Her young warriors (Amos iv. 10.), "slain by the sword!" "Her infants dashed in pieces," those yet unborn killed in their mothers' womb. The last two verses are full of force. What an end to the tribe of Joseph! "that fruitful bough by 'a well'" (Gen. xlix. 22, cognate to "fountain"); cast out, withered; all his grace exhausted! Mark it well; his heathen acts requited by all the ferocity of the heathen! The punishment has reached its last consummation of terror.

12. "bound up;" "as in a bag, and so treasured up." Comp. Job xiv. 17: "My transgression is sealed up in 'a bag'" (substantive of this verb), and Thou sewest up mine "iniquity:" we have same word above (ch. iv. 19.).

"hid." Better, "laid up," as Job xxi. 19: "God 'layeth up' his 'iniquity for his children; He rewardeth him."

13. "the pangs of a travailing woman." A figure not only of

upon him : he ^{is} an unwise son ; for he should not ^{stay} long in *the place of* the breaking forth of children.

14 ^a I will ransom them from ^{the} power of the grave ; I will redeem them from death : ^b O death, I will be thy plagues ; O grave, I will be thy destruction : ^c repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.

15 ¶ Though ^d he be fruitful among *his* brethren, ^e an east wind shall come, the wind of the LORD shall come up from the wilderness, and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up : he shall spoil the treasure of all ^f pleasant vessels.

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1 Prov. 22. 3.
2 2 Kin. 19. 3.
3 Heb. *a time*.
4 Isai. 25. 8.
5 Ezek. 37. 12.
6 Heb.
7 the hand.
8 1 Cor. 15.
9 54, 55.
10 Jer. 15. 6.
11 Rom. 11. 29.
12 See Gen. 41.
13 52. & 48. 19.
14 Jer. 4. 11.
15 Ezek. 17. 10.
16 & 19. 12.
17 ch. 4. 19.
18 Heb. *vessels*
of desire, Nah. 2. 9.

extreme suffering, and sometimes of the terrors of the day of the Lord (comp. Isa. xiii. 8, 9. 1 Thess. v. 2, 3.), but also, of course, of joyful deliverance (comp. especially Micah iv. 9, 10.).

“not wise.” A stronger form for, most unwise ; just as Deut. xxxii. 6. Comp. “not My people” (ch. i. 9.) ; “not man” (ch. xi. 9.).

“he should not stay long.” Rather, “at the time,” i.e. the due time “he does not stand, place himself, where the children break forth in “birth.”

14. “I will ransom them . . . redeem them.” “The first word “signifies, ‘rescue them by the payment of a price ;’ the second relates “to one, who, as the nearest of kin, had the right to acquire anything “as his own by paying that price. Both words in their exactest sense “describe what our Saviour did for us.”

“them” points strictly back to ver. 8. That verse spoke of destruction ; this of redemption ; all that has been said before of the punishment of Ephraim, as well as ver. 15, shows that these words cannot be a reversal of *that*. They can only refer to the great redemption at the last day, as the Apostle has applied them.

“I will be.” Better, in both cases, “where,” as above ver. 10 ; as the LXX. here, and as 1 Cor. xv. 55.

“repentance shall be hid.” This is equivalent to, “the Lord hath “sworn, and will not repent” (Ps. cx. 4.) ; and Rom. xi. 29 : “The “gifts and calling of God are ‘without repentance.’”

15. “among (his) brethren.” Perhaps, “among his like,” but not before God. Compare the repeated reference to “brethren” in Jacob’s blessing (Gen. xlix. 5, 8, 26.).

“he shall spoil.” *He* (emphatic), “the enemy, ever in the mind of “the prophet ;” the Assyrian, pictured here by “east wind.”

“shall spoil.” Not the common word ; here only in Hosea ; and ten times besides ; see especially Judges ii. 14, 16 ; and 2 Kings xvii. 20 (a chapter much related to Hosea), the first and last of these ; where this is the punishment of Israel for their Baal-worship.

“treasure.” Rather, “treasury.”

“of all vessels of desire.” Comp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 27 : “Hezekiah “made himself ‘treasuries’ for silver and gold,” &c., and for “all manner “of pleasant jewels” (exactly, only “vessels” there, plural) ; ib. xxxvi.

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² Fulfilled,
cir. 721.

² Kin. 17. 6.

¹ 2 Kin. 18. 12.

16 ² Samaria shall become desolate; ^f for she hath rebelled against her God: ^e they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up.

^e 2 Kin. 8. 12. & 15. 16. Isai. 13. 16. ch. 10. 14, 15. Amos 1. 13. Nah. 3. 10.

10: "Nebuchadnezzar brought (Jehoiachin) to Babylon "with all the "goodly vessels," exactly, "of the house of the Lord;" comp. Nah. ii. 9.

16. "shall become desolate." Rather, "bear his iniquity;" same word as "offended (ver. 1, &c.); chosen, perhaps, because so very like another verb (Amos vii. 9, &c.) meaning "to be made desolate," for which, in fact, it has been taken; between it and "Samaria" there is, not improbably, a play of words in the Hebrew.

"they shall fall by the sword," as ch. vii. 16.

"dashed in pieces," as ch. x. 14; all these, the acts of the heathen Hazael (2 Kings viii. 12.); the last atrocity, that of a wild beast; comp. the same word above (ver. 8.); only recorded besides of "children of "Ammon" (Amos i. 13.), and "Menahem" (2 Kings xv. 16.). Comp. ch. ix. 7, "the days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are "come; Israel shall know."

CHAPTER XIV.

The Conversion of Israel; His new life in Grace, and in Glory.

INTRODUCTION.

The judgment has fallen upon Samaria finally; for the kingdom of Israel there is no rising again (comp. ch. i. 4.). The prophet now appeals to Israel, man by man, pleads, as a voice from heaven, to be heard all "the many days" of their lonely waiting (comp. ch. iii. 3.). He teaches them the way, the very words, wherewith they shall entreat for pardon. "Oh, return, Israel, home to the Lord thy God;" entirely confess thy sin. "Take" now a new, a better offering, "words;" "words" of truth now (comp. chs. vii. 13; x. 4.); of earnest prayer; of entire self-devotion; "lips" sanctified in grace, for unceasing thanksgiving. "Thou only, "oh, God, art our Saviour" (comp. ch. xiii. 4.); Thou only our God; Thou only art the Father of the fatherless; in Thee alone (comp. ch. ii. 23.) there is "mercy" (vv. 1—3.).

"I will be thy Healer;" thou knowest Me, needest Me now (comp. chs. vi. 1; vii. 1.); I will love thee again with all the largeness of My goodness (comp. ch. ix. 15.). Turned thou art to Me, My people; I return to thee, thy God (comp. chs. viii. 5; ii. 23. Lam. v. 21.). I will be . . . no more thy terror (comp. ch. xiii. 7.); no more will I waste thee (comp. ch. v. 12.). "I will be as the dew to thee," fresh "every morning" (Lam. iii. 23.); "never passing away" (comp. chs. xiii. 3; ix. 16; "their root is "dried up," ch. xiii. 15; "his spring shall become dry"). Israel shall "take root and blossom" (Isa. xxvii. 6.); "the glory of Lebanon shall "be given to it" (ib. xxxv. 2.). Pure, bright shall he be as the lily; rich, strong, enduring, as the olive tree (Judg. ix. 9. Ps. lii. 8.); his offspring as fresh and vigorous (Ps. cxxviii. 3.); his home of blessedness (Gen. xxvii. 27.), "sweet, fragrant with grace," as "Lebanon." Israel

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CHAPTER XIV.

Before
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1 *An exhortation to repentance.* 4 *A promise of God's blessing.*

O ISRAEL, ^a return unto the LORD thy God; ^a ch. 12. 6.
^b for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. ^b Joel 2. 13.
^b ch. 13. 9.

shall be, from his Lord, "a shade" to shelter, even as his Lord; "a corn of wheat, dying and quickning," as He; "a vine" of many branches, as He; "wine of Lebanon," to cheer and refresh, as He. Under His shelter "the ransomed shall return and come to Zion" (Isa. xxxv. 10; vv. 4—7.).

"Thine, Thine I am, oh, my God; every idol I put away" (comp. chs. ii. 17; iv. 17.).

"I Myself answer him" (comp. ch. ii. 21, and Isa. lxxv. 24.); "watch over him now" (comp. ch. xiii. 7.) in love.

Strength have I now, and perpetual freshness, not my own.

Yes, "fruit" hast thou now indeed; "it is from Me" (comp. ch. viii. 4, "not by Me;" ver. 8.).

And will not man be wise to ponder these things (Deut. xxxii. 29.), to know his God? "Just and right is He" (ib. xxxii. 4.). In His "way of holiness" the righteous "walk" (Isa. xxxv. 8, 9.), free, happy, "with grace upon grace;" only "transgressors stumble" there (ver. 9.).

Observe, 1, in this last chapter, the continual references, now in the way of contrast, to what has been said in those that precede. 2. How the Song of Solomon seems to be the pattern of much of the imagery. 3. How, for the old "controversy" (ch. iv. 1.) there is now the free communion of the Father's love and the child's adoration. He, the Lord of grace, represented by one all-sufficient figure, "the dew." Israel, the backsliding and the wilful, by the thrice repeated, "as Lebanon."

1—3. And now there is at once the offer of pardon to individuals, and the revelation of the new covenant of "grace and truth" in place of the ordinances of the Law. True repentance must begin with God's pleading with the soul; then follows its "return to Him" (here as in Deut. iv. 30; xxx. 2, lit. "close, quite up to Him"); its entire confession of its sin, its yearning for pardon, its self-dedication to Him in deepest abasement, its new vow of perpetual prayer and praise. All were "words," from first to last, but "words" are now "acts," "full purpose of heart." Then the penitent renounces, one by one, each past sin, trust in arm of flesh ("Asshur"); trust in its own strength ("horse and horsemen," ch. i. 7. Ps. xx. 7.), they would come from Egypt (comp. Isa. xxi. 1.); trust in every idol. "I am nothing; Thou, art All in all. I, a helpless child; Thou, my Father." In true repentance all excuses fall away. The soul says not now, it was "inexperience," "weakness." My fall was due to "circumstances," to "fate." It was because of the "violence of passion." Mine own iniquity it was, out of my own heart.

1. "thou hast fallen." Properly, "stumbled;" and so below in ver. 9; grievously indeed, but not to utter "fall," as ch. xiii. 16; (comp. Rom. xi. 11.).

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2 Take with you words, and turn to the LORD :
say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and ² receive
us graciously : so will we render the ^o calves of our
lips.

² Or,
give good.

^c Heb. 13. 15.
^d Jer. 31. 18,
&c.

ch. 5. 13.
& 12. 1.

^e Deut. 17. 16.
Ps. 33. 17.

Isai. 30. 2, 16.
& 31. 1.

^f ch. 2. 17.
ver. 8.

^g Ps. 10. 14. & 68. 5.

3 ^d Asshur shall not save us ; ^e we will not ride
upon horses : ^f neither will we say any more to the
work of our hands, *Ye are* our gods : ^g for in thee
the fatherless findeth mercy.

4 ¶ I will heal ^h their backsliding, I will love

^h Jer. 5. 6. & 14. 7. ch. 11. 7.

2. "Take with you words." Probably in the ceremonial sense of the law, as Exod. xxix. 1 (and constantly in Pentateuch); "take" one "bullock," sing. of "calves" here (which word is different from that, chs. viii. 5, 6; x. 5.).

"receive us graciously." Rather, "take" (it is the same word); i. e. "receive good," i. e. "the good Thou first givest us;" so St. Jerome and others.

"and we would pay back calves—our lips." Two more ceremonial words. A rich verse, full of the Law, yet fuller of the Gospel. The Lord Jesus Christ "hath taken away all iniquity." "By Him therefore, "let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of "our lips, confessing (*marg.*) to His Name" (Heb. xiii. 15.). Our verse includes the beginning and the end of the great penitential Psalm (Ps. li. 1, 2, 18, 19.). "Have mercy upon me . . . wash me thoroughly from "mine 'iniquity.' 'Do good' in Thy good pleasure to Zion . . . Then "shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness . . . then "shall they offer upon Thine altar 'bullocks,'" exactly as here. Comp. also ib. lxix. 30, 31; also Isa. vi. 7: "Lo this hath touched thy 'lips,' "and thine 'iniquity' is taken away."

3. "findeth mercy," or, lit., "is pitied," "Ruhamah," "the pitied one" (chs. i. 6; ii. 23.) is the same word. Comp. Lam. v. 3, 6: "We "are 'orphans' (as here 'fatherless'), and without father. . . We have "given the hand to the Egyptians, to the Assyrians, to be satisfied with "bread;" also Prov. xxviii. 13: "He that covereth his sins shall not "prosper but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them 'shall have mercy,'" exactly.

4, 5. Then the Saviour speaks to the soul, with love, "super-abounding," upon that full, sincere, confession. "Thy waywardness and "wilfulness," thy "turnings" to and fro "I will heal." I will give thee again, even in fuller measure, My free bounty of grace. I will be with thee, not only at times, but perpetually, "the dew," the daily nourishment of thy life, by My Spirit within thee." Compare this threefold act of the Saviour; "healing, loving, refreshing," with the threefold "betrothal" (ch. ii. 19, 20.), with "the grace of the Lord, the love of "God, the communion of the Spirit" (2 Cor. xiii. 14.). This verse contains the reversal, on God's part, of all their past punishment.

4. "I will love them freely." The last, another ceremonial word, properly "free," "willing offering;" comp. Exod. xxxv. 29, amongst

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them ⁱ freely : for mine anger is turned away from him.

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CHRIST
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5 I will be as ^k the dew unto Israel : he shall

Eph. I. 6.
k Job 29. 19. Prov. 19. 12.

many places ; also Ps. lxxviii. 9 : " Shower ' of bounties ' Thou didst " shake out, O God." It is a word of great condescension on the part of the Lord God ; we may compare similar language at the end of the verse, ch. xi. 8. We have a close cognate word, Ps. li. 12 : " Let Thy ' free " (' bounteous ') Spirit uphold me."

5—7. Now we have the fruits of the "dew." Like "the grace," of which it is the type, it is "manifold and varied" (Eph. iii. 10.). "It " ' fell ' of old, with the manna " (Num. xi. 9.). Like it, " ' distils ' God's Word " (Deut. xxxii. 2.). It is the symbol of the Resurrection. " ' Thy dew ' is as the ' dew ' of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her " dead " (Isa. xxvi. 19.). It is the symbol of unity, and of eternal life (Ps. cxxxiii. 1, 3 : " ' the dew ' of Hermon descending upon the moun- " tain of Zion "), yea, of all " the precious things of heaven " (Deut. xxxiii. 13.). But many figures are required to describe the riches of its operation. First, Israel is now like "the lily," emblem of "a glory " more than Solomon's " (St. Matt. vi. 28, 29.) ; bright and pure, with a God-sustained "growth" in humility (compare "the lily" of the valleys, Song of Sol. ii. 1.), but in constant freshness, (as "lilies by rivers of " waters," Ecclus. i. 8.) ; emblem, truly of "faith," "bursting forth" as from a well of inward life, but at the same time "striking deep roots," because "grounded in love" (Eph. iii. 17.). Under that dew of the Resurrection, of the Spirit of God and of Christ, Israel unites in himself, at once, fresh Baptismal beauty, and "strength in the inner man."

Such is the beginning of this new life, and so, for "the dew" fails not, is its continuance. Of Israel there shall be ever new "suckers," ("branches," A. V. ; the word is used in the singular, of "a sucking child") ; even in the strength of Him, Who grew up as "a tender plant" (lit. "sucker" as here) ; and as " ' a root ' out of the dry ground " (Isa. liii. 2.) ; "nurslings" of grace, "olive branches in the house of God" (Pss. lii. 8 ; cxxviii. 3.), all as aromatic flowers in Lebanon. The Church of the Redeemed sees "children's children," a perpetual growth ; at once the loveliness of Christ's "little ones," "the vigour" (so it should be translated rather, the "beauty" ver. 6.) "of young men" (St. John ii. 12, 14.) in all, even to "old age" (Ps. xcii. 14.), "the fragrance" of a saintly life, "an odour " of a sweet smell, a sacrifice well-pleasing unto God " (Phil. iv. 18.).

And can there be yet more grace, yet richer blessings ? Yes, these last have belonged to "the Israel of God" in its own home, so to say, amongst its own offspring. They shall overflow to others, not yet "gathered in." "Men shall turn" at the sight, "return to the Lord," saying, "Surely God is in thee" (Isa. xlv. 14. Comp. Zech. viii. 22, 23. 1 Cor. xiv. 25.), and "shelter themselves under Thy shadow," comp. with St. Jerome, Song of Sol. ii. 3 : "As the apple tree among " the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down " under His shadow (exactly) with great delight, and His 'fruit' (ver. 8.) "was sweet to my taste." Israel "converted himself, strengthens his "brethren," for His "seed of life" is in him. "The corn of wheat" that "died, brings forth much fruit ; 'the vine,' with its branches, brings

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cir. 725. ² grow as the lily, and ³ cast forth his roots as
Lebanon.

² Or, blossom. ⁶ His branches ⁴ shall spread, and ¹ his beauty

³ Heb. strike. shall be as the olive tree, and ^m his smell as Lebanon.

⁴ Heb. ⁷ ⁿ They that dwell under his shadow shall

shall go. return; they shall revive as the corn, and ⁵ grow as

¹ Ps. 52. 8. & 128. 3. the vine: the ⁶ scent thereof shall be as the wine of

^m Gen. 27. 27. Caut. 4. 11. Lebanon.

ⁿ Ps. 91. 1. ⁸ Ephraim shall say, ^o What have I to do any

⁵ Or, memorial. more with idols? ^p I have heard him, and observed

^o ver. 3. ^p Jer. 31. 18.

“forth much fruit” (St. John xii. 24; xv. 5, 8.). “The name,” “the memorial,” (“scent” of A. V. ver. 7 is wrong, see *marg.*) that is in Him, has an abiding sweetness and power, even as “wine of Lebanon.” “Thy love is better than ‘wine’ . . . Thy Name is as the ointment poured forth” (Song of Sol. i. 2, 3.). Here powers are ascribed to regenerated Israel, which belong properly only to Almighty God. Perhaps in this last crowning verse of the description, there is that “communication of “the divine nature” (2 St. Pet. i. 4.) to redeemed and sanctified man, which is elsewhere also prophesied. Compare amongst other places Ps. cxii. with cxi.

With Israel’s own conversion there follows “a life from the dead” (Rom. xi. 15.). Everywhere there is a great “turning to the Lord.” Stirred by a strength, not their own, men are everywhere “quicken’d,” burst forth with a new life of grace and power and manifold gifts. “A new name is named upon them” (Rev. iii. 12.). And the “Memorial” is the Lord (comp. same word, ch. xii. 5.). He is theirs, He is in them; they are His.

5. “as the lily.” This word is only found besides in the Song of Solomon, but there frequently; apparently the lily is so called from “its pure, clear, brightness.”

“as Lebanon,” six times mentioned in that “Song.”

7. “They that dwell under His shadow.” So Ezek. xxxi. 6: “Under His shadow” (Asshur’s) “dwelt” all great nations.

“they shall revive (as) the corn;” this is difficult; strictly, it is, “they shall revive (quicken) corn;” just as (ch. vi. 2.), “Let us ‘return’ “to the Lord, . . . after two days will ‘He revive’ us.” On the whole, it may be best to translate it, as the A. V.

8, 9. And, now, in the end, we have the fulfilment of the promise (ch. ii. 16, 17, 19, 20.). Idolatry, and all the sin that went with it, is entirely cast away; and there is the new “betrothal” of Israel by his Lord. Between the purified soul and its Saviour there is now a constant interchange of holy, humble confidence, and gracious love, as in a restored Paradise. See introduction to the chapter. It freely speaks; He answers, “while yet it is speaking” (Isa. lxx. 24.). “Evergreen cypress “tree am I now;” strong, that is, as well as beautiful and glorious, but with perpetual verdure, and rich luxuriance too, beyond that tree’s nature; “That fruit,” God answers, “is from Me.” All before was

him : I *am* like a green fir tree. ⁹ From me is thy fruit found.

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9 ^r Who *is* wise, and he shall understand these ^r things? prudent, and he shall know them? for ^r the ways of the LORD *are* right, and the just shall walk in them : but the transgressors shall fall therein.

^q Jam. 1. 17.
^r Ps. 107. 43.
Jer. 9. 12.
Dan. 12. 10.
John 8. 47.
& 18. 37.
^s Prov. 10. 29.

Luke 2. 34. 2 Cor. 2. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.

their own work (ch. viii. 4, 6.); it was failure, it was sin, it was misery and ruin. Now of their Lord and God, and from Him are all things, and they for Him (1 Cor. viii. 6.).

And will not man learn of Me, His Saviour, the wisdom of God? Will he not, now that he has felt the wretchedness of not knowing Me, of losing his knowledge of Me (chs. iv. 1, 6; v. 4.) begin afresh, and have from Me "the knowledge of My ways (in which, by Me, he shall go "on and grow for ever," ch. vi. 3.). "All the paths of the Lord are "mercy and truth" (Ps. xxv. 10.). "Great and marvellous are Thy "works, Lord God, Almighty! Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King "of saints!" (Rev. xv. 3.). Thou art Wisdom, and Holiness, and Peace! "Great peace have they who love Thy Law, and to them there is no "stumblingblock" (Ps. cxix. 165.). "None of the wicked shall "under- "stand," but the wise "shall understand" (Dan. xii. 10.).

It is a beautiful close of a most beautiful chapter; very simple, very majestic. It is an adoring meditation upon the finished work of the Lord, "the Father of mercies," and a call to men to join that adoration.

8. "a green fir tree," green, or evergreen. The word is used of the "olive tree" (Ps. lii. 8.), of "bay tree" (ib. xxxvii. 35.), of "oil" (ib. xcii. 10; also ver. 14.). The fir, or as it is thought rather, "cypress "tree," was one of the glories of Lebanon (comp. Isa. lv. 13; lx. 13. Ezek. xxxi. 8.). It is a tree particularly sound, and strong, and of varied utility; the epithet perhaps adds to it some feature not properly its own. It is, we must suppose, the best image among the trees, of the life of grace in the soul; at once grand and beautiful, all extending in branch and foliage, rich in fruit, and strong, and undecaying.

9. "wise, prudent." The two words are constantly joined; so far as they are distinguished, the first may be "contemplative," the second "practical" wisdom.

"walk; fall." Rather, "stumble." Comp. Jer. ix. 12, who here, as so often, seems to imitate Hosea; also ch. xxxi. 9, he prophesies of the redeemed: "I will cause them 'to walk' by the rivers of water in 'a "straight way,' wherein 'they shall not stumble:' for I am a father to "Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn."

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“THE word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel.” This, in strictness, is all that we know of the Prophet himself; his own name, his father’s name, and his gift from the Lord. Except the names, the first verse of his book is exactly like the first of Hosea and the first sentence of Micah; but then, in each of those two cases, we have the dates of the time, and in the latter, the particular scope, of the mission. The same is the case with Amos and Isaiah, and these four prophets all belong to one great period of prophecy; Amos to the reigns of Uzziah and Jeroboam; Hosea and Isaiah to those of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah; Hosea also to that of Jeroboam II; Micah to the three last of these.

Of the other three Prophets who are placed in the same group, and belong probably to the same period, Jonah, perhaps the earliest of all in the Canon (see 2 Kings xiv. 25. Jonah i. 1.), is introduced to us nearly as abruptly as Joel, but with a distinctly stated mission: “Go to Nineveh, and cry against it,” and his book is, we know, partly a personal narrative. Obadiah and Nahum, otherwise as unknown as our prophet, still have their work recorded; “the vision” of the first “concerning Edom;” “the burden of Nineveh,” “the book of the vision of Nahum.” Joel alone of the first seven of the “Twelve” has no special ministry assigned to him, is connected with no precise time or place.

Let us consider first in his case, as in that of other prophets, the single point which we can rest upon, . . . his name. It means, “the Lord is God;” it carries us back to the cry of the people (where the form is indeed fuller), “the Lord He is God” (1 Kings xviii. 39.). As that cry was the assent of Israel to the work and teaching of Elijah, so Joel twice points to this as one chief result which will follow in the time of the end, “Ye shall know that . . . I am the Lord your God” (chs. ii. 27; iii. 17.).

Perhaps it is not fanciful to connect the greatest of the Prophets after Moses, in outward act, with one of the first, it may be the very first of

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these, who, in word of power, were endowed by God with equal greatness.

1. Elijah and Joel were probably not far distant from one another in point of time, and the same truth is expressed in their names, only in a reversed order, "the Lord is God." 2. Elijah's mission begins: "As the Lord " God of Israel liveth . . . there shall not be dew or rain these years, but "according to my word" (1 Kings xvii. 1.). Joel begins with a description of a great desolation of the land, in which all "is withered" (comp. 1 Kings xviii. 5. Joel i. 4—20.). 3. Both prophesy, as the relief from this, abundant rain (1 Kings xviii. 41. Joel ii. 23.). 4. In the history of the one, the writing of the other, "the earthquake and the " fire" occupy a marked place (1 Kings xix. 11, 12. Joel i. 19, 20; ii. 3, 5, 10; iii. 16.). 5. Both, of course, are eminent preachers of repentance. 6. Both are great, ever memorable names, but their personal history, in the case of Elijah, almost entirely, in the case of Joel, absolutely, is hidden out of sight. We cannot gain apparently any more light from the name of the prophet's father, "Pethuel," that is, "persuaded of God."

It is reasonable to compare Joel with the prophets who, in the Canon, are in immediate juxtaposition with him. He is, undoubtedly, very closely related to Jonah in subject and language (compare Joel ii. 13. Jonah iv. 2. Joel ii. 14. Jonah iii. 9; i. 6. Joel ii. 15. Jonah iii. 5—7. Joel ii. 17. Jonah iv. 10, 11.). As to Obadiah, the connection is still more direct and remarkable. The parallels between Joel and Nahum are also striking. To omit others here, the phrase translated "gather blackness" (Joel ii. 6.), is only found besides (Nahum ii. 10.); and "they cast lots" (ch. iii. 3.), except in Obad. 11, only in Nahum iii. 10; but we may safely consider Nahum, the later of the two, and the imitator of Joel. He, "the Comforter," is also especially the prophet of doom and judgment; the bond between the two is expressed by the great verse of Joel iii. 16. There are a few traces of connection between Joel and Micah, but hardly enough to build any argument upon them.

It is very different with, at least, two of the three prophets which remain, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah. With one remarkable verse of Joel (ch. i. 15.) Isaiah xiii. 6 is identical, but there are many points of resemblance in that whole thirteenth chapter. Really the beginnings of each prophecy (the second verses) seem to be related, and we may compare scarcely less, the end (Joel iii. 2. Isa. lxvi. 16—18.). Again, ch. xxiv. of Isaiah (which has a clause exactly the same as Hosea, and another as Amos) is exceedingly like the first chapter of Joel; and, to pass other connections between the two prophets, in another chapter of Isaiah (v.) we have two words (remarkable in the original) "swiftly and speedily" (ver. 26.), only found together again in Joel iii. 4; in ver. 24 a phrase exactly like Joel ii. 5, and a description of the executioners of the wrath of God (vv. 26—30.), similar to that of Joel ii.

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2—10. This agreement, be it noted, between these two great prophets is, almost exclusively, in the declaration of judgment.

Joel is unquestionably linked to Amos; the latter begins (vv. 1, 2.) as the former ends (ch. iii. 16.); a phrase not found elsewhere occurs at the end of each (Joel iii. 18. Amos ix. 13.), but the connection goes much further, and in this case, as in that of Isaiah, it is observable that Amos, the prophet almost solely of woe and doom, is identified with the prophet of "the day of the Lord" and of judgment. On the contrary, between Joel and Hosea no such certain connection can be established, and this, when we remember the close relation between Hosea and Amos, is remarkable, and the more so, that Joel, though the prophet of woe, is also the prophet of great spiritual blessings, and so has a natural affinity with the writer of such a chapter, as Hosea ch. xiv. and other like passages; he is also full of tenderness, scarcely less than is manifested in Hosea (ch. xi.). But the comparison with both Amos and Hosea illustrates one fresh point in the book of Joel. Both of these, his probable contemporaries, are continually denouncing manifold, gross sins, though chiefly in the kingdom of Israel; Joel exhorts to repentance, and so, of course, implies previous sin, but with the exception of one word, "ye drunkards" (ch. i. 5), which may not perhaps be pressed literally, he has no rebuke of a single sin of his people.

Can we point certainly to any portion of previous Scripture which Joel *does* imitate? The answer is, he has, like so many of his brethren, formed himself upon the books of Moses, for we may here note, that, in the first and second chapters, both the general description and particular phrases are clearly adapted from the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy. Thus, Exod. x, containing the narrative of the plague of "locusts" and of "darkness," supplies many parallels; again, throughout the book of Deuteronomy seems to be constantly before the prophet's eye, but in reference to the Pentateuch as well as to other parts of Holy Scripture, Joel, while imitating, preserves a distinct character and style of his own. As to the Psalms, the connection between Ps. xlii. 1 and Joel i. 20 is clear; we may also compare Ps. lxxix. 10 and Joel ii. 17; cii. 12 and Joel iii. 20; otherwise there are no obvious relations between them.

But from the writing of Joel himself we may gain some fuller light. First, his whole book gives evidence that he was a prophet of Jerusalem; he was living in the centre of the public worship of God; "the House of the Lord is before his eyes" (chs. i. 9, 13, 14, 16; iii. 18.). He speaks of the priests as present (ch. i. 13, 14.); "he bids them blow the trumpet in Zion" (ch. ii. 1, 15.); he addresses "the children of Zion" (ch. ii. 23.); reproaches Tyre, Zidon, Philistia, with "selling to the Greeks" "the children of Judah and Jerusalem" (ch. iii. 6.). God promises by him "to bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem" (ch. iii. 1;

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see also ch. iii. 8, 16—21.). Of Israel in its separated existence he takes no more notice than if it were not (*Pusey, so also St. Jerome*). Then it has every appearance of being a very early document of prophecy, and the hints it gives of the history of the time, though too slight for proofs, all point the same way. Amos, whose date we know, quotes it. As to the circumstances, which it describes or implies, the people seem to reverence and obey the prophet; at any rate there is no trace of opposition to him, as there was to Isaiah, and in a much later day to Jeremiah; on the other hand, against them there is no charge of idolatry nor of the sins denounced by Isaiah and Micah. Neither, as yet, is there any division between prophet and priest. Further, as to the great prophecy of the Agent of the first Judgment, it is expressed in language very like known ancient prediction, unlike for the most part to that which is later. It falls in with the mysterious solemnity of Joel that he should only speak of "the northern one," but it also agrees with the form of Ahijah's prediction of (apparently) the same enemy (1 Kings xiv. 15.). It is in this way, we know, that prophecy lays down a bold outline in the beginning, and leaves for later ages the filling in of the details.

Not a priest apparently, not like his only just departed predecessor a worker of miracles, not a prophet directly supported by a king as Isaiah and Jeremiah (at first), not even with any distinct, definite mission, as most of his brethren, Joel, one of the very first, like the Baptist, the last of the prophets, prevails by his simplicity, by his humility, by the loving earnestness of his call to repentance (ch. ii. 12—14.), by the very terror itself of his especial warning of judgment to come. He is tender to all, and would save all, "old and young, bride and bridegroom, child and suckling." He mourns with a personal sorrow over the desolation which he sees, over "the groans" of the poor famished beasts, and "the perplexity" of the herds of cattle (ch. i. 18, 19.). And again, at the prospect of the great renovation, he bursts forth with joy as full and sympathy as fervent; as himself, one of "the children of Zion," as knowing now, what his people shall know then, that "the Lord is God," and "that He dwelleth in Zion" (ch. iii. 17, 21.).

What are the great topics, which seem original, in this unknown prophet, though afterwards largely adopted from him by others? Pre-eminently he reveals (1) a great and final "day of the Lord," a day of "destruction" and "decision;" but before that last day, he prophesies (2) the coming of "The Teacher of righteousness," and (3) a great "outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord on all flesh;" then (4) "the saving of a remnant;" a last struggle (5) between the heathen and the people of God; finally (6) the everlasting joy and peace of the Church, the Lord "indwelling" in her. Surely a wealth of truth added to the deposit of

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faith. His style is peculiarly flowing; it has a wonderful smoothness and ease; his language very terse and vivid; he effects great emphasis by repetitions of words and by details of description; compare the description of the desolation in the first chapter; the advance of the locusts in the second; or that more awful gathering in the valley of Jehoshaphat in the third. Sometimes he uses the very briefest form of words, two words, in his own language, sufficing for each feature of his description; comp. ch. i. 10, where are five pairs of such words. There are many like verses. From him the image of "the thief" is adopted by our Lord and His Apostles; St. John in the Revelation in three successive verses (ch. ix. 7—9.) uses the symbol of the "locusts," and takes from Joel the details; but further he appears in other places to refer to him (comp. Rev. vi. 12, Joel ii. 31. Rev. xiv. 15—18, Joel iii. 13. Rev. xxi. 27; xxii. 1, Joel iii. 17, 18. Rev. xxi. 3, Joel iii. 17, 21.). The last prophet of the New Testament, like the last of the old, alike revives and reproduces the words of Joel (comp. Joel ii. 11, Mal. iii. 2. Joel ii. 31, Mal. iv. 5.).

May we not say that this great prophet of the two Advents of our Lord, though one of the briefest of all, is nevertheless the most comprehensive of all? His clear, calm, solemn voice, heard at the very beginning of the great outburst of prophecy, is echoed on by St. John to the end of time. He is the herald of the Lord Christ, the herald of the Spirit of Christ, and of each emphatically. All nations, all men, and for all time, he "convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," for of the convicting and healing Spirit he is the faithful mouthpiece.

A few words must be added about the interpretation of "the locusts." There may have been an actual plague of locusts, desolating the land as in Egypt; this, of course, is not excluded, but here they are described in terms which go beyond the literal meaning.

1. They are represented as "a strong nation" (chs. i. 6; ii. 2, 5, &c.); the language used in the Pentateuch of the Canaanites, afterwards of the Midianites (see on ch. ii. 1—11.), and though not exclusively in Holy Scripture, yet most frequently and naturally of men.

2. The whole description (ch. ii. 3—11.) goes along with this interpretation; it is most obvious and simple to apply it to an army of men.

3. The wasted "corn, and wine, and oil" (ch. i. 10.), is in Deut. xxviii. 50, 51 one of the sufferings to be inflicted by the nation "of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young."

4. Most of all, Joel himself, at the end, seems distinctly to interpret his own meaning.

(a) "Give not Thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should

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“rule over them;” there is plainly no connection between the desolation caused by locusts, and the people being given over to a heathen conqueror. Note by the way that “heathen” here is plural of “nation” (ch. i. 6.), as in the phrase “say among the peoples” (ch. ii. 17.), “peoples” is the plural of the word used of the locust (ch. ii. 2, 5.).

(b) God is described by the prophets in fifteen places besides, “to be jealous for His people” (ch. ii. 18.) in holy love, as against the heathen who oppressed them. “Always, it is said of Almighty God, as regarding His rational creatures; it is a violation of the uniform usage of Holy Scripture . . . to extend the phrase to His action as regards His irrational creation.”

Still more (c) “the northern one” (ch. ii. 20.) points the same way, especially to the Assyrian invader (see on that verse). It means, “one who has an *habitual* relation to the north.” The great destroyer is, in Jeremiah, described again and again as “coming from the north;” it is quite arbitrary to apply the word to actual locusts, which, in matter of fact, are said to “come into Palestine from the south.”

(d) But even more conclusive, if possible, is the phrase “he hath magnified to do” (ch. ii. 20.); i. e. moral action, intelligent design, is ascribed to this enemy.

These arguments, in the main, are those of Hengstenberg, Pusey, and others, as before of St. Jerome. There are others also which might be added. The use of the symbol, as we may now regard it, can be explained. Joel, a great commentator, so to say, upon the Pentateuch, who lives and moves in its thoughts and phrases adopts, and, observe, adopts together, the two last plagues but one of Egypt, “the locusts” and “the darkness,” as his figures of a greater “day of the Lord.” Note also, St. John in the Apocalypse pointedly follows Joel, and seems to interpret him (Rev. ix. 7—9.). Egypt is throughout the Old Testament the standing warning of Israel. To bring forward to their full consciousness these two awful plagues, and to foretell a judgment even more tremendous of moral, spiritual desolation and death, was to preach, with the most piercing voice, “the terror of the Lord.”

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Still more (c) “the northern one” (ch. ii. 20.) points the same way, especially to the Assyrian invader (see on that verse). It means, “one who has an *habitual* relation to the north.” The great destroyer is, in Jeremiah, described again and again as “coming from the north;” it is quite arbitrary to apply the word to actual locusts, which, in matter of fact, are said to “come into Palestine from the south.”

(d) But even more conclusive, if possible, is the phrase “he hath magnified to do” (ch. ii. 20.); i. e. moral action, intelligent design, is ascribed to this enemy.

These arguments, in the main, are those of Hengstenberg, Pusey, and others, as before of St. Jerome. There are others also which might be added. The use of the symbol, as we may now regard it, can be explained. Joel, a great commentator, so to say, upon the Pentateuch, who lives and moves in its thoughts and phrases adopts, and, observe, adopts together, the two last plagues but one of Egypt, “the locusts” and “the darkness,” as his figures of a greater “day of the Lord.” Note also, St. John in the Apocalypse pointedly follows Joel, and seems to interpret him (Rev. ix. 7—9.). Egypt is throughout the Old Testament the standing warning of Israel. To bring forward to their full consciousness these two awful plagues, and to foretell a judgment even more tremendous of moral, spiritual desolation and death, was to preach, with the most piercing voice, “the terror of the Lord.”

JOEL, I.

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CHAPTER I.

1 Joel, declaring sundry judgments of God, exhorteth to observe them, 8 and to mourn. 14 He prescribeth a fast for complaint.

THE word of the LORD that came to Joel the son of Pethuel.

CHAPTER I.

The sore Judgments of the Day of the Lord; an exhortation to fasting and mourning.

INTRODUCTION.

No analysis can express the force and pathos of this wonderful chapter. Joel appears suddenly, like the Holy Baptist afterwards, not indeed in the desert, but, it would seem, in the midst of his people, and declares terrible judgments ready to fall. "The day of the Lord is at hand; as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come" (ver. 15.). But that day is clearly visible to the inspired prophet. In a distinct, life-like picture, he tries to make it visible "to all the inhabitants of the land," of the world. We may compare him, in his first utterance, with Isaiah in the beginning of his prophecy (ch. i. 5—9.). The scourge may have been laid already on the land; but if so, there is worse, far worse calamity yet in store. Punishment follows upon punishment, death on death (vv. 1—4.). All nature is suffering. "Awake," all ye that sleep; ye that are steeped in dull insensibility, "as drunkards; awake, and weep." See those armies of the Lord (comp. ch. ii. 11.), one after another, everywhere wasting, destroying. See "My vine," see "My fig tree," "bared," withered, "cast away" (vv. 5—7.). "Lament"—the whole congregation of Israel seems to be addressed—"like virgin for husband" of her pride, her joy, her youth, lost at once, for ever. Lament, for see the house of the Lord, the evil has reached it too. "Cut off is meat and drink offering." "The ministers of the Lord," they have nothing to minister. There, too, the wail goes up. Look abroad, that "wail" is everywhere, for the spoiler is everywhere "eating the fruit of the land," . . . leaving thee neither "corn, wine, oil" (comp. Deut. xxviii. 51. vv. 8—10.). Yea, "wither away, ye that plough field, ye that dress vine;" your harvest is perished, your labour lost. Your beautiful "trees," so rich, so fruitful once, each one of every kind "is withered;" "withered with them too is joy;" it has ceased "from the sons of men" (vv. 11, 12.).

Ye too, ye above all, "ye priests, gird you with sackcloth," day and night send up your cry of bitter sorrow. "Meat offering and drink offering" is yours no more; be your songs howlings (comp. Amos viii. 3.) in this day of doom (ver. 13.). "Sanctify fast," let the whole people unite their wail of agony there, in that house of their God, itself desolate. Let them cry as one man, "Alas for the day! the day of the Lord is at hand." Alas, here, "before our eyes, cut off" is even offering to our God; cut off "the joy and gladness" of His presence, of His name. He hears us no more (vv. 14—16.). Oh, this dread judgment is falling

JOEL, I.

2 Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. ^a Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? Before CHRIST
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^a ch. 2. 2.

3 ^b Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation. ^b Ps. 78. 4.

4 ^c That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten. ^c Deut. 28. 38.
ch. 2. 25.
² Heb. *The residue of the palmerworm.*

heavier, more terribly yet. "The garners are laid desolate." The hope of to-morrow is as the blight of to-day. The poor innocent flocks and herds "pant and gasp" in death. Oh Lord, hear their cry; hear me (Thy prophet) crying for them, crying for all. Oh, there is no pause, no respite; "the streams of waters are dried up now, the fire is devouring "tree and pasture" (vv. 17—20.).

So in great simplicity, yet with wonderful power of language, the day of the Lord is first described. Joel dwells (1) upon a few thoughts, and would have them sink into our minds; all is "cut off" (vv. 5, 9, 16.); that word, so constant in the Pentateuch, is itself a doom, the doom of the broken Law; all is "dried up," "withered" (vv. 10, 12, 17.), "lan-
"guishing" (vv. 10, 12.). The "howl" of agony comes from the careless and reckless first (ver. 5.); then, from those who have spent every care on their labour (ver. 11.); last, from the priests; they who should strengthen others, now yield, overwhelmed themselves (ver. 13.). (2) He traces out the woe in remarkable detail (comp. the picture of the withered trees, ver. 12; of the lost harvest, ver. 17.). (3) He exhibits the progress of the judgment, as it grows in terror; field, vineyard, orchard, are "spoiled;" every home is joyless, stricken; at last, house of God, the plague is there too. (4) Then, with deeper pathos still, as all the inhabitants of the land are pouring out their bitter cry, in that house of their offended God, the prophet bids us look at the misery of the cattle; and by just three words expresses their agony as though, in this extremity, God had given them the feeling, the sense, the submission, which man had lost by his sin. (5) But first and last, the spiritual judgment stands out clear, above and beyond the material. "My land" is ruined; "My vine and My fig tree" is laid waste; these are well known emblems of the Church (vv. 6, 7.). Sacrifice is no more, priest is powerless; no more "ploughing," preparing the soil; no more dressing of vineyard; every grace is withered, every beauty from our God is withdrawn. For festal robe there is sackcloth on My ministers, in My house (vv. 9—14.). Look, nought remains but "the devouring fire;" "the rivers of waters" of life "are dried up;" if any soul thirsteth for its God, God answereth not now (vv. 19, 20.).

1—4. Very calmly as well as solemnly Joel speaks; a voice from the Lord. He is in the place of assembly, perhaps "the gate," or before the house of God. His words echo partly, partly vary well remembered words of Moses (Deut. xxxii. 1.), with which Isaiah begins also

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5 Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; ^d for it is cut off from your mouth.

^e So Prov. 30. 25, 26, 27. ch. 2. 2, 11, 25. ^f Rev. 9. 8.

6 For ^e a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, ^f whose teeth *are* the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion.

^g Isai. 5. 6. ^h Heb. laid my fig tree for a barking.

7 He hath ^g laid my vine waste, and ^h barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away · the branches thereof are made white.

^h Isai. 22. 12. ⁱ Prov. 2. 17. Jer. 3. 4.

8 ¶ ^h Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for ⁱ the husband of her youth.

(ch. i. 2). "Old men, hear (comp. Deut. xxxi. 28; xxxii. 7.); give ear, all that dwell on the earth." See, "what neither thy fathers nor thy fathers' fathers have seen" (Exod. x. 6.); "tell it in the ears of thy son, and of thy sons' son" (ver. 2.); let it be told on to "fourth generation," and onward still. It is a fixed doom; it will surely come. "The leavings" (so ver. 4 literally means) "of the gnawer, the multiplier ate; the leavings of the multiplier, the licker ate; the leavings of the licker, the consumer ate." This is the parable of the terrible, continued, all-destroying judgment of God. And as in the two preceding verses, one chapter of the description of the plagues of Egypt is partly the model. "They (the locusts) shall cover the face of the earth . . . and shall 'eat the residue' (exactly as here) of that which is escaped" (as in ch. ii. 3, 32.), which remaineth unto "you from the hail" (Exod. x. 5.). But mark the contrast. There was one dreadful visitation of locusts in Egypt; upon you there shall be a four-fold outbreak of destroyer upon destroyer; there was intercessor then to spare those heathens; your punishment shall fall, shall increase, and there shall be none to stay the hand of the Angel of death. Distinct kinds of locusts are, beyond doubt, intended; and these, symbols, we may safely believe, of the avenging hosts, sent by God to scourge the earth (comp. Rev. ix. 3—9. See note at end of General Introduction). Without limiting the reference to this alone, we may, with St. Jerome, who claims "the Hebrews" generally as supporting him, note "how four great invaders in succession wasted Judah, the Assyrian, Chaldean, Macedonian, Roman."

5—7. "At the feast of trumpets," says Bengel on Eph. v. 14, "these words were proclaimed;" "Rouse ye, rouse ye, from your sleep: awake, ye that work vanity." Such a cry the prophet makes now, "Awake, weep, howl." Isaiah in a chapter very parallel, seems to explain Joel. "The mirth of tabrets ceaseth . . . They shall not drink wine with a song . . . There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened" (Isa. xxiv. 8, 9, 11.). "Howl ye;" it is repeated thrice, as here (Isa. xxiii. 1, 6, 14; comp. ib. xiii. 6; xv. 3; also St. James v. 1.). For vv. 6, 7, compare especially Ps. cv. 33—35, which show that, here too, the plague of Egypt is the pattern (comp. also Hosea ii. 12.).

8—10. "Lament." Rather, "Cry, Woe," or "Cry to thy God;" a different word from that ver. 13. Now the suffering is worse, more

JOEL, I.

9 ^kThe meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD; the priests, the LORD'S ministers, mourn.

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10 The field is wasted, ¹the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: ^mthe new wine is ²dried up, the oil languisheth.

^k ver. 13.
ch. 2. 14.
¹ Jer. 12. 11.
& 14. 2.
^m Isai. 21. 7.
ver. 12.

11 ⁿBe ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished.

² Or,
ashamed.
ⁿ Jer. 14. 3, 4.

12 ^oThe vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, *even* all the trees of the field, are withered: because ^pjoy is withered away from the sons of men.

^o ver. 10.

^p Isai. 24. 11.
Jer. 48. 33.
See Ps. 4. 7.
Isai. 9. 3.

afflicting; not only "new wine" "is cut off" (ver. 5.), but "cut off" (same verb) "is meat-offering and drink-offering from the house of the "Lord." The first composed of "fine flour, and mingled with oil" (Lev. ii. 1—3, 13.); the second of "wine" (Num. xv. 4—10; xxviii.); both were parts of the daily morning and evening sacrifice (Exod. xxix. 40, 41.); but also they accompanied those of every Sabbath day, every new moon, the three great festivals of the year, also those of the day of Atonement, and special offerings besides; "the cutting off," therefore, of these was the cessation of all sacrifice. And as now it is a more terrible, because a spiritual loss, so must thy woe be deeper, "Virgin "daughter of Sion;" for whom hast thou lost? "Thine husband," . . . who "called thee as a wife 'of youth'" (Isa. liv. 5, 6.); and with him "the corn, the new wine, the oil;" thy strength, thy refreshment, every gift of grace, all is gone (see the last clause of ver. 13.).

11—12. Ye too, ye that were bidden to till My land, to dress My vine, look at the "wheat," look at "the barley" (meat for rich and for poor); all that "harvest" of souls "is perished" (comp. Amos v. 16, 17. Shall the sons of the alien be your "plowmen and your vine-dressers?" Isa. lxi. 5.). Look at those "trees of righteousness," "that "planting of the Lord" (do. ver. 3.). What varied beauty was there; what plenty, what rich diversity of fruit; all, all is "withered;" "wither ye too, for joy has withered." Note in these verses how this word is emphatically repeated four times over. Here, too, the plagues of Egypt are perhaps referred to, in order to shew that this is an aggravation of judgment. "The hail brake 'every tree of the field' . . . " "And the barley' was smitten" (Exod. ix. 25, 31.). But the withdrawal of the original blessing in Deuteronomy is clearly marked. "The "Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, . . . a land of wheat, and "barley, and vine, and fig-tree, and pomegranate" (Deut. viii. 7, 8.). What a reverse is this! what a curse instead of that blessing! The palm tree and apple tree (it is very doubtful whether this last is a right rendering) are added to the description here; they represent some of the graces of the Church (see Song of Sol. vii. 7, 8.). The last is clearly a tree of especial excellence (ib. ii. 3.); there is, doubtless, a force in the detail, as also in the selection of the particular trees.

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q Jer 4. 8.
ver. 8.
r ver. 9.

13 ^q Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for ^r the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God.

s2Chr. 20. 3, 4.
ch. 2. 15, 16.

t Lev. 23. 36.

² Or, day of
restraint.

u 2Chr. 20. 13.

x Jer. 30. 7.

y Isai. 13. 6, 9.
ch. 2. 1.

14 ¶ ^s Sanctify ye a fast, call ^t a ² solemn assembly, gather the elders *and* ^u all the inhabitants of the land *into* the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD,

15 ^x Alas for the day! for ^y the day of the LORD *is* at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.

z See Deut. 12.
6, 7, & 16.
11, 14, 15.

3 Heb. *grains*.

16 Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, *yea*, ^z joy and gladness from the house of our God?

17 The ³ seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered.

13—16. And now there is a third call of yet another class to join in this public mourning. Ye too “ye priests, gird you with sackcloth, lament, “howl.” Jeremiah (iv. 8.) repeats the exact words of Joel, and adds, “for the fierce anger of the Lord is not turned back from us;” it is increasing. Ye were lamenting before (ver. 9.), but now make lamentation over your sacrifice, your morning, your evening oblation, your one, your only “ministry.” All else is forbidden, other offering “is withholden.” Ye who mourn not for your dead, now as women “beat your breasts for them;” so “lament” here properly signifies (comp. Isa. xxxii. 11, 12.); ye whose garments are “for glory and beauty” (Exod. xxviii. 40.), “gird you now with sackcloth.” Yea, in this time of dearth, “Sanctify one universal fast;” fast, at least, now from every sin; proclaim ye not Passover, not Feast of Tabernacles (of both “solemn assembly” is used in the Pentateuch), not gathering for joy, but against utter despair. Alas, O Lord; alas, “the destruction!” Woe upon us, for Thou art the “Destroyer!” So we should probably render the word “the Almighty,” which alliterates closely with “destruction.” Here, here, into Thy House has entered in Thy plague, it is before our eyes; here, we “eat before the Lord and rejoiced” (Deut. xii. 6, 7.), and now “all meat is cut off,” and we “cry” in agony.

Any mourning was quite the exception in the life of the priests (see Lev. xxi.); we hear of kings and prophets wearing sackcloth, but of priests only here, unless 2 Kings xix. 2, and the parallel place of Isaiah be an exception; even on the day of Atonement they did not wear it. Verse 15 is exactly repeated by Isaiah (xiii. 6.).

15. “the day of the Lord.” Joel first, in the Old Testament, uses this great expression.

17—20. The last two verses seem to be “the cry” of the priests and the people in the house of the Lord. Perhaps these four are the words

JOEL, I.

18 How do ^a the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate.

19 O LORD, ^b to thee will I cry: for ^c the fire hath devoured the ² pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field.

20 The beasts of the field ^d cry also unto thee: for ^e the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

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^a Hos. 4. 3.

^b Ps. 50. 15.

^c Jer. 9. 10.

ch. 2. 3.

² Or, habi-
tations.

^d Job 38. 41.

Ps. 104. 21.

& 145. 15.

^e 1 Kin. 17. 7.

& 18. 5.

of the prophet. At any rate the whole description of misery is intensified; that is clear from the words "laid desolate are the garners," *they* too now are empty; it is indicated also from the last clause of ver. 17, "the corn is withered," which repeats expressions of ver. 10, and may be supposed to include all there mentioned. We can also trace the progress of the calamity by another of the verbs, which are used. The barns "are broken down." This is said of an "utter overthrow," of a "laying in ruins." No doubt if we knew the precise meaning of the three words of the first clause of ver. 17, all found here only, and of "barns" in the third, the description would have additional force and meaning to us. In the original all these verses have a dirge-like sound; and the picture is as of a land utterly ravaged by a conquering host; two words at least point to human destroyers (comp. Anos vii. 9.). Jeremiah xii. 10, 11, may serve as a commentary; "They have trodden My portion under foot, they have made My pleasant portion a desolate wilderness. They have made it desolate, and being desolate it mourneth unto Me." Yet those dead "grains" look sad, the prophet continues, but they feel not. Hear "the sighs" of the famished "cattle;" see the "bewilderment" of those "flocks and herds;" mark the suffering sheep; "they bear the burden of a guilt" not their own. Thy guilt, O man, is upon them. And then the tender heart of the prophet, ready to burst, cries out to his Lord, as if He stood alone, alone able to interpret this misery, to declare its cause, and its only remedy. Oh, hear me, pleading for these Thy poor, helpless, suffering creatures; oh hear, and spare! Stay that burning fire. Pastures, trees, all are in flames. Oh hear those panting, gasping cattle; to Thee they plead in that dumb agony; all they too are perishing, for Thy streams of mercy are dried up, Thy grace is quenched in fire of judgment! This is the only place where "groan" (sigh) and "perplexed" is not used of men; and so also the third verb, "are desolate," or rather, as it should be rendered, "bear the punishment of sin," is said only of rational creatures. Very noticeably, the wonderful picture ends with a distinct reference to the touching words of Psalm xlii. 1: "As the hart 'panteth' (here only besides the word, wrongly rendered 'cry,' ver. 20, occurs) after the water-brook (exactly as rivers "of waters" here), so 'panteth' my soul 'after Thee' (as here), O God." But that longing, fainting thirst, now is in vain. It is unappeased; it passes away only in the torture of death. There is only now, without and within, "the burning of fire" (vv. 19, 20; comp. ch. ii. 3, 5.). Yet there shall be a day when "the pastures of the wilderness (same) spring" again (ch. ii. 22.); and "the rivers" (same) of Judah shall flow with "waters" (ch. iii. 18.).

CHAPTER II.

1 He sheweth unto Zion the terribleſſen of God's judgment. 12 He exhorteth to repentance, 15 preſcribeth a faſt, 18 promiſeth a bleſſing

CHAPTER II.

The Coming Judgment deſcribed further; the Call to Repentance renewed; the Prayer for Pardon, and God's Answer of Mercy and Reſtitution; the Promise of "the Teacher of Righteouſneſs," and "the Pouring out of the Spirit," and the "Escape of a Remnant" in the "terrible day of the Lord."

INTRODUCTION.

The chapter divides into the following portions:—vv. 1—11; 12—14; 15—27. Verſes 28—32 in the Hebrew Bible form a ſeparate chapter.

The ſame impending judgment is deſcribed in fuller detail, and with aggravated terrors. But now the executioners of the judgment are delineated as they have not been before. "They are the Lord's army," "they perform His Word, His Voice marſhals them, guides them" (ver. 11.); fire is before them, behind them, and it is "ſtubble" that they "devour" (ver. 5.). There was "the Garden of Eden" once, now "it is deſolate wilderneſs;" there once was beauty and peace; now "all faces gather blackneſs;" there is agony, confuſion, tumult, and "no remnant now eſcaping" (vv. 3—6.). See how "a highway" is prepared for their hoſt; ſee how they march upon one "city;" they have entered it, everywhere at once poſſeſs it; one ſurpriſe, and all is ſlaughter, deſtruction. Is their ſtrength, their victory, their own? No; it is the Day of the Lord: that day of "darkneſs and gloomineſs," that day "great and very terrible;" firſt and laſt it is the Lord's doing. It is His Voice (vv. 1—11.). But that Voice has changed its tone: hear; it pleads with you; it offers you repentance, bids you "now, at leaſt now," turn to your Lord. As of old, ſo now, ſo ever, He is "full of grace, full of mercy." Oh! turn ye. "Who knoweth, He will turn to you, yea, yet reſtore you a bleſſing" (vv. 12—14.). Then Joel makes once more his appeal for a great, univerſal repentance, and draws a picture which became, no doubt, a reality. In that temple of deſolation "the people are gathered;" "old man and infant, bridegroom and bride," every one. Then the miniſters of God weep forth the Litany, "Spare us; ſpare Thy people, O Lord. "Let not our enemies reproach us daily, Where is thy God?" (vv. 15—17.). Joel had before quoted the firſt verſe of Pſalm xlii.; as here, he ſeems to refer to another (ib. 10.). We muſt ſuppoſe that great congregation does "thiſt for their God" (Ps. xlii. 2.), for immediately He answers them. They are "His people," again (vv. 18, 19, 26, 27; comp. ch. iii. 2, 3, 16.); they are delivered from their enemies; now, only "glad and rejoicing" (vv. 21, 23.), for all is reſtored that they have loſt, and greater bleſſings added "to the children of Zion" (comp. ver. 32, and ch. iii. 16, 17, 21.), even "the Teacher of righteouſneſs"

JOEL, II.

thereon. 21 *He comforteth Zion with present,* 28 *and future blessings.*

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^a **B**LOW ye the ² trumpet in Zion, and ^b sound
an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the

^a Jer. 4. 5.
ver. 15.

² Or, *cornet.* ^b Num. 10. 5, 9.

(vv. 18—23.). Yes, God sends “a rain” of free bounties “to confirm His inheritance” (Ps. lxxviii. 9.), and with it “fulness of joy” (Ps. xvi. 11.) in “overflowing” measure (St. Luke vi. 38.); entire “restitution” (Acts iii. 21.); “fulness of good things” (St. Luke i. 53.); perpetual “praise” for perpetual mercies (St. Luke xxiv. 52, 53.); “trust and hope,” which shall “never make ashamed” (Rom. v. 5.); “assurance of knowledge and union with God;” “hereby we know that we dwell in Him and He in us, “because He hath given us of His Spirit” (1 St. John iv. 13.). Compare the LXX. here, in all these instances, with the New Testament references (vv. 24—27.). So exactly does the prophet anticipate the very words of the Gospel of Christ, as he sets a pattern also to prophets who shall follow him.

But there is yet a greater blessing to come. That “rain” shall be followed by a stream of grace “poured out richly” upon “all flesh.” “All the Lord’s people” shall be “prophets” and the Lord shall “put His Spirit” now “upon all” (Num. xi. 29.); and yet there shall be “Judgments” with that blessing (as upon Egypt of old; comp. ch. iii. 19.). “Blood and fire and smoke” on earth, “darkened sun and moon turned “to blood” in heaven; heralds these of “that terrible day of the Lord;” heralds, too, to the faithful remnant, that “the called of the Lord,” if “they call on Him,” shall escape in that day (vv. 28—32.).

This chapter is also one of wonderful power and fulness. It describes, in a little more than thrice ten verses, the history of the world, the work of the Church, the terrors of the law, the mercies of the Gospel. There is just a glance at “the Garden of Eden” in the beginning; and at the end, of that “good Creation” there is “a remnant” saved! Then “Zion,” “the holy mountain,” the Church of God, here first mentioned (ver. 1.), is to be the place from whence “to sound alarm,” the place of “fasting, weeping, and mourning” (ver. 15.), that its “children” may, in due time, “rejoice in the Lord” (ver. 23.), and in that great day “be delivered” (ver. 32.). “The Lord of all” shows His power in the gathering of the heathen to do His will and judgment; His mercy in “sparing His people” (vv. 11, 17, 18.). At once He is “in the midst “of Israel” (ver. 27.), and “His Spirit is poured out upon all flesh” (ver. 28.). Moses here, as elsewhere, gives the pattern; Jonah, if he be earlier, supplies some of the language; Joel’s own words are adopted very distinctly by Isaiah, Nahum, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zephaniah, Zechariah, Malachi. In one verse here, 32, and in several places of chapter iii., his agreement with Obadiah is very noticeable indeed. It will be shown how “the Revelation” refers to him. The figure of “the thief,” derived from him by our Lord Himself, as by His Apostles, sets a fresh Divine seal upon his prophecy.

1—11. The prophet begins afresh his description of the same judgment, as in the last chapter; several particulars of which are resumed and intensified. “All the inhabitants of the land” are there called to “hear” (ch. i. 2.); now “to tremble” (ver. 1.). “The day of the Lord,” we heard,

JOEL, II.

Before
CHRIST inhabitants of the land tremble: for ° the day of
cir. 800. the LORD cometh, for *it is nigh at hand*;

• ch. 1. 15. Obad. 15. Zeph. 1. 14, 15.

“is at hand, as a destruction” (ch. i. 15.); here, too, “it is at hand,” but “as a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds, and thick darkness” (ver. 2.); “it is great, and very terrible, and who can abide it?” (ver. 11.) “A nation” had “come up upon My land ‘strong’ and ‘without number’” (ch. i. 6); here it is “a great people” and a “strong” (same) (ver. 2.), “a strong (same) people, set in battle array” (ver. 5.). “Very great is his camp, (it is) strong (same) that executeth “His Word” (ver. 11.). “The fire devours the pastures” (ch. i. 19, 20.); here “before, a fire devoureth” (same), “behind a flame burneth” (same as ch. i. 19.); it is “the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth” (same) “the stubble” (ver. 5.). First, “He hath laid My vine ‘waste’” (ch. i. 7.); now the (whole) land is ‘a desolate’ (same) wilderness” (ver. 3.). These repetitions identify the two descriptions; but even in these we see there is further progress and additional terror in the judgment. “Blow ye the trumpet in Zion:” give the signal of the invasion of this tremendous chastisement (comp. Hosea viii. 1; Jer. iv. 5; vi. 1.). It is “the day of the Lord.” He is coming to avenge His broken Covenant (see *note*, ver. 1.). Ye have heard of those old Canaanitish enemies, how they were “greater and mightier” than yourselves (Deut. iv. 28; vii. 1; ix. 1, 14; xi. 23, where throughout “mighty” is the same as “strong” here). “There hath not been ever the like to these.” Look, they are “horses, horsemen, chariots, bounding on the mountain tops.” Look, as they advance, “the peoples are in anguish” of fear. What “mighty men!” what “men of war!” (exactly as ch. iii. 9.) “what steady, unbroken order! what a rapid irresistible march!” They are “in the city,” “they mount the wall, climb the houses.” Before this host “earth is quaking, heavens trembling” (so ch. iii. 16.); sun and moon “is dark, stars withdraw their shining” (all exactly repeated, ch. iii. 15.). Before this host, “the Lord utters His Voice” of doom (so ch. iii. 16.).

With ch. iii. before us, and the references above cited, it is hardly possible to avoid the conclusion that human instruments of punishment are mainly in view, though the locusts (which however in this section are never mentioned by name) may still be a type of them. “Other peoples” (it is the plural, ver. 6.) besides those directly visited, are in alarm; “man by man,” so it is in the original, “in his way they shall march” (ver. 7.). “Man shall not thrust his brother, warrior on his highway, they shall march,” so ver. 8 should be translated. “They shall enter in like a thief.” The figure we know is applied from this, the first instance of its use, to our Lord; it is most natural to explain it, secondarily, of the conscious ministers of His judgment.

1. “Blow ye the trumpet.” This common word is only used on two occasions in the Pentateuch (in Num. x. it is a different one). There is “the trumpet” of Sinai (Exod. xix. 16, 19; xx. 18.), connected with “the darkness, clouds, and thick darkness” (as here, ver. 2.), in Deut. iv. 11 (where the same three words occur); there is also “the trumpet” of jubile (same word as “alarm” here), on the day of Atonement (see Lev. xxv. 9.). Perhaps both instances may be referred to here, and below (ver. 15.); here, “The day of the Lord is near . . . a day of wrath,

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2 ^d a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: ^e a great people and a strong; ^f there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, *even* to the years ² of many generations.

3 ^g A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land *is* as ^h the garden of Eden before them, ⁱ and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.

4 ^k The appearance of them *is* as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run.

5 ^l Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, ^m as a strong ^m people set in battle array.

6 Before their face the people shall be much pained: ⁿ all faces shall gather ³ blackness.

7 They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall

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^d Amos 5. 18, 20.

^e ch. 1. 6.

^f ver. 5, 11, 25.

^g Ex. 10. 14.

^h Heb.

of generation and generation.

ⁱ ch. 1. 19, 20.

^h Gen. 2. 8 & 13, 10.

Isai. 51. 3.

ⁱ Zech. 7. 14.

^k Rev. 9. 7.

^l Rev. 9. 9.

^m ver. 2.

ⁿ Jer. 8. 21.

Lam. 4. 8.

Nah. 2. 10.

³ Heb. *pot.*

“a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness” (exactly as here, ver. 2.), “a day ‘of the trumpet and alarm’ against the ‘fenced cities’” (Zeph. i. 14—16.). “The trumpet blown now in Zion” marks this judgment; it seems an echo of that terror of Sinai, a confession that that old covenant was made in vain; the same, by and by, will call to repentance.

2. “there hath not been ever the like . . . after it.” The language is closely akin to Exod. x. 14; xi. 6.

3. “desolate wilderness.” So exactly ch. iii. 19.

“nothing shall escape them.” We have the same word, “in Mount Zion shall be ‘deliverance’” (ver. 32.); properly here and there, “remnant, those that escape;” the phrase is probably derived from Exod. x. 5 (quoted on ch. i. 4.). The word being used elsewhere “of the persons who escape” suggests in itself that we should not linger by the type of the locusts only, but think of enemies more terrible, who destroy not harvests only, but men.

5. “shall they leap.” Nahum imitates Joel here, and, it may be, interprets him. “‘The noise’ (‘voice’ as here) of a whip, and ‘the ‘noise’ of the rattling of the wheels, and of the pransing ‘horses,’ and of ‘the ‘jumping chariots.’ ‘The horseman’ lifteth up both ‘the flame’ of the sword and the lightning of the spear” (ch. iii. 2, 3, *marg.*).

“that devoureth the stubble.” So of the overthrow of the Egyptians (Exod. xv. 7.).

6. “shall gather blackness.” This phrase is found besides only in Nahum ii. 10: “Much pain” (substantive of verb here) “is in all loins, “and the faces of them all gather blackness.”

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march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks:

8 neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and *when* they fall upon the ² sword, they shall not be wounded.

9 They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall ^o enter in at the windows ^p like a thief.

10 ^q The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: ^r the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:

11 ^s and the LORD shall utter his voice before ^t his army: for his camp *is* very great: ^u for *he is* strong that executeth his word: for the ^x day of the LORD *is* great and very terrible; and ^y who can abide it?

12 ¶ Therefore also now, saith the LORD, ^z turn

8. "in his path." Properly, "highway," as A.V. usually renders the word; such as an army would move upon, with the additional idea of its being "straight and prepared."

9. "They shall run to and fro in the city." Here too Nahum probably imitates Joel. "The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall 'jostle' (same verb, different conjugation) 'one against another in the 'broad ways,' they shall seem like torches, 'they shall run' like the 'lightnings.'"

"the city." That is, Jerusalem.

"like a thief." A comparison only found twice besides in the Old Testament (Job xxiv. 14; xxx. 5.). It is, no doubt, adopted by our Lord and His Apostles from hence (St. Matt. xxiv. 43. St. Luke xii. 39. 1 Thess. v. 2. Rev. iii. 3; xvi. 15.).

10. "the sun and the moon shall be dark." Compare a similar passage, Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8, which may illustrate this. All this language follows naturally upon the figure of "the thief" (ver. 9.), as applied in the New Testament.

11. "for (he is) strong." Rather "It," the camp, the host. "Strong," as vv. 2, 5; the word is not used of the Lord God.

"executing his word." Like "fire and hail . . . and stormy wind 'fulfilling His Word'" (same), Ps. cxlviii. 8; like "the Angels 'that excel in strength, 'that do His commandment'" (same) ib. ciii. 20.

"for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible." So below (ver. 31.), where the exact words are adopted by Malachi (ch. iv. 5.). The same epithets are used of the Lord Himself" (Deut. vii. 21; x. 17.).

12—14. The Lord has just "uttered His Voice," "before His army." They, His ministers, are already "doing His Word;" suddenly, as we

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ye *even* to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: Before
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13 and ^arend your heart, and not ^byour garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he ^cis gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

^a Ps. 24, 18.
& 51, 17.

^b Gen. 37, 34.
² Sam. 1, 11.
Job 1, 20.

^c Ex. 34, 6.
Ps. 86, 5, 15. Jonah 4, 2.

Speak, that same voice is heard, with thrilling tone, pleading with man. "Oh, then, now, now at least," this is the force of the three first particles (ver. 12.), they give emphasis, "turn ye home to Me "with all your heart;" yes, body, soul, and spirit, all bowed, all taking part in true affliction together; oh! "with rent heart," with full, deep contrition, "turn ye to the Lord your God." Did He not proclaim Himself to Moses "The Lord, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, "and abundant in goodness and truth?" (Exod. xxxiv. 6; exactly as here, only "gracious" here before "merciful"). Did He not after that first great sin of Israel, at the intercession of Moses, "'repent of the evil' " (exactly) which He thought to do to His people?" (do. xxxii. 14.) "Who knoweth; He will yet turn to you, leave you" after this sore judgment, "His blessing" again; let you come, with fresh "offering," once more, before Him.

These verses, to ver. 17 inclusive, form the Epistle for Ash Wednesday in our Church Service; so excellently they describe even Christian repentance. See the sermon of Bishop Andrews on vv. 12, 13; the fourth of his Ash Wednesday course. He notes how we have "turn ye," so also "heart" twice at the beginning and end; the first of "conversion" from sin; the second, of "contrition for sin," after the heart has been "rent;" "one declining from evil to be done hereafter, the other sentencing itself for evil done heretofore:"—"With the whole heart, and "with fasting and with weeping, and with mourning," the body following in its abasement, as the spirit and soul lead the way; and these acts of mourning helping in their turn to deepen the affliction of the broken heart. But "the rending" points, as Bishop Andrews also notes, rather "to the indignation" and "revenge" of St. Paul's statement (2 Cor. vii. 11.) than to mere sorrow.

12. "saith the Lord," i.e. "it is the solemn utterance of the Lord." This is the only place, in Joel, where the expression occurs; (see on Hos. ii. 13.). Here too Deuteronomy probably supplies the pattern for the language (comp. ch. xxx. 1—3.). Some think that Isaiah (xxii. 12.) refers to this verse, as also to ch. i. 8, 13.

13. "rend your heart," &c. The rending of the garments was an expression of extraordinary emotion, chiefly of grief, of terror, or of horror. The word itself is a very strong one, see Hos. xiii. 8: "'I "will rend' the caul of their 'heart,' and there will I devour them "like a lion." Rather, "very gracious, and very merciful . . . evil." From Exodus, see above; in Jonah iv. 2, exactly as here; Pss. lxxxvi. 15; ciii. 8; cxlv. 8, repeat the great words; and we have some of them pleaded elsewhere, as Num. xiv. 18. What Jacob did (Gen. xxxvii. 34.), and Joshua and Caleb (Num. xiv. 6.), and David (2 Sam. i. 11; xiii. 31.), and Ezra (ix. 5.) in earnest prayer to God, and afterwards St. Paul and

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14 ^d Who knoweth *if* he will return and repent, and leave ^e a blessing behind him; *even* ^f a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God?

^d Josh. 14. 12.
^e 2 Sam. 12. 22.
^f Kin. 19. 4.
Amos 5. 15.
Jonah 3. 9.
Zeph. 2. 3.
^e Isai. 65. 8.
Hag. 2. 19.
^f ch. I. 9. 13.
^g Num. 10. 3.
ver. 1.
^h ch. I. 14.
ⁱ Ex. 19. 10,
22.
^k ch. I. 14.
^l 2 Chr. 20. 13.
^m 1 Cor. 7. 5.

15 ¶ ^g Blow the trumpet in Zion, ^h sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:

16 gather the people, ⁱ sanctify the congregation, ^k assemble the elders, ^l gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: ^m let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.

17 Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD,

St. Barnabas (Acts xiv. 14.), is not here condemned; only, the rending of the heart is indispensable, the outward act may then fitly follow.

14. "Who knoweth . . . repent." So exactly Jonah iii. 9, but he inserts "'God' will turn," &c. (comp. also ib. vv. 8, 10.).

15—17. There seems no real break in the section from ver. 15 to ver. 27; the connection is really close between vv. 17, 18; for convenience only, we may take these three verses first. With this "Word" (ver. 12.) of the Lord Himself, entreating His people "to turn to Him," the prophet renews more solemnly his own appeal. "Blow the trumpet" once more, "in Sion" (the next, and last time, the Lord Himself "shall roar "out of Sion," ch. iii. 16.); call to repentance, warn of judgment. "Gather" every soul, no one may be absent, into the Temple of God. The hosts of destruction are raging without; within be ye all, as one man, suppliants before your God. "Priests and people, old men and little children, bride and bridegroom," all, at last, converted, each contrite for your sin; all joining, in one earnest Litany, even that of Moses and David, "the ministers of the Lord;" "Spare us, O Lord; spare Thy people: save us from the heathens' 'reproach,' 'from the heathens' 'rule.'" It is a lesson of divine worship for all time. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhort (one another); and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. x. 25.). Shall we not, the older the world grows, and so the more terrible the accumulation of sin, of the sin, worst of all, of the redeemed and baptised, do well to unite, again and again, in that old, unchanging Litany of the Church, "Spare us, O Lord?" How long, and with what patience and love, and what unnumbered souls the Lord has spared, generation after generation! But, be the world "ever so rebellious," God's ministers must sound the trumpet in Sion, and the Church must be "instant in prayer."

16. "sanctify the congregation." This was the command "before the Lord came down on the third day," and gave "the Law" (Exod. xix. 10, 11.). So it is now, before "the coming of the Teacher of Righteousness," and the "outpouring of the Spirit" (vv. 23, 28.).

weep ⁿ between the porch and the altar, and let them say, ^o Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should ² rule over them: ^p wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?

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ⁿ Ezek. 8. 16.
Matt. 23. 35.
^o Ex. 32. 11.
^p Deut. 9.
26.—29.

18 Then will the LORD ^a be jealous for his land, ^r and pity his people.

² Or, use
a byword a-
gainst them.

^p Ps. 42. 10. & 79. 10. & 115. 2. Mic. 7. 10. ^q Zech. 1. 14. & 8. 2. ^r Deut. 32. 36. Isai. 60. 10.

17. "the porch;" same word 1 Kings vi. 3. See its description there. "the altar," i.e. of burnt offering, see 2 Chron. viii. 12. This was apparently a very sacred place. Twice "the porch" is called "the porch of the Lord" (2 Chron. xv. 8; xxix. 17.).

"Spare thy people." So the Lord God says, "Should not 'I spare' Nineveh?" (Jonah iv. 11.)

"Thy people . . . Thine heritage." So ch. iii. 2; Deut. xxxii. 9, and often in Deuteronomy, and elsewhere.

"that the heathen should rule over them." This, and not the *marg.* rendering, is the uniform meaning of the Hebrew phrase; it occurs fifty times in the Hebrew Bible. Comp. Deut. xv. 6: "Thou shalt 'reign' (same) 'over' many 'nations;' they shall not 'reign over' thee." See Ps. cvi. 40, 41, and for the last clauses Deut. ix. 26—29, and the Psalms cited in *marg.*

"The enigma, which was closed," says St. Jerome, "is now opened." Who that "people is, manifold and strong," described under the name of "palmerworm," &c. is now explained more clearly, "lest the heathen rule over them."

18—27. And God immediately answers the prayer, and "He pities His people" (see Introd. to Chapter), and does away their "reproach," and restores abundantly the lost "blessing," "the corn, and the wine, and the oil" (comp. ver. 14.). And instead of the bitter rule of heathen, "He casts that northern one into the sea" (comp. Exod. xv. 1, 4, 5, 8, 10.). For the "wail" of agony let there be now a jubilee hymn of deliverance. For the Lord "hath done marvellous things" (Ps. xcvi. 1. Comp. vv. 21, 26.). All is changed, all is new; let "the land" rejoice" (comp. same word, ch. i. 10.); "beasts of field" (ch. i. 20.), "fear no more." "The pastures are springing" now with grass" (comp. ch. i. 19, 20.); "vine and fig tree" are rich with fruit." And for you, "ye children of Zion," there are greater things yet in store; "joy and gladness" indeed is yours; it is come back for you to the House of your God (comp. ch. i. 16, where we have the substantives of the verbs "be glad" and rejoice," here vv. 21, 23.); for the Lord hath given you "The Teacher of Righteousness." All that "dryness," all that "languishing" of famished soul, is done away. There shall "come down" for you, precious "rain," "showers of blessing" (Ezek. xxxiv. 26.). Comp. Hos. vi. 3; x. 12; and also Isaiah ix. 3, 6. Yea, it shall be a feast of tabernacles renewed, fulfilled; for "thy floor and winepress" shall be "full" (comp. Deut. xvi. 13.); "pure wheat" there, well winnowed; "wine" there, new indeed, and "oil of true gladness." All shall be

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19 Yea, the LORD will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you ^scorn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen:

^s See ch. I. 10.
Mal. 3. 10,
11, 12.

^t See Ex. 10.
19.

^u Jer. 1. 14.

^x Ezek. 47. 18.
Zech. 14. 8.
^y Deut. 11. 24.

^z Heb. *he hath magnified to do.*

20 but ^tI will remove far off from you ^uthe northern *army*, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face ^xtoward the east sea, and his hinder part ^ytoward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because ^zhe hath done great things.

refreshing, all "restitution" (Acts iii. 19, 21.). "Ye shall eat" then, and "be satisfied;" "ye shall praise" for new, for increased mercies, "the Name of the Lord;" for that old "shame" (ch. i. 11.) ye shall have perfect trust and confidence; "ye shall know that I am among you," "in you," your Incarnate Lord God." Comp. Ps. xxii. 26: "The meek shall eat, and be satisfied; they shall praise the Lord (same words) that seek Him;" and Zeph. iii. 17.

It is a wonderful passage. There is the contrast of Christ and Antichrist; "He Who doeth all things well," "Who doeth" for us "great things" (St. Luke i. 49.), with him "who exalteth himself" (Dan. xi. 36. 2 Thess. ii. 4.); "the vats overflowing with wine and oil;" with those others "overflowing with wickedness" (ch. iii. 13.); God's people never ashamed, or disappointed of their hope; with the "desolation of Egypt and Edom" (ch. iii. 19.). There is besides "the gladness and the rejoicing" of the redeemed; and their perpetual praise of their Lord (St. Luke xxiv. 52, 53. Acts ii. 46, 47.).

18. "Then will the Lord be jealous for his land." Besides this place, the word is used by the prophets fifteen times of God's love for His people, as shown against the heathen, who actually oppressed them. "And in all the thirty-five cases, where it is applied to God, it is as His attribute towards His rational creatures" (*Pusey*).

19. "corn, wine, oil;" as in ch. i. 10, to which reference is made.

"ye shall be satisfied." So again below (ver. 26.). This was the blessing promised in the Law, Lev. xxv. 19; xxvi. 5; and at least four times alluded to in the Book of Deuteronomy.

"I will no more make," &c. All God's promises are conditional. They presuppose man's faithfulness . . . After the captivity, He made them no more a reproach to the heathen, until they finally apostatized, and leaving their Redeemer, owned no king but Caesar (*Pusey*).

20. "the northern one." See note on locusts, in the General Introduction. That is, the Assyrian, or the Chaldaean, who is from the north (*St. Jerome*).

"east sea, . . . utmost sea." Properly, "fronting sea," "hinder sea;" the first, "the Salt (Dead) Sea," the second, "the Mediterranean;" the face is supposed to be turned eastward; both words found, Zech. xiv. 8.

"he hath done great things." Here of those who are patterns and forerunners of Antichrist, as in Dan. viii. 11, 25; exactly same words

JOEL, II.

21 ¶ Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things.

22 Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength.

23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

24 And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil.

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^z ch. 1. 18, 20.

^a Zech. 8. 12.

See ch. 1. 19.

^b Isai. 41. 16.

& 61. 10.

Hab. 3. 18.

Zech. 10. 7.

² Or, a

teacher of

righteous-

ness.

³ Heb.

according

to righte-

ousness.

^c Lev. 26. 4.

Deut. 11. 14.

& 28. 12.

^d Jam. 5. 7.

are used of the Lord in the next verse, where we should translate "hath done," as also in Ps. cxxvi. 2, 3.

In this verse Joel again reverts to the description of a real army. The imagery is apparently borrowed from Exod. x. 19 (the destruction of the locusts), but it is enlarged. As the enemy is from the north, and may be supposed to occupy all the land, so he is cast out by God into each part of the land, where there was a natural opportunity for destruction. The land barren and desolate would then be the desert of Arabia, the southern boundary of the Holy Land. The destruction of Sennacherib's army would be a partial fulfilment of the prophecy (*Pusey*).

23. "ye children of Zion," so Ps. cxlix. 2, a very similar passage.

"he hath given you the former rain moderately." Rather, "the Teacher of, or for, Righteousness;" as in the *marg.* the Vulgate, and many ancient and modern authorities, both Jewish and Christian; "moderately" is undoubtedly wrong; "teacher" is the ordinary sense of the word, here rendered "former rain;" in the first instance, it is marked with particular emphasis in the original; in the second, this is omitted, and the word, there rightly translated in A. V., seems to be slightly varied by Joel from the usual one, to identify this rain with "the Teacher" and His doctrine; comp. Deut. xxxii. 2, and for the whole passage Hos. vi. 3, and especially ch. x. 12 (last clause) and Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 26, 27. On the whole it seems most probable, that this is a prophecy of the great "gift" of the Messiah.

"in the first (month)." Rather, "first of all," St. Jerome and others. It may be in reference to the second gift, introduced ver. 28, by "afterward." Compare these two words in Isaiah i. 26.

24. "the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats overflow." The last clause is exactly repeated in ch. iii. 13. This is the reversal of the punishment in the first chapter, comp. especially Hos. ix. 2; but it is not just the same as verse 19. "Wheat" is a different word, and means that which is "purified." Perhaps the whole refers to the effect of the "teaching" and discipline "of righteousness" in those who are "chosen" and "gathered in as sheaves into the floor" (Micah iv. 12.). The regenerate soul is made like "an even levelled place" (the meaning of "floor," comp. Isa. xxi. 10: "O my threshing, and the son of my

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Before
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^e ch. 1. 4.
^f ver. 11.

^g Lev. 26. 5.
^h Ps. 22. 26.
See Lev.
26. 26.
ⁱ Mic. 6. 14.

^j ch. 3. 17.

^k Lev. 26. 11.
^l 12. Ezek. 37.
26, 27, 28.

^m Is. 45. 5, 21.
ⁿ 22. Ezek. 39.
22, 28.

^o Isai. 44. 3.
^p Ezek. 39. 29.
^q Acts 2. 17

25 And I will restore to you the years ^e that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, ^f my great army which I sent among you.

26 And ye shall ^g eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed.

27 ^h And ye shall know that I *am* ⁱ in the midst of Israel, and *that* ^k I *am* the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

28 ¶ ^l And it shall come to pass afterward, *that*

“floor”), but then it is “full also of wheat;” it has the grace, and purity, and bears the image of Christ; it is like a vat or “press” “cut out of the rock” (Isa. v. 2.): “where the treaders tread out wine” (ib. xvi. 10.); but from that tribulation the rich juices of faith and love issue forth, “the good wine kept to the last,” and “the oil of joy,” where before were the tears of “mourning” (Isa. lxi. 3, and especially Jer. xxxi. 12.).

26. “ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied.” This is much stronger than the expression in ver. 19; the phrase indicates continued, uninterrupted action. Ye shall be at once satisfied, and ever reaching forward to fresh enjoyment, comp. Isa. lxii. 8, 9.

“My people shall never be ashamed;” so exactly in the next verse. In all eternity they shall have no wish unfulfilled, all shall be perfect joy and rest. It is the frequent promise of the Psalms; xxii. 5: “In Thee they trusted, and ‘were not ashamed,’” so Pss. xxv. 2, 3; xxxi. 1. 17; lxxi. 1. Isa. xlix. 23. Comp. Rom. ix. 33; x. 11, where in ver. 13 St. Paul directly quotes Joel ii. 32, and so may be supposed to allude to him, as to other writers of the Old Testament, verse 11: “For the ‘scripture saith, ‘Whosoever believeth in Him shall not be ashamed.’”

27. “And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel.” Here we have fresh evangelical promises. Of old they had said, “Are not ‘these things come upon us, because our God is not ‘amongst’ us?” (Deut. xxxi. 17.) Ezekiel constantly dwells on this knowledge, comp. especially xxxix. 28, 29; where in ver. 29 he quotes Joel’s phrase, “I ‘have poured out My Spirit’ upon the house of Israel.” Hosea agrees with Joel in the next words, “I am . . . the Holy One ‘in the midst ‘of’ thee” (see ch. xi. 9.), and so later prophets follow. Isaiah re-echoes another clause (ch. xlv. 22.): “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ‘ends of the earth: for ‘I’ am God, ‘and (there is) none else.’” This blessedness had its accomplishment in Pentecost, and still has to Christians continually; but Joel, quoting his own words (ch. iii. 17.), points us to a perfect fulfilment, when “Jerusalem shall be holiness, and no ‘strangers shall pass through her any more.’”

28—32. The interpretation of vv. 28, 29 is sure from the Acts of the Apostles; and so also that of the first clause of ver. 32 (see *note*),

I ^m will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; ⁿ and your sons and ^o your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

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^m Zech. 12. 10.
John 7. 39.

ⁿ Isai. 54. 13.

^o Acts 21. 9.

29 and also upon ^p the servants and upon the

^p 1 Cor. 12. 13. Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11.

and scarcely less that of vv. 30, 31; see our Lord's prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the last judgment, especially in the Gospel according to St. Luke (ch. xxi.). But the description throughout seems to be based on the books of Exodus and Numbers, both as to the coming mercy and the final punishment. Joel here, like Isaiah and other prophets, passes at once from the first Advent of our Lord to the second. "The Spirit" of cleansing is also "a Spirit of judgment, and a Spirit of burning" (Isa. iv. 4.). We have here foreshortened, as we may say, the future events of all time till the end, which in the next chapter will be exhibited more fully, just as the first great judgments on Judah have been in this chapter (vv. 1—11.). Comp. especially with vv. 30—32 ch. iii. 13—17, and with vv. 28, 29, ch. iii. 18. But it is true, at the same time, that we have in this section a reference to the continual work of the Spirit of God under the dispensation of the Gospel, with the opposition to it. Again and again, there are times of renewal, following upon times of declension; and again, just as "great grace was upon all" (Acts iv. 33.), so immediately "Satan fills the heart of Ananias, and he lies to the Holy Ghost" (ib. v. 3.); and where the Apostle "labours more abundantly than all" (1 Cor. xv. 10.) by "the grace of God," there, too, rise up "deceitful workers" (2 Cor. xi. 13.). The solemn doctrine finds here its earliest distinct expression, "Many are called, few are chosen." The Spirit of God is poured out largely, freely, "upon all flesh," with no stint, no exception; and, the end of all is . . . "the deliverance of a remnant," "escaping" in "that terrible day."

28. "afterward." Apparently in relation to "first" (ver. 23.); in Gen. xxv. 25, 26, we have exactly the same words. Comp. St. Peter's explanation "in the last days" (Acts ii. 17.).

"pour out My Spirit;" repeated by Ezekiel (see ver. 27.) and Zech. xii. 10; the word "pour out" shows the abundance of the gift (*St. Jerome*). The translation of the LXX. here is found in the same connection, Acts x. 45. Rom. v. 5. Titus iii. 6; "all flesh" is used, even in the Old Testament, of all "mankind" Gen. vi. 12, 13. Deut. v. 26. Ps. cxlv. 21. Isa. xl. 5, 6, and in many other places.

"shall prophesy;" comp. especially Num. xi. 25. The original word means "well forth," "plenteously pour forth." We have the closely cognate Hebrew word used in Prov. i. 23, "I will pour out My Spirit upon you;" so also Ps. cxlv. 7, "They shall abundantly utter" the memory of Thy great goodness, and cxix. 171. The Spirit of power and grace is as a well within the heart of His elect, which must pour itself forth; "a sound" which, when heard, must be echoed, comp. Acts ii. 2 with 1 Thess. i. 8; "a fire" which must burn, Jer. xx. 9.

29. "and also;" as ii. 3, 12; iii. 4. The particles mean not only an addition, but a remarkable one; they are well rendered in the Acts ii. 18.

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handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

¹ Matt. 24. 29.
Mark 13. 24.
Luke 21. 11,
25.

30 And ¹I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

² Is. 13. 9, 10.
ch. 3. 1, 15.
ver. 10.
Matt. 24. 29.
Mark 13. 24.
Luke 21. 25.

31 ²The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, ³before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

³ Rev. 6. 12.
⁴ Mal. 4. 5.
⁵ Rom. 10. 13.
⁶ Isai. 46. 13.
& 59. 20.
Obad. 17.
Rom. 11. 26.

32 And it shall come to pass, *that* ⁴whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for ⁵in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath

“servants and handmaids.” Primarily and properly, “bondservants;” so Deut. xxviii. 68, and elsewhere; comp. especially 1 Cor. xii. 13, “I will pour out My Spirit,” exactly repeated for especial emphasis, as is Joel’s manner; comp. i. 19, 20; ii. 12, 13 (“turn,” &c.); 20, 21; 26, 27; iii. 4, 7; 17, 21, and elsewhere.

30. “I will shew wonders.” The exact phrase of Deut. vi. 22; eleven times in the Pentateuch of the “wonders” in Egypt (in four other cases in a general sense); and so of several instances in the Psalms. We may then consider that Joel here again refers to Exodus for “the blood,” iv. 9; vii. 17, 20; for “the fire,” ib. ix. 23, 24. Comp. Ps. cv. 32.

“pillars of smoke.” The first word occurs only in Song of Sol. iii. 6 besides, its exact application here is obscure; “smoke” is only found in Pentateuch Gen. xv. 17, and Exod. xix. 18. “The mountain ‘was’ altogether ‘in a smoke,’ because the Lord descended upon it in ‘fire,’ and ‘the smoke’ thereof ascended as ‘the smoke of a furnace.’” Comp. for all three wonders Rev. viii. 7, 8; ix. 2 (3.). St. Luke xxi. 11, 25, 26, and 36, “where the word ‘escape’ is like the real sense “of the word, ‘shall be delivered’” (ver. 32.) (*Pusey*).

31. “darkness.” This sign had its pattern in one of the plagues of Egypt; Exod. x. 21 (same word).

“the moon into blood.” Comp. especially Rev. vi. 12; for the last clause, see above on ver. 11. Observe the phrase in ii. 10, iii. 15 is different. Does it refer to the withdrawal and “the hiding” Himself of our Lord, the Sun of Righteousness, while the persecuted Church is imaged by the “moon” turned to “blood?”

32. “whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord.” A constant phrase; as men began in Seth’s time (Gen. iv. 26.); as Abraham (Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 4; xxi. 33.); so amongst other places, Isa. lxiv. 7. It means worship of and dependence upon God, as He is, and is revealed to us. The great words are quoted exactly by St. Peter (Acts ii. 21.) and St. Paul (Rom. x. 13; comp. 12.).

“deliverance.” A different word from “shall be delivered,” but related to it; the same as above (ver. 3.), nothing “shall escape” them; it should be rendered as in Isa. xxxvii. 32, “out of ‘Jerusalem’ shall go “forth a remnant, and ‘they that escape’ (exactly) out of ‘Mount “Sion.” The words are found in Obadiah 17, “Upon Mount Sion shall

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said, and in ^xthe remnant whom the LORD shall call.

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^x Is. 11, 11, 16. Jer. 31. 7. Mic. 4. 7. & 5. 3, 7, 8. Rom. 9. 27. & 11. 5, 7.

“be ‘they that escape,’ and there shall be holiness,” where the last words are as in Joel iii. 17.

“as the Lord hath said.” Some say by Joel himself, some by Obadiah. It is remarkable that the word for “hath said,” most common as it is, is only here used by Joel, and differs from that above ver. 12, as both from that in ch. iii. 8. The last clause is perhaps, “and among the remnant ‘there will be,’ resumed from preceding ‘clause, ‘those whom God calls.’” These are the important words, “those who call on the Name of the Lord,” must first be “called by ‘Him.’” St. Peter seems to refer to these last words, and to explain them (Acts ii. 39.), where compare the word for “call” with LXX. here.

CHAPTER III.

The Great and Final Judgment. The heathen who have oppressed Israel are punished for their “great wickedness;” Jerusalem has been made “holiness,” and is blessed for ever.

INTRODUCTION.

Israel has been heavily punished for its sins, has been pardoned, and restored (ver. 1.); its full blessedness shall be revealed in the end (vv. 18—21.). But first the judgment must pass to “all the heathen nations.” Some of them, mighty oppressors, “have scattered My people” everywhere; “have parted among them My land,” contemptuously “for My people cast lots;” “sold them” for price of shame (vv. 2, 3.). Others, “Men of Tyre, Philistines,” in blasphemous contention with Me, in daring insult of Me, “have taken My silver and My gold; sold children of Judah to children of Javan,” just “to remove them far away,” and for ever “from their home.” Yea, “swift and speedy shall your reward return upon your own head;” “as thou hast done it shall be done unto thee” (Obad. 15.). “Far off I will sell you” (vv. 4—8.). But “all ye heathen,” all I call to the battle; “wake ye up;” “all from every quarter,” ye “mighty ones” of the earth! And “ye, my mighty ones,” come down to meet them (vv. 9—11.). There, “in the valley of judgment I sit,” the Lord, “the Judge” of all! And there those “surging, countless multitudes” rage! “The harvest is ripe,” “the wickedness is full.” Reap, My angels! “The Lord hath uttered His voice.” “In that day of doom the Lord is the refuge of His people.” In that day “Jerusalem shall be holiness.” “No stranger’s” voice in that fold of peace (comp. St. John x. 5.). “The Lord is among them;” “they know” (do. 4.) “His voice” (vv. 12—17.). In that day how blessed your eternal rest! how rich that “new wine!” that “pure milk for the newborn” (1 St. Pet. ii. 2.); that “fountain” of “water of life” “coming forth of the house of the Lord!” “Egypt” lies “desolate,” “Edom” lies “desolate;” “the innocent blood that they shed” is judged (Rev. vi. 10.). And Judah redeemed, sanctified, “abides for ever;” for ever “praising” Him, their “indwelling Lord” (vv. 18—21.).

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CHAPTER III.

1 *God's judgments against the enemies of his people.* 9 *God will be known in his judgment.* 18 *His blessing upon the church.*

^a Jer. 30. 3.
Ezek. 38. 14.

FOR, behold, ^a in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,

Mark the wonderful fulness of revelation condensed into just thrice seven verses, and the light flashed upon Old Testament history. Egypt, that type of oppressor, still a mighty power, feared and courted, shall be a desert; Edom, that false and cruel brother, soon to rage more bitterly, "exalted though it be, shall be brought down" (Obad. 3.); it too shall be a desert; Tyre, that ungrateful friend, Philistia, that rancorous enemy, merchants and slave-dealers both, they shall be carried captive too, sold themselves. But these are only types of the ungodly of the earth everywhere. All those hosts of might, what are they doing, with all their strength and wealth, but filling up their wickedness, forgetting God, or daringly defying Him, that they may be judged, in a moment, swept away for ever.

In that day of account, what survives but "holiness," what is pure but that "one innocent blood," and they who are washed in it? When "heaven and earth shake," only the Lord God endures, and Zion "which He loveth." And how great then is the bliss of the saints, how all sufficient the shelter, the mercy of God poured out everywhere, and upon all, in heaven for ever!

The connexion between Joel and Obadiah here is most remarkable; but the whole chapter seems to have fixed itself upon the mind and heart of the Jewish and the Christian Church. Only a very few of the succeeding prophets have no reference to it. Some of them borrow its words; others adopt and expand its figures. St. John in the Revelation sets his seal as from God upon it, and upon the whole prophecy. Joel is the prophet eminently of the Christian Church. He is its teacher, in the first outpouring of the Spirit, at Pentecost, when it is born; he is its teacher through its long history to the end. Ever he points to the "streams of water" (chs. i. 20; ii. 23, 28; iii. 18.). "They come forth" from Sion. They water the dry valleys of the world (ch. iii. 18.). For ever they will issue forth out of the throne of God and the Lamb; for increase of grace and blessedness.

1—3. Apparently, the first words of the chapter explain ch. ii. 29—32. "For those days" (ch. ii. 29.) are indeed days of terror as well as of restoration. "Behold" (the word introduces a marvellous work, hard to be believed, comp. Hab. i. 5.), I not only save "the remnant of Israel," I call into judgment all their enemies, and Mine, "all the nations" of the world. This last is the main point here. (See *note*, ver. 1.). Observe how many are specified in this brief but most comprehensive chapter; those "who scattered God's people," as the Assyrians, Babylonians, and subsequently the Romans; and "cast lots for them;" that is, the Babylonians again, and the Edomites (Obad. 11.); those like the people of Tyre and Sidon, and the Phil-

JOEL, III.

2 ^b I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into ^c the valley of Jehoshaphat, and ^d will plead with them there for my people and ^b *for* my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered ^c among the nations, and parted my land. Before CHRIST
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^b Zech. 14.
2, 3, 4.
^c 2 Chr. 20, 26.
ver. 12.
^d Isai. 66, 16. Ezek. 38, 22.

istines, who plundered them and sold them into captivity (vv. 4—7.); “the Sabeans,” who shared in that traffic of souls (Ezek. xxvii. 22.); most of all, Egypt their earliest oppressor; Edom their bitter persecutor, first, and last, and always, “shedder of innocent blood.” Imperial conquerors and jealous rivals; fierce warrior hosts and mean traders, greedy of gain at any hazard; “far off” hordes and neighbours, all shall be gathered, “innumerable multitudes.” Note again the sins of these heathen: they are pitiless; weakness of sex, tenderness of age touches them not; theirs is a reckless debauchery; a child is sold that they may drink (ver. 3.). Comp. Hosea for suchlike cruelties in Assyrians (x. 14; xiii. 16.); Amos, in Syrians (i. 3.); Isaiah, in Medes (xiii. 17, 18.). Doubtless heathen uncleanness has ever been, as it is, appalling; Moses marks it with God’s abhorrence in the rude times of the Canaanites (Lev. xviii. 24—30.), St. Paul, in the days of the so called civilization of Rome (Rom. i. 24—32.).

1. “when I shall bring again the captivity;” the same phrase Hosea vi. 11, and precisely Amos i. 14, but originally Deut. xxx. 3; where we have, ver. 1, “among all the nations, whither the Lord hath driven thee,” just as here vv. 2, 11, 12; (“nations,” ver. 2, “people,” ver. 8, “Gentiles,” ver. 9, “heathen,” vv. 11, 12, are all the same in the Hebrew, and should be rendered by the same word); afterwards it becomes very common; compare especially, Jer. xxix. 14, also xxx. 3 (comp. ver. 18.), and often, and especially Pss. lxxxv. 1; cxxvi. 1, 4. Zeph. iii. 20, and Ezek. xxxix. 25—29. The phrase is not limited to return from captivity strictly so called, it means also a restoration to what was before, or rather to a better state than before. Both senses are, we may believe, intended here, for we know who said “They shall be led away captive into all nations” . . . until the times of “the Gentiles (‘nations’) shall be fulfilled;” and again, how the Apostle contrasts the work of the ministers of the Gospel of the grace of God, “who bring into captivity” every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. x. 5.), with our “captivity to the law of sin, which is in (our) members” (Rom. vii. 23.).

2. “bring them down.” Comp. Hos. vii. 12. Obad. vv. 3, 4, especially, and Jer. li. 40 (same word in all).

“valley of Jehoshaphat” (so below ver. 12.); not the same as “valley of Berachah” (2 Chron. xx. 26.), though there may be a reference to the events there recorded. Probably the name is invented by Joel, who alone uses it, “Jehoshaphat,” meaning, “the Lord judgeth;” “plead” (judge), which follows here (as in ver. 12.), is the same word.

“My people,” &c., as ch. ii. 17, to which reference is thus made.

“scattered;” a word only used besides for “dispersion” of Israel. Esther iii. 8; (two words, so applied, Lev. xxvi. 33, and often, and Deut. xxviii. 64, xxx. 3, and often, are for some reason not adopted

JOEL, III.

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Obad. 11.
Nah. 3. 10.
Amos 1. 6. 9.

3 And they have ° cast lots for my people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink.

4 Yea, and what have ye to do with me, † O Tyre,

here; there is yet another, Zech. vii. 14.); perhaps "violence" is the idea expressed in it, comp. Ps. lxxxix. 10, and it may refer to Gentile persecutions of Israel.

"parted My land," so Amos vii. 17. The phrase had been used of the work of Joshua (Josh. xiii. 7; xix. 51.). The Gentiles had resumed the land, and "divided it to themselves."

3. "cast lots." We find several other verbs joined with this substantive; this only in Obad. 11, and Nahum iii. 10; in Obadiah, as here, in the case of strangers, and Edomites with them, over Judah, in its first captivity.

"sold." This had been foretold Deut. xxviii. 68; so Titus after taking Jerusalem sold those "within seventeen years old" (Joseph. B. J. vi. 9. 2.).

"for wine, that they may drink." Comp. Obad. 16: As "ye have drunk upon My holy mountain" (as ver. 17 below), so shall "all the heathen drink" (exactly) continually, yea, "they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be, as though they had not been."

4—8. But the prophet finds fresh iniquity and more daring, as he continues his survey of the world. The nearer the heathen comes to the people of God, the sharper his trial; and if he is not converted to the truth and grace of God, he becomes to that holiness a more open, implacable foe. (Too often, alas! he learns new sins from those who bear the name of Christ!) "What are ye to Me" (comp. Amos ix. 7.), ye men of Tyre, ye Philistines? "ye before Me!" ye, too, in your blindness of blasphemy, thinking "to retaliate" your losses, your defeats "upon Me!" (comp. 2 Chron. xx. 11.). "Lo Thine enemies, "O Lord, make a tumult," 'take crafty counsel against Thy people,' let us 'cut them off, that the name of Israel, may be no more remembered ... "Let us take to ourselves the house of God in possession!" (Ps. lxxxiii. 2—4, 7, 12.) And these are the specimens of the civilized world; the trained military states; the experienced, greatly developed merchant cities! They have no narrownesses, they have no exclusiveness. "Let me be rich; in all my labours they shall find no iniquity in me" (Hos. xii. 8.). "Javan (so here), Tubal, Meshech these are (My) "merchants;" no matter what *their* vices, no matter what the purposes of *their* trade, "they trade the persons of men and vessels of brass in " (our) market" (Ezek. xxvii. 13.); the one and the other; each as cheap (comp. here vv. 5, 6.); "let us sell our captives" to them, we are all the safer; and they, what care we that they have lost for ever their own "pleasant land" (Zech. vii. 14.). And so we have here another horrible crime, old and inveterate amongst men, of slave-dealing; "Tyre and Sheba," the traders of the then world, west and east, its chief perpetrators; they, shaping it into a system; they, supplying and improving its machinery; they, simply taking it up, without shame, without scruple, as one other department of legitimate "business." And has not the sin a warning for so called Christian nations? Is the plague

JOEL, III.

and Zidon, and all the coasts of Palestine? ^a will ye render me a recompence? and if ye recompense me, swiftly *and* speedily will I return your recompence upon your own head; Before
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Ezek. 25.
15, 16, 17.

5 because ye have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried into your temples my goodly ²pleasant things: ² Heb.
desirable:
Dan. 11. 38.

6 the children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto ³the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border. ³ Heb. the
sons of the
Grecians.

7 Behold, ^bI will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them, and will return your recompence upon your own head: ^b Isai. 43. 5, 6
& 49. 12.
Jer. 23. 8.

burnt out quite amongst them? Has not England to judge herself before God, whether in her vast trade she will be missionary of the grace of Christ, or a missionary . . . of sin.

4. "Yea, and;" exactly same particles as ch. ii. 29, see *note* there.

"ye;" thrice, emphatically, in this verse; just as "to Me," and "upon Me" (twice). Lit. "what are ye to Me?" i. e. (1) "Ye are aliens from Me," and (2) "ye, men, dare to come into contact with Me, your God."

"will ye render Me;" as if in retaliation upon Me, for your past dependence upon My people.

"swiftly, speedily;" together, as here, besides only in Isa. v. 26.

"return . . . your own head;" same words, ver. 7, so Obad. 15.

5. "ye have taken," &c. "Benhadad" threatens (1 Kings xx. 6.) (in time of Ahab) "whatsoever is pleasant" (as here, only singular) "in thine eyes," my servants "shall take away" (see on Hos. ix. 6, where is the same word). The instance of plunder here may have been in the time of Jehoram (2 Chron. xxi. 17.): "they (the Philistines and others), came up into Judah, . . . and carried away all the substance found in the king's house." Up to the time of the prophet they had not plundered "the temple."

"My silver;" as in Hos. ii. 8, Hag. ii. 8.

"temples," or "palaces," which the word also means.

6. "unto the sons of the Grecians" (*margin.*). The Hebrew word seems to be the same as "Ionia," with the Greeks of which country they would first come in contact; it is a form directly derived from "Javan," who was the son of Japheth (Gen. x. 2.), and the father of "Tarshish, Kittim," &c. (ver. 4.). Comp. Isa. lxvi. 19, but especially Ezek. xxvii. 13, as above. The people of Tyre were the great slave dealers of the ancient world. The Philistines hoped by this "removal far off," to weaken the military strength of Judah, and they gratified "the vengeance of their despicable heart" (Ezek. xxv. 15.) by inflicting such a sore trial.

7. "raise them;" same word as ver. 9, "wake up," "be awakened," ver. 12, another conj.; for which it seems to prepare. Probably this, like those, refers to war. Here, it may be, the union of the descendants

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8 and I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the ⁱSabeans, to a people ^kfar off: for the LORD hath spoken *it*.

ⁱ Ezek. 23, 42.

^k Jer. 6, 20.

^l See Isaiah

8, 9, 10.

Jer. 46, 3, 4.

Ezek. 38, 7.

9 ¶ ¹Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles:

of these captive Jews with the future conquerors of Tyre and Philistia is indicated. So the phrase means, Isa. xiii. 17.

8. "to the Sabeans." The people in the S.W. extremity of Arabia; see Ezek. xxvii. 22. "The merchants of Sheba" . . . "they were thy merchants." They are instanced, probably, as being the "remotest" nation in "the opposite direction." They were, of old, united with the Phœnicians in the trade of the world. Tyre was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, and then by Alexander, who sold more than 13,000 of the inhabitants into slavery. Arrian says "30,000." For the beginning of the punishment of Philistia, see 2 Chron. xxvi. 6, 7; and comp. Zeph. ii. 4—7.

"for the Lord hath spoken it," and so "it shall surely be." So exactly Obad. 18; and Isa. i. 2. and often elsewhere.

9—17. The judgment, soon to fall on Philistia and on Tyre, will authenticate the judgment, in the end of the world, upon all the heathen, all the Antichristian nations. This it is which alone remains. On the one hand "the outpouring of the Spirit of God on all flesh," more and more, wider, and deeper (comp. ver. 18 with ch. ii. 28, 29.); on the other the filling up of iniquity (St. Matt. xxiii. 32.), till "the press is full, and the fats overflow." And here again, in nine verses, we have a magnificent scene painted in all its terrible reality. "Proclaim ye" (same exactly as "call," ehs. i. 14; ii. 15.), another "assembly;" ye My prophets, ye My ministers, ye have a mission not to Israel only, but to the world. "Sanctify ye" no more "fast," the day of repentance is past; "sanctify war," a holy war, "the battle of that great day of God "Almighty" (Rev. xvi. 14.). "Awake up," all; let none be absent; "let all gather themselves" (they know not that it is I that gather them; comp. ver. 2, the same word); all their mighty ones; yea, O Lord; and summon Thou Thy "legions of Angels!" "Thy mighty," Thy obedient ones! And then we have the day, the place, and that army of Antichrist, that world of ungodliness is before us. Heaving, raging, multitudes; no eye but One can see them all, no thought, but His, their God's, can take account of those generations upon generations, those awful unspeakable varieties, degrees, aggravations "of wickedness." All around is "the sea of the nations," foaming out wrath, tossing to and fro, in one last wild madness of blasphemy; and He the Judge "sits "above the waterflood!" The Sun of righteousness is hidden now (comp. St. John xii. 36.). "The moon," Christ's Church, is lost out of sight; it too has felt love growing cold, and faith dying out; but its prayers, its intercessions are ended now. Those saints and prophets, who were as "stars," "shining as lights in the world" (Phil. ii. 15.), "turning many to righteousness" (Dan. xii. 3.), they have all been gathered in. And, once again ("it is the last time"), "the Lord utters "His voice out of Zion, out of Jerusalem" (comp. ch. ii. 11.), out of His

JOEL, III.

² Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Before
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10 ^m beat your plowshares into swords, and your ² pruninghooks into spears: ³ let the weak say, I am strong. ² Heb.
Sanctify.
^m See Is. 2. 4.
Mic. 4. 3.
³ Or, scythes.
ⁿ Zech. 12. 8.
^o ver. 2.
⁴ Or, the
LORD shall
bring down.
^p Ps. 103. 20.
Isai. 13. 3.
^q ver. 2.
^r Ps. 96. 13.
^s & 98. 9. &
110. 6.

11 ^o Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither ⁴ cause ^p thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD.

12 Let the heathen be wakened, ^q and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to ^r judge all the heathen round about.

13 ^s Put ye in the sickle, for ^t the harvest is ripe:

Isai. 2. 4. & 3. 13. Mic. 4. 3. ^s Matt. 13. 39. Rev. 14. 15, 18. ^t Jer. 51. 33. Hos. 6. 11.

high and holy dwellingplace; heaven and earth have passed away. All that tremendous tumult is hushed, that darkness is complete, universal. Only, as "that Voice" speaks, the Word of doom is found to be Word of great "redemption" also. In the love of their God, His people have inconceivable shelter and peace; they in Him are strong, because He is their trust.

9. "Prepare;" properly, as *marg.*, "Sanctify war." Comp. Isa. xiii. 3, I have commanded "My sanctified ones," i.e. the Medes against Babylon. "I have also called My mighty ones for Mine anger." This war is to be as solemn, in its place, as "the fast proclaimed" in the day of Judah's anguish (ch. i. 14.). Jeremiah adopts the words (ch. vi. 4.), "mighty men," as ver. 11, and so before ch. ii. 7, where we have also "men of war." "draw near," i. e. "to battle," as is expressed with the same word 1 Sam. vii. 10.

"let them come up." So exactly ver. 12, and above, ch. ii. 7, 9, where A. V. has "they shall climb." The actual warriors of this passage show us who are meant in those just cited.

10. "Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks." These same words, Isa. ii. 4. Micah iv. 3, in the reverse statement.

"let the weak say." This adjective only here; it appears from the use of the cognate verb to be meant of those "discomfited" (Exod. xvii. 13.) in war; comp. Isa. xiv. 12.

"strong;" better, "mighty;" it is the same as vv. 9, 11. "I am fit for service in the battle."

11. Lit. "from round about," as in next verse. The image is derived from "the enemies closing in upon Israel," and so from Deut. xii. 10; xxv. 19. Comp. Amos iii. 11.

"Thy mighty ones;" no doubt, "the Angels," "mighty in strength" (Ps. ciii. 20.).

12. "come up;" though "to the valley," because, "into the presence of the Lord." Comp. St. Matt. xxv. 31: "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy Angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory," (ver. 32.), "and before Him shall be gathered all nations." The LXX. here agrees with St. Matthew.

13. "the sickle;" only besides in Jer. l. 16; the word of LXX. here is

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^u Isai. 63. 3.
^{Lam.} 1. 15.
^{Rev.} 14. 13,
20.
^x ver. 2.
² Or, *con-*
cision, or,
threshing.
^y ch. 2. 1.
^z ch. 2. 10, 31.
^a Jer. 25. 30.
^{ch.} 2. 11.
^{Amos} 1. 2.
^b Hag. 2. 6.
^c Is. 51. 5, 6.
³ Heb, *place*
of repair,
or, harbour.
^d ch. 2. 27.
^e Dan. 11. 45.
^{Obad.} 16. Zech. 8. 3.

come, get you down ; for the ^u press is full, the fats overflow ; for their wickedness *is* great.

14 Multitudes, multitudes in ² the valley of ² decision : for ^y the day of the LORD *is* near in the valley of decision.

15 The ^z sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

16 The LORD also shall ^a roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem ; and ^b the heavens and the earth shall shake : ^c but the LORD *will be* the ³ hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

17 So ^d shall ye know that I *am* the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, ^e my holy mountain : then

found in Rev. xiv. 14—19, which passage is the comment upon this ; comp. also LXX. for the first clause here with St. Mark iv. 29.

“get you down.” Rather, “tread.” So LXX. here, and good authorities besides.

“press ;” so Isa. lxiii. 2. “Winefat,” A. V. Comp. also Rev. xix. 15.

“their wickedness is great ;” exactly as Gen. vi. 5, which it recalls.

“As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man” (St. Luke xvii. 26.).

14. “Multitudes, multitudes.” A very strong expression. “Thongs upon thongs, and thronging still.” The word means a surging multitude (it is powerfully explained in Isa. xliii. 4 ; xvii. 12.) ; then, it is in the plural (only here and Ezek. xxxii. 20.), and it is repeated to increase still the number ; so in Gen. xiv. 10 : “the vale was pits, pits of slime ;” Exod. viii. 10 (A. V. 14.) : they gathered them “heaps, heaps.” Ezekiel in a grand passage, using constantly the same word, fills up this wonderful outline of Joel (ch. xxxii. 18—32.).

“valley of decision.” The same as that before called “of Jehoshaphat.” But “this word denotes ‘the strictness’ of God’s judgment.” Properly, “cut,” “decided,” then, “severe punishment, ‘decided,’ and “‘decreed’ by God,” Isa. x. 22, 23 ; xxviii. 22. Dan. ix. 27.

15. Exactly as ch. ii. 10. Not “shall be,” “shall,” but “are,” “have withdrawn.”

16. Comp. ch. ii. 11, and for the third clause, ch. ii. 10 ; the first two exactly as Amos i. 2 ; comp. Hos. xi. 10, especially ; and Hag. ii. 6, 7.

“hope.” Better, “place of refuge,” “shelter ;” twelve times in the Psalms, as, e.g., Ps. xli. 1.

“strength.” Rather, “stronghold ;” six times in the Psalms of the Lord God, as, e.g., Ps. xxvii. 1. Isaiah unites the two words as here (ch. xxv. 4.). “Thou hast been ‘a strength’ to the needy in his distress, “‘a refuge’ from the storm.”

17. “So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God.” Exactly as ch. ii. 27, only the second clause of that verse omitted.

“dwelling in Zion.” Exactly repeated as the last words of the prophecy below (ver. 21 ; so Isa. viii. 18.). Even this Evangelic promise had

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shall Jerusalem be ²holy, and there shall no ^fstrangers pass through her any more.

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18 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the mountains shall ^gdrop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, ^hand all the rivers of Judah shall ³flow with waters, and ⁱa fountain shall come forth of the house of the LORD, and shall water ^kthe valley of Shittim.

² Heb. holiness.
^f Isai. 35. 8. & 52. 1. Nah. 1. 15. Zech. 14. 21. Rev. 21. 27.
^g Amos 9. 13.
^h Isai. 30. 25.
³ Heb. go.
^k Num. 25. 1.

ⁱ Ps. 46. 4. Ezek. 47. 1. Zech. 14. 8. Rev. 22. 1.

its expression exactly, with the exception of the word "Zion," in Exod. xxix. 46: They "shall know that 'I am the Lord their God,'" that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt (comp. Hos. xiii. 4.), that I may "dwell" among "them," and it reappears in the Revelation (ch. xxi. 2, 3): "I John, saw 'the holy city,' new 'Jerusalem,' coming down "from God, out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold 'the tabernacle' of God is with men, and 'He will dwell' (comp. with LXX. "here) with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, their God."

"then shall Jerusalem be holiness." As *margin*.; so Obad. 17; comp. also ver. 16. Zech. viii. 3 adopts and expands the language.

"there shall no strangers pass through her any more." This seems a kind of sacred proverb. Job xv. 19: "Unto whom alone the "earth was given, and 'no stranger passed' among them." Isa. xxxv. 8: "It shall be called the way of 'holiness,' the unclean 'shall not pass "over' it." So Nahum i. 15; so Zechariah, in the last words of his prophecy, again adopts and explains the words. Rev. xxi. 27, is only a paraphrase upon these sayings.

18—21. The scene passes into the New Heaven and the New Earth. It is the bliss of Judah, over against the "desolation" of Egypt and Edom. There is a richer outpouring of the Spirit of God: "Mountains," "hills, valleys," that were dry before, the greatest and the least, all are watered, refreshed, overstreamed with grace. All innocent blood ever shed is avenged, is atoned. "The fountain of life" (Ps. xxxvi. 9.) is ever flowing, for it is from Thee, O Lord: Thy people are "holy now," as Thou art holy; "they abide now," as Thou abidest: there is perfect peace; there is perpetual "praise." "The Lord is ever dwelling in Zion."

18. "it shall come to pass." Exactly as ch. ii. 28, 32.

"the mountains shall drop down new wine." So exactly, Amos ix. 13 (only a different conjugation), who alone besides has this symbolic blessing; before the "new wine" had been "cut off," ch. i. 5.

"flow with milk." Properly, "flow milk" . . . "waters," as though they themselves gushed forth, of their own accord, into the good gifts, which they yield (*Pusey*).

"the rivers of Judah." Comp. ch. i. 20, same word: "before they "had been 'dried up.'"

"a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord." Ezekiel and Zechariah adopt and expand this image, using some of the same words, see Ezek. xlvi. 1. Zech. xiv. 8; and so "the Revelation" ch. xxii. 1.

"the valley of Shittim," i.e. "Acacias," a different tree from ours of

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19 ¹Egypt shall be a desolation, and ^mEdom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence *against* the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.

¹ Is. 19. 1, &c.
^m Jer. 49. 17.
Ezek. 25. 12,
13.

20 But Judah shall ²dwell ⁿfor ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation.

Amos 1. 11.
Obad. 10.

² Or, *abide*.
ⁿ Amos 9. 15.

21 For I will ^ocleanse their blood *that* I have not cleansed: ^pfor the LORD dwelleth in Zion.

^o Isai. 4. 4.
^p Ezek. 48. 35.

ver. 17. Rev. 21. 3. ³ Or, *even I the LORD that dwelleth in Zion.*

that name. The Valley (only spoken of here in Holy Scripture) was seven miles and a half beyond the Dead Sea (*Josephus*), and dry, for in such a valley only the Eastern acacia grows (*St. Jerome*). Shittim is mentioned Num. xxv. 1; xxxiii. 49. Josh. ii. 1; iii. 1. Micah vi. 5 (all). If the same as "Abel-Shittim," it was "in the plains 'of Moab,'" and is associated, of course, with idolatry and uncleanness. There was "a fountain" of water under the temple, which may have partly given occasion for the figure here.

19. "Egypt shall (properly) become a desolation." The last words, as Exod. xxiii. 29, &c. This is the first prophecy of the humiliation of Egypt . . . yet when Joel thus threatened Egypt there were no human symptoms of its decay. Isa. xix. Jer. xlvi. Ezek. xxix, xxx, xxxii. 1—18.

"Edom shall become a desolate wilderness." Exactly as it had been said of Judah (ch. ii. 3). See how this prophecy too is enlarged by Obadiah; Jer. xlix. 7—22. Ezek. xxxv. For its former fertility, see Gen. xxvii. 39. Num. xx. 17. In Joel's time not the slightest shadow was cast upon her future.

"for the violence against the children of Judah." So Obad. 10, has the same word. See detail of this more fully stated, Amos i. 11.

"because they shed innocent blood." Same words, Deut. xix. 10. Ezekiel (ch. xxxv. 5, 6.) points this cruelty to Edom.

20. "And Judah for ever shall abide" (as *margin*). A different word from "dwell" (vv. 17, 21). It is said of the Lord (Ps. ix. 7.): "But the Lord 'shall endure for ever:'" ib. cii. 12: "But Thou, O Lord, 'shalt endure for ever,' and Thy remembrance 'unto all generations,'" exactly. "Not," of course, "earthly Judah, or earthly Jerusalem, for these 'must come to an end with the earth itself, of whose end the prophet 'well knew' (*Pusey*). It is a promise of the perpetual abiding of the Church of God, and that His children shall dwell with Him for ever.

21. "For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed." Rather, "'I will pronounce innocent their blood,' 'that I have not 'pronounced innocent.'" The words look back to those of ver. 19: "innocent blood;" they are the same. And this is the only meaning of the verb, as in Exod. xx. 7. Deut. v. 11. In that God punishes the shedding of it, He declared the blood innocent, whose shedding He punished.

"for the Lord." Better, as *margin*., "Even I the Lord, that dwelleth 'in Zion.'"

AMOS.

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AMOS is known to us more particularly than almost any of "the Twelve" minor Prophets, if, perhaps, we except Jonah. His name is unique in the Old Testament, for that of the father of Isaiah is spelt differently. It means, it would seem, "he who takes up and lays a burden;" and so would be characteristic of his whole book of prophecy, which stands almost by itself in its continued denunciation of "woe" and punishment, its omission, till the very close, of all topics of hope and encouragement; a fact all the more striking when we compare it with the contemporary writings of Hosea, and, as we may suppose, of Joel.

"He was among the herdmen of Tekoa." Whether he was born there or not, "Tekoa" was his home. This was one of "the fenced cities" built by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 5, 6.), "six (Roman) miles (*St. Jerome*) south of Bethlehem," twelve from Jerusalem. "It lies on an elevated hill." Its high position (Robinson, *Bibl. Res.* i. 486.) "gives it a wide prospect. . . . To the south-east the view is bounded only by the level mountains of Moab, with frequent bursts of the Dead Sea, seen through openings among the rugged and desolate intervening mountains." Tekoa bears a clearly symbolical name. In its usage it has both the sense of "pitching" a tent (*Jer.* vi. 3.), and "blowing" a trumpet (*ib.* 1.). In the case of Amos, both meanings are united. He was at once a shepherd, who there had "pitched" his tent for his livelihood, and who was called "to pitch" it against Israel; but still more, "to blow" the trumpet "from Tekoa" (*ch.* i. 1. *Jer.* l. c.). Accordingly he uses (once) the very word: "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done (it)?" (*ch.* iii. 6.) Not only herdman, however, and shepherd, but "gatherer or dresser of sycamore fruit" was the future prophet; and not amongst pleasant pastures, or amidst "trees and vineyards," but in the wide desert (comp. "the wilderness of Tekoa," 2 Chron. xx. 20.), "where there was continually the savageness of lions, and the slaughter of the flocks" (*St. Jerome*). Amos was poor, we may well suppose; led habitually a hard life; in the midst of many perils; but in those solitudes

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of the "south" of Judah he was trained, as has been well said, "as a child of nature," and "endued with power and wisdom by his God" (*Pusey*).

From such a life, he himself tells us, "the Lord took him" (ch. vii. 15.) (using the very language that Asaph had employed of David, the shepherd of Bethlehem, Ps. lxxviii. 70.), a servant surely, equally simple in faith, equally loyal to his God, equally ready to obey this and every other Divine call; but, unlike his great predecessor, not sent "to feed," but "to prophesy" heavy tidings "against Israel." This high commission of Amos reminds us of another Prophet, especially of that occasion which brought his trial and that of "the man of God out of Judah" into closest parallel. Some one hundred and fifty years had passed since that witness for the Truth came "to Bethel," and in the presence of the first Jeroboam "cried against the altar in the word of the Lord" (1 Kings xiii. 1, 2.). Like a far greater than that prophet, like the earliest of all, Amos had interceded for "the sinners of God's people" (ch. ix. 10.); like Moses, he had been heard; but he who had the meekness, and gentleness, and tenderness of Moses, was no less faithful and firm. Before his great day of trial he had been "bold as a lion" (Prov. xxviii. 1.), and his words had been with power, so that his influence could be called "a conspiracy against Jeroboam," and like Elijah's, "a troubling" and convulsing "of the land" (ch. vii. 10.). Now he shows himself the inheritor of the "mantle" of those two great men who had stood in this very same spot some seventy years before (comp. 2 Kings ii. 2, 23.); like them, he must "speak of the Lord's testimonies before kings, and not "be ashamed" (Ps. cxix. 46.); like them, he must hand down to other generations the example of a Prophet's fidelity. His steadfastness and calmness against Amaziah and the priests of Bethel will very shortly afterwards encourage Micah in the days of Hezekiah (Jer. xxvi. 18.); Jeremiah, in a day as dark, will follow him in his conflict with Hananiah (ib., ch. xxviii.). We know no more of his personal history; only, and this too is significant, that "he who was among the herdmen" prophesied "in the days of Uzziah . . . and in the days of Jeroboam . . . two years before the earthquake" (ch. i. 1.). Both kings are marked types of worldly power, they witness it in their names. Each is a successful warrior; Uzziah "breaking down the wall of Gath and the wall of "Ashdod," and conquering elsewhere, so that "his name spread abroad "even to the entering in of Egypt" (2 Chron. xxvi. 6, 8.); Jeroboam "restoring the coast of Israel from Hamath unto the sea of the plain," so that it is said, "By his hand the Lord saved" His people (2 Kings xiv. 25, 27.). Their reigns are remarkable for great public works, vast armies, developed industry, unusual prosperity (see 2 Chron. xxvi.). Amos, "the Shepherd from the desert," though, unlike Elijah and Elisha he worked no miracle, has, like St. John the Baptist, that great power

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of "a just man and a holy" (St. Mark vi. 20.). His simplicity arrests attention in those scenes of riot and luxury; his true, earnest voice gives especial awe to his opening words, "The Lord roareth from Sion;" as seven times over he declares that "a devouring fire" is ready to descend on Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, on Bozrah, Rabbah, Kiriath, and on Jerusalem. Some surely felt, even in Israel, that all that "strength of bow and sword, and battle, of horses and of horsemen" could not really "save" (comp. Hosea i. 7.), and "that the courageous even among the mighty" must "flee away naked in that day" of the Lord (ch. ii. 16.). To us Amos prefigures the Galilean fishermen raised to be Apostles; and illustrates the Divine Law, how "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty" (1 Cor. i. 27.).

But, as is the case with other Prophets, Amos makes himself still better known to us by the words which, under the guidance of his Lord, he speaks. Emphatically he is the Prophet of "judgment and woe." Like Jeremiah, two hundred years and more afterwards, he comes before us, at the very first, as one "set over the nations and the kingdoms, to root out, and pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down;" and only at the very end, and in reference to a far distant day, "to build and to plant" (Jer. i. 10. Amos ix. 14, 15.). Like Joel, perhaps his immediate predecessor, like Isaiah after him, he proclaims in the beginning, and middle, and end, "that day" (ch. ii. 16.), "that day of the Lord (which) is darkness, and not light (ch. v. 18.); "even very dark and no brightness in it" (ib. 20.); "the day of howlings," for "songs;" "of sun going down at noon;" of agonizing "thirst;" unavailing "wandering to and fro for the word of the Lord," all along, in the day of pride, despised, and now hopelessly lost (ch. viii. 3, 9, 12, 13.). Once he takes up a formal "lamentation" for Israel (ch. v. 1.), just as in after times Jeremiah and Ezekiel will for Jerusalem; twice he pronounces a solemn "woe" (chs. v. 18; vi. 1.); twice, in most vivid words, he brings before us a picture of death in that doomed city. First, a single sufferer left for a more prolonged misery in the house where nine lay dead; then a last wail of distress in the temple, "a mass of corpses everywhere; and a casting them forth in silence" (chs. vi. 9, 10; viii. 3.). Very solemnly, and yet with touching pathos, he reminds them of great chastisements already, perhaps recently, inflicted, and all in vain: "Yet have ye not returned unto Me, saith the Lord" (ch. iv. 6—11.); at the end of each chapter, from the second to the eighth inclusive, he warns of greater soon to come: "When the mighty shall not deliver his soul;" when "the altars of Bethel. . . shall fall to the ground," and "the houses of ivory perish;" when "the Lord God," "who treadeth on the high places of the earth" will do this which is now secret, but to be revealed, when they "meet" Him in judgment. But the precise doom is announced; "Gilgal shall surely go into captivity"

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(ch. v. 5). "I will cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus" (ib. 27 : comp. ch. vi. 7.) ; and before that time an unknown "nation" shall be raised up to afflict them, all the whole length of their land (ch. vi. 14.). Still further, the Lord made him "see" (doubtless Amos put forth the parables no less vividly to the people) the signs of the coming punishment, and of the final doom. Very forcibly the great roll of judgment is unfolded further, to exhibit "the locusts eating the grass of the land," "the fire devouring it;" "the Lord Himself" measuring "the wall" for destruction; "the basket of fruit" betokening that "the harvest is ripe" (Joel iii. 13.) ; and then nothing remains but to repeat once more "the dirge of death" (ch. viii. 14.), because the sentence is gone forth, "Smite" "the lintel; I will slay with the sword;" "he that escapeth shall not be delivered" (ch. ix. 1.).

Even this analysis does not exhaust the "burdens" of this long sentence of doom. Almost as impressive is his rare, because we may suppose he knew of God that it would be a vain, call to repentance. And surely it is most striking that, in the supreme agony of his own soul, he twice prays for those who will not pray for themselves; and then, as if he was warned, like Jeremiah (ch. vii. 16.), "makes intercession" no more (ch. vii. 2, 5.). Still more, that his one only promise of mercy is reserved for a far-distant day, and for the house of David, not for Israel to whom he was sent (ch. ix. 11—15.). It falls in with the entire spirit of his prophecy, that, after that solemn opening of the first chapter, Amos pointedly likens the past judgments upon Israel to the "overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah" (ch. iv. 11.), to the Egyptian plagues (ib. 10.), and those which are to come, twice to the earthquake and the inundation of the Nile (chs. viii. 8; ix. 5.). But above all, in his grand descriptions of "the Lord, the Lord of Hosts" (the names by which he warns them continually), he adopts the language of terror and awe. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth," the Lord says (ch. iii. 2.). His fatherly care over them, His many mercies, Amos recounts (ch. ii. 9—11.); but the "solemn utterance" of the Lord now is only of punishment. What does He? "He maketh the morning darkness;" "He treadeth upon the high places of the earth" (ch. iv. 13.); "He maketh the day dark unto night," "poureth the waters of the sea upon the earth" (ch. v. 8.); "He darteth, like lightning, desolation against the strong" (ib. 9.); "He toucheth the land, and it melts away" (ch. ix. 5.). And this awful, all powerful Lord knoweth, too, "man's inmost thought" (ch. iv. 13.); and "He hath sworn," and that thrice, "by His holiness," "by His own soul," by that "excellency of Jacob" (which Himself He is), "I will take you away with hooks," "I will deliver up the city, and its fulness," "surely never will I forget any of their works" (chs. iv. 2; vi. 8; viii. 7.).

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And what was the state of the nation, which provoked this stern treatment, this heavy sentence? Amos here, too, is a Prophet for all time, and especially for an age of what is called advanced civilization and especial refinement. No inspired writer, we may venture to say, exhibits more forcibly the secret as well as the open and flagrant sins of such an age. Israel was now a powerful kingdom, under a king of remarkable vigour, who had enlarged its territory by signal military success. It was proud of the "horns of its strength;" "they were its own" (ch. vi. 13.). It had, as never before, armies of "mighty men," full equipped, tried in battle (chs. ii. 14—16; vi. 13.). And this prosperity, coming all at once upon a people steeped in idolatry, brought with it utter and shameless demoralization. Hosea, perhaps a little later than Amos, "touches," it has been well said, "the centre of the offence: Amos shows the hideousness of it in (its) details" (*Pusey*). With a holy indignation, sometimes taking the form of scornful irony, he scathes their master sin; "Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes after three years" (ch. iv. 4.). In wonderful words, selected by St. Augustine in proof of his eloquence, he contrasts the heartless luxury, the laboured self-indulgence of those "who are at ease in Zion," and "careless in Samaria," with the "affliction of Joseph," close at their doors, and utterly unheeded (ch. vi. 1, 6.). Especially does his noble heart kindle at the sight of the wrongs and sufferings of the poor, at the hands of such as these. "They recline," forsooth! "on their couches of ivory;" "they eat" the choicest dainties; "they lounge," the livelong day, over their wine, and to the sound of "their effeminate music" (ch. vi. 4—6.). Men, these, who "pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor" (ch. ii. 7.); who "treasure up wrong and robbery in their palaces" (ch. iii. 10.); "who swallow up the needy, even to make the poor to cease out of the earth" (ch. viii. 4.); who fret and chafe over the restraint of weekly "Sabbath" and continual "new moon," because they are hindered one day from ungodly gain, from grinding bargain, from "falsifying the balances of deceit" (ch. viii. 5.). And the sin is not the sin of nobles, merchants, soldiers, only, it is the sin of women too; "Hear ye, ye kine of Bashan, who crush the needy, who say to their husbands, Bring, and let us drink" (ch. iv. 1.).

As we might too well suppose, the mass of the rich and the mighty clearly give no heed to the Prophet; rather "they hate him that rebuketh in the gate; they abhor him that speaketh uprightly" (ch. v. 10.). The fathers had tempted God's Nazarites among them to break their vow; they had said "to the Prophets, Prophecy not" (ch. ii. 12.); and now the sons are scoffers more bold, more defiant. Away, they cry, with the Prophet, and "his evil day" (ch. vi. 3.); "The evil shall not surprise

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“us” (ch. ix. 10.). Therefore, says Amos, in language which, to a Christian remembering his Lord before Annas and Caiaphas, Herod and Pilate, is full of deepest meaning: “the prudent shall keep silence in “that time, for it is an evil time” (ch. v. 13.).

The style of the great Prophet is in perfect keeping, as it was sure to be, with the simple truthfulness of his character; with his holy awe of his Lord; his tender compassion for the lowly and the suffering. “No—where among the Prophets,” it has been said, “do we meet with “images from country life in such pure originality, in such liveliness “and fulness” (chs. ii. 13; iii. 4, 5, 12; iv. 1, 2, 9; vi. 12; vii. 1, 7, 14; viii. 1, 2, 6; ix. 9, 13, 14.). He is a master equally of indignant invective, and of touching pathos; there is his eightfold thunderbolt of woe; but there is also his tender refrain, “yet ye have not returned to Me” (ch. iv. 6—11.); “the mighty shall not deliver his soul;” thrice he says it (ch. ii. 14, 15.) of “that day,” when the impenitent and unpardoned “shall meet his God;” but he says thrice also, “Seek ye Me, “and live;” “Seek the Lord, and live;” “Seek good, that ye may “live” (ch. v. 4, 6, 14.). And where shall we find a more wonderful utterance for depth and fulness, and also for terseness and force, than that one verse in which he describes “the tossing to and fro of Israel “in all nations as in a sieve,” which at once scatters the chaff to the wind, and preserves each pure grain (ch. ix. 9.).

He seems clearly to follow Joel, whose language he pointedly adopts; he is, perhaps, a little earlier than Hosea, so several interpreters think; with whom anyhow he is in striking relation; Obadiah is clearly as closely related to him as to Joel. His connection with the book of Job is much to be observed; still more, how, like Hosea and Joel, he constantly refers to the Pentateuch. He is imitated by those who came after him. But with the two placed in the Canon before him he forms one of a “three—fold cord.” His resemblances to them, and his differences from them, illustrate, as in other instances, the “manifoldly varied wisdom” (comp. Eph. iii. 10.) “of the Spirit, Who spake by the Prophets.”

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1 *Amos sheweth God's judgment upon Syria, 6 upon the Philistines, 9 upon Tyrus, 11 upon Edom, 13 upon Ammon.*

THE words of Amos, ^a who was among the herd- ^a ch. 7. 14.
men of ^b Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel ^b 2 Sam. 14. 2.
^c Chr. 20. 20.

CHAPTERS I. AND II. 1—5.

The Lord declares His Judgment upon Seven Guilty Nations, Judah being one of them.

INTRODUCTION.

With words identical with those of Joel, at the end of his prophecy (ch. iii. 16.) Amos begins, "the Lord will roar from Zion," &c.; he only a poor "herdman," but the mouthpiece of the very Voice of the Lord. It is the last warning; just "two years before the (terrific) earthquake." Once again he will say from the Lord when it is the time of judgment, "Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake" (ch. ix. 1.). Over seven guilty nations, that voice rolls its thunder, "and for three transgressions," and "for the fourth," and crowning one of all; over Damascus, Philistia, Tyre; over Edom, Ammon, Moab; and over Judah too. If these are not spared, shalt, thou, Israel escape (chs. ii. 6, 8; iii. 1, 2.) in thy heaped up sins? Against Me have these nations "transgressed;" Damascus, "threshing all Gilead with iron;" Philistia, leagued with Tyre "to deliver up the whole captivity to Edom" (vv. 6, 9.); Tyre, Edom, "brothers" to My people, by pledged word and by kindness received, or, by very birth and race; yet one, making slaves of those brethren, the other "tearing" them, as a beast of prey; Ammon, Moab, they too kinsmen and Ammon killing all that live, yea even the unborn, and that "to enlarge their border" (ver. 13.); Moab insulting the dead (ch. ii. 1.). See how they all perish before "the fire of judgment:" viz. that city of strength and beauty, that old city, Damascus (Gen. xv. 2.), those proud defiant cities of Philistia, (note their names) with not "a remnant" left (ver. 8.); Tyre, though it be all but inaccessible "rock;" Edom, though it saith, "who shall bring me down?" (comp. Obad. 3.); "Bozrah," (ver. 12.); "Rabbah," that one "mighty" city of Ammon; "Kirioth," all those "many," rich "cities" of Moab.

The seven nations are clearly arranged in an emphatic order; the three first, simply heathen enemies of God and His people; the three last, Edom, Ammon, Moab, closely related to Israel. Further, we see from the text, that they are paired, and that variously; "Damascus, Philistia," by the words, "I will cut off the inhabitant" (comp. also ch. ii. 3.) "and him that holdeth the sceptre" (exactly vv. 5, 8.); "Tyre, and Edom," by "brothers" (vv. 9, 11.); "Ammon, Moab," by the words, "with shouting" (ver. 14; ch. ii. 2; exactly); and "princes" (chs. i. 15; ii. 3.). On the other hand, we have "wall of Gaza, Tyre, Rabbah" (vv. 7, 10, 14.), to mark, no doubt, their great strength; then, "Philistia, and Tyre deliver up the whole captivity to Edom" (vv. 6, 9.); Damascus the first, Ammon the last of the six, alike practise horrible cruelty on "Gilead" (vv. 3, 13.). Again Tyre, at the

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^c in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of ^d Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the ^e earthquake.

^c Hos. 1. 1.
^d ch. 7. 10.

^e Zech. 14. 5.

end of the first series; Edom, next to it, at the beginning of the other, alone, save Judah (ii. 4, 5.), have their sin and punishment described in two verses (all the rest in three), the brevity, perhaps, marking, more solemnly, their ruin.

Again, "Thus saith the Lord," begins each judgment in chs. i., ii.; and "saith the Lord" also ends those of Damascus (ver. 5.), Ammon (ver. 15.), Moab (ch. ii. 3.); and (in a fuller form) that of the Philistines (ver. 8.); this form is the same as in ch. iii. 7, 8, 11, &c.; "for three transgressions, &c., &c., I will not turn away" is found in every instance; so, "I will send a fire . . . which shall devour the palaces," with the single exception of ch. i. 14 where it is "I will kindle" a fire. But the punishment varies in details; Damascus, Ammon, "shall go into captivity" (very slight variation of phrase); the "people of Syria," "king and princes of Ammon;" whereas those of Moab "shall be slain" (ch. ii. 3.); the very "remnant of Philistia shall perish" (ver. 8.), how it is not said; of Ammon and Moab the end appears to be that of fierce battle (chs. i. 14; ii. 2.). Many and mighty are these cities, and peoples of the world now, even like those old seven nations of Canaan; and their malignity against the people of God, and against God Himself is implacable; but though they "join hand in hand," "Edom," . . . "Moab," . . . "Ammon," . . . "the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre," though "they have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance" (Ps. lxxxiii. 4, 6, 7.), all, altogether shall have their punishment, sure, terrible, irreversible.

Amos preludes the seven trumpets of the Angels in the book of Revelation, and the last Judgment; he recalls that great event in the history of his not distant predecessor Elijah, when there was wind and "earthquake and fire;" but for "the small, still voice," that followed then, the Lord now "roars" upon His enemies, and sweeps them away utterly. It is a wonderful picture both of the Judgment of God, and the sin of man. Note, how sin is propagated, repeated, aggravated, as by horrible entail. Damascus "threshes" Gilead; Ammon tortures their "women with child;" Philistia takes all the vanquished captive; Tyre buys and sells them; Edom "stifles" the last spark of "compassion;" tears very "brethren" with devilish rage. Note, how the evil, for the time, put aside all differences one with another, to combine against the people of God; how luxury, devotion to pleasure, refinement can consist, side by side, with revolting cruelty (vv. 3, 5.), as in Damascus; how, as in Philistia, there may be in one and the same bad heart violence and fraud; how, as in Tyre, love of greed and gain may make an empire city of the world "covenant breaker, unmerciful to brethren." And what is it to sin against light? Edom becomes simply as Satan to Jacob; "keeps his wrath for ever." Ammon for a little increase of territory, will outstrip heathen in wickedness and pitiless ferocity; Moab if it loses its victim when living, will rage against the Most High, by insult of the dead. But the Lord God seeth, and will require (Ps. x. 13, 14.). Oh! fearful madness to "treasure up wrath against the day of wrath"

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2 And he said, The LORD will ^f roar from Zion, Before
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and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the habita-
tions of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of ^f Jer. 25. 30.
Joel 3. 16.
^g Carmel shall wither. g 1 Sam. 25. 2. Isai. 33. 9.

(Rom. ii. 5.). All these three transgressions, as well as that fourth will He bring to light! each of these three which man has forgotten his Judge remembereth (comp. Hosea vii. 2.); and what shall He do for that fourth, which was done against further warning, which was the worst of all, and which has quenched the last motion of the Spirit of Grace, and taken away all place of repentance? Pusey well quotes: "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth "from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias" (St. Matt. xxiii. 35.).

Amos is here in close relation to Joel; Jeremiah follows, and expands his prophecies (chs. xlvii.,—xlix.; so Ezek. xxv., especially chs. xxvi. 1—6; xxxv.).

1. A most weighty opening of the Prophecy. "The words of Amos," perhaps of him, who "has a burden to lay upon" Israel (see General Introd.), "who was among the herdmen," perhaps the lowliest of labourers, "out of Tekoa," out of a very wilderness (2 Chron. xx. 20.), but there "encamped" as a watcher against his people, and "blowing" thence a trumpet of alarm and woe (General Introd.); obscure in himself, but "seeing the vision" of the Almighty, and so, bold against Uzziah, once "the Lord's strength," and Jeroboam "whose people is mighty;" a witness of the unrest beneath all the great prosperity of those two kings, a herald of the convulsion, of which "the earthquake," ready to break out, is only a feeble image (comp. ch. ix. 1.). Amos comes forth with the suddenness and the authority of his predecessor Elijah (1 Kings xvii. 1.). As Jonah before him cried in Nineveh, "Yet forty days, and "Nineveh shall be overthrown;" so the shepherd prophet, "yet two "years," and the earth shall quake and reel: and all these proud heathen cities, yea Judah, Israel itself, where shall all be?

2. Above the earthquake, in the midst of the fire (vv. 4, 7, &c.), that Voice speaks (1 Kings xix. 12.), but now aloud and in vengeance (Nah. i. 2.); "out of Zion," "the holy mountain," where alone "He dwells," so Amos warns Israel (*Pusey*) from the first (Joel iii. 17.); "out of "Jerusalem" the city of His love. Look, at once "He speaks and it "is done" (Ps. xxxiii. 9.); "from south to north, it is one mourning," all "is withered;" "the shepherds' pastures," the Prophet's own home, desolate; "Carmel," that garden of beauty, is dried up.

Amos, at the beginning, joins his prophecy to that of Joel. The Word of the Lord passes not away; it is echoed on from mouth to mouth, age after age. God is ever with His Church; ever and again a living Voice issues thence, and "Bethel, and Dan, and Samaria," and every other idol temple is put to shame. "Out of Sion" (Isa. ii. 3.) goes forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord "from Jerusalem;" but when that word is of Judgment, "the earth mourneth and languisheth . . . "Sharon is like a wilderness, and Bashan and Carmel shake off (their "fruits)" (Isa. xxxiii. 9; comp. also Isa. xvi. 10; xxix. 6; also Amos ix. 3. 1 Kings xviii. 42.).

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3 Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of ^h Damascus, ² and for four, I will not ³ turn away *the punishment* thereof; ¹ because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron:

4 ^k but I will send a fire into the house of Hazael, which shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad.

5 I will break also the ¹ bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from ⁴ the plain of Aven, and him that holdeth the sceptre from ⁵ the house of Eden: and ^m the people of Syria shall go into captivity ⁿ unto Kir, saith the LORD.

6 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of ^o Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away

^h Isai. 8. 4.
& 17. 1.
Jer. 49. 23.
Zech. 9. 1.
² Or, *yea,*
for four.
³ Or, *convert*
it, or, let it
be quiet:
and so ver.
6, &c.
¹ 2 Kings 10.
33. & 13. 7.
^k Jer. 17. 27.
& 49. 27.
ver. 7, 10, 12.
ch. 2. 2, 5.
^l Jer. 51. 30.
Lam. 2. 9.
⁴ Or, *Bikath-*
avn. ⁵ Or, *Beth-eden.* ^m Fulfilled, 2 Kin. 16. 9. ⁿ ch. 9. 7. ^o 2 Chr. 28. 18. Isai. 14. 29.
Jer. 47. 4, 5. Ezek. 25. 15. Zeph. 2. 4.

3, &c. Now there follows the sevenfold sentence of punishment upon the seven guilty nations. Damascus, under "Benhadad," i.e. son of the idol, "Hadad" (according to some "the Sun"), had begun its ravages of Israel in the time of Baasha (1 Kings xv. 20. 2 Chron. xvi. 4.), to pass by the earlier hostility of Rezin against Solomon (1 Kings xi. 24, 25.); had continued them against Ahab (1 Kings xx.), and during this time had taken Ramoth in "Gilead" (ib. xxii. 3.), and through "Naaman," "obtained deliverance," i.e. victory, over some foe (2 Kings v. 1.). There was another war about Ramoth, in the reign of Joram (2 Kings viii. 28, 29; ix. 15.), when Hazael (see below) is king. "In those days" (of Jehu) "the Lord began to cut Israel short, and Hazael smote them in "all the coasts of Israel, from Jordan eastward; all the land of Gilead, "the Gadites, and Reubenites, and Manassites" (ib. x. 32, 33.). Again in the reign of Jehoahaz (ib. xiii. 3, 4, 7.) "the king of Syria destroyed "them, and made them like the dust by threshing" (as here); compare the fuller and terrible account by Elisha (2 Kings viii. 12.). Thus for about 130 years that war, with very few intervals, went on, during which, and not only at its end, "the affliction of Israel was very bitter; "for there was not . . . any helper for Israel" (ib. xiv. 26.).

Damascus was triumphant in war, "rich" in its magnificent trade (Isa. viii. 4. Ezek. xxvii. 16, 18, "a city of praise and . . . joy" (Jer. xlix. 25.); a very garden of fertility and beauty, an "Eden" of "delight." The Word goes forth; "the people of Syria shall go into "captivity," a fate till then unheard of (see *Pusey*). Strong as it is, there is prepared against it one yet stronger, "even the king of Assyria" (Isa. viii. 4.). "Damascus is taken away from being a city" (ib. xvii. 1; comp. 2 Kings xvi. 9, especially); later, it seems to have become "very "feeble" (Jer. xlix. 24.), and before long, no doubt, "a ruinous heap" (Isa. xvii. 1.). In the days of Alexander, or his successors, it revived, but only as a portion of a Greek dynasty.

6—8. From their enemy in the north Amos passes to their still more bitter enemy in the south-west, Philistia, "from the days of Shamgar" (Judges iii. 31; v. 6.) to the last day of Jerusalem (Jer. xlvii. 4. Ezek. xxv. 15.), for some seven hundred years. Here heathen cruelty was

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the punishment thereof; because they ²carried away captive the whole captivity, ^pto deliver *them* up to Edom:

7 ^qbut I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza, which shall devour the palaces thereof:

8 and I will cut off the inhabitant ^rfrom Ashdod, and him that holdeth the sceptre from Ashkelon, and I will ^sturn mine hand against Ekron: and ^tthe remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord God.

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² Or, carried them away with an entire captivity, 2 Chron. 21. 16, 17.
Joel 3. 6.
^p ver. 9.
^q Jer. 47. 1.
^r Zeph. 2. 4.
Zech. 9. 5, 6.
^s Ps. 81. 14.

^t Jer. 47. 4. Ezek. 25. 16.

inflamed by rivalry, by wrongs continually received and inflicted, and superstition gave it increased fierceness. Ezekiel describes it as an "exceeding vengeance," "a despite," or abhorrence, "an enmity everlasting," even as Edom's; nay, representing that of Satan against the woman's seed (comp. Ezek. xxv. 15 with ch. xxxv. 5 and Gen. iii. 15, in all which places the same rare word for "enmity" is used). To the transgressions of "Aram" (ver. 3.) Philistia added those of men-stealers (comp. Joel iii. 6.), traders in blood, and murderers by hands, if possible, more violent than their own. With the wars of Aram upon Judah they are connected subsequently (2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 18.); with those against Israel by Isaiah (ch. ix. 12.), "the Syrians before and the Philistines behind;" and they shall devour Israel with open mouth;" with Tyre, as here, by Joel iii. 4. Ezek. xxv. 15—17; xxvi. 1, &c., and especially Jer. xlvii. 4.

7. "Gaza," "the strong," the southernmost of the five great cities of the Philistines, is mentioned in Gen. x. 19; it was admirably chosen for situation, both for strength and commercial advantages to and from Egypt. As here, it is mentioned first in Josh. xiii. 3; and "Ashdod," as here, second (ib.). We never hear of it being taken, save Judges i. 18, during all those centuries from that date to the end of the monarchy of Judah; but the Lord says, "I will send a fire upon it;" and we know, to confine ourselves to Holy Scripture, "Pharaoh smote Gaza" (Jer. xlvii. 1.).

8. Of "Ashdod," very probably "the Waster," we read about this time: "Uzziah brake down the wall of Gath . . . and the wall of "Ashdod" (2 Chron. xxvi. 6.). "Ashkelon" (the etymology is doubtful) "is cut off; the remnant of their valley," says Jeremiah (ch. xlvii. 5; comp. ver. 7.). "Ekron," perhaps "the rooter out" (comp. Zeph. ii. 4, especially), is much less known to us; it was given to Jonathan, the Maccabee, after he set fire to Azotus (Ashdod), and burned with fire the temple of Dagon, and had conquered Ascalon (1 Maccab. x. 84, 86, 89.); for in fact, the Lord turned His hand again and again upon these proud cities; and "the remnant," which in Judah is ever saved, in Philistia "perishes." "The day cometh to spoil" all the Philistines; "to cut off," as here, "from Tyrus and Sidon every helper that remaineth" (as in Joel ii. 32, "the remnant"); "for the Lord 'will 'spoil' the Philistines, the remnant of the country of Caphtor" (Jer. xlvii. 4.). Contrast with this Amos v. 15: "It may be the Lord . . . will "be gracious to 'the remnant' of Joseph."

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^u Isai. 23. 1.
Jer. 47. 4.
Ezek. 26, &
27, & 28.
Joel 3. 4, 5.

^x ver. 6.
² Heb. *the
covenant of
brethren.*

² Sam. 5. 11.
1 Kings 5. 1.
& 9. 11.—14.

^y ver. 4, 7, &c.

^z Isai. 21. 11.
& 34. 5.

Jer. 49. 8, &c.
Ezek. 25. 12, 13, 14. & 35. 2, &c. Joel 3. 19. Obad. 1, &c. Mal. 1. 4.

^a Gen. 27. 41. Deut. 23. 7.

9 ¶ Thus saith the LORD ; For three transgressions of ^uTyrus, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof ; ^xbecause they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembered not ²the brotherly covenant :

10 ^ybut I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus, which shall devour the palaces thereof.

11 ¶ Thus saith the LORD ; For three transgressions of ^zEdom, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof ; because he did pursue ^ahis

9, 10. The transgression of Tyre is clearly outwardly the same as that of the Philistines (comp. vv. 6 and 9.) ; but it had its aggravation. The Philistines, with all their cruelty, acted as others around them after fierce warfare ; the people of Tyre, in cold blood, were their accomplices. Again, the Philistines were old, open, inveterate enemies ; battle had never been fought between kings of Israel or Judah and Tyre, and Tyre from the time of David had been "in covenant" with Judah, and that covenant was one of peculiar friendliness ; it may have contained special privileges for the Jews, "as in that made with the Jews by King "Demetrius" (1 Maccab. x. 34.), *Pusey*. They had been "brothers" (1 Kings v. 7—12.) ; but "brothers" they had become such as Edom. "Fierce are the wars of brethren," said the heathen ; and "they who "have loved exceedingly, they too hate exceedingly" (*Aristotle*, quoted by *Pusey*).

Tyre stands out amongst these heathen nations as emphatically "trading the persons of men" (comp. Joel iii. 6. Ezek. xxvii. 13.) ; as covenant-breakers ; as "stifling pity ;" violating almost a tie of blood. Compare the Apostle's words, especially in the original ; "covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable" (Rom. i. 31, and so 2 Tim. iii. 3.). More than this. Tyre is by sea what Babylon is by land, an empress city. It is the world-city of wealth and trade, "crowned" (Isa. xxiii. 8.) ; later, if not now, her "heart was lifted up," and she said "I am God ; I sit (in) the seat of God ; in the midst of the seas" (Ezek. xxviii. 2.). And in the day of Jerusalem she magnified herself against "the City of God." "She is broken (that was) the gates of the people . . . "I shall be replenished, she is laid waste" (ib. xxvi. 2.). Perhaps then as she is the last of these purely heathen nations here, so she is the worst ; she has some light, and sins against it. The peace between Tyre and Israel, notwithstanding such acts, e.g. as Elijah's and Jehu's, in the slaughter of the Baal-worshippers, is very remarkable.

10. Nebuchadnezzar "set up engines of war against (her) walls" (see Ezek. xxvi. 7—14.), and, according to some, took the city ; but later still (Zech. ix. 4, 5.) prophesied, "the Lord . . . will smite her power in the "sea, and she shall be 'devoured' with 'fire.' Ashkelon shall see it "and fear ; Gaza also, and be very sorrowful, and Ekron." Tyre was certainly taken by Alexander the Great.

11. And now we learn what it was "to deliver up to Edom." Edom

brother ^b with the sword, and ² did cast off all pity, ^c and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever :

12 but ^d I will send a fire upon Teman, which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah.

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^b 2 Chr. 28. 17.

² Heb. corrupted his compassions.

^d Obad. 9, 10.

^c Ezek. 35. 5.

towards whom Israel was charged especially, and from the first, to act as towards "a brother" (Deut. xxiii. 7, "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; "he is thy 'brother,'" comp. ver. 8.), was from the Exodus to the end of the monarchy, his bitterest enemy; whenever opportunity arose, Edom was ready, not merely to fight against him, but to "pursue with the sword," with a rage pitiless, savage as a wild beast's, unrelenting. For actual warfare we trace it in Saul's reign (1 Sam. xiv. 47.); in David's (1 Chron. xviii. 12, 13.); in Jehoshaphat's (2 Chron. xx, especially vv. 10, 11.); in Joram's (2 Kings viii. 20—22.); Amaziah's (ib. xiv. 7.); Ahaz' (2 Chron. xxviii. 17, especially). One Psalmist tells us of their malignity at the capture of Jerusalem (Ps. cxxxvii. 7.), another of their earlier efforts for its destruction (Ps. lxxxiii. 4—8.). See on Obadiah. "By thy 'sword' shalt thou live," was Isaac's sentence upon Esau; it was their whole history. "War and rapine were the only professions of the Edomites" (*Dict. of Bible*, "Edomites"). Esau, "the profane," Doeg, the assassin of the priests of God, and the exterminator of their city, Hadad, "the adversary" (Satan, in original) to Solomon (1 Kings xi. 14; comp. ver. 25.), still later, Herod the murderer of the Innocents, Antipas of John the Baptist, and the Herod "who killed James, the brother of John, with the sword," each, in his generation represents the devilish "enmity" (see above on ver. 6.) of that people, of whom in the last book of the Old Testament we still hear "they shall call them the border of wickedness, the people "against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever."

Observe the strength of the language. Edom "chases with the sword" the escaping remnant (Obad. 14.), (see ver. 6 note), stifles (literally, it seems, makes to sink, a very strong word) every spark of rising pity, "tears" as a wild beast (Ps. vii. 2, &c.) and that perpetually, and then that "outrage" and "extravagance" of wrath, "he keeps for ever." It is the very picture of the Evil One, and of Antichrist; it is the very defiance in the creature of the will and the teaching of his God, the All Merciful, Who "passeth "by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage," Who "retaineth "not His anger for ever; for in mercy delighteth He" (Micah vii. 18.).

12. "Teman," "son of Eliphaz" (Gen. xxxvi. 11.), who was "son of "Esau" (ib. 10.). Probably the district of which Bozrah was the capital, so St. Jerome; the word means "southern district." Bozrah, lit. "a fort," "that which cuts off approach," the chief city of Edom (Gen. xxxvi. 33.). Comp. especially Isa. xxxiv. 5, 6, 10; Joel iii. 19; Jer. xlix. 7—22, especially ver. 18; Ezek. xxxv. the whole chapter. Observe, no one sin, no one time of their hostility is mentioned; but though Edom fed itself on its passion of hatred some 1500 years, all that intense fierceness is silenced in a moment (2 Thess. i. 8, 9.). Jeremiah says of "the king of "Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the Ammonites, the king of Tyre," &c. "I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar" (ch. xxvii. 3, 6.). We have no details of the history, but we know in Malachi's time the Lord says, "I laid his mountains . . . waste for the "jackals of the wilderness" (see Pusey on *Obadiah*, v. 16.); later on, in

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- 13 ¶ Thus saith the LORD ; For three transgressions of ^e the children of Ammon, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; because they have ^f ripped up the women with child of Gilead, ^g that they might enlarge their border :
- 14 but I will kindle a fire in the wall of ^h Rabbah, and it shall devour the palaces thereof, ⁱ with shouting in the day of battle, with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind :
- 15 and ^k their king shall go into captivity, he and his princes together, saith the LORD.

the seventh century, "under Mahometan rule, the great cities fell to ruin, "and the country became a desert" (*Dict. of Bible*, i. 489.).

13. "A peculiar, wanton ferocity" distinguished "the children of Ammon;" "their god is "Moloch." The people, who could burn their own sons and daughters in the fire to their idol, may well have practised to enemies the revolting atrocity of the text; in Holy Scripture Ammon and Moab have a mark upon them worse in one respect than Edom; "even to "the tenth generation" (contrast Edom, ver. 8.) "shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever" (Deut. xxiii. 3; see reason, ib. 4.). They are mixed up with several of the wars of Edom against Israel (see on ver. 11.); besides we hear of their hostilities (Judges iii. 13.), in conjunction with Moab (see especially, Judges x. 7—9.); still again in Jephthah's time (ib. xi. 4.), where it is a contest for their "border;" again in David's, see 2 Sam. x., and especially ib. v. 4. (the insult to David's messengers); ib. xii. 26—31. For their war in Jehoshaphat's time, see above, on ver. 11; with them Jotham (2 Chron. xxvii. 5.) had the one war of his reign, of which we have an account. "Bands of the Moabites, and "Ammonites" were sent "to destroy" Judah, in the time of Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiv. 2.). "Tobiah the Ammonite, and Samballat the Moabite (comp. with "the Horonite," Neh. ii. 19. Jer. xlvi. 5, 34. "Hornaim") were persecutors at the Restoration (Neh. ii. 19, &c.). Very early there is a typical name in an Ammonite king, who would make a covenant if he might "thrust out all your right eyes;" "Nahash," the serpent (1 Sam. xi. 2.). We hear (Zeph. ii. 8.) of "the reproach of Moab, and "the revilings (properly blasphemies against God, compare Isa. xxxvii. 6, 23.) of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached My people, and magnified (themselves) against their border," as here (comp. Ezek. xxv. 3, 6, 7.). Again, we read "Baalis the king of the Ammonites hath sent Ishmael . . . to slay thee" (Gedaliah) (Jer. xl. 14.).

14. There would seem to be some variation in the fate of Ammon. Note the two last clauses of ver. 14, and comp. ch. ii. 2. A battle violent, impetuous, in its issue overwhelming, is indicated. Ezekiel, as in the other cases, throws some light upon the passage (see especially ch. xxi. 18—32.), where, remarkably, we have (ver. 20.), "Appoint a way that "the sword may come to Rabbath of the Ammonites, and to Judah in "Jerusalem the defenced." And between the two a kind of parallel is drawn. They "were no more to be remembered among the nations" (chs. xxi. 32; xxv. 10.).

15. "their king shall go into captivity." Comp. Jer. xlix. 3.

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CHAPTER II.

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1 *God's wrath against Moab, 4 upon Judah, 6 and upon Israel.*
9 *God complaineth of their unthankfulness.*

THUS saith the LORD; For three transgressions of ^a Moab, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he ^b burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime:

^a Is. 15, & 16.
Jer. 48.
Ezek. 25. 8.
Zeph. 2. 8.
^b 2 Kin. 3. 27

The same as here, only with a single but important variation. This sentence is more emphatic in the light of Ezek. xxv. 3. "Because thou saidst" (the Ammonites are spoken of), "Aha, against My sanctuary, when it was profaned, and against the land of Israel when it was desolate, and against the house of Judah when they went into captivity" (as here). Ib. 5: "I will make *Rabbah* a stable for camels;" ib. 7: "I will cut thee off" (as above, vv. 5, 8.) "from the peoples, and I will cause thee 'to perish' (as ver. 8.) out of the countries." When the Moslem conquered Syria, they found the city in ruins; and in ruins remarkable for their extent and desolation, even for Syria. One land of ruins it still remains (*Dict. of Bible*, "Rabbah").

CHAPTER II.

1. "he burned." Of this act nothing is known. Some have supposed it to be connected with what we read in 2 Kings iii. 27; at which time the king of Edom was an ally of Jehoram, son of Ahab, and so might be involved in the hatred felt to Israel. St. Jerome says: "To shew that He is Lord of all . . . God avenges the wickedness done even to the king of Edom, when the Moabites . . . did not terminate their rage . . . even with his death." In all the other cases, Amos has mentioned only crimes committed against the covenant nation. Moab was a perpetual enemy of Israel (see above, on "Ammon," 2 Kings xiii. 20.); "the bands" (see on Hos. vii. 1.) "of the Moabites invaded the land of Israel at the coming in of the year," as of an habitual raid. Besides its earlier feuds with Israel, it was engaged in war with David when it was so severely punished (2 Sam. viii. 2.); it rebelled after the death of Ahab (see 2 Kings iii. 4, 5, and whole chapter). For many particulars of its condition and destiny we have information from Isaiah (chs. xv.; xvi. Comp. Jer. xlvi.). Also Isa. xxv. 10, and perhaps elsewhere in that chapter (see *Dict. of Bible*, "Moab," p. 397.). Its fate is also declared, Ezek. xxv. 8—11; and Zeph. ii. 8—10, especially. Two things seem certain about Moab: (1) its riches and prosperity; Moab stood next to Israel in all matters of material wealth and civilization (*Dict. of Bible*); (2) no doubt as a consequence of this, its "pride" (Isa. xvi. 6. Jer. xlvi. 29. Zeph. ii. 10.).

vv. 4—16. The judgment upon Judah; and upon Israel, first, generally. Her sins, her especial ingratitude. None "shall deliver his soul in that day."

INTRODUCTION.

To Judah it is in itself a heavy condemnation, that she is added to these six guilty nations; that after Syria, Philistia, Tyre, and Edom,

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c Jer. 48. 41.
d ch. 1. 14.

e Num. 24. 17.
Jer. 48. 7.

2 but I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the palaces of ^c Kirioth: and Moab shall die with tumult, ^d with shouting, *and* with the sound of the trumpet:

3 and I will cut off ^e the judge from the midst thereof, and will slay all the princes thereof with him, saith the LORD.

Ammon and Moab, she makes with them a seventh. But, in truth, she is far worse than they (vv. 4—5.). She has sinned against light and love (see *note* on ver. 4.), and her punishment shall be even that of a Tyre and an Edom (comp. ch. ii. 5 with ch. i. 10, 12.). And what a warning is this to Israel! Hosea said (ch. iv. 15.), “Though thou, Israel, play the “harlot, let not Judah offend.” Amos pronounces the woe first upon Judah. Further, as the six preceding nations have been especially arranged in pairs, so Judah, left last, still “wanteth not her mate” (Isa. xxxiv. 16.); it is Israel.

And mark Israel's sins (vv. 6—8.). They, too, “three and four;” but they, too, worse than sins of Philistines and Tyre. These “deliver up” (ch. i. 6, 9.) “captives,” Israel “sells” brethren; “the righteous,” offending “poor,” and that, to purchase for themselves pettiest luxury. “They turn aside” those “lowly ones” “out of the way,” thwart their work, “wrest their judgment.” Father and son sin together shamelessly, only “to pollute My Name.” Nay, see! by one and the same act (comp. “turn aside” and “lay themselves;” exactly the same word in Heb.) they sin and make defiant boast of their sin “in the house of their God.”

Vv. 9—12. What warnings, what bounties had God showed them! Those “Amorites,” so proud in their sins, so mighty in their power, “I destroyed before them;” from Egypt, scene at once of sin and of bondage, “I brought them up;” My wisdom and My love I made visible to them in “prophets,” My holiness in “Nazarites;” “raised up these “out of their own sons,” and these they only tempted to rebellion, like their own.

Vv. 13—16. “Look! I even groan under the burden of you.” “Sheaves” ye were in My hand. Sheaves now only for the threshing, or to fall on the ground and to be left ungathered. Comp. Jer. ix. 22. Ripe, ye are, but for doom. Then, in seven or eight clauses, follows the punishment. It takes almost the form of a dirge, with a threefold refrain, None “shall deliver his soul.” Ye and your armies are “swift, “strong, valiant” (ye have made yourselves Amorites indeed!); “in that “day” how shall all that pride of power “perish” utterly, and the sinner be “naked” in the presence of his God.

Note in this chapter the ampler description of Israel's sin. In each case before it has been contained in one verse, here it runs out to three (vv. 6—8.); then, here alone, God's mercies are exhibited in detail (vv. 9—11.), again in three verses, to which two fresh sins of Israel are added (ver. 12.); then the punishment is also described in three (vv. 14—16.). On the other hand, vv. 9—12 seem to fall into pairs. Comp. “the Amorite” (vv. 9, 10.); “the Nazarite” (vv. 11, 12.); as if these were in a kind of antithesis.

Amos dwells on the particulars of Israel's sin, and so exhibits it more

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4 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; ^fbecause they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and ^gtheir lies caused them to err, ^hafter the which their fathers have walked:

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f Lev. 26. 14,
15. Neh. 1. 7.
Dan. 9. 11.
g Isai. 28. 15.
Jer. 16. 19, 20.
Rom. 1. 25.
h Ezek. 20. 13,
16, 18, 24, 30.
i Jer. 17. 27.
Hos. 8. 14.

6 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; For three transgres-

vidently. Four chief offences recur through his book: (1) "perversion of "justice" and bribery (chs. ii. 7; v. 7, 12.); (2) oppression of the poor (chs. ii. 6—8; iii. 9, 10; v. 11; vi. 3; viii. 4—6.); (N.B. especially "false measures," ib. 5.); (3) "uncleanness" (ch. ii. 7.); (4) extreme and wanton luxury (chs. ii. 8; iii. 12, 15; iv. 1; v. 11; vi. 4—6.). We may add, "contempt of God's" rebuke (chs. ii. 12; v. 10 (13.); vi. 3; ix. 10.).

4. Judah sinning against the written, prescribed "Law" is "judged by "the Law" (Rom. ii. 12.). Mark, no one transgression is specified, as in every case before, but the words are very weighty, (1) "They have "rejected," and perhaps with loathing, their Lord and His holy Law." Comp. Lev. xxvi. 15. Hos. iv. 6 (same word). This first crowning and all-containing sin is tacitly compared with the wickedness of the other nations against their neighbours, especially Edom's (see below); then (2) in detail: "statute" after statute they have not kept; (3) "reject-
"ing" the truth, of necessity they have become the slaves of a "lie;" comp. 2 Thess. ii. 10. "because they received not the love of the truth, that "they might be saved;" ver. 11, "for this cause God shall send them strong "delusion, that they should believe a lie." See also Isa. xxviii. 15. Rom. i. 25. (4, and last of all) despising His yoke they have fallen under the bondage of human opinion, "the vain conversation received by tradition "from" their "fathers" (1 St. Pet. i. 18; comp. Ezek. xx. 16, 18.). Compare Ps. cxix. last verse: "I have gone astray" (same verb) "like a "lost sheep: seek Thy servant, for I do not forget Thy commandments." "The lies" are "idols" or any other "vanities." 2 Kings xvii. 15: "They rejected His statutes . . . and they followed after vanity, and "became vain, and went after the heathen that were around them." Isaiah denounces punishment upon them, in the same words, for moral offences (ch. v. 20—24; last verse especially). Note the unusual length of this verse: it has, in Hebrew, exactly the same number of words as the description of Edom's sin (ch. i. 11.) and that alone. It is a brief but full description of sin; its root, its growth, its fruit, its end.

5. Some two centuries passed, and that first destruction by Nebuchadnezzar came; "when they burnt" the house of God, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, and "burnt" all "the palaces thereof" with "fire" (2 Chron. xxxvi. 19.). Hos. viii. 14 is almost exactly the same; Jer. xvii. 27, with a little variation.

6. "In Israel" the Prophet rebukes four classes of sins (see Introduction to chapter). The description here combines 1 and 2 (ib.). It is

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k Isai. 29. 21.
ch. 8. 6.
l Isai. 10. 2.
ch. 5. 12.
m Ezek. 22. 11.
n Or, young
woman.
o Lev. 20. 3.
Ezek. 36. 20.
Rom. 2. 24.
p Ex. 22. 26.
q Ezek. 23. 41.
1 Cor. 8. 10.
& 10. 21.

sions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; because ^kthey sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes; ^lthat pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and ^mturn aside the way of the meek: ⁿand a man and his father will go in unto the *same* ^omaid, ^pto profane my holy name: ^q8 and they lay *themselves* down upon clothes ^rlaid to pledge ^sby every altar, and they drink the wine of ^tthe condemned *in* the house of their god.

³ Or, such as have fined, or, mulcted.

clearly of actual selling (comp. ch. viii. 6.); the Law allowed this till the year of release, and on condition that the man should not be a bond-servant, but a hired one (Lev. xxv. 39, 40.). Here the case may be "that of an insolvent debtor, to sell whom the Law gave no warrant." The aggravation of the sin is of course here, that, besides the selling itself, it is the sale of a "poor, righteous man," innocent of any evil purpose, and "for either a trifling luxury" (comp. Song of Sol. vii. 1. Ezek. xvi. 10.), "or it may be at a worthless price." St. Jerome adopts the latter view.

7. Lit., "the panters!" as with indignation. This use of the participle in a vivid appeal is found often in Amos (ch. iii. 10; v. 7, 12, 18; vi. 3—6, 13; viii. 14.), and in other Prophets.

"after the dust," &c. A difficult sentence. Perhaps these creditors "pant" even for that "earth dust" which as mourners (Job ii. 12. Lam. ii. 10. Ezek. xxvii. 30.) "the poor" cast "on their heads." Others say, "They long to see dust on the head of the poor" (comp. ch. v. 11, "forasmuch as your treading is upon the poor"). Pusey well says, "Covetousness, when it has nothing to feed it, craves for what is absurd or impossible. What was Naboth's vineyard to a king of 'Israel with his ivory palace?' Here we have the sins marked above (vv. 1, 2, 3.).

"This portion of Amos, from ch. ii. 6 to ch. iii. 8, is the "Haph-tarah," i. e., "concluding and corresponding section" to Gen. xxxvii. 1—xl. 23, which relates the sale of Joseph by his brethren, and the sin of Judah with his daughter-in-law Tamar (*Bp. Wordsworth*). They sell "the righteous one for money" are words applicable in their deepest and fullest sense to the antitype of Joseph, "the holy one and the just;" the word "pant" (ver. 7.) found also in Ps. lvii. (ver. 3; comp. lvi. 1, 2.) which the Church uses on Easter day, is at least referable to Christ's enemies also; and the second clause no less foreshadows and prepares for "the unjust judgment of Him Who was 'the meek and lowly One'" (*Pusey*; comp. LXX. here, and St. Matt. xi. 28, 29.). It was unto judges that God said by Asaph "deliver the weak and needy; rid them out of the hand of the wicked" (Ps. lxxxii. 4.); but these cruel "oppressors, despising the poor, draw (them) also before the judgment seats; and" (at last by more hideous sin) "blaspheme that noble name by which (they) were called" (St. James ii. 6, 7.).

8. Then follows the climax. "In luxury, and state, and withal in "shameless publicity" . . . "they stretch their listless length on the

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9 ¶ Yet destroyed I the ^a Amorite before them, Before
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^r whose height *was* like the height of the cedars, and
 he *was* strong as the oaks; yet I ^s destroyed his
 fruit from above, and his roots from beneath.

10 Also ^t I brought you up from the land of
 Egypt, and ^u led you forty years through the wil-
 derness, to possess the land of the Amorite.

11 And I raised up of your sons for prophets, and

^q Num. 21. 24.
^r Deut. 2. 31.
^s Josh. 24. 8.
^t Num. 13.
^u 28, 32, 33.
^v Isai. 5. 24.
^w Mal. 4. 1.
^x Ex. 12. 51.
^y Mic. 6. 4.
^z Deut. 2. 7.
 & 8. 2.

“garments of the despoiled, in their idol feasts, beside every altar;”
 (comp. Ezek. xxiii. 41, especially), “and drink the wine” there,
 “which they procured by extortion” (comp. the parallel ch. vi. 3, 4, 6.).
 “With wonderful irony Amos marks the ghastly mixture of sin and
 “worship, condemning it in five (the last) words.” “They sleep not,
 “except they have done mischief” (Prov. iv. 16.) . . . “They eat the bread
 “of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence” (ib. 17.).

9. This they had done in the house of their God, and I, their only
 true God, what had I not done for them, their comfort, their deliverance?
 And shall not the “day come ‘again’ saith the Lord of hosts, that shall
 “leave them neither ‘root’ nor branch” (Mal. iv. 1.). “The Amorite” is
 also singled out for the whole Canaanitish enemy (Deut. i. 7, 20, 27, 44.).

10. Yes, and “I brought you up” from bondage, (yea, as from the grave
 by a resurrection to life, comp. same verb, Ps. xxx. 3.), out of Egypt,
 that other seat of idolatry; “taught you to go, taking you by your arms”
 (Hos. xi. 3.), and then after your “forty years’” walk with Me, placed
 you in “that good land,” made for you clean and holy (see Jer. ii.
 5—7, the best comment upon this). Their knowledge of the book of
 their Law in detail, as well as of their past history would make these
 allusions (vv. 9—12.) very touching, if the hearers could be touched.

11. Then (passing “from miracles of power to miracles of grace”),
 “I raised up,” i. e. “out of the ordinary way of My Providence,”
 “superhuman wisdom and self-denial among you.” Here, too, the word
 includes spiritual resurrection (see on Hos. vi. 2, “In the third day He
 “will raise us up”). Each prophet, as he “rose up” in Israel, came fresh
 from God, an image of His pleading, unceasing love, a vision dim, but
 still sure, of His holiness. And what a noble host they were! Star
 after star! Ahijah the Shilonite, Jehu the son of Hanani, Micajah,
 Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Hosea, Amos himself; these and others, as “the
 “hundred” saved by Obadiah, of whom the words and acts only, not the
 names, are given. And they were not alone. “Of your young men,”
 “your best and bravest, I weaned from the world and made My
 “‘Nazarites.’” These too doubtless were not few in number; “Amos
 “speaks of them as a known class,” and puts them side by side with the
 Prophets; very likely, however, leading a private life, “each in his own
 “sphere,” here one, there another, living amid that mass of corruption,
 “the consecration of his God” (Num. vi. 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” (Lam. iv. 7.).
 What a flash of light this throws upon the history of Israel, of which we
 have, we may say, only glimpses. What witness for God so mighty, as

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of your young men for ^xNazarites. *Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? saith the LORD.*

^x Num. 6. 2.
Judg. 13. 5.
^y Isai. 30. 10.
Jer. 11. 21.
ch. 7. 12, 13.
Mic. 2. 6.
^z Isai. 1. 14.

12 But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink; and commanded the prophets, ^ysaying, Prophecy not.

13 ^z Behold, ²I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed *that is full of sheaves.*

² Or, *I will press your place, as a cart full of sheaves presseth.*

a little holy child, as "young men, who are strong, who have overcome the wicked one" (1 St. John ii. 14.); the early "crowned;" as St. Stephen; "their face as the face of an angel?" (Acts vi. 15.)

"saith the Lord." Here "saith" is a very solemn expression of the will of God. Amos uses it twenty-one times, amongst other places, chs. iii. 10, 13, 15; iv. 3, 5, 6, 8—11; ix. 7, 8, 12, 13; Hosea only four times, Joel once.

12. And ye of these holy ones, of these young and aspiring ones, were the tempters (comp. Num. vi. 3.), of the prophets the betrayers and murderers (Acts vii. 52.). What has been the history of the kingdom of Israel, to pass over that of Judah, but one fierce, continued persecution of them by Jeroboam, then by Ahab and Jezebel, then by Ahaziah (2 Kings i. 9—13.), by Jehoram? (ib. vi. 31.) So our Lord says of Jerusalem (St. Matt. xxiii. 37.).

13. What wonder that it follows, "Behold I groan under you;" "I am weary to bear you" (Isa. i. 14.). "I am pressed," lit., "I straiten," here, apparently, "Myself," "allow Myself to be worn out." St. Jerome seems to explain it rightly "as the wain laden with straw (rather "sheaves") groans and creaks under the weight, so I bearing no longer your sins, and committing them as straw to the flames cry out and say, "the flight" &c. Comp. Zech. xii. 6, and Jeremiah ix. 22: Thus "saith (as ver. 11.), the Lord, even the carcasses of men shall fall "as dung, upon the open field and as the handful (as 'sheaves' here) "after the harvestman, and none shall gather (them);" and immediately, it follows (ver. 23, as here ver. 14.): "Thus saith the Lord, let not the "wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let 'the mighty man' glory "in his might." Then there comes the punishment (vv. 14—16.). It is expressed in different ways, as it will take different forms. Comp. last vv. of chs. iii., v.—viii. First here, and very impressively, all that military strength of every kind, on which Israel now relied against God shall utterly "perish." We have an account of Uzziah's power in 2 Chron. xxvi. 8, 9, 13. Doubtless the contemporary and equally warlike Jeroboam was not less armed in Israel. Man makes his "refuge" in man; but only if he "waits on the Lord" is he "of good courage," and He "strengthens his heart" (Ps. xxvii. 14. Comp. Isa. xl. 31.). Not self-trusting men, but Angels are "mighty in strength," and that because "they are ever doing His commandments" (Ps. ciii. 20.). Only he who "calls on the name of the Lord 'shall be delivered'" (Joel ii. 32.). Apparently this first threat of punishment on Israel is not so terrible as those upon the seven nations before. There is here no "devouring fire," yet that is at hand (ch. v. 6.); but the doom is almost as complete even here, and the dirge-like description, "he shall not deliver his soul" (vv. 14, 15.), deepens the effect. Israel had once his true "refuge," so

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14 ^a Therefore the flight shall perish from the swift, and the strong shall not strengthen his force, ^b neither shall the mighty deliver ² himself:

15 neither shall he stand that handleth the bow; and *he that is* swift of foot shall not deliver *himself*: ^c neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself.

16 And *he that is* ³ courageous among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day, saith the LORD.

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^a Jer. 9. 23.
ch. 9. 1, &c.

^b Ps. 33. 16.

² Heb. his
soul, or, life.

^c Ps. 33. 17.

³ Heb.
strong of
his heart.

CHAPTER III.

¹ *The necessity of God's judgment against Israel.* ⁹ *The publication of it, with the causes thereof.*

HEAR this word that the LORD hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the

“flight” properly means; it is used of “God” (2 Sam. xxii. 3. Ps. lix. 16. Jer. xvi. 19.). It has “perished” for ever (comp. same verb, chs. i. 8; iii. 15.). He had “might;” He has made it weakness. He will find “in that day” of doom (so constantly in Isaiah ii. 11, &c.), one only answer to his cry for help. “No man shall deliver his own soul.” And his “flight” shall now be *from* his God, for he knows that He is “naked” (Gen. iii. 10.). “The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men . . . hid themselves . . . and they say to the “mountains . . . hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, “and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is “come; and who shall be able to stand?” (Rev. vi. 15—17.)

CHAPTER III.

The certainty, and the necessity of the Judgment upon Israel, who refuses every warning of his God.

INTRODUCTION.

And now, “hear this word, which the Lord Himself pronounces “against you,” against “the whole family” “which once I blessed “and promised that it should be a blessing” (see note on ver. 2.). Favoured above all, how have you sinned? and shall not I visit? (vv. 1, 2.) Can there be peace, where there is no likeness? no oneness of will? (“what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?”) “Is not thy God become to thee ‘a lion,’ to take vengeance? Art not “thou a fit ‘prey?’ ready to be taken?” yea “silly bird” that thou art (Hos. vii. 11.), thou “fallest into the snare” prepared for thee (comp. Isa. xxiv. 17. Ps. cxxiv. 6, 7.). Shall not that judgment be thy destruction? And now when that judgment is proclaimed, “wilt “thou not fear?” When the Lord “cometh out of His place” (Micah i. 3.), “to do it,” and when His prophets at His bidding “blow “the trumpet” of woe and doom (vv. 3—8.). “Cry aloud” then (My

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whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying,

^a Deut. 7. 6.
& 10. 15.
Ps. 147. 19, 20.

² ^a You only have I known of all the families of the earth : ^b therefore I will ² punish you for all your iniquities.

^b See Dan. 9. 12.

Matt. 11. 22. Luke 12. 47. Rom. 2. 9. 1 Pet. 4. 17. ² Heb. *visit upon*.

prophets), "on the palaces of Ashdod, of Egypt." "Gather" their great men upon "the mountains of Samaria." There let foe (himself doomed, ch. i. 7, 8.), there let friend (in whom thou trustest, comp. Hos. vii. 11; xii. 1. &c.) see an ungodliness worse than their own. "Palaces," those, where not wealth, but "wrong and rapine is stored up," against the day of wrath (Rom. ii. 5; vv. 9, 10.). And see that wrath of "the Lord thy God!" "Everywhere Thine enemy, pressing thee in, closing on his prey:" thy proud "strength brought down!" (Obad. 3, 4.), "those palaces spoiled!" What shall the "Good Shepherd rescue" of such as these? Shall not their very remnant "perish," almost as that of Philistia (ch. i. 8.), just a few "dry bones" left? Comp. ch. vi. 8—11. Just one or two of those luxurious ones caught up out of the grasp of "the lion" (vv. 11, 12.). Yes, "hear ye" (My prophets, or ye who will hear them); "testify ye, against "the house of Jacob," tell forth "the solemn word" of the Lord God (the only One), "the Lord of hosts." "In that day, when I visit the "transgressions" (comp. ch. i. 3, 6, 9, &c.), "of Israel," "I will visit" and make a full end (comp. Jer. iv. 27.). "Those many altars, and that "one" (doomed so long, 1 Kings xiii. 3.), "shall be cut off;" "those "houses of ivory," "they shall perish" (vv. 13—15.).

This chapter is closely related to the preceding; it is linked also with the one that follows. Note that the expression "saying of the Lord" (see on ch. ii. 11.), occurs ten times in chs. iii, iv. The judgment threatened (ch. ii. 14—16.) is here more fully detailed. Thrice we hear, only here in Amos, of God's "visitation;" thrice of "the palaces" "built up by unrighteousness" (Jer. xxii. 13, 14.), as in "Ashdod, and "Egypt," so in Samaria; thrice of the avenging "lion," even the Lord of hosts.

Jeremiah, ch. iv., should be compared, especially vv. 4—7; 9, 16, 17, 19, 22, in which there are verbal resemblances also. So Jer. vi. 1—8, 15—17.

1, 2. He begins again with the solemn, threefold call, "Hear ye" (so chs. iv. 1; v. 1.), so frequent in the Old Testament. He summons them, as in the Name of the Holy Trinity, to hear God's words. Now he speaks to "the whole family," Judah as well as Israel; by-and-by to Israel only (vv. 9, 13; ch. iv. 1, &c.). You, you only have I delivered so wonderfully, you only have I known so tenderly, "in the wilderness" (Hos. xiii. 5), in Egypt, but long before in the person of Jacob, of Abraham; therefore you I visit above all, who, knowing Me, have rejected Me. There seems a reference to that primal blessing of the father of the faithful (Gen. xii. 3; comp. ib. xxviii. 14.). God now takes it away "family by family" (see Zech. xii. 12.). See this righteous Law re-affirmed by our Lord: "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom . . . than for that city" (St. Matt. x. 15. St. Mark vi. 11. St. Luke x. 12. Also St. Matt. xi. 20—24. St. Luke x. 13—16. Again ib. xii. 47, 48. Rom. ii. 9. 1 St. Pet.

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3 Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

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4 Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing?

² Heb.
give forth
his voice.

5 Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is for him? shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all?

iv. 17.). So under the Law, "there went out 'fire' from the Lord, and "devoured" them, i. e. Nadab and Abihu; "and Moses said to Aaron, "This is that which the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them "that come nigh Me" (Lev. x. 2, 3.). There may be also, as Pusey says, another meaning—viz., "that God would leave no sin *unchastened* in "those whom He had made His own. The two meanings are fulfilled "at different times. God *chastens* in proportion to His love in the day "of grace. He *punishes* in proportion to the grace despised and trampled "upon, without repentance, in eternity." So also St. Jerome.

3. The introduction to and the first of the five (or seven) parables. Who are "the two?" Only two seem possible to be meant. The Lord God, and the faithful soul or the unfaithful. First, God and man are, by God, intended "to walk together." Enoch "walked" (another conjug.) "with God" (Gen. v. 22.); so Noah (ib. vi. 9.); but in the event, not Israel, "the chosen one," God's own son (Hos. xi. 1.), but only the faithful few, as the Prophets, walked with Him; and so under the Gospel, only pure and single and virgin souls "follow the Lamb whithersoever "He goeth" (Rev. xiv. 4.). Only is there peace where there is holiness and obedience.

4. The "lion" is clearly the Lord God (comp. ver. 8; ch. i. 2.); the "prey" Israel; the avenger is sure, the sin open, challenging, so to say, the punishment. The command was "Walk before Me, and be thou perfect, and I will make My covenant between Me and thee" (Gen. xvii. 1, 2.); "If ye walk in My statutes" (Lev. xxvi. 3.), "I will 'walk' among "you" (ib. 12.); but if ye "walk" contrary to Me, I will "walk" contrary "to you in fury" (ib. 23, 24, 28.). Comp. Jer. ii. 14: "Is Israel a "servant? . . . why is he spoiled?" (ib. 15.): "the young lions" roared upon him, and "gave out their voice" (Eng. marg., as here); "they made "his land waste" (ib. 17.); . . . "Hast not thou procured this to thyself, "in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, when He led" (ch. ii. 10.) "thee by the way?" For the connection and a contrast here, we may perhaps compare Hos. xi. 10: "They shall walk" (exactly as ver. 3.) "after the Lord." "He shall roar as a lion, when He shall roar, then "the children shall tremble" ("be afraid," ver. 6.) "from the west" (ib. 11.); "They shall tremble" as "a bird" (ver. 5.) "out of Egypt;" where comp. also ver. 9: "I am God, the Holy One in the midst of thee," with ver. 3 here, and "I will not enter into the city," (exactly the same) with ver. 6 here.

5. The "bird" is Israel, "silly and without heart" (Hos. vii. 11.), flitting ever from evil to evil (see Hos. i. c.), who should have flown to the Lord for safety (Ps. xi. 1.), like "the sparrow" (same word) "finding "a house . . . and a nest for herself, where to lay her young, even Thy "altars, O Lord of Hosts" (Ps. lxxxiv. 3.). "Then the soul" of the

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6 Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people ² not be afraid? ^c shall there be evil in a city, ³ and the LORD hath not done *it*?

² Or, not run together?

^c I. ai. 45. 7.

³ Or, and shall not the

LORD do somewhat?

7 Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but ^d he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

^d Gen. 6. 13. & 18. 17. Ps. 25. 14. John 15. 15.

righteous is as "a bird" "escaped" (ch. ii. 15.) "out of the snare" "of the fowler: the snare is broken, and we are escaped" (Ps. cxxiv. 7.). But now Israel has fallen upon "snare of the earth," i.e. apparently, "hid, or laid in the earth," i.e. "destruction;" because she has, herself, set the "gin," i.e. her own deceiving, entangling transgression. Rather translate the verse, "Does bird fall upon snare of the earth, and there "is no gin for her? does snare rise from the ground, and have taken "nothing at all?" Perhaps "snare" (LXX. have here the same word, which is used in St. Luke xxi. 35.) means "destruction" as often (Ps. cxxiv. 7, &c.); "Gin" (as in Exod. xxiii. 33; xxxiv. 12. Deut. vii. 16.) represents sin (especially of idolatry), and its consequent punishment; the word in last clause for "earth" is different from that in the first, perhaps, as elsewhere in Amos (chs. v. 2; vii. 11, 17; ix. 15.), it means "their own land." So the second clause would apply, and particularise the first. "His own iniquities shall take (as here) the wicked "he shall be holden with the cords of his sins" (Prov. v. 22; comp. especially, Jer. 1. 24.).

Ver. 5 is closely related to ver. 4, both by its subject and the word "taken;" but there is a clear difference. There the avenger, here the sinner is chiefly described; the one unheeding, the other with purpose fixed and sure. Note, also, the punishment, unseen all along, is yet ever ready prepared, and at last it bursts forth "suddenly, and they shall "not escape" (1 Thess. v. 3.).

6. The avenger and the sinner are still before us, but the punishment and its minister are more vividly portrayed. It is, as it were, "the last "trump;" the measure of iniquity is full; "the city," Samaria here, yet more generally still, "city after city" of the world, is ripe for its doom; "the evil," loss of good, loss of God, falls. Shall not all "tremble?" for it is "the Lord." "He hath done it" (comp. Ps. xxii. 31, last word). "All men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God. "for they shall wisely consider of His doing" (Ps. lxiv. 9.).

7. But as He "doeth" judgment, so in His mercy He gives warning of it, and that by His appointed ministers. "God said to Noah, the end "of all flesh is come before Me" (Gen. vi. 13.). "Shall I hide from "Abraham the thing which I do" (ib. xviii. 17.). "God hath showed to "Pharaoh," i.e. through Joseph, "what He is about to do" (ib. xli. 28.). So to Jonah about Nineveh (Jon. i. 2; comp. also ch. iii. 4.). And now to Amos about Israel. These instances are referred to by St. Jerome here. Rev. i. 1: "The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him to "shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass, and He "sent and signified (it) by His angel unto His servant John" (ver. 8.). To His Prophets, as afterwards to His Apostles, "God hath revealed by "His Spirit . . . the deep things of God" (1 Cor. ii. 10.). And must they not "speak what they do know, testify what they have seen?" (St.

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8 *The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord GOD hath spoken, † who can but prophesy?

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9 ¶ Publish in the palaces at Ashdod, and in the palaces in the land of Egypt, and say, Assemble yourselves upon the mountains of Samaria, and behold the great tumults in the midst thereof, and the ²oppressed in the midst thereof.

e ch. 1. 2.
† Acts 4. 20.
& 5. 20, 29.
1 Cor. 9. 16.

10 For they ²know not to do right, saith the LORD, who store up violence and ³robbery in their palaces.

² Or, *op-*
pressions.
‡ Jer. 4. 22
³ Or, *spoil.*

11 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; ^hAn adversary *there shall be* even round about the land; and he shall bring down thy strength from thee, and thy palaces shall be spoiled.

h 2 Kings 17.
3, 6, & 18. 9,
10, 11.

12 Thus saith the LORD; As the shepherd ⁴taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and ⁵in Damascus *in* a couch.

⁴ Heb.
delivereth.

⁵ Or, *on the*
bed's feet.

John iii. 11.) Jer. xx. 9: "His Word was in my heart as a burning fire . . . and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not (stay)." So Acts iv. 20. 1 Cor. ix. 16.

9—10. "Publish ye," then (it is "the Word of the Lord" (ver. 10.) to His Prophets, it would seem); "make" My doom "heard" upon these heathen palaces; "say to Ashdod, to Egypt, "assemble yourselves" on those high "mountains" which hang over "Samaria." See that guilt and the punishment close at hand. "Let us destroy her palaces" (Jer. vi. 5.). "Thus hath the Lord said . . . This is the city to be "visited: she is wholly oppression" "in the midst of her" (ib. ver. 6.) . . . "Violence and spoil is heard in her, before Me continually is grief "and wounds" (ib. ver. 7.). Comp. Micah vi. 10, 12. Perhaps "Egypt" is also summoned particularly, in reference to such passages as Exod. xxxii. 12. Deut. ix. 28; xxxii. 27; comp. above, ver. 1; "Ashdod," in reference to such an one, as 2 Sam. i. 20.

11. Now follows another sentence of judgment (comp. ch. ii. 14—16.), partly in the formula of ch. i. 3, 6, 9, &c.; but weightier, and, strictly, in Amos, only ch. v. 3, besides; the two titles of God being as vv. 7, 8, above, and ver. 13 below. There is a startling but vivid abruptness, as Hos. viii. 1, "The trumpet to thy mouth. As an eagle against the "house of the Lord, because they have transgressed my covenant," &c. The prophet sees the "avenger hemming in (so also *Pusey*) on every "side the doomed people." Such was Sbalmaneser, who "went up to "Samaria and 'besieged' (verb of 'adversary') it three years" (2 Kings xvii. 5.).

12. And only a remnant, poor and feeble, shall be saved. The lion, perhaps not now, the Lord, (ver. 8.) but His, and man's enemy (1 St.

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² Or, *punish
Israel for.*

13 Hear ye, and testify in the house of Jacob, saith the Lord God, the God of hosts,

14 that in the day that I shall ² visit the transgressions of Israel upon him I will also visit the altars of Beth-el: and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground.

ⁱ Jer. 36. 22.
^k Judg. 3. 20.
^l 1 Kin. 22. 39.

15 And I will smite ⁱ the winter house with ^k the summer house; and ^l the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, saith the LORD.

Pet. v. 8.) is everywhere devouring; "the Good Shepherd" rescues here one, there another from him, but the saved are, as dry bones, yet not utterly dead; the "legs" representing, perhaps, those who now, at last, bend in worship; the "ear," those whose dullness to hear is startled by the sound of judgment: this is what remains of those who "oppressed the poor in Samaria" (ch. iv. 1.); who lay "on beds of ivory" (comp. ch. vi. 4.), who when "Damascus was recovered" by Jeroboam II. (2 Kings xiv. 28.), lived there in increased luxury, as their very "couch" of self-indulgence.

And then (vv. 13—15) we have a fuller and more precise threat of judgment, connected with, yet distinguished from the preceding by a different form of words, "saith the Lord" (see ch. ii. 11.). Yea, "hear ye" (My Prophets) "and testify against the house of Jacob," in the name of Him Who is "the Lord God, the God of hosts," the only Potentate; a very full form, perhaps in contrast to the false God of Beth-el (ver. 14.); I will visit the transgressions of Israel, as those of the seven nations before him, but I will visit especially his greatest and his worst, his shameless idolatry, his heartless riot in luxury. "All his altars shall fall" (comp. ch. ii. 8.). "All his houses of ivory shall perish" (comp. ch. ii. 14.). The old sentence of the man of God, pronounced a century and a half ago against Bethel, shall be fulfilled; the pomp and splendour which has been multiplied above Ahab's, shall vanish in a moment, "that day." Both "altars" and "altar" seem emphatic here: the force of the first explained by Hosea x. 1, 2, 8, and viii. 11; of the last by Hos. x. 15. 1 Kings xiii. 1—3. Above all the "altars" whose number proclaimed the broken unity of the Church, there was one, the chief (ch. ix. 1, where we have, as here, the article with "altar"), which was the king's "sanctuary" (ch. vii. 13.); rival of Jerusalem; rebel against the King of kings. Again the "ivory house" is part of an attempt to array man in the glory which belongs to God alone (see Ps. xlv. 8.).

CHAPTER IV.

**Israel's inveterate oppression of the poor, and idolatry;
her obstinate impenitence; the past judgments of God
unavailing; yet God will come; man must meet Him.**

INTRODUCTION.

But there are those in Israel who must especially "hear this word" of judgment. Women "oppress the poor and the weak!" Women shame

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1 He reproveth Israel for oppression, 4 for idolatry, 6 and for their incorrigibleness.

HEAR this word, ye ^a kind of Bashan, that are ^a Ps. 22. 12. Ezek. 39. 18. in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the

themselves by revelry; men putting off their manliness, to share this cruelty and luxury with them. "Hear; the Lord God, the Holy One, hath sworn." The days are (quickly) coming, and ye silly, heedless, dull souls shall find your pleasures snares indeed; headlong was your riot; headlong, helpless shall your ruin be (vv. 1—3.). Go ye on, then, with your idolatry; act out your self-will and call it worship; multiply sacrifices, that ye may multiply sin (vv. 4, 5.). What has been the consequence? "I too, who have multiplied upon you mercies" (ch. ii. 9—11.), "I have given you" My other gifts . . . of chastening. First, "want of bread in all your cities;" then, upon "some of your cities," want of "rain," so that "the harvest" perished; then "blasting, mildew, locust," upon all your fruits; "pestilence" next, "and sword;" all your pride of war, "choice young men, horses," all destroyed; last of all "overthrow," confusion, destruction in your land, even "as of Sodom and Gomorrah;" the remnant only saved, as from fire. All these five sore judgments (threatened all, ye know, in My law) sent each (not at random, not by a blind law of "nature," but with definite aim, providential fitness), could not "turn you to your God" (vv. 6—11.). "Therefore thus will I do unto thee" (comp. above ch. iii. 11, and Jer. v. 13.) even like this, and worse; "prepare, then, to meet thy God," (surely He is coming to thee). And He! What is His name? Creator; yea, and Destroyer; Heart-searcher; "He frustrateth" proud hopes; He "treadeth down" might and pomp of earth (He would have made thee "ride upon the high places," Dent. xxxii. 13.); He, the Lord of Hosts, "treadeth" on thee (Micah i. 3; vv. 12, 13.).

The first five verses are closely connected with the last chapter; only marking an intensity of two of their great sins; oppression of the poor, and idolatry, and announcing more definitely the impending "captivity." Then the distinctive feature of the chapter follows: the five past unavailing judgments, threatened from the time of the giving of the Law, and here described in its precise language. But these are the precursors of one yet more terrible. "Prepare yet, even yet; thou must meet thy God." The references to Deuteronomy are very noticeable; there are several points of close connection between chs. iv; v. 1—3. and ch. viii. (comp. chs. iv. 1; viii. 4, 6; iv. 2; viii. 7, 11; iv. 6—8; viii. 11, 12; iv. 10; viii. 13; iv. 13; viii. 9; v. 1; viii. 10; v. 2; viii. 14. Comp. also "ye shall cast," ch. iv. 3; and same verb ch. viii. 3.). The latter chapter at once resumes and aggravates the woes of the earlier. Now "the bread" and "the water" fail; the "land of vine and fig-tree and olive-tree" (comp. Dent. viii. 8.) is blighted; those "young men" who might have been "Nazirites" (ch. ii. 11.) are "slain" by the enemy; the people of God are as "Sodom and Gomorrah" in sin and in punishment (comp. Isa. i. 10.); a worse "famine," a more wasting "thirst," a more hopeless "wandering" is still to come.

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b Ps. 89, 35.

c Jer. 16. 16.
Hab. 1. 15.

d Ezek. 12. 5,
12.

e Or, ye
shall cast
away the
things of
the palace.

f Ezek. 20. 39.

g Hos. 4. 15.
& 12. 11.
ch. 5. 5.

poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, Bring, and let us drink.

2 ^b The Lord GOD hath sworn by his holiness, that, lo, the days shall come upon you, that he will take you away ^c with hooks, and your posterity with fishhooks.

3 And ^d ye shall go out at the breaches, every *cow* at that which is before her; and ^e ye shall cast them into the palace, saith the LORD.

4 ¶ ^f Come to Beth-el, and transgress; at ^g Gilgal

1—3. We know the luxury and riot of the days of Uzziah had corrupted women as well as men; see the great description (Isa. iii. 16—24; xxxii. 9—11.). It cannot have been less heartless and reckless in Samaria at the same time; but here it is doubly offensive, as part and parcel of an habitual grinding down of the poor. Amos is vivid, as usual. On the one hand, there is youth, strength, wealth, in full wantonness, pampering itself in “the mountain of Samaria,” like “the heifers of Bashan;” women, with men, eating, drinking, making merry; on the other, unseen, unknown perhaps by them, certainly uncared for, . . . “the poor;” who have ministered to their dress, their feasts, their pageant, and who, by them and for them are “crushed.” But “God is “not mocked.”

2. The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness.” He will avenge (comp. ch. vi. 8.), where after a similar but fuller description of shameful luxury, “the Lord God swears by His Soul . . . I will deliver up the “city,” &c. For does He not “save the children of the needy, and break “in pieces the oppressor?” (Ps. lxxii. 4.); and shall not these silly, but most guilty souls be caught up out of that torrent of false pleasure, not in a net merely, but pierced by the hook, writhing in pain. Comp. Hab. i. 14, 15. Jer. xvi. 16. Ezek. xxix. 4, 5.

3. “And through the breaches in the walls as driven cattle shall ye “go out, each woman straight before her” (comp. especially Josh. vi. 5.); “and ye shall cast” yourselves (perhaps) headlong . . . “saith the Lord” (to be put to shame); apparently the picture of a driving away into captivity.

“ye shall cast (them) into the palace.” Both words are very difficult in the original, and nothing certain can be said about them; the verb here is properly active, and so used constantly (comp. Deut. xxix. 27; A.V. 28.); “The Lord rooted them out of their land in anger . . . and ‘cast them’ into another land;” (Joel i. 7.); “He hath laid my “vine waste . . . He hath made it bare and ‘cast’ it ‘away.’” It is found also below (ch. viii. 3, q.v.); “palace,” i.e. of the enemy. But why then should Amos vary from the word (doubtless very like this) which he uses so often? The ancients generally take it for the name of a place, or country; some say e.g. “Armenia;” if so, ch. v. 27, may be compared. The word only occurs here. The general sense of the verse is plain. Perhaps Ezek. xii. (4.) 5, 12, is to be compared.

4. This is a bitter irony. Be even more earnest in your false wor-

multiply transgression; and ^s bring your sacrifices every morning, ^b and your tithes after ² three years:

5 ⁱ and ³ offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim and publish ^k the free offerings: ^l for ⁴ this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

6 ¶ And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: ^m yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

7 And also I have withholden the rain from you, when *there were* yet three months to the harvest:

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^s Num. 28.

3, 4.

^h Deut. 14. 23.

² Heb.

three years
of days.

ⁱ Lev. 7 13.
& 23. 17.

³ Heb. offer
by burning.

^k Lev. 22.

18, 21.

Deut. 12. 6.

^l Ps. 81. 12.

⁴ Heb. so

ye love.

^m Isai. 26. 11.

Jer. 5. 3.

ver. 8. 9.

Hag. 2. 17.

ship. "Go ye and serve every one his idols" (Ezek. xx. 39.); offer at Bethel and Gilgal (see Hos. iv. 15.) your own sacrifices, i.e. not the burnt offerings which the Law prescribed "every morning" (Num. xxviii. 3, 4, 6.), but one of "thanksgiving," "of your own will" (ver. 5.); comp. Lev. xxii. 29; yea, "bring" "your tithes" (joined with "sacri-
fices," Deut. xii. 6, 11.) not every three years (Deut. xiv. 28; xxvi. 12, in both which places "year" is found), but every three days, if it be possible; what is it, but to "multiply transgression?" (Hos. viii. 11—13.) "The more shameless thou art, the more My sentence on thee will be justified" (*St. Jerome*). "To transgress" is the very life of Israel (chs. ii. 6; iii. 14.). The sinner varies, like others, his acts, but he breaks not the chain which he has bound upon him. "Whether he eats, or "whether he drinks, or whatever he does," all he does, not "to God's glory," but to his own shame and ruin.

5. "Yea, go on in your self-willed observance of the Law; choosing "what 'you like' and leaving out what ye like not;" offer, not sin offering, trespass offering, but as if all was well with you, only thanksgiving; (so *Pusey*); burn in your sacrifice what is forbidden to be burnt (see Lev. ii. 11; vii. 12.), and despise distinction of "leaven" and "un-leavened;" "proclaim" aloud your "freewill offerings," as though these private acts were public, ordained ceremonies. Is it not idol worship after all? Is it not "the leaven of malice and wickedness?" Is it not vanity, selfishness, wilfulness? Superstition is constantly punctilious, scrupulous, zealous; at once a dupe and a slave.

Then follows (vv. 6—11.) a remarkable passage. "The five judgments," with a pathetic refrain, "yet have ye not returned unto Me," which may be compared with ch. ii. 9—12; there we had the Lord's miracles of love; they had failed; now, still in mercy, He has sent . . . chastisements; and first "famine." But not without having given warning too of this and of His other judgments; and that "want of bread" (comp. Deut. xxviii. 48.) should it not have taught them that the Lord "giveth "corn and wine and oil," not those "lovers," of whom alone they think? (Hos. ii. 5, 8.)

7. Here is the second, "a discriminating visitation." *St. Jerome*, who

and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city; one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered.

8 So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: ⁿ yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

9 ^o I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: ² when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, ^p the palmerworm devoured *them*: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

10 I have sent among you the pestilence ³ ^q after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, ⁴ and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: ^r yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

11 I have overthrown *some* of you, as God over-

lived in Palestine, says, "this was the loss of 'the latter rain,' of the "greatest necessity here . . . lest when the grain is swelling, it should dry "up . . ." "The time intended is the end of April, whence to the harvest "are three months." (Here) "all the water, except small fountains, is "from cisterns." He compares the drought in Elias' time (St. Luke iv. 25.). Again, "lest they should think this happened by a law of nature, and "the course of the stars, and the variety of seasons," He says "one piece "was rained upon" (ib.). This judgment touched nation and individual, yet was there mercy with it too, and a call for reflection to all. This reflection seems marked by the deliberate character, so to say, of the very words (comp. Deut. xxviii. 23.).

8. In this agony of thirst, two, three whole cities reeled, staggered, faint, and dying, to another, to get the water, which yet, in that favoured city, was "not enough for you and for us" (St. Matt. xxv. 9.). "Those "who were punished were more than those who were reprieved;" so "wandered" (same word, ch. viii. 12. Comp. there ver. 11 also).

9. Here follows the third chastisement; blighting of their corn, destruction of their gardens and vineyards by locusts; mostly watered in the East artificially, they were out of the reach of ordinary drought. And this too was the very judgment denounced of old in that dread curse of Deut. xxviii. 22 (comp. Hag. ii. 17.). "It would call up, from the "same oracle, other like threatenings" (so *Pusey*).

10. The fourth judgment is pestilence and the sword; the first, expressly, a repetition of the terrible plague of Egypt (Exod. ix. 3, "mur-rain" is the same word); both denounced in that same solemn Law (comp. also Lev. xxvi. 25.), an union of the two destructions, of which David deprecated the last, and found the first so desolating. The language of the latter clause suggests such a scourge as that of 2 Kings xiii. 7.

ⁿ ver. 6, 10, 11.

^o Deut. 28. 22. Hag. 2. 17.

² O., *the multitude of your gardens, &c. did the palmerworm, &c.*

^p Joel 1. 4. & 2. 25.

³ O., *in the way.*

^q Ex. 9. 3, 6. & 12. 23.

^r Deut. 28. 27, 60.

Ps. 78. 50.

⁴ Heb.

with the captivity of your horses,

² Kin. 13. 7.

^r ver. 6.

threw ^s Sodom and Gomorrah, ^t and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: "yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

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^s Gen. 19. 24.

^t Isai. 13. 19.

Jer. 49. 18.

^u Zech. 3. 2.

Jude 23.

^v ver. 6.

^x See Ezek.

13. 5. & 22.

30. Luke

14. 31. 32.

^z Or, *spirit*.

^y Ps. 139. 2.

Dan. 2. 28.

^z ch. 5. 8.

12 Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: *and* because I will do this unto thee, ^x prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

13 For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the ² wind, ^y and declareth unto man what *is* his thought, ^z that maketh the morning darkness, ^a and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, ^b The LORD, The God of hosts, *is* his name.

& 8. 9. ^a Deut. 32. 13. & 33. 29. Mic. 1. 3. ^b Isai. 47. 4. Jer. 10. 16. ch. 5. 8. & 9. 6.

11. Last of all, I sent among you an overthrow, such as that of Sodom and Gomorrah; utterly destroyed some of your neighbour cities; blighted and burnt up a whole tract of land, "left you a very small "remnant," and that "scorched and charred, and all but consumed." So here too, a memorable passage of Deuteronomy would be forced upon their memories (see ch. xxix. 22—25.). Isaiah i. 7, 9 is a close parallel.

12. Here, in the end, there is at once a call, the very last, to repentance, and a threat, the last and most solemn, of a final though undeclared judgment, "Thus will I do." The twice-repeated "Israel," and "thy God," leads us to a very parallel appeal of Hosea (ch. xi. 8.): "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I "make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim?" "Meet Me," even yet, as a returning child, or—thou must meet Me "in that day" of judgment. The Lord lays on man suffering, that He "may speak to his heart" (Hos. ii. 14.) and be heard. Mostly, such sorrow is needed to prepare the soul for Christ at His coming.

13. Well mayest thou repent, well mayest thou prepare for *Him!* Maker of the strong mountains, Creator, Controller of the wild wind, Who "understandeth" man's thought (Ps. exxxix. 2.) "afar off;" "Who "turneth bright dawn into gloominess, treadeth down the high places" (from Deut. xxxiii. 29.) of pride. Comp. Micah i. 3. Be at peace with Me. I am the Creator of all, the Searcher out of all; at once Ineffable Light and Awful Darkness; "I kill and I make alive;" "The Lord; "the God of hosts." In this grand description the Prophet seems to pass from God's power over things seen to His sovereignty over what is unseen. "Wind" (spirit) prepares for "thought;" comp. especially Zech. xii. 1: "Thus saith the Lord, Which stretcheth forth the heavens, "and layeth the foundation of the earth, and 'formeth' the spirit" ("wind" here) of "man within him." And the two next acts seem to be here figurative of destroying might: the latter, as in Micah, l. c.; the former also, "maketh dawn gloom," may possibly refer to such overthrow, as Sodom's, already noticed (see Gen. xix. 15.); so, when Jericho fell, we hear, "they rose early about *the dawning of the day*" (Josh. vi. 15.) (it is the only instance in that book); Isa. xiv. 12: "How art thou fallen "from heaven, O Lucifer, son 'of the dawn.'" Again, Jonah iv. 7 (the only instance in him), "God prepared a worm when *the dawn rose* . . . and 'it smote' the gourd and it withered."

1 A lamentation for Israel. 4 An exhortation to repentance. 21 God rejecteth their hypocritical service.

^a Jer. 7. 29.
Ezek. 13. 1.
& 27. 2.

HEAR ye this word which I ^a take up against you, *even* a lamentation, O house of Israel.

CHAPTER V.

The "dirge" over "the mighty sins" of Israel; the great future "woe," "captivity beyond Damascus." ^a

INTRODUCTION.

And now for the third time the Prophet cries out, "Hear ye;" but now it is for "a dirge." "The virgin of Israel is fallen, she shall never rise again" (comp. ch. viii. 14.); "dashed down" in all her pride ("in the day of battle" comp. Hos. x. 14.). Those "thousand" warriors are become "a hundred;" of those "hundred" "the remnant is but ten" (and what even of those ten? comp. ch. vi. 9) (vv. 1—3.).

Yes, "hear;" for "thus saith the Lord: Seek ye Me, and live;" "Seek not Bethel, Gilgal, Beersheba," unto death and shame. Yet once more I say it, "Seek the Lord;" or He will burst forth as "devouring fire" (vv. 4—6.).

No, ye defy Him Who is "just" and right (Deut. xxxii. 4.). Ye only "turn the judgment" in which He delights "to bitterness" (comp. ver. 24.); and He, all the while, the Creator of those mighty stars" (some of which ye worship (ver. 26.), "who turneth" at His will "deepest gloom into brightness," or "darkeneth" all, "overwhelmeth" all with His "flood" (vv. 7—9.). But in vain this entreaty: "They hate him that reproveth;" "the poor they overthrow in judgment" (comp. Prov. xviii. 5.). Those "houses, therefore," of pride and splendour (spoils of those oppressed ones, comp. ch. iii. 10, 15.) "ye shall not inhabit;" those "vineyards" of beauty that "ye longed for," "shall yield you no wine." Your "wealth of transgression, your might of sin I know" (and I, the God of the poor and helpless, avenge; comp. Hos. vii. 2) (vv. 10—12.).

"Therefore" (it is the *punishment* of Israel) "the prudent shall be silent in that time" of woe; "yet" (for it is a *warning* too, though the mass is doomed) "it may be the Lord will be gracious to some;" (I say it for the last time), "Oh, seek good!" "Oh, hate the evil!" Oh! do you (at least) "the remnant of Joseph, set up judgment in the gate" (as witnesses for your God). For "remnant" only shall there be (vv. 13—15.). "Therefore, thus saith the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord" ("Adonai," as above, ver. 3.), "wailing shall there be" everywhere, "in highway, in field, in vineyard;" the wailing of death (vv. 16—17.). But do any of you even boldly "desire that day" of doom, as if it could bring you good? Oh! "woe" rather, hopeless "woe" to you! "It is darkness itself to you:" a day of "flight," "a terror to the mightiest" (comp. chs. ii. 16; ix. 1, 18—20.). Think not multiplied "festivals," laboured "sacrifices" (comp. ch. iv. 4, 5.), will avail you then. "I hate them!" Only "judgment," only "righteousness," I desire, and that "ye would not" (vv. 21—24.). (What do ye but fill up your fathers' sins?) "All those forty

2 The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is forsaken upon her land; *there is* none to raise her up. Before
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3 For thus saith the Lord GOD; The city that went out *by* a thousand shall leave an hundred, and

"years did ye bring your sacrifices to Me," ye who carried about the tabernacle, of (another) king; tried to make into "substance" your "image;" worshipped a star, the god of your own making. "Beyond Damascus" (into the heathendom that ye love), "I the Lord of all these hosts east you out captives" (vv. 25—27; comp. above, ver. 5.).

This chapter seems to fall into portions of three verses, from 1—15 at least; and again, 18—20. There is also throughout a threefold repetition of leading words and phrases, marking the whole with a "dirge"—like "burden;" or (in some cases) it is "three" warnings, and "four:" for instance, "house of Israel" (vv. 1, 3, 4, and 25.); "seek" Me; "seek" not "Bethel;" "seek the Lord" (vv. 4—6; and 14, "seek good"); "The Lord God of Hosts" (vv. 14—16, and 27, exactly); then, "in the gate" (vv. 10, 12, 15.); "wailing" (ver. 16, twice; ver. 17.); "day of the Lord" (ver. 18, twice; and ver. 20.); "therefore" (in Amos always introducing a threat of punishment), (vv. 11, 13, 16.); "Bethel" (ver. 5, twice, and ver. 6.). We might add the threefold "Bethel, Gilgal, Beer-sheba" (ver. 5.); a triple sin; "the lion, the bear, the serpent" (ver. 19.); a triple punishment. Other instances may be noted also. Observe, further, the "dirge" here, and its sequel, is first and last over their inveterate "idolatry" (vv. 5, 6; 21—23, 25, 26.); over their "luxury" (ver. 11.); and in greater fulness than before, over "their oppression of the poor" (vv. 10—12, 15; 7, 24.); it becomes one universal "wailing" (vv. 16, 17.). The references again to the Pentateuch, especially Deuteronomy, are very clear; no less so, those to the book of Job. The chapter is linked to chs. iii. and iv. by the repetition, for the third time, "Hear ye this word" (ver. 1.); to iv, besides other connections, by the twice-repeated "the Lord is His name" (comp. vv. 8, 27; iv. 13.); to vi, by the "woe" (ver. 18; ch. vi. 1.), and further, by the repetition of ver. 7 in ch. vi. 12.

1. Amos begins this his third appeal, in order to impress Israel the more, by "a dirge" over its destruction, mourning over those who were full of joy. Here too the shepherd prophet follows the shepherd king. The first and second instances of such a dirge we find in 2 Sam. i. 17, ff; iii. 33, 34. Amos is followed, as so often, by Jeremiah, and typifies Christ weeping over Jerusalem.

2. The dirge of Amos, based on that of David, to which Micah also refers (ch. i. 10.), seems to be comprehended in one verse, but that one very full and expressive. "Fallen" thou art, now and for ever; thy might, thy glory departed; for thee there is no rising; no more tender care; thou, once known as "the virgin of Israel," "thou art east off (or "down), a rejected thing" (rather than, as in A.V., "forsaken"); a wreck upon thine own land, in the midst of thy resources, for a prey and a "derision" (Hos. vii. 16.). Israel did fall; and she has never been restored.

3. The ruin pointed at seems to be by war and conquest. It was

that which went forth *by* an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel.

4 ¶ For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, ^b Seek ye me, ^c and ye shall live :

5 but seek not ^d Beth-el, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to ^e Beer-sheba : for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and ^f Beth-el shall come to nought.

6 ^g Seek the LORD, and ye shall live; lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour *it*, and *there be none* to quench *it* in Beth-el.

7 Ye who ^h turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth,

8 *seek him* that maketh the ⁱ seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, ^k and maketh the day dark with night : that ^l calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth

to be a decimation of each military city ; nine-tenths should perish, and this in large and small places alike ; the doom universal, without exception.

4. Here begins a great call to repentance, which is practically to the remnant (ver. 15.), for to the mass it will be unavailing (vv. 16, 17.). At the same time it is a reproach for their habitual, inveterate sins. It is terse, energetic, as the other addresses of Amos. " Seek Me, and live ; " " seek the Lord, and live " (ver. 6.) ; " seek good, and not evil that ye may live " (ver. 14.). " In two words (ver. 4.) he comprises the whole " of the creature's duties and hopes. " To seek God Himself for Himself, ' this is life, life eternal ' " (from *Pusey*).

5. Compare with this simple obedience to God, and immediate reward from Him, the laboured, multiplied acts of will-worship and idolatry, the first described in two words, the last in three clauses ; ye seek out diligently your new way ; " ye enter in " and think ye have found ; then dissatisfied " ye pass " elsewhere, searching still ; and for House of God ye win a " house of vanity and nothingness. " Ye are ever seeking, and ye lose for ever.

6. Yea, " Seek ye the Lord " (same words) " while He may be found " (Isa. lv. 6.) ; for has He not declared Himself " a devouring fire ? " (Deut. iv. 24. Comp. Lam. ii. 3.) " Shall (not) they go forth, and look upon " the carcases of the men that have ' transgressed ' against Me ? for " their worm shall not die, neither shall their ' fire ' be ' quenched ' " (last verse of Isaiah).

7. But, as if the prophet added, And will He not break out upon you ? ye " who turn the sweetness of justice into the bitterness of worm-wood " (*St. Jerome*), and trample on right because it stands in your way ? Again Deuteronomy is appealed to (ch. xxix. 18.) ; again the close union pointed out of false worship and fraud and wrong. You cease to worship the God of truth and holiness ; you lose all sense of right to man, as well as of duty to God.

8. Such are ye. Ye reverse God's holy will and work, Who loveth

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them out upon the face of the earth: ^m The LORD Before
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is his name:

9 that strengtheneth the ²spoiled against the ^m ch. 4. 13.
² Heb. *spoil.*
strong, so that the spoiled shall come against the
fortress.

10 ^aThey hate him that rebuketh in the gate, ⁿ Isai. 23. 21.
and they ^oabhor him that speaketh uprightly. ^o 1 Kin. 22. 8.

11 Forasmuch therefore as your treading *is* upon
the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: P Deut. 28.
30, 38, 39.
Mic. 6. 15.
Zeph. 1. 13.
Hag. 1. 6.
^p ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall
not dwell in them; ye have planted ³pleasant vine-
yards, but ye shall not drink wine of them. ³ Heb.
*vineyards
of desire.*

12 For I know your manifold transgressions and
your mighty sins: ^qthey afflict the just, they take ^q ch. 2. 6.
⁴ Or, *a
ransom.*
⁴a bribe, and they ^rturn aside the poor in the gate
from their right. ^r Isai. 23. 21.
ch. 2. 7.

“judgment,” Who “executeth judgment and righteousness” (Ps. xcix. 4.). Ye are only “destroyers,” overturners of all; and He! He is the “Creator,” not only of “mountains and wind” (ch. iv. 13.), but of “the sweet influences of Pleiades” and of “the bands of Orion” (Job xxxviii. 31.), images of His brightness; yea, and that “darkness as of the grave,” that misery, which ye have brought on the poor oppressed, He can turn to the clear light of the morning, and your day of pride darken into night (comp. ver. 18.); nay, hath He not poured out in His wrath (Hos. v. 10.) the waters of the great flood on wickedness such as yours? The allusion to the flood is by good authorities recognised; the interpretation of the second and third clauses is that of Theodoret also. Yea (ver. 9.), so we should probably translate, “He it is that flasheth” (or maketh to smile) “desolation upon the strong, and desolation upon the fortress shall come.” Unlike those of whom Job speaks (ch. v. 21.), “Neither shalt thou be afraid of ‘destruction’ when ‘it cometh’” (ib. 22.). At “destruction and famine thou shalt laugh” (the only instances of this Hebrew word in Job); the strength of those “strong” ones would be their weakness. The great God in a moment “flasheth upon them ruin.” On one side is man’s labour of years, “his fortifying of his power mightily” (Nah. ii. 1.); high walls, “gates of brass, bars of iron.” The Lord gives the word, and all is desolation (Joel i. 15; compare especially ch. vi. 13, 14.).

10—12. But, as if the prophet said, Do I not plead in vain; is not “spoil,” “desolation,” the very picture of Israel now? Look, there is “the gate” of the city (vv. 10, 12; also ver. 15.), the place of judgment; “the elders” are sitting (Deut. xxii. 15, 24.), but not “to judge up- rightly” (Ps. lviii. 1; comp. lxxxii. 3.); rather it is “to tread upon the weak, already trodden down” (ver. 11.), and “turn him aside in his cause” (ver. 12.). Lo! there comes suddenly upon them a Hosea, or an Amos, as after them came a Jeremiah (who twice “reproved in the gate,” Jer. xvii. 19; xix. 2.); an Ezekiel (see Ezek. iii. 26.), but not necessarily a prophet only (comp. “prudent,” ver. 13.). That voice says

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^s ch. 6. 10.

^t Mic. 3. 11.

^u Ps. 34. 14.
& 97. 10.

Rom. 12. 9.

^x Ex. 32. 30.

² Kin. 19. 4.

Joel 2. 14.

13 Therefore ^s the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it *is* an evil time.

14 Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, ^t as ye have spoken.

15 ^u Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: ^x it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

“Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute ‘the judgment’ of ‘truth and peace in your ‘gates’” (Zech. viii. 16.); and they cry out, at once, of that reprovcr, “Away;” “I hate him;” as Ahab of Micaiah (1 Kings xxii. 8. Comp. Micah iii. 9 especially). Look at them, I say; their houses costly as Solomon’s (ver. 11.), “of hewn stone” (comp. Isa. ix. 9, 10; and 1 Kings v. 17.); “vineyards of their desire” (gained as Ahab’s); look at them, “straiteuing” the poor “just man,” “taking “bribes” to wrong, and to crush him. Is it not a people “abundant in “transgression, mighty in sin?”

Here too Deuteronomy supplies the model (ch. xxviii. 30.): “Thou shalt build a house,” and “thou shalt not dwell therein;” thou “shalt “plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof;” (see ib. 39.); at the end we shall find this punishment is reversed (ch. ix. 14.). Comp. also Micah vi. 15 especially, the two last clauses of ver. 11, almost exactly in Zeph. i. 13; comp. also Hag. i. 6.

Observe, as many commentators suggest, how this foreshadows the persecution of our blessed Lord. “They that sit in the gate speak “against Me” (Ps. lxxix. 12.). “They that hate Me without a cause are “more than the hairs of My head” (Ps. lxxix. 4.). “They have spoken “against Me with a lying tongue” (Ps. cix. 2.). He, all the while “speaking as never man spake,” perfectly.

13—15. “Therefore,” it is apparently a continuation of their punishment; comp. “therefore,” (vv. 11 and 16.), and at the same time an address to “the remnant” (ver. 15.), “the wise man shall be still “now, for it is vain to reprove” (in ch. vi. 10 there is a similar dread silence, and ch. viii. 3 also). Is it not the time of man’s obduracy and of God’s visitation?

This verse suggests also our Lord’s example. He, the All-Wise, is silent in that day of His affliction: “If I tell you, ye will not believe” (St. Luke xxii. 67.). Yet, as that time is not fully come, Amos continues; but oh! yet (ver. 14.) “seek good; put away that evil; then the “mighty God may be indeed yours,” “as ye say” so boastfully; “ye “say, God is with you, because ye are ‘the sons of Abraham.’ Hear, “then, what He says, ‘If ye were sons of Abraham, ye would do the “works of Abraham’ (St. John viii. 39.); “ye would seek good.”

15. Ye have “hated in the gate him that rebuked” (ver. 10.). Oh! now “hate the evil” which was rebuked; ye have cast “righteousness “and judgment to the ground” (ver. 7.); oh! now, if ye may, “establish “it’ again” (from *Pusey*). It may be the Lord will spare “a remnant,” and call to mind the true-hearted Joseph, your forefather. It is a holy

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16 Therefore the LORD, the God of hosts, the Lord, saith thus; Wailing *shall be* in all streets; and they shall say in all the highways, Alas! alas! and they shall call the husbandman to mourning, and ^y such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing. Before
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17 And in all vineyards *shall be* wailing: for ^z I will pass through thee, saith the LORD. y Jer. 9. 17.
z Ex. 12. 12.
Nab. 1. 12.

18 ^aWoe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end *is* it for you? ^bthe day of the LORD *is* darkness, and not light. a Isai. 5. 19.
Jer. 17. 15.
Ezek. 12. 22,
27.
2 Pt. 3. 4.
b Jer. 30. 7.
Joel 2. 2.
Zeph. 1. 15.
c Jer. 48. 44.

19 ^cAs if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.

20 *Shall* not the day of the LORD *be* darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?

necessity to the true and faithful, because they "love the Lord," to "hate evil" (Ps. xvii. 10; comp. Rom. xii. 9.). If men have grace to repent, they will long "to break off," if it be possible, their "sins by "righteousness," their "iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor" (Dan. iv. 27.).

18—17. Then, as if it was all in vain, for the third time (see ver. 13.), "therefore;" with the solemn declaration of "the Lord, the God "of hosts," and here (in ver. 16.) with the addition of, "the Lord," the Judge of all speaks; everywhere shall there be "wailing" (this, too, thrice repeated), "wailing" in those broadways of abused, prostituted justice, "wailing" in the fields without, "wailing" in those "vineyards" erewhile "of delight and joy" (comp. Isa. xvi. 10.). There, where "Wisdom cried in vain" (Prov. i. 20, 21.), let there be "mourning;" "everywhere" let there be mourning, "as for an only son" (Jer. vi. 26.); for, as in the night of Egypt's ruin, "I will pass through" (so Exod. xii. 12.) "and smite; I your Lord."

18—20. Perhaps these persons may have been scoffers, such as we read of (Isa. v. 18.): "Woe" to them that draw iniquity "with cords of "vanity" . . . ib. 19: "that say, Let Him make speed, 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." Ver. 20: "Woe unto them "that call evil good" (as ver. 15.), "and good evil; that put darkness for "light, and light for darkness" (each as here). Jeremiah seems to imitate Amos (ch. xvii. 15.): "Behold, they say unto me, Where is the "word of the Lord? Let it come now!" Ver. 16: "As for me, I have "not hastened from" (being) "a pastor to follow Thee, neither have I "desired" (same conj. as here) the woeful 'day' Thou knowest . . ." Ver. 17: "Be not a terror to me; Thou art my 'Hope'" (as Joel iii. 16.) "in the day of evil," as ver. 13. Comp. also Jer. v. 12, 13. Anyhow, "to desire," instead of waiting with a holy awe for "the day of the "Lord," must be the act of men wholly heedless and irreverent. Perhaps these were saying, "Why, that day really will never come; or if it come,

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- 21 ¶^d I hate, I despise your feast days, and ° I will not ² smell in your solemn assemblies.
- 22 † Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept *them*: neither will I regard the ³ peace offerings of your fat beasts.
- 23 Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.
- 24 § But let judgment ⁴ run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

¶ Prov. 21. 27.
Is. 1. 11.—16.
Jer. 6. 20.
Hos. 8. 13.
° Lev. 26. 31.
‡ Or, *smell your holy days.*
† Isai. 66. 3.
Mic. 6. 6, 7.
§ Or, *thank offerings.*
¶ Hos. 6. 6. Mic. 6. 8. † Heb. *roll.*

“it will not be so evil after all.” But it may also be, as St. Jerome suggests, that many flattered themselves with the promises, which also went with the day of the Lord, as in Joel iii. 16—18, forgetting that the Lord is only “the Hope of *His people*” (ib.). St. Chrysostom (*Homil.* ix. on 1 *Thess.* vol. v, p. 409, Oxford ed.) quotes Isa. v. 19 (above), and this verse, and says, “He does not simply speak of ‘those who desire,’ but ‘those who desire’ out of unbelief.”

But ye, who put “darkness for light,” shall it not be to you a harvest such as ye have sown? Shall it not be to you “deep gloom” indeed? not a ray of hope, not a streak of the vision of peace. Only the gathering of that tremendous wrath of Him Whom ye defy! The holy God, imaged by lion, bear, and serpent, now becomes thy avenger, “fear on every side.” Comp. for a similar thought Jer. xlviii. 44, also ib. viii. 17. St. Jerome illustrates the verse by their successive oppressions by Assyrians, Chaldees, Medes, Persians: “And when ye return to your land, there will come Alexander the Great, and Antiochus Epiphanes, “in your own borders.” The last verse (20.) is not mere repetition, though as a repetition it is weighty. Yes. Is it not “darkness,” that dread day of the Lord? Does not your own heart tell you so? Does not conscience echo the words? Put aside, if you will, outward signs of doom, sword and famine, plague and manifold deaths. Is there not a voice in your ears, calm, but “piercing to the dividing of soul and “spirit?” “Behold, the Judge standeth before the door” (St. James v. 9.).

21—24. The connection may be: Think not you shall be spared for your costly and continual sacrifices (comp. ch. iv. 5.). Think not that you practice all—yea, more than all—that I have prescribed for My worship. “We” have “festival, solemn assembly; burnt offering, and meat offering, and peace offering,” each in their place; nay, the best and choicest victims, above and beyond the letter of the Law. Yea we have, more than in David’s time, sweetest hymns of praise, and most elaborate music. Oh! that hollow service with double heart, yea, wholly heartless, it is only sin added to sin; sin of profaneness and hypocrisy, trying to gild and conceal sin of covetousness, of cruelty, of oppression, of uncleanness. “I hate” it, “I loathe it,” as shameful defilement. “I will not smell, nor hear, nor look upon it.” As if God thus marked by His more and more intense abhorrence their more and more multiplied ceremonies of falsehood. Here again note (with *Pusey*), “the only sacrifice they did *not* offer was ‘sin and trespass offering.’” “Worshipping “‘Nature,’ not a holy personal God, they had no sense of unholiness

25 ^h Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?

26 But ye have borne ² the tabernacle ⁱ of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves.

27 Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity ^k beyond Damascus, saith the LORD, ^l whose name is The God of hosts.

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^h Deut. 32. 17.
Josh. 24. 14.
Ezek. 20. 8,
16, 24.
Acts 7. 42, 43.
See 1s. 45. 23.
² Or, *Sicenth*
your king.
ⁱ 1 Kin. 11. 33.
^k 2 Kin. 17. 6.
^l ch. 4. 13.

“for which to plead the atoning sacrifice to come.” A round of sacred services, and no purity! an endless machinery of ritual, and no “spirit” in one of “the wheels!” Incessant labour, and no obedience, no love!

24. Then, (not altogether abruptly; for “take thou away from before Me” (ver. 23.) may prepare the way for it.) Oh! rather “than thousands of rams” and “ten thousands of rivers of oil” (Micah vi. 7.), let “judgment” (comp. ib. 8.), which has been so long perverted in its course (comp. above, ver. 7.) “roll on,” now, at length, as a mighty tide of waters, . . . reaching all, refreshing all; and “the righteousness” of the heart, the righteousness taught of God, and flowing down from Him, be as a ceaseless stream! Isaiah is in obvious agreement (ch. i. 11.): “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me? saith the Lord; “I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of ‘fed beasts’” (as here). Ib. 13: “Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an ‘abomination to Me . . . it is iniquity, even ‘the solemn meeting.’” 14: “Your new moons and appointed feasts My soul ‘hateth;’ ‘they are ‘upon Me a burden.’ I am weary to bear (them).” 15: “. . . I will hide Mine eyes . . . I will not hear.” 16: “. . . ‘put away’ (ver. 23.) the evil of your doings” (comp. Hos. viii. 13. Jer. vi. 20.). “Judgment” and “righteousness” rise up here naturally in contrast to hollow-hearted ceremonial worship.

25—27. And has not this been your way from the very first? Are ye not children of idolaters? (comp. St. Matt. xxiii. 31, 32.) “Make ye not “their sin your own.”

26. Rather, perhaps, “And ye have carried about the tabernacle of your king, and the statue” (some say, “pedestal”) “of your “images, the star,” &c. This tabernacle was probably a little portable shrine, such as those for Diana (Acts xix. 24.). “Moloch” and “king” in Hebrew have the same consonants. “Chiun” is very obscure, it is only found here. It is to be noted that in the original there is the most exact parallelism in the two first clauses, “the tabernacle of your king, the Chiun of your images.” “Chiun” is not unreasonably referred to a common verb, meaning “to set up firm.” It is an indignant irony: Not Me (this is the emphatic word, so St. Jerome and others, comp. Isa. xliii. 23.) did ye worship, but ye worshipped *your own* king, *your own* image and likeness, the copy, and that a worthless one, of the imagination of *your own* hearts; yes, “the star “of your own god,” which made not you, but which ye made for yourselves. This contrast is very marked throughout the verse. Yes, and your king, like the Lord whom ye rejected, had his “tabernacle.” Ye could carry it about, and (perhaps) your shadows had their substance, like His, whose “tabernacle” (cognate) “is in Salem” (Ps. lxxvi. 2.), and for

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CHAPTER VI.

1 *The wantonness of Israel, 7 shall be plagued with desolation, 12 and their incorrigibility.*

^a Luke 6. 24.
² Or, *are*
secure.

WOE ^a to them *that* ² *are* at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, *which are*

Whom righteousness and judgment are "the habitation" (perhaps, cognate to "Chion") "of His throne." "And "I will carry you captive," a word full of weight. It was a new and unheard-of punishment (see on ch. i. 5.). Not to Damascus, but far beyond it, beyond that scene of your recent triumph (2 Kings xiv. 28.), that snare, and provocation of your luxury (ch. iii. 12.)—*beyond*. And, in that one word of doom, certain, for it is His, Whose word is with power, but in its circumstances all undefined as yet, there is fresh terror. Ye shall be captives, exiles, homeless—and of such a home! For ye have dared to offer your God, your Redeemer, a half-service, which is no service, only a profanation of the Holy One. Ye have adored "sun and moon and stars," all "the host" of heaven (Deut. iv. 19; so xvii. 3: comp. Jer. xix. 13.) in place of Him "Whose name "is Lord," and Maker of those glorious "hosts," Who is over all, Alone, Omnipotent.

CHAPTER VI.

The second and nearer "woe." Israel's wanton luxury shall end in desolation, its pride of power in "affliction" from the appointed "nation."

INTRODUCTION.

The second "woe" follows. "The chief of the first of the nations," the most highly favoured in favoured Zion, in prosperous Samaria, what are they doing? In reckless scorn of that day of doom, they set up their "judgment-seat for violence" (comp. v. 15.). See how they feast in splendid state! How, "in imitation," forsooth! "of David, they play "so skilfully!" How they drink, yea, in chalices!" "anoint themselves, yea, with holy unguent;" "lounge" and idle the livelong day! And what of "Joseph" their brother, and his distress? They heed it not, hear it not, in that high riot. "Therefore" "it is but a little "while," "at the head" of the captives, ye "heads" of Israel, to your punishment shall ye pass away (vv. 1—7.).

"By His own soul hath the Lord most mighty" (as ch. v. 3, &c.) "sworn" (ch. iv. 2.), "I hate these palaces" (ch. iii. 10.). "I deliver "up this city" (not a part only, as to Edom (ch. i. 6, 9), but) the whole of it, and for ever. And said I, "ten" should be left in it (ch. v. 3.); even if ten be found in one of these "palaces" "they shall die," and "no mourning shall there be over them" (ch. viii. 3; comp. Jer. xvi. 4—6.); no calling now on "the name of the Lord" (vv. 8—10.). Comp. Hos. vii. 7. "For, see," the word is gone out from the Lord, "Great house and small, all alike, will He smite"—emblems of the utter "breach" of Israel, of the "cleft" of Judah. And can it be otherwise? Have ye not been perverse, defiant of His laws, destroyers of them? "turning judgment to bitterness," "righteousness" into cruel

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named ^b chief of the nations, to whom the house B-fore
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of Israel came!

b Ex. 19. 5. 2 Or, *firstfruits*.

wrong? "have ye not been boasting in utter vanity," "our might," "our horns?" (Deut. xxxiii. 17.) Did not our king restore the "border" (ver. 2.) of Israel "from the entering in of Hamath" "unto" the sea "of the plain?" (2 Kings xiv. 25.) Yes, and in vain; "for see, I am raising up against you a nation" (even as long ago I forewarned you), and "he shall afflict you" (as your oppressors of old), all along that self-same land. The scene of your triumph shall be the scene of your shame (vv. 11—14.).

In this chapter their nearer "affliction" by Tiglath-pileser is threatened. There are two marked contrasts: first, the proud security of Israel, in its mountain home at Samaria (ver. 1.), in its military successes (ver. 13.),—and its sweeping devastation by the avenging "nation" (ver. 14.); secondly, there is a very vivid picture of its profuse and heartless luxury (vv. 4—6.) most fully detailed here, as "the oppression of the poor," in the last chapter, and again of death and desolation in one of its splendid "palaces" (vv. 8—10.). The punishment denounced is like that at the end of chs. ii. and iii., but more defined. This is, as at the end of chs. iv., v., the avenging work of "the Lord, the God of hosts."

The whole section (vv. 1—6.) is chosen as an instance "of the eloquence of the prophets," and commented upon at length by St. Augustine (*De Doctr. Christ.* iv. 7.). The references, again, to the Pentateuch are very close and frequent.

1—6. Then with a second "woe" there follows a most vivid description of the heartless self-indulgence of the "upper classes" of Israel. O ye, "ye heads of thousands," descendants of those twelve princes of renown (there is in the words a clear reference to Num. i. 16, 17.); heirs of men chosen by Moses, what might ye not have been? Look (ver. 2.) "east, and north, and south," look at those old capital cities in Assyria, Syria, Philistia, even in outward prosperity were they more favoured than ye? Calneh was not older in her glory, Hamath not more "strong," Gath not richer, more fertile. Ye were called to judge for the Lord, to feed His people. And ye live in wanton, reckless "ease," and ye trust in your own arm (ver. 13.) to save you. Yes, ye say; "be gone," as a thing unclean, that day, they talk of, of coming evil; and ye bring close home to yourselves that "scission" of your own, not for "judgment" but "oppression." Scoffers at the just Judge, hugging to yourselves your short-lived power for wrong (see Ezek. xii. 27. Ps. xciv. 20.), ye lie, so many Ahab's, on couches of ivory (ver. 4.), as Eastern satraps (ch. iii. 12. Isa. ii. 6; see especially Ezek. xxiii. 15.), your "tiaras" (Ezek. i. c.) on your heads; ye must have the choicest "out of the flock and the stall," as if your God meant His bounty only for you.

Ye "simper forth" (rather than "chant") your songs of love and wine to the sound of the viol, "the psaltery" of the Temple taken to your revel; and the name, the skill, the loyal, godly zeal of David ye abuse, as the pattern of your self-worship.

O, deeper shame and more daring profaneness! Ye drink in "bowls" of sacred use; the very same, or copies of those, which, of old, these princes

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c Jer. 2. 10.

d Isai. 10. 9.

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cir. 794.

e 2 Kin. 18. 34.

f 2 Chr. 26. 6.

g Nah. 3. 8.

h Ezek. 12. 27.

i ch. 5. 18.

& 9. 10.

k ch. 5. 12.

ver. 12.

2 ° Pass ye unto ^d Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to ° Hamath the great: then go down to ^f Gath of the Philistines: ^g *be they* better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border?

3 Ye that ^h put far away the ⁱ evil day, ^k and cause ^l the ² seat of violence to come near;

4 that lie upon beds of ivory, and ³ stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of

1 Ps. 94. 20. 2 Or, *habitation.* 3 Or, *abound with superfluities.*

“dedicated willingly” to the Lord; yea, as if instead of unclean, ye were holy and honourable, ye make yourselves “priests and kings” of the “god of this world;” almost in blasphemous mockery of the only rightly Anointed One, your “garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and “cassia, out of your ‘ivory’ palaces” (Ps. xlv. 7.). And all the while what reck ye of the suffering poor? “the breach of Joseph?” The “soul,” that takes its ease, hears not the sigh of sorrow, or herald voice of judgment, and “night” comes, and—“they require it!” (St. Luke xii. 19, 20.) Isaiah gives the commentary: “‘Woe’ unto them that rise up “early in the morning that they may follow strong drink, that continue “till night, till wine inflame them. And the harp and ‘the viol,’ the “tubret, and pipe, and wine are in their feasts, but they regard not the “work of the Lord.” . . . And so immediately it follows (as here, ver. 7.), “Therefore” my people “are gone into captivity. . . . Therefore hell “hath enlarged herself. . . . and their glory and their multitude, and “their pomp . . . shall descend into it” (vv. 11—14.). Belshazzar only brings out fully the heathen profaneness into which “the chiefs of Israel” were falling: “They brought the golden vessels that were taken out of “the temple of the house of God . . . and the king and his princes . . . “drank’ in them” (Dan. v. 3.).

God put aside (ver. 3.); luxury and banqueting made a business and a passion (ver. 4.); music degraded from its heavenliness; art prostituted to serve the passing pleasure (ver. 5.); vanity consecrated, even deified (ver. 6.); this is “fashion,” this is “the course of this world.” And what is the end? The dulness of insensibility, a cold heart, at last “woe” (ver. 1.).

2. “Calneh” (see Gen. x. 10.). “This was *east* of them, on the river “Tigris,” some forty miles, perhaps, from Babylon; “Hamath,” probably meaning “citadel,” mentioned again below (ver. 14.), only here called “great;” in the valley of the Orontes; it was the *north* border of Israel (Num. xxxiv. 7, 8.). Jeroboam II. “restored the coast” (as “border” here) of Israel “from the entering of Hamath” (exactly as below, ver. 14.) “unto the sea of the plain” (exactly as “wilderness” below, ver. 14.) (2 Kings xiv. 25, comp. ver. 28.).

“Gath.” This was, of course, on the south. “Uzziah .. brake down “the wall of Gath, and the wall of Ashdod” (2 Chron. xxvi. 6.).

3. “that put far away.” The Chaldee Paraphrast says, “Ye would avert punishment, and ye come ever nearer and nearer to sin.”

4. “stretch themselves” (same word, ver. 7.), lit. “are poured out;”

the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; Before
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5 ^m that ² chant to the sound of the viol, *and* ^m Isai. 5. 12.
invent to themselves instruments of musick, ⁿ like ² Or. *quaver.*
David; n I Chr. 23. 5.

6 that drink ³ wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: ^o but they are not ³ Or, *in bowls*
grieved for the ⁴ affliction of Joseph. *of wine.*
o Gen. 37. 25.
4 Heb. *breach.*

7 ¶ Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.

8 ^p The Lord GOD hath sworn by himself, saith the LORD the God of hosts, I abhor ^q the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all ⁵ that is therein. P Jer. 51. 14.
1 Heb. 6. 13, 17.
q Ps. 47. 4.
Ezek. 24. 21.
ch. 8. 7.
5 Heb.
the fulness
thereof.

9 And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die.

10 And a man's uncle shall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that *is* by the sides of the house, *Is there yet any* with thee? and he shall say, No. Then shall he say, ^r Hold thy tongue: ^s for ⁶ we may not make mention of the name of the LORD. r ch. 5. 13.
s ch. 8. 3.
6 Or, *they*
will not, or,
have not.

used Exod. xxvi. 12, 13, of a "hanging" or "overlapping" curtain; Ezek. xvii. 6, "a spreading" vine; ib. xxiii. 15, of a head-dress "hanging over," worn by Chaldeans: a very vivid picture. St. Jerome translates, "playing the wanton."

6. "bowls." This word in the original, everywhere else (thirty-nine times in all), is used of the bowls out of which the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled. In Num. vii. a silver "bowl" is twelve times one of the offerings of each of the twelve princes already alluded to above, in ver. 1. These "bowls" are mentioned amongst the vessels taken out of the Temple (2 Kings xxv. 15.). They may have been used afterwards at Belshazzar's feast (see Dan. v. 3.).

"anoint." The word is almost always used of "sacred anointing;" "Messiah" is directly derived from it. A different word is used for the ordinary anointing of the body (see Exod. xxx. 23, 25, 32.).

"are not grieved," &c. The allusion is probably to Gen. xxxvii. 24, 25; xlii. 21.

7—10. Shortly ("now") shall the punishment follow. "First" in station, they shall be "the first to bear the yoke of captivity" (so St. Jerome and others). In a moment "the screech" (so the word "banquet" rather means) of revelry shall be "the screech" of agony and shame (comp. Rev. xviii. 7—10, and 14.). "The fruits that thy soul lusted

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11 For, behold, ^tthe LORD commandeth, ^uand he will smite the great house with ²breaches, and the little house with clefts.

^t Isai. 55. 11.

^u ch. 3. 15. ² Or, *droppings*.

“after ‘are departed from thee,’ and all things dainty and goodly are ‘departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.’ It is doom indeed, and irreversible. “Sworn hath the Lord God,” by His own perfect Being, which is Holiness, Justice, Love, “by His Sovereign “Might;” He is Lord over all; “I will break,” as I forewarned you, “the pride of your power” (Lev. xxvi. 19; comp. Jer. xiii. 9.). “I hate” those “palaces” in which “ye store up violence and robbery” (ch. iii. 10.); “ye, who are only a reproach to ‘Jacob,’ your father” (comp. Hos. xii. 3—6, 12—14.); and “I deliver up” all your strength and wealth to a worse captivity than your old one to Edom (ch. i. 6, 9.). And then follows one of the vivid pictures of Amos. “It shall come to “pass” (perhaps “in the straitness” of that last terrible three years’ siege of Samaria, 2 Kings xvii. 5; comp. ib. vi. 24—29, and in the famine and pestilence which accompanied it), in one great “palace” “house,” if “ten” have survived the first sufferings (ch. v. 3.), yet they, “not turning to the Lord” (ch. iv. 6, &c.) “shall all die.” There may be a reference to Sodom, already mentioned (ch. iv. 11; Gen. xviii. 32.). And in that house of death, see the sight. One is lingering amidst that corruption, himself marked for death. A relation enters,—not father or brother, all the nearest are gone,—to gather the bones of some loved one, “to burn” over him (perhaps) a little incense; and he sees in the inner corner another sufferer. “Art thou alone?” “Is there any other still?” “No.” And there rises a cry or a prayer to God. “Hush!” says that visitor; “no time this to make mention of the Lord” (partly from *Pusey*). Note in this remarkable dialogue how short and hurried it is. Once two words, then only one suffices. Lastly, all is ended with a “Hush!” (Comp. chs. v. 13; viii. 3.) Observe Amos himself had already said thrice, “The Lord, the God of hosts is His Name” (ch. iv. 13; comp. ch. v. 8, 27.); he will say again (ch. ix. 6.), “The Lord is His Name.” To the prophet and to the saints of God it is a delight to dwell on the “Name,” that is, the glorious *revelation* of the Being and attributes of the great Creator, the Sovereign Ruler, the Lord. “Unto Thee, O Lord, do we “give thanks, give thanks, for that Thy Name is near, Thy wondrous “works declare” (Ps. lxxv. 1.), and so constantly in Pss. xcii. 1; xcvi. 2; xcix. 3; ciii. 1; cv. 1, 3; cxlv. 1, 2; cxlviii. 13, &c. Here, for whatever reason, in that house of death, mourners will not utter it, will not listen to it. It is not for this place, it is not for us. Is it rebellion? or rather despair? *Pusey* says well: “If men have not sought God “earlier, they have, when His hand is heavy upon them, no heart, nor “time, nor thought, nor faith to seek Him.”

11—14. The connection is probably as in ch. iv. 13, where the same two particles, as here, begin the verse. “Yes, great and awful is that “desolation, and that which is to come” (ver. 14.), for the sentence of “doom is gone forth from the Lord.” “He shall give His angels “charge” (Ps. xci. 11.) in heaven “to smite” thee (comp. ch. ix. 1.). “He shall raise up heathen nations” (ver. 14.) on earth; “the great “house” (symbol, perhaps, of the ten tribes, *St. Jerome*) shall fall into

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12 ¶ Shall horses run upon the rock? will *one* plow *there* with oxen? for ^xye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock:

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x Hos. 10. 4.
ch. 5. 7.

13 ye which rejoice in a thing of nought, which say, Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength?

14 But, behold, ^yI will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith the LORD the God of hosts; and they shall afflict you from the ^zentering in of Hemath unto the ²river of the wilderness.

y Jer. 5. 15.
z Num. 24. 8.
1 Kin. 8. 65.
2 Or, valley.

CHAPTER VII.

¹ The judgments of the grasshoppers, ⁴ and of the fire, are diverted by the prayer of Amos. ⁷ By the wall of a plummet is signified the

“ruins,” for it is delivered to perpetual captivity; “the little” (the two, *St. Jerome*) into “clefts,” for “a cleft” may be repaired; or “palace, and lowliest home” shall perish together. And why not? Have ye not “put bitter for sweet?” (ver. 12.) Shall this “overturning” of right go unpunished? As well may “horse” unharmed “run upon” the hard “rock,” as well “oxen plough it.” “And ye” (ver. 13.) as much “without understanding” as they (Ps. xxxii. 9.), all whose toil is only “a ploughing of wickedness,” who only “eat the fruit of lies” . . . “because thou didst trust in the multitude of thy mighty men” (Hos. x. 13.); “ye that rejoice in a very nothing,” as if your own arm had saved you (Ps. xliv. 3.); “ye who say, our might is our own” (“who is Lord over us?”) (ib. xii. 4.); are not we “the ten thousands of Ephraim?” (Deut. xxxiii. 17.); “in Thy favour shall our ‘horn’ be exalted” (Ps. lxxxix. 17.);—judgment is prepared for you. For I who “raised up” of old deliverers for you (Judges iii. 9—15.), “I who raised up” for you “prophets” and “Nazarites” (ch. ii. 11.), now “am raising up a nation” to do My vengeance, “and they shall oppress you” after the manner of Egypt; as of old, Canaanite and Amalekite; as later, Syrian, in Gilead, and all its coasts from north to south. This was fulfilled some fifty-five years after by the invasion of Tiglath-pileser. The word “afflict” is only here used by Amos, often before of their heathen oppressors.

14. “The river of the wilderness.” Comp. above, on ver. 2.

CHAPTER VII.

The Visions of Judgment upon Israel. The true Prophet's Life, and the Doom of the Idolatrous Priest.

INTRODUCTION.

And now there follow (chs. vii. 1—ix. 6.) the (five) visions of Amos, who, from the first, told us, that his “words” were those that “he saw”

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rejection of Israel. 10 Amaziah complaineth of Amos. 14 Amos sheweth his calling, 16 and Amaziah's judgment.

² Or, green worms.

THUS hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me ; and, behold, he formed ² grasshoppers in the begin-

(ch. i. 1). They join on closely to the last chapter (vi. 13, 14). There was described a general "affliction." The three visions of this chapter exhibit this "affliction" in detail, and in its successive stages. First, the land has been "mowed down" by "a king," perhaps Hazael, or his son Ben-hadad, or both ; but it is reviving ; there is "an after-grass," as in this present time of Jeroboam II. (comp. ver. 10.). But "the Lord is "forming locusts," and sent by Him "they devour the green herbage." Shall the corn and the fruit (ch. viii. 1.) be also destroyed ? Amos intercedes "for Jacob," and the Lord stays His hand (vv. 1—3.). The reference seems to be to the first invasion of the Assyrians, under Pul. The prophet has a second vision. "A fire is devouring the great deep," i. e. perhaps several of the mighty heathen nations near to Israel, and also "the Portion," i. e. it may be, Israel itself ; Amos again, and perhaps more urgently, prays that this plague too may "cease" (Exod. ix. 29, 33, 34), and he is heard (vv. 4—6.). This is apparently the more destructive invasion of Tiglath-pileser. There is yet a third vision. Now "the Lord Himself is standing over the wall of the city, a plumb-line in His "hand." This judgment is final (vv. 7—9.). This would be "the desolation," after "the sword" of Shalmaneser. Amos had been interceding for Jacob ; Amaziah, priest of Bethel, denounces him to "Jeroboam," as "conspiring" against him. Then follows (vv. 10—17.) another most vivid picture. Face to face, Amos stands "at Bethel" against "Amaziah ;" the prophet of God against the idolatrous priest. In his shepherd's dress, poor, single-handed (yet "a conspirator !"), like another Elijah against one "strong" in the support of "king," "court," perhaps "his 450 prophets" (1 Kings xviii. 22.). Then one short dialogue. Falseness tries all its arts ; Truth rests itself calm on God's word and will. At last all those unavailing appeals to the people "to hear" are turned into judgment upon one chief offender, the representative of the people's sin ; "hear "thou the Word of the Lord." As seed, so shall harvest be. "Thy wife "harlot, thy sons and daughters, portion of the sword ;" "thy land "divided ;" thyself, to die in land polluted ; Israel utterly uprooted, cast away.

The first four visions (including that of ch. viii. 1.) are arranged in pairs ; compare the sentence prefixed to each. Then the first two are linked together by the intercession of Amos, and "the repentance" of the Lord (ch. vii. 2, 3, 5, 6.) ; the two next by two other identical sentences (chs. vii. 8 ; viii. 2.) ; as to the fifth, see on ch. ix. In this chapter Amos is brought before us in the likeness of Moses, in whose very words as well as spirit, he intercedes for "Jacob ;" so again he recalls the shepherd David (Ps. lxxviii. 71.) and the man of God out of Judah (1 Kings xiii. 1.). Further, his visions expressly continue those of his immediate predecessor, "Elisha" (see on ver. 1.) ; in his persecution by Amaziah he is the follower, of course, of all his brethren, more or less ; he anticipates remarkably the like story in the case of Jeremiah. Jeremiah's vision (ch. xxiv. 1—10.) may be compared with one of his. The references to the Pentateuch are very direct.

ning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and, lo, *it was* the latter growth after the king's mowings.

2 And it came to pass, *that* when they had made an end of eating the grass of the land, then I said, O Lord GOD, forgive, I beseech thee: ^a ² by whom shall Jacob arise? for he *is* small.

3 ^b The LORD repented for this: It shall not be, saith the LORD.

4 ¶ Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me: and, behold, the Lord GOD called to contend by fire, and it devoured the great deep, and did eat up a part.

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^a Isai. 51. 19.
ver. 5.

² Or, *who*
of (or, for.)
Jacob shall
stand?

^b Deut. 32. 36.
ver. 6.
Jonah 3. 10.
Jam. 5. 16.

1—9. Here follow, in close connection with chapter vi. 14 (Intro. to ch.) three (out of the five) visions of Judgment. Some points seem reasonably clear in the first (vv. 1—3.). It is a vision of a judgment of locusts. Compare the formula here: "Thus hath the Lord God shewed to me," first with Elisha's in a similar case (2 Kings viii. 10, 13.); then with that in ch. iii. 11, &c. ("behold" points the same way, ch. vi. 11, 14.). Next in "grasshoppers" a peculiar word is used, which alliterates with "nation" (ch. vi. 14.) and is applied to "Assyrian" captains, Nahum iii. 17, is the only other instance; further, we have, in Nahum i. 12, "mowing down" of the destruction of enemies. Two facts are put forward prominently. "Behold grasshoppers, formed by the Lord;" "behold the latter after-growth." Israel was wonderfully revived; "there was a fresh springing up of luxuriant verdure;" and there was, suddenly, everywhere a swarm of locusts (comp. ch. iv. 9.), "framed" by Him, Who "raised up" a nation; these surely, as in Joel, were types of the same "northern" army. There are also, at least, two difficulties. First, what are "the mowings of the king?" are they, in the figure, "a royalty" claimed by the king of Israel of which, however, there is no record? in the application, are they the description of the severe ravages of the Syrian kings in Israel, Hazael and his son Ben-hadad? (see 2 Kings ix. 14, 15; x. 32, 33; xii. 17; xiii. 3, 7, 22, and especially viii. 12.) Secondly, is Pul's invasion to be described, as here, by "the grasshoppers eating up?" &c. The answer is, first, it is in one place not distinguished in spirit from that of Tiglath's (1 Chron. v. 26; and 2 Kings xv. 19, 29.), where "came" against the land, is said of each; next, a very heavy tribute was paid to him (2 Kings xv. 19.) which we may estimate by comparing that exacted of Judah by Pharaoh-Nechoh (ib. xxiii. 33.). We may compare, perhaps, as to the imagery (Rev. viii. 7.). "The first angel sounded . . . and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass" (see LXX. here) was burnt." Amos intercedes for Israel, almost in the exact words of Moses (Num. xiv. 19; also Exod. xxxiv. 9.). "He is small," he pleads, that is now, after this desolation. The answer is, "I will not do My whole work now." Compare the issue of Pul's invasion (2 Kings xv. 19, 20.).

4. There comes now a second judgment: God "calls" His people to contend with Him by fire. In the sense perhaps of Ps. l. 3, 4.

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c ver. 2, 3.

5 Then said I, O Lord GOD, cease, I beseech thee:
c by whom shall Jacob arise? for he *is* small.

6 The LORD repented for this: This also shall
not be, saith the Lord GOD.

7 ¶ Thus he shewed me: and, behold, the Lord
stood upon a wall *made* by a plumbline, with a
plumbline in his hand.

8 And the LORD said unto me, Amos, what seest

“Our God shall come . . . and a fire shall devour before Him . . . He shall ‘call’ to the heavens from above, and to the earth, ‘to’ judge His people.” It is a more terrible visitation, such as that of Tiglath-pileser’s invasion. “It devours the very deep,” i.e. perhaps the surging, confused, “roaring” multitude of the nations. Compare Isa. xvii. 12: “Woe to the ‘multitude’ of many people, which make a ‘noise, like the ‘noise’ (cognate words to ‘deep’) of the seas;” and Rev. xvii. 15. “And did eat up also ‘the portion,’ i.e. perhaps ‘Israel.’” If this vision is rightly interpreted thus, we know Tiglath-pileser’s invasion swallowed up at least one kingdom, Syria (2 Kings xvi. 7.); it may have overthrown others; it certainly also devoured a large part of Israel, not a heaving mass, like “the nations,” but the chosen “portion” “of the Lord” (as LXX. here add). Compare Deut. xxxii. 9: “The Lord’s ‘portion’ is His people; *Jacob* is the lot of His ‘inheritance’ (comp. Jer. xii. 10, especially). Dr. Pusey interprets it of the “definite portion” of Israel, fore-appointed by God to desolation (see 2 Kings xv. 29.). Observe this worse calamity, marked by “fire,” follows that of “the grasshoppers,” as “the burning” (ch. iv. 11.) succeeds to the “palmer worm” (ib. 9.); so in Joel we have the same order; “the locusts” (ch. i. 4.); “the fire devouring” (ib. 19.); “the rivers dried up” (ib. 20.). We may here compare Rev. viii. 8 (also ch. xvi. 3.). “The second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain, burning with ‘fire’ was cast into ‘the sea;’” (ib. 9.): “and the third part of the creatures . . . in the sea died.” So Jeremiah li. 25. compares Babylon, “which destroyest all the earth, to a mountain of ‘burning.’”

5—6. Amos again intercedes; and here we have the account of that wonderful ordering of events, so improbable in itself, “that the king of Assyria” should “take Damascus,” “slay Rezin” (2 Kings xvi. 9.), and yet spare his ally, Pekah and “Samaria” (vv. 7—9.). The final judgment follows, typifying, it would seem, the taking of Samaria, and the complete captivity by Shalmaneser. The Lord is manifested in the act of doom. He had made “the wall” of His building upright, “given His people an “undeviating rule of right;” now, “by the same eternal rule, He will “destroy.” The figure is applied to both acts (see references A.V.). “By “that law, that grace, which we have received, by the same we are “judged” (comp. St. John xii. 48.). All is solemn, regular, strict, to the exactest measure. The Lord also makes Amos partner of His secret counsel (ch. iii. 7.), and, if we may so speak, now, at the last, goes against His own nature. He Whose very name is “He that passeth by transgressions” (Micah vii. 18.), will “pass by no more.” Compare with ver. 9 especially Leviticus xxvi. 22, 25, 30, 31.

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thou? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the Lord, Behold, ^d I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: ^e I will not again pass by them any more:

9 ^f and the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and ^g I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.

10 ¶ Then Amaziah ^h the priest of Beth-el sent to ⁱ Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words.

11 For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land.

12 Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there:

13 but ^k prophesy not again any more at Beth-el: ^l for it is the king's ² chapel, and it is the ³ king's court.

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^d See 2 Kings 21. 13.

Isai. 28. 17.

& 34. 11.

Lam. 2. 8.

^e ch. 8. 2.

Mic. 7. 18.

^f Beer-sheba,

Gen. 26. 23.

& 46. 1.

ch. 5. 5.

& 8. 14.

^g Fulfilled,

2 Kin. 15. 10.

^h 1 Kin. 12. 32.

ⁱ 2 Kin. 14. 23.

^k ch. 2. 12

^l 1 Kin. 12. 32.

& 13. 1.

² Or,
sanctuary.

³ Heb.

house of the
kingdom.

10—11. The doom has been pronounced, but there is not a thought of repentance. The false priest rises up at Bethel—thither, to the centre of the state-idolatry, the faithful prophet had come—and first he tries to exasperate king Jeroboam against him. “Here is one conspiring against thee;” treason, “conspiracy” had been a perpetual plague-spot of the separated kingdom¹; here is one “exceedingly troubling” (Acts xvi. 20.) our country (ib. xvii. 6.). This charge may have had its ground, and Amos may not always have warned in vain; but Amaziah adds another and a false one; this traitor has said, “Thou, O King, shalt die by the sword” (see ver. 9, last clause); “thy Israel shall be led away captive.” The king, it seems, pays no heed to the accuser. Perhaps he is indifferent, perhaps he knows the accusation is false, or calling to mind Jonah (2 Kings xiv. 25.), and the great Elisha of his father’s days (ib. xiii. 14.), he has, it may be, an awe of a prophet of the Lord.

12, 13. Amaziah tries next to damage Amos, it may be, before the people. Away, “thou seer,” thou and thy visions out of thine own head; thou art “from Judah,” alien, enemy, to us; and thou art only a prophet “for hire,” a diviner “for money” (Micah iii. 11.); “get thy

¹ So, Baasha, “conspired” (1 Kings xv. 27.); Zimri (ib. xvi. 9, 16.); Jehu (2 Kings x. 9.); so, in cases, soon to arise, Shallum (ib. xv. 10.); Pekah (ib. 25.), Hoshea (ib. 30.), it is same word, as here, throughout.

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14 Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I ^ma prophet's son; ⁿbut I was an herdman, and a gatherer of ²sycamore fruit:

15 and the LORD took me ³as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.

16 Now therefore hear thou the word of the LORD: Thou sayest, Prophesy not against Israel, and ^odrop not thy word against the house of Isaac.

17 ^pTherefore thus saith the LORD; ^qThy wife shall be an harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be divided by line; and thou shalt die in a polluted land: and Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his land.

^m1 Kin. 20. 35.
² Kin. 2. 5.
& 4. 33.
& 6. 1.
ⁿ ch. 1. 1.
Zech. 13. 5.
² Or,
wild figs.
³ Heb. from
behind.
^o Ezek. 21. 2.
Mic. 2. 6.
^p See Jer. 23.
12. & 29. 21,
25, 31, 32.
^q Isai. 13. 16.
Lam. 5. 11.
Hos. 4. 13.
Zech. 14. 2.

“bread for thy work, among thine own people,” and, then, with the blasphemy of one hardened in falsehood,—“but at Bethel” (it is the first word for emphasis), “dare not to prophesy,”—and why? not because it is “House of God,” not because it is place where the Lord made Himself known; “for it is sanctuary of the king,” it is “the house of our kingdom, our court.” So strikingly, he who charges the true prophet, that he is sycophant, proclaims himself, “my religion is the State religion, “my lord is the King.”

14—17. Amos replies; before his persecutor, before it may be, a multitude of adversaries, priests and people, he speaks boldly, calmly, humbly. “No prophet I,” not such my office, not such my class; I am only a poor herdman, only a dresser of the poor man’s fruit. My fare was the humblest, it is so now. But “the Lord took me from my “flocks;” I am His instrument. You forbid me to prophesy; the Lord bids me. “Away,” thou sayest, thou that art ever “dropping” woe upon Israel. Thou thyself shalt feel “the Lord’s word” is true, in thy own home, in its shame in its desolation. Note (1) here “land,” repeated thrice, like a knell; and contrast the same word (ch. ix. 15.); (2) how here, in the last clause (ver. 17.), Amos solemnly repeats and confirms the truth of Amaziah’s report of his words (ver. 11.). Compare the contest of Jeremiah with Hananiah (Jer. xxviii.); with Pashur (ib. xx. 3, 6.); and the cases of Ahab and Zedekiah (ib. xxix. 21.), and Shemaiah (ib. 31, 32.). Note, too, how Amaziah, Hananiah, Zedekiah, and other false prophets and priests bear names, which we should rather expect in the true; “whom the Lord strengthens,” “whom the Lord favours,” “the righteousness of the Lord.” Is it a sign of him who is transfigured as an angel of light, and whose ministers are . . . as ministers of righteousness? Is the word of the faithful witness of the Lord, of necessity, to the multitude of men, that of one who “lays a burden” upon them, “Amos;” while “they who prophesy smooth things,” are “strong,” “in favour,” seem, for the time, teachers of truth, upholders of law and of right?

1 *By a basket of summer fruit is shewed the propinquity of Israel's end.*
4 *Oppression is reproved. 11 A famine of the word threatened.*

THUS hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me: and
behold a basket of summer fruit.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Fourth Vision, "the end of bitterness" for Israel.

INTRODUCTION.

A fourth vision follows, "the basket of summer fruit." (It pairs, clearly, with the third; see *Introd.* to ch. vii.) The judgment, now, is not only ready prepared from the Lord, as in ch. vii. 8, but "the harvest is ripe" in the land itself. In the former vision, "the wasting" of that destroying "sword" was foretold (ch. vii. 9); here there is "the howling" of the survivors over the mass of "corpses everywhere cast forth" (vv. 1—3.).

"Hear ye."—The Prophet then for the fourth and last time bursts forth; just as "the transgressions of Israel are three, yea, four" (ch. ii. 6.), so also this form of the judgment is "thrice, and a fourth time" repeated: "ye who swallow up the needy," ye who would (against God's solemn word and will, Deut. xv. 11.) "make the poor of the earth to cease," who, instead of "open hand" (ib.) to thy brother, "open forth" wheat in "deceitful measures," and "sell him the very refuse;" "hear ye this word" of doom (vv. 4—6.).

"The Lord hath sworn, never will I forget their works." "Shall not the earth quake for this? shall there not come on it Egyptian plagues" (ver. 8.), and worse, "overwhelming flood," "noontide darkness" that may be felt, "universal mourning" over death (not only of "first-born") but "as of only son," hopeless, helpless, "most bitter?" (vv. 7—10.)

But "lo" ("that day" of Israel's doom as a nation and kingdom is only type and precursor of) "the days" that "are coming" afterwards; famine I sent you before (ch. iv. 6—8.); "ye wandered" before, "but only from one of your cities to another" (ib. 8.), then ye shall "hunger for the word of the Lord," and it shall be in vain. "In that day," lo! your "beauty," it has "faded:" your "strength," it has become "weakness;" that which ye looked to for "life" it shall be your death for ever. And those "young men" might have been "Nazarites" to their Lord (ch. ii. 11.), those "virgins" His delight! (vv. 11—14. Ps. xlv. 11, 14.)

The chapter is a whole. The vision, in three verses, corresponding to the three of its parallel (ch. vii. 7—9.), is here, with that one, interpreted. First the reasons of the judgment are given (vv. 4—6.); their two crowning sins, "oppression of the poor," and defiant "idolatry" before God; the last, the root of all the rest (vv. 4—6, 14.). Then its consequences "in the coming days" to, apparently, the whole family (ch. iii. 1.) brought up from Egypt (vv. 7—13.). Only in this chapter (save ii. 16, ix. 11.), we have (and thrice, vv. 3, 9, 13.) the great word so

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- 2 And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said the LORD unto me, ^aThe end is come upon my people of Israel; ^bI will not again pass by them any more.
- 3 And ^cthe songs of the temple ² shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord GOD: *there shall be many dead bodies in every place; ^dthey shall cast them forth ³with silence.*

^a Ezek. 7. 2.

^b ch. 7. 8.

^c ch. 5. 23.

² Heb.
shall howl.

^d ch. 6. 9, 10.

³ Heb.
be silent.

constant in Isaiah "In that day," i. e. of the Lord; thrice over, also, we have "the solemn saying it is of the Lord God" (vv. 3, 9, 11.).

See Introduction to ch. iv. for the close correspondence between this chapter, vv. 4—14, and chs. iv. 1—v. 2. Many ancient and modern interpreters have considered that there is here a prophecy of the last terrible sin of Israel. Who is "the needy one" (sing., vv. 4, 6.), "swallowed up" (Ps. lvii. 3.) by the rich and mighty, but Christ our Lord? (May we not add, He is foreshadowed as the true Joseph, in contrast to those who "sell corn" so cruelly, and who "buy" their brethren, as did not he even the Egyptians?) "That earthquake and noontide darkness" had its counterpart at the Crucifixion; that day of mourning instead of festival, in the terrors and misgivings of "that great Sabbath day" (St. John xix. 31.). Surely "the mourning" then, of those who did mourn, was as for "the only son," and such, we know, shall be hereafter the mourning of all (Zech. xii. 10.).

Besides references, as before, to the Pentateuch, we have some striking agreements with Hosea; apparently a direct imitation by Ezekiel (ch. vii.); and a quotation of part of ver. 10 in the book of Tobit, ii. 6.

1—3. And now once more Amos resumes, exactly at the point where he was interrupted. The reference to the last chapter (vv. 7, 8.), is close. "The fruit was the latest harvest in Palestine. When it was gathered, 'the circle of husbandry was come to its close.'" So the harvest of Israel was come now. "What could have been done more in My vineyard, 'that I have not done in it?'" In the last vision too, "the Lord" is described "standing" in judgment, ready to deal out the doom; in this the people are ready, in spite of themselves, for that "cutting down;" the ripe harvest seems to invite the sickle (comp. Joel iii. 12—14.). And there follows another of the picture scenes of Amos, flashed upon our eyes rapidly, but very vividly. "The idol temple," "perhaps the last 'place of refuge,' is thronged from end to end. But there are "howlings" there for joyous songs. "Corpses" are lying everywhere. "Everywhere one casts forth" his dead, and there is not even, "Ah, my 'brother!'" We seem between "the bowling," the first word at the beginning, and the "hush" at the end, to have here the whole course of that agony of despair. In that wild lament "they cry not" to God (Hos. vii. 14; comp. Isa. xiii. 6.); there is no hope, no relief, none "to stand" "between the dead and the dying;" no rites, or obsequies; no prayer, no sign; at the last, terrible silence. Vv. 1, 2 point to ch. vii. 7, 8; this verse (3.) illustrates ver. 9. there. Comp. Jer. xxii. 18, 19, especially.

2. "The end," as "of death," or "destruction." Gen. vi. 13: "The 'end' of all flesh is come before Me;" Ezek. vii. 2: "Thus saith the

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4 ¶ Hear this, O ye that ^eswallow up the needy, Before
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even to make the poor of the land to fail,

5 saying, When will the ²new moon be gone, that ^e Ps. 14. 4.
² Or, month.
^f Neh. 13. 15.
16.
we may sell corn? and ^fthe sabbath, that we may
³set forth wheat, ^gmaking the ephah small, and the
shekel great, and ⁴falsifying the balances by deceit?

6 That we may buy the poor for ^hsilver, and the
needy for a pair of shoes; *yea*, and sell the refuse
of the wheat? ³ Heb. open.
^g Mic. 6. 10. 11.
⁴ Heb. per-
verting the
balances of
deceit.
Hos. 12. 7.
^h ch. 2. 6.
ⁱ ch. 6. 8.
^k Hos. 8. 13.
& 9. 9.

7 The LORD hath sworn by ⁱthe excellency of
Jacob, Surely ^kI will never forget any of their
works.

“Lord . . . unto the land of Israel, an ‘end,’ ‘the end’ (exactly) ‘is
“‘come’ (exactly) upon the four corners of the land.” “Now is ‘the
“‘end’ upon thee, and I will send Mine anger upon thee” (ib. 3;
comp. vv. 5, 6.). There is here an emphatic coincidence of sound and
sense, between “summer-fruit” (Kaits), and “end” (Kets), substantives
from two closely cognate words, which mean “cutting,” “cutting off,” as
we might say—“a basket of ripe-cut fruit;”—“The cutting off is come
“upon My people.” We have a similar relation between “almond tree”
and “hasten” (Jer. i. 11, 12.).

4—6. Still Amos makes his appeal to the conscience of the rich,
wanton oppressors of the poor; but, as when he addresses the idolaters
(below ver. 14.),—they were no doubt the same persons,—it is, we may
suppose, rather to justify God’s coming vengeance, than any longer to
hold out hope of repentance. Three such warnings have gone before,
and this is the fourth. “Hear, ye rich ones; well may ye howl in that
“day” (comp. St. James v. 1, 4, 5.), for do ye not “pant for the
“needy” as your prey? “Make a very sabbath” of the land, but now by
dispossessing the poor, while ye add field to field? (Isa. v. 8. Micah ii. 2.)
“Hear, I say, ye to whom Sabbath, and new moon, is only irksome
“restraint; ye keep them, forsooth, and all the while plan your frauds,
“paring down the quantity ye sell, obtaining more silver in return by
“false weights;” and then, after ye have “taken away the poor man’s
“heritage” (Micah ii. 2.) “buy ye not these weak, impoverished ones
“themselves, for the least, the hardest price? sell ye not to the furnishing
“the very refuse of the wheat?” Observe, in this section, how it begins,
and ends with the “needy one,” and “sell,” for emphasis. Again, how by
mention of “sabbath” and “new moon,” not only their shameless hypo-
crisy and profaneness, but their regular, systematic oppression is vividly
exhibited. Lev. xxv. 35: “If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in
“decay with thee, thou shalt relieve him.” . . . Ib. 37: “Thou shalt not
“give him thy money (“silver”) upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals
“for increase.” Deut. xv. 7: “If there be among you ‘a poor man’ of
“one of thy brethren . . . thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thine
“hand from thy ‘poor’ brother;” Ib. 8: “but thou shalt ‘open’ thine
“hand wide unto him.”

7—10. Their punishment follows. Have not those “cries entered into
“the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth?” (St. James v. 4.) He Who is the

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¹ Hos. 4. 3.

^m ch. 9. 5.

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ⁿ Job 5. 14.
Isai. 13. 10.
& 59. 9, 10.
Jer. 15. 9.
Micah 3. 6.

^o Isai. 15. 2, 3.
Jer. 48. 37.
Ezek. 7. 18.
& 27. 31.
^p Jer. 6. 26.
Zech. 12. 10.

^q I Sam. 3. 1.
Ps. 74. 9.
Ezek. 7. 26.

^r Hos. 4. 15.
^s Deut. 9. 21.

² Heb. way:
See Acts 9. 2
& 18. 25.
& 19. 9, 23.
& 24. 14.

^t ch. 5. 5.

8 ¹ Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, ^m as *by* the flood of Egypt.

9 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, ⁿ that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day:

10 and I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; ^o and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; ^p and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day.

11 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but ^q of hearing the words of the LORD:

12 and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find *it*.

13 In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst.

14 They that ^r swear by ^s the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The ² manner ^t of Beer-sheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again.

“Excellency of Jacob” forgetteth not the poor (Ps. ix. 11; lxxii. 12—14.). He who is all Holy, all Just, “beholdeth mischief and spite to requite “it with His hand” (ib. x. 14.). Yea, He hath said, “all their doings “are before My Face” (Hos. vii. 2.). “Shall not the earth quake” for their oppression? shall there not be one universal wail? (Hos. iv. 3, 4. Amos v. 16, 17.). “As that river of Egypt rises and sinks, whirls to and “fro and overwhelms, shall not the earth heave, as overburdened with “sin and wrong, and swallow up all?” Shall not “darkness” (as that of Egypt) fall upon you “in that day” when I withdraw from you “the “sun” in all its noontide glory, suddenly (see the contrast, Isa. lviii. 10.), when it is only “mourning” everywhere, a most bitter Egyptian mourning. “Flood” here, and ch. ix. 5, is the constant word for “the river” of Egypt.

11—14. But there is yet sorer judgment to come. They who would not “hear Me,” when I called (ch. iii. 1, etc.), how shall they long and long, “run to and fro” “to seek my word;” and all to no purpose. St. Luke xvii. 22: “The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days “of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.” Then the “True Bread” shall be lost to them; and where is the “Fountain of Living Waters” which they refused before? (Jer. ii. 13.). What unavailing “wander-

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1 *The certainty of the desolation.* 11 *The restoring of the tabernacle of David.*

I SAW the Lord standing upon the altar : and he ² Or. said, Smite the ² lintel of the door, that the posts ^{chapter, or, kuop.}

“ing from that sea” of saltness (Deut. iii. 17.) to the “sea of the Philistines” (Exod. xxiii. 31.); from “dark” North, to East (here “sun-rising”), which to them has no light. Yea, because they are without Him, “Who giveth power to the faint,” even the young men shall be weary, they shall fail (Isa. xl. 29, 30.); a cloud shall gather, too, over those, whose “Beauty” might have been “desired by their Lord” (Ps. xlv. 11.). Yes, and all who, instead of swearing by the “Name of the Lord” (Deut. vi. 13; x. 20.) “swear” blasphemously “by the life” of that which is “no God” (ib. xxxii. 17.), they shall fall, to rise no more for ever. So the dirge of ch. v. 2. is emphatically repeated. Israel perished, not by a gradual decay, but suddenly in the midst of its strength and pride. The language in vv. 9, 10 (first clause) was noticed by the earliest Fathers, as well as by St. Jerome, for its remarkable correspondence with the miracle at our Lord’s Passion (see *Introd.* to chapter). The great passage of Zechariah (ch. xii. 10.) still more strikingly points this to the Lord Christ, and connects this history of Israel with the first Advent and the second (St. John xix. 37. Rev. i. 7.), so linking naturally ver. 10 with those that follow.

It is a picture, vivid, as always in Amos, first of the lost tribes. Who knows in how many hearts of outcast Israel there is hunger and thirst? “We wait for light, but behold darkness.” But it is true of all of Israel who have not found Christ, and who abide in their unbelief (so *St. Jerome*, here). “For the sins of her prophets, the iniquities of her priests, that have shed the blood of the just (plur.) in the midst of her, ‘they have wandered’ (exactly as here) as blind men ‘in the streets . . . when ‘they wandered,’ they said among the heathen, ‘they shall no more sojourn (there)’” (Lam. iv. 13—15; see ff. vv.). “Famine” had been before one of their visitations, but it had not brought them to repentance (ch. iv. 6—8.). “Famine” was with Israel no trivial image of distress; it may be suggested here, in keeping with what has gone before (vv. 5, 6.), by that great seven years’ “famine” of Egypt (Gen. xli. 27, 36.); but in this there should be no Joseph to provide for his people. They had had more recent instance of famine and of its cause in Ahab’s time for three years (1 Kings xviii. 2.); again in Jehoram’s, twice, and the last, for seven years (2 Kings vi. 25; viii. 1.); but in this there should be no Elijah, no Elisha to help (ib.). It should be far different, far more hopeless. The drought should be,—of the dew of grace; the thirst,—of the Living God (Deut. xxxii. 2. Hosea xiv. 5.). Has not the woe a wider reach? “To wander from sea to sea,” “to run to and fro” (our word exactly, Dan. xii. 4.); “to increase knowledge” (ib.), and withal only “sorrow,” is it not the portion of those who know not the Lord, still more of those who have rejected Him? On the contrary, it is the promise to the Church, “though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction . . . thine eyes shall see thy teachers” (Isa. xxx. 20.).

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² Or, *wound*
them.

^a Ps. 68. 21.
Hab. 3. 13.

may shake: and ² ^a cut them in the head, all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword: ^b he that fleeth of them shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered.

^b ch. 2. 14.

CHAPTER IX.

The "sinful kingdom destroyed;" "the fallen tabernacle raised up anew and for ever."

INTRODUCTION.

And now the final overthrow follows. "The Lord had been standing over the wall" of the city "with plumbline" (ch. vii. 7.), now He "is standing over the very altar," the seat and centre of their sin, and He says, as to the destroying angel, "Smite." The people were ripe for destruction (ch. viii. 1.); now they are gathered in their temple for the slaughter; and there is the "earthquake" (comp. ch. i. 1.), and they are overwhelmed all. Whither shall any of their "fugitives flee" from My wrath? In "highest heaven," "in deepest hell," "in top of Carmel," "bottom of the sea;" in their very captivity, where they thought the worst was past, "the sword of the avenger is there;" "My Word of power there;" "My Eye there, watching them, for evil, not for good" (vv. 1—4.).

And I, am I not the most mighty "Lord" (vv. 1, 8.) "God" (vv. 5, 8.) "of hosts," Who needs only "touch the earth and it melts away," and "then all, mourn;" am I not He Who is the "Builder of the Heavens," the "Founder of them upon the earth," the "Lord of the sea" and that mighty "river of Egypt," remembrancer sure of My plagues? And ye, what are "ye to me?" What more now than other peoples, "Syrians, Philistines," who have perished like yourselves? (ch. i. 3—5; 6—8.), nay, are not "ye, children of Israel, become children of Cush?" (vv. 5—7.) So now the "eyes of the Lord God" are against this "sinful kingdom" (comp. ver. 4 above), (as I said of old), "to destroy it," and the house of Jacob, of Israel, spared only for sifting trial, shall be "tossed to and fro" "in all nations" as very chaff, while those sinners, now so defiant, shall be slain with the sword, yet not one pure "grain" perish (vv. 8—10.).

And what of that remnant, that "holy seed?" "In that day that is coming, I will raise up the cottage" in that ruined "Vineyard" (Isa. i. 8.), for it is "David's," and "wall up those breaches" (ib. v. 5.); yes, "raise it up, as in the days of old." "Edom shall be (was it not My Word of promise?) a possession for My Israel," yea "all the nations" (comp. ver. 9.), for "My Name is called upon them all." Yea, greater blessings than these; "in that turning of the captivity of My people," there shall be "sowing" ever, "reaping" ever, at once and together (Ps. cxxvi. 4—6.). All those former judgments shall pass away (chs. iv. 9; v. 11.), "they shall dwell in safety," "they shall drink the wine," "eat the fruit of the gardens"—as of paradise restored to them—for they are "the planting of the Lord" (Isa. lx. 21.), sure, and deep-rooted, and their "land" now is My fresh "gift to them," and it is their own "for ever" (vv. 11—15.).

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2 ^c Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; ^d though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down:

3 and though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom

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^c Ps. 139. 8,
&c.

^d Job 20. 6.
Jer. 51. 53.
Obad. 4.

The chapter falls naturally into two parts, vv. 1—10; 11—15, according to its subject (see title above). Observe (1) how with wonderful, divine art, Amos here links the end with the beginning, and this last chapter with every one that has preceded. He spoke (ch. i. 1.) of a coming "earthquake;" lo, it has come" (ch. ix. 1.). He foretold the overthrow of "Syria, Philistia, Edom; 'sinful' Israel has become as they" (vv. 7, 8.); "Edom pursued his brother with the sword" (ch. i. 11.), his "remnant" by a holy vengeance shall be "possession of (the true) "Israel" for ever; by a captivity to the "name" and service "of God" (Ps. cxlix. 7, 8.). Yea the true "David" shall "smite" "all nations;" Philistia, Syria, Edom, "all shall become His servants and bring Him "gifts," even themselves (comp. 2 Sam. viii. 1—6, 14.). Some of the connections with the other chapters from ii. to viii. are noted below, as they occur.

Observe (2) as to the form of the chapter, Amos constantly reiterates significant words thrice; in the first part, we hear thrice of the avenging "sword," thrice of that final "destruction" by a threefold "command" from the Voice of the "Sovereign Lord," Who thrice is mentioned. Threefold too is the call to see the great wonder ("behold"), the "destruction" of Israel as a people and kingdom; its "wandering in all "nations;" its restoration from its "captivity;" even as thrice we hear of the Lord God as "building" and His people "building" with Him (comp. 1 Cor. iii. 9, 10.).

Observe (3) how this destruction of Israel, points almost directly to the irremediable overthrow of all impenitent "sinners" (vv. 1—4, 10; comp. Hosea x. 8.), its restoration to the heavenly rest, and perpetual security of the redeemed.

(4) The connections, as before with the Law, especially the book of Deuteronomy, are remarkable; with Joel and Obadiah, especially as to the relations of Israel and Edom, they are verbally exact; while Isaiah seems again and again to refer to this, his immediate predecessor; but his reference shows the gradual growth of prophecy: Amos mentions the "raising up of the fallen cottage;" Isaiah tells us expressly who shall "do" it (ver. 12.). "It is a light thing that thou shouldst be My "servant 'to raise up' the tribes of Jacob;" I will give thee also for a light to "the Gentiles," "to establish" ("raise up") the earth, to cause to inherit "the desolate heritages" (ch. xlix. 6, 8.). Finally, the words of Amos here (vv. 11, 12.) are the assurance of the peaceful union in one body of Jew and Gentile (Acts xv. 15 ff.), the end of the first great sifting controversy of the Church of Christ, the pledge of the truth of prophecy, and of every word of God; for "known unto God are all "His works from the beginning of the world" (ib. 18.).

1—6. Amos has seen the instruments of the Lord's wrath ready (ch. vii. 7, 8.). Now he sees Him, the Avenger Himself, "com-

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of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them :

^e Lev. 26. 33.
Deut. 28. 65.
Ezek. 5. 12.
^f Lev. 17. 10.
Jer. 44. 11.

4 and though they go into captivity before their enemies, ^e thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them : and ^f I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good.

^g Mic. 1. 4.
^h ch. 8. 8.

5 And the Lord GOD of hosts *is* he that toucheth the land, and it shall ^g melt, ^h and all that dwell therein shall mourn : and it shall rise up wholly like a flood ; and shall be drowned, as *by* the flood of Egypt.

² Or,
spheres.
³ Heb.
ascensions.
ⁱ Ps. 104. 3, 13.
⁴ Or, bundle.
^k ch. 5. 8.
ch. 4. 13.

6 *It is* he that buildeth his ^{2 3 i} stories in the heaven, and hath founded his ⁴ troop in the earth ; he that ^k calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth : ¹ The LORD *is* his name.

“manding” the last blow to fall. There is an utter overthrow. “Head” is cut off (ch. vi. 7.) ; “the last,” where shall “they flee?” Try they, those doomed ones, to hide them in deepest pit? “Hell is “naked before Him, and destruction hath no covering” (Job xxvi. 6.) ; think they, “as rebel angels” (Isa. xiv. 13, 14.), “to climb up to heaven?” I abase their impotent pride in a moment. Canst thou avoid thy God? “High is He as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what “caust thou know?” (Job xi. 7, 8.) “Thy pomp, is it not brought “down to the grave” (“Sheol” as here)? the noise of thy “viols” (Isa. xiv. 11. Amos v. 23; comp. also Isa. xxviii. 15, 18.). Vain the “lurking places” (1 Sam. xxiii. 23.) of lofty Carmel, against My “sifting search;” vain that deepest sea below : the serpent gives them, at My “command,” the bite of death. Yea, that captive remnant has not felt the last, or the worst. “My sword” is captains for them still. “My “eye” follows them, “for evil,” for judgment. And who am I? “the Lord “God of hosts!” He Who destroyeth, as well as “buildeth” “Earth” and “Sea” and “Heaven :” signs of My glory, ministers of My judgment. Note, in the beginning of the history of the kingdom of Israel, “Jeroboam “was standing by the altar of Bethel, to burn incense, and then it “was foretold ‘the altar’ should be rent” (1 Kings xiii. 1, 3.). “In “this day of the Lord’s anger none escaped” (exactly as ver. 1.) “nor “remained” (Lam. ii. 22.). To “Carmel” Elijah had gathered all Israel, and there “by the brook Kishon had slain the prophets of Baal” (1 Kings xviii.). “Carmel” was already a warning of death.

Light and darkness, are they not creatures of God? man’s craft, can it deceive God? “The excellency of Carmel” (Isa. xxxv. 2.) ; all earthly beauty and glory can it be “a hiding place from the wind? a covert “from the tempest?” (ib. xxxii. 2.) Let man go ever so deep, multiply all known contrivances, invent fresh, to make himself strong ; the Lord is before him, beyond him, above him.

6. “stories.” The word used (Exod. xx. 26.) for “steps,” as to an “altar ;” (1 Kings x. 19.) “of a throne,” and so commonly, perhaps here

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7 Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the LORD. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the ^mPhilistines from ⁿCaphtor, and the Syrians from ^oKir? Before
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8 Behold, ^pthe eyes of the Lord God *are* upon the sinful kingdom, and I ^qwill destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD.

9 For, lo, I will command, and I will ²sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as *corn* is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least ³grain fall upon the earth.

10 All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, ^rwhich say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.

^m Jer. 47. 4.
ⁿ Deut. 2. 23.
Jer. 47. 4.
^o ch. 1. 5.
^p ver. 4.
^q Jer. 30. 11.
& 31. 35, 36.
Obad. 16, 17.

² Heb. *cause to move.*

³ Heb. *stone.*

^r ch. 6. 3.

“upper chambers,” as in a very similar word (Ps. civ. 3, 13.) “Troop:” besides only (Exod. xii. 22.) “a bunch” of hyssop; (2 Sam. ii. 25.) “troop” of men; (Isa. lviii. 6.) “the bundles,” E. M., “of the yoke,” here, perhaps, “vault;” it is said to mean “a compacted body.”

7—10. And you,—should I spare you? Say ye, ye are “Israel,” “My children” (Hosea viii. 2); “What are ye to Me?” (Joel iii. 4); are ye not rather “children of Cush?” far off from My land; how much farther from My grace? Can ye any more than they “change the skin?” Turn yourselves to “good, who have trained yourselves to evil” (Jer. xiii. 23.). Say ye, “the Lord brought us up out of Egypt?” (chs. ii. 10; iii. 1.); what have ye made of that great mercy? ye have made it differ nothing from movings to and fro of the nations, as I stirred them; ye are even as Philistines, your enemies; like Syrians, who came from Kir, (and have oppressed you, and who to Kir go back again, captives, ch. i. 5.). And then the sentence of doom is resumed (ver. 8.), in the very words used above (ver. 4.), only with greater severity, in reference to the ingratitude just described (ver. 7.), yet with a promise to individuals (ver. 9.), preparing the way for the great promise to the church (vv. 11—15.). “Behold the eyes of the Lord God” (so ver. 5 also) are “against” this “sinful kingdom; utterly to destroy it;” “behold,” I declare yet once again My sovereign will; “wanderers” shall the house of Israel be indeed; “from sea to sea, from north to east” (ch. viii. 12.). Amongst all the nations (whom they despise, who despise them), tossed hither and thither, in persecutions, in weary journeyings through the wilderness of the world, age after age; sifted by a thousand trials, yet not one pure grain lost. Only, as certainly “by the sword shall these sinners die, who are saying now” (exactly as ch. vi. 13.), “the evil shall not touch us.”

Verse 9 is an epitome of the wonderful history of Israel from the days of Amos to our own. Everywhere sifted, nowhere lost; the bush burning, not consumed. The words apply universally also. “Sifted” are all the souls of the saved, “sifted as wheat” (St. Luke xxii. 31.) by Satan

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^s Acts 15, 16,
17.

² Heb. *hedge,*
or, *wall.*

^t Obad. 19.

^u Num. 24. 18.

³ Heb.

upon whom
my name
is called.

^x Lev. 26. 5.

11 ¶^s In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and ² close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old :

12 ^t that they may possess the remnant of ^u Edom, and of all the heathen, ³ which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.

13 Behold, ^x the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the

sometimes, God permitting it; by chastening of God, continually, that all that is impure may be winnowed away. But what of the "sinners of "My people;" saying on and on, all their lives through: If there be a judgment, who knows? you talk of evil to come, we fear it not.

11, 12. And now follows the great prophecy of the future Restoration, the first time that Amos has uttered a word of blessing. Not only that profane idol temple of Jeroboam shall fall, and for ever; but ruin shall be upon all "My vineyard" . . . "I will break down the wall thereof . . . I will "lay it waste" (Isa. v. 5, 6.); for the palace of David there shall only be "a hut," that "hut" itself a "fallen one;" "breach" shall be upon "breach;" the kingdoms first divided, then one abolished, the other overturned (Ezek. xxi. 27.); but God will hear yet the prayer of the penitent king; "Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion, 'build' thou "the walls of Jerusalem" (Ps. li. 18.); and "God will save Sion, and "build" the cities (ver. 14.) of Judah, that they may dwell there" (as ver. 14.), and "have" it "in possession" (as in ver. 12 exactly); Ps. lxxix. 35, comp. Jer. xxxi. 4; xxxiii. 7. "In that day" He "will raise "us up" (Hosea vi. 2.). The word very emphatically begins, and all but ends the verse—not as once, "your sons for prophets, your young "men for Nazarites" (ch. ii. 11.); but the whole of "Jacob, and all the "preserved of Israel" (Isa. xlix. 6.), and this He will do that they, the restored people, "may inherit" as the heirs of the world, "the remnant of "Edom, yea, of all the nations" calling now upon My name, because first it is named over them (Joel ii. 32.). As "raise up" points, it may be, to ch. ii. 11, so "possess" to ch. ii. 10. Out of Egypt they were brought "to possess the Amorites," "greater nations than themselves" (Deut. xi. 23.); now they shall be restored, after longer and more terrible wanderings, for a nobler work, for a holy retaliation (see Ezek. xxxvi. 5.), for a great conversion out of the whole world; Edom shall be their "possession" (Num. xxiv. 18.); yea "thy seed shall inherit the "Gentiles" (Isa. liv. 3.). Undoubtedly Amos does not here mention the Messiah by name, but he describes His office. Is not Christ alone "the Raiser up of the fallen" (compare ch. v. 2.), "the Closer up of breach "and division" (comp. Isa. lviii. 12.), "the Healer of Wounds?" Is it not "His name" which is named over His people? Even the "ruined" soul He "raiseth" and "buildeth it up again," as in the days of its youth and freshness. Contrast with this "raising up the fallen but "of David," the "fall" of Israel; "she shall no more rise" (ch. v. 2.).

13—15. Such would be the outward development, the visible extent of the Church (vv. 11. 12.); what would be its inward grace? At that

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treader of grapes him that ²soweth seed; ³and the mountains shall drop ³sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt.

14 ²And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and ^athey shall build the waste cities, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them.

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² Heb. *draweth forth*.

³ Joel 3. 18.

³ Or,

new wine.

² Jer. 30. 3.

^a Isai. 61. 4.

& 65. 21.

Ezek. 36.

33,—36.

time (comp. ch. viii. 11, 13 with vv. 11, 13 here), "he that ploughed" would have the "reaper" "close by his side," "bringing in his sheaves "with joy;" "he that pressed the grapes" at the end of the year, would find himself working with the "sower" at the beginning; the growth unceasing, the ripening rapid beyond all experience. As if the whole year were one continual Passover, Pentecost (feast of harvest), Feast of Tabernacles (feast of ingatherings) (Exod. xxiii. 16. Deut. xvi. 13.); the fruits at once green, and ripe, and gathered. For it is one grace which "opens the heart," and "sows" the ingrafted word, and "gives the increase," and grace is not measured, nor limited by time. More than this, those former scenes of idolatry (Hos. iv. 13.) shall "flow" with "wine," and "melt themselves" into oil; "the mountains" shall bring peace to the people, and the "little hills" by righteousness (Ps. lxxii. 3.). Yea, and "the captivity" shall be at an end, and the old punishment pass away (comp. chs. iv. 9; v. 11, where are nearly the same words). Instead "of waste places," "peaceful habitations, sure dwellings" (Isa. xxxii. 18.). Everywhere "vineyards of delight" (ch. v. 11.); everywhere "gardens "of God" (Ezek. xxviii. 13; xxxvi. 35.). "They shall not 'build' and "another 'inhabit;' they shall not 'plant' and another 'eat;' for as the "days of a tree are the days of My people, and Mine elect shall enjoy "the work of their hands" (Isa. lxx. 22.): "planted" in their own home, rooted deep, to abide for ever (comp. Joel iii. 20.). Note first, the contrast to their former state; ye have "ploughed" wickedness, ye have "reaped" iniquity (Hos. x. 13.). Then how all the words point to the Lord of the harvest, or His labourers. "The plougher," as in St. Luke ix. 62. 1 Cor. ix. 10; "the reaper and the sower," St. John iv. 35—38; "the treader of the grapes" on the other hand, being the very description of Christ (Isa. xliii. 2, 3.), as "the sower," and the remarkable word "Drawer forth" of the seed, carry our thoughts to Him, Who in the contemporary prophet "draws" with "bonds of love" (Hos. xi. 4.). But lastly (comp. "days are coming" with the same ch. viii. 11, and "melt" here with ver. 5.) the same days would seem to be at once for blessing and misery, for life and death. Wheat and tares grow together till the harvest (comp. Joel iii. 13, 16.).

In the same way, in ver. 14, the words in their full sense are Christian. We are brought back, "a captivity to Christ" (2 Cor. x. 5.). Regenerate men are now God's "husbandry," "God's building" (1 Cor. iii. 9.); as "the planting" of the Heavenly Father, they shall not be rooted up (St. Matt. xv. 13.); but, in their turn, they "plant," they "build" (1 Cor. iii. 6, 12.); "branches" all, they that labour and they for whom they labour, of the "One Vine;" "they bring forth much fruit," and they eat and drink unto life eternal (St. John vi. 54; xv. 5.). And is not the Church

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^b Isai. 60. 21.
Jer. 32. 41.
Ezek. 34. 28.
Joel 3. 20.

15 And I will plant them upon their land, and
^b they shall no more be pulled up out of their land
which I have given them, saith the LORD thy
God.

“a city” upon “the Rock?” “the kingdom of heaven as a vineyard?” (St. Matt. xx. 1.) Rose not the second Adam “in a garden,” symbol of a new earth, and of a restored Paradise? (St. John xix. 41.). The end (ver. 15.) is in keeping; for “the land” which His people lost, for the “polluted land” into which they were driven (ch. vii. 17.), the Lord “gives” them “their own land.” Our Lord has explained these last words of the great prophecy. “I give unto them eternal life; and they “shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand” (St. John x. 28.). Note how the prophet of nature as well as of grace, blends still the two works of God. In the beginning he told of sin and judgment; “the top of Carmel withered.” In the regeneration there is the “planting” (of “trees of righteousness” Isa. lxi. 3.), whose seed is from God, even faith, and whose root in Christ is love (Eph. iii. 17.).

OBADIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

OBADIAH (*servant of the Lord*) lived most probably towards the end of the reign of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam II, king of Israel, about B.C. 790. His prophecy probably occupies this place in the Canon, because it is a continuation of the last five verses of Amos, immediately preceding. Obadiah also adopts the language of Joel (comp. Obad. 17 with Joel iii. 17, and with Joel ii. 32. Obad. 15 with Joel i. 15; iii. 4, 7.), and that of Balaam (comp. Obad. 18, 19 with Numb. xxiv. 18, 19.). On the other hand, Obadiah's language is adopted by Jeremiah (comp. Jer. xlix. 7—22 with Obad. 1, &c.), and by Ezekiel (comp. Ezek. xxv. 12, &c. with Obad. 10, &c.). The prophet (1) denounces judgment upon the Edomites; (a) by the Chaldeans, vv. 1—16; (b) by the children of Israel, vv. 18, 19; (2) promises (a) the restoration of the Jews from captivity; (b) the triumphant ascendancy of the kingdom of God.

It should be noted, that many eminent authorities, and this Bible Chronology, assign a later date, B.C. 588, to Obadiah; but with scarcely convincing arguments.

The style of this brief prophecy is characterised by vividness, connectedness, power, and conciseness.

OBADIAH.

1 *The destruction of Edom.* 3 *for their pride,* 10 *and for their wrong unto Jacob.* 17 *The salvation and victory of Jacob.*

THE vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord GOD ^a concerning Edom; ^b We have heard a rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent among the heathen, Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle.

^a Isai. 21. 11.
& 34. 5.
Ezek. 25.
12, 13, 14.
Joel 3. 19.
Mal. 1. 3.
^b Jer. 49. 14,
&c.

1. Each clause of this verse springs out of the preceding one. "The vision," i. e. the substance of the vision, includes what the prophet heard, the "rumour," or true report. The Lord God utters His voice: the prophet, and with him other prophets who had received a like message against Edom, hear. It is, that an ambassador, some messenger of Providence, is sent among the heathen, especially to Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians, stirring them up to arise against Edom in battle. And they say, Yes, let us rise (comp. Jer. xlix. 14.).

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2 Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen: thou art greatly despised.

3 The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts ^c of the rock, whose habitation *is* high; ^d that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?

4 ^e Though thou exalt *thyself* as the eagle, and though thou ^f set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.

5 If ^g thieves came to thee, if robbers by night, (how art thou cut off!) would they not have stolen till they had enough? if the grapegatherers came to thee, ^h would they not leave ² some grapes?

6 How are *the things* of Esau searched out! *how* are his hidden things sought up!

7 All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee *even* to the border: ³ ⁱ the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, *and* prevailed against thee; ⁴ *they that eat thy bread* have laid

2. "I have made thee small." This is the beginning of what "the Lord God saith." I constituted thee a small, weak, obscure nation, in a territory only 100 miles in length by twenty in breadth; and now thou art (i. e. shalt be) a despised one also. How inconsistent then is "the pride of thine heart!"

3. Thou vainly vauntest thyself in thy inaccessible fastnesses. These were the caves in the limestone rocks, founded on sandstone cliffs, and these again founded on masses of porphyry more than 2000 feet high. Such caves an eagle might choose, for they seemed, such is the climax of the figure in ver. 4, to soar upwards to the stars (comp. Num. xxiv. 21.). God reads the language of the heart, and answers it by His Almighty decree.

5. "how art thou cut off!" A parenthetical burst of sympathy from the tender-hearted prophet on the utter excision, or, as some render the term, the stupefaction of the Edomites. The extremity of it is illustrated by contrast, in two familiar examples. Even of nightly plunderers, who become bold in the darkness, it is observed that their thefts are limited by what they deem sufficient for themselves; and so, of grape-gatherers, they always leave some grapes undiscovered, or unplucked. But Edom is "utterly consumed" (Ps. lxxiii. 19.).

6. The facts are prophetically related with the prefix of astonishment at them, which literally runs, "How are Esau out-searched," i. e. the people and property of Esau, as a whole, and in all its parts.

"his hidden things," or treasures hid in the rocky cave-dwellings. Not a "grape" should escape notice, or be left, but all would be tracked out (comp. Jer. xlix. 10.).

7. Their treacherous treatment of their brother Jacob (ver. 10.) is now to receive its appropriate punishment. Confederate neighbouring nations, their personal friends, their very dependants—such is the

a wound under thee: ^k *there is none understanding*
² in him.

8 ¹ Shall I not in that day, saith the LORD, even
destroy the wise *men* out of Edom, and under-
standing out of the mount of Esau?

9 And thy ^m mighty *men*, O ⁿ Teman, shall be
dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of
Esau may be cut off by slaughter.

10 For *thy* ^o violence against thy brother Jacob
shame shall cover thee, and ^p thou shalt be cut off
for ever.

11 In the day that thou stoodest on the other side,
in the day that the strangers ³ carried away captive
his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and

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^k Isai. 19. 11,
12.

² Or, of it.

¹ Job 5. 12, 13.

Isai. 29. 14.

Jer. 49. 7.

^m Ps. 76. 5.

Amos 2. 16.

ⁿ Jer. 49. 7.

^o Gen. 27. 41.

Ps. 137. 7.

Ezek. 25. 12,
& 35. 5.

Amos 1. 11.

^p Ezek. 35. 9.

Mal. 1. 4.

³ Or, *carried
away his
substance.*

climax of the three consecutive clauses—all would fail them; nay, would positively betray them to the enemy. This is expressed in three different ways. (1) The ambassadors of neighbouring nations, having been admitted within their border, would take them as far as that border on their return, and then leave them a prey to the invading enemy (comp. 2 Chron. xx. 23. Zeph. ii. 8.). (2) Men that were at peace with them (comp. Ps. xli. 9. Jer. xx. 10.) would deceive them by not helping them, and would prevail against them by imposing on them in the treaty, and so ruining them. (3) Even “*their bread*,” i. e. the men who depended on them for bread, and lived at their expense, would lay a snare (this is the best rendering of the word) under them.

“*none understanding in him.*” The person is changed from the second to the third, a common idiom in the Hebrew prophets, expressive here of the stupidity of Edom, as if he was not worthy of being addressed directly. He had become infatuated.

8. The thought is expanded in this verse. It is the just judgment of God, Who withdraws wisdom from those who were beforetime famed for it, as were the Edomites. Eliphaz was a Temanite, and the other friends of Job were of the same nation. “The children of the east country” (1 Kings iv. 30.) perhaps included Edom, which lay on the way from India to Europe. Comp. Jer. xlix. 7, using these words of Obadiah; and Baruch iii. 22, 23.

9. With the wise men infatuated, and the mighty men panic-stricken, none of the mountainous region of Edom could hope to escape from slaughter by their being cut off.

10. “*violence.*” All sorts of open ill-treatment.

“*thy brother Jacob.*” Not only a man, but thy twin-brother: the enormity of the crime is thus pointed out, as being of itself sufficient to bring shame and utter destruction upon Edom. And shame was the punishment corresponding to his overweening pride, as in ver. 3 (comp. also Hos. x. 6. Ps. cix. 29.). “*For ever*” must be understood as fulfilled by degrees, and that for a period unknown.

11. The time in this verse is not defined in the original, which runs thus: “In the day of thy standing over against,” i. e. to gaze at the

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¹ cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou *wast* as one of them.

¹ Joel 3. 3.
Nah. 3. 10.
² Or, *do not behold, &c.*
^r Ps. 22. 17.
& 54. 7.
& 53. 10.
Mic. 4. 11.
& 7. 10.
^s Ps. 37. 13.
& 137. 7.
^t Job 31. 29.
Prov. 17. 5.
& 24. 17, 18.
Mic. 7. 8.
³ Heb.
magnified thy mouth.
⁴ Or, *forces.*
⁵ Or, *shut up,*
Ps. 31. 8.
^u Ezek. 30. 3.
Joel 3. 14.
^x Ezek. 35. 15.
Hab. 2. 8.
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12 But ² thou shouldest not have ^r looked on ^s the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have ^t rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have ³ spoken proudly in the day of distress.

13 Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid *hands* on their ⁴ substance in the day of their calamity;

14 neither shouldest thou have stood in the cross-way, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldest thou have ⁵ delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress.

15 ^u For the day of the LORD *is* near upon all the heathen: ^x as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.

calamities of God's people, "thou too as one of them;" the act taking place centuries afterwards.

12. The English margin renders, "Do not behold," &c. And it is correct. For it is the voice of earnest exhortation and warning, mercifully sent to Edom, against sins that were still future, not to do what would displease God, and what, if done, would be punished. The condition of Judah and Jerusalem is expressed by the word "*day*" six times repeated. Even in time past (Num. xx. 20, 21.) the conduct of Edom towards his "*brother*" had been marked by gratuitous insult, in marked contrast with the Divine precept given to Israel, "Thou shalt not abhor "an Edomite, for he is thy brother," and with the request (Num. xx. 20, 21.), "Thus saith thy brother Israel." And here the prophecy looks forward to the time of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 17.), and more especially to the time of the capture of Jerusalem, when Edom certainly did some of the things here enumerated (comp. Ps. cxxxvii. 7. Ezek. xxxv. 5, 6, 10, 11.).

14. "to cut off those of his that did escape," i. e. the Jewish fugitives, who were probably making their way through Idumæa into Egypt.

The "*violence*" (ver. 4.) is described in its ever-advancing character; from beholding to pleasure, to insult, to plunder of goods, to interception of persons, to betrayal into the hands of the enemy.

15. After the prophetic warning follows the denunciation of judgment to come. By contrast with the preceding should come on "*the day of the Lord.*"

"as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee." Comp. Ps. cxxxvii. 8, marginal rendering: "happy he, that recompenseth unto

OBADIAH.

16 ^y For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall ² swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.

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^y Jer. 25. 28.
29. & 49. 12.
Joel 3. 17.
1 Pet. 4. 17.

17 ¶ ^z But upon mount Zion ^a shall be ³ deliverance, and ⁴ there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.

² Or, *sup up*.
^z Joel 2. 32.

^a Amos 9. 8.

³ Or, *they that escape*.

⁴ Or, *it shall be holy*.

Joel 3. 17.
^b Isai. 10. 17.
Zech. 12. 6.

18 And the house of Jacob ^b shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be *any* remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken *it*.

“thee thy deed which thou didst to us.” Obadiah repronounces the terrible judgments of Joel iii. 7, and is in turn repeated by Ezek. xxxv. 15.

16. “as ye have drunk . . . so shall all the heathen drink.” Your profaneness and revelry at the destruction of Zion, your cup of excess, shall be turned into a cup of punishment, the cup of God’s wrath, to you first, as being the nearest in relationship to God’s people, and then to “all the heathen” (comp. vv. 1, 2, 15.), who shall drink on, till they have exhausted all the dregs; shall swallow up, and then be swallowed up in turn (comp. Rev. xviii. 3, 6.). Their end, was to be not recovery but ruin, as Ezek. xxvi. 21. The fulfilment of this threat may be inferred from Lam. iv. 21, Jer. xxvii. 2—4, 6, and is recorded as having certainly been executed (B.C. 420.) by Malachi i. 4.

17. All things are for the sake of the Church of God. Hence Joel, Amos, and so here Obadiah, conclude their prophecies with precious promises to the chosen people, which would receive, first, a literal fulfilment in the times of Zerubbabel, and of the Maccabees, and, further, a spiritual fulfilment in the Christian dispensation. The prophet takes up the words of Joel ii. 32. “Mount Zion,” in contrast with the “mount of Esau.” “Deliverance” and “holiness” are abstract terms, meaning, there will be those who escape, and there will be holy ones, saints, to worship God in spirit and in truth. The immediate fulfilment would be the restoration of the Temple worship after the captivity.

“Shall possess their possessions.” Shall inherit their inheritances, as of old (Amos ix. 11.); and by extension among the heathen, in the world (comp. Amos ix. 12. Ps. ii. 8. Rev. xxi. 24.).

18. “the house of Jacob . . . the house of Joseph,” i. e. Judah, and the ten tribes, a remnant of which was now united with Judah. This prophecy was fulfilled in part by the Maccabees, who subdued the Idumæans, and compelled them to become Jews. In a figure, it foretells that the Gospel preached in the house of Jacob and Joseph, by Jews in Palestine, shall be as a flame (1) to soften hard hearts, and refine them to holiness, and (2) to burn up and destroy all ungodliness (comp. Jer. v. 14. Zech. xii. 6. 2 Thess. ii. 8.).

“there shall not be any remaining.” After the last siege of Jerusalem, the name of the Edomites disappears from history.

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^c Amos 9. 12.
^d Zeph. 2. 7.

^e 1 Kin. 17.
9. 10.

² Or, shall
possess that
which is in
Sepharad.

^f Jer. 32. 44.

^g 1 Tim. 4. 16.
Jam. 5. 20.

^h Ps. 22. 28.

Dan. 2. 44.
& 7. 14, 27.

Zech. 14. 9.

Luke 1. 33.

Rev. 11. 15.

& 19. 6.

19 And *they of* the south ^c shall possess the mount of Esau; ^d and *they of* the plain the Philistines: and they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria: and Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead.

20 And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel *shall possess* that of the Canaanites, *even* ^e unto Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, ² which *is* in Sepharad, ^f shall possess the cities of the south.

21 And ^g saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the ^h kingdom shall be the LORD'S.

19, 20. The old tribal divisions of Judah and Israel will be obliterated in the extension on all sides of the people of God, restored from their several captivities, whether that of Assyria, or of Babylon, or of northern Canaan, as far as Zarephath, or of Sepharad (either Sardis in Lydia, or some unknown place of captivity), or, in later times, of Greece (see Joel iii. 6.). Old names of localities are used to express this enlargement, but the extension shall far outstrip the old limits of the promised land. To these countries would Judah and Israel extend their population, their influence, and their religion.

21. "saviours." Like judges in earlier times (Judg. iii. 9, 15. 2 Kings xiii. 5.). Fulfilled in some degree by the rise of the Maccabees; more fully, in Christian times, by the body of preachers sent by the Divine Saviour (Jesus; St. Matt. i. 21.), who took their first stand upon Mount Zion; whose office it was "to save themselves and those who heard them;" through whose preaching in every age loyal subjects are saved, and the wicked judged (2 Cor. ii. 15.).

"the kingdom shall be the Lord's." Fulfilled most entirely and gloriously, when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever:" "when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (Rev. xi. 15. 1 Cor. xv. 24.). See other reff. in margin.

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. xxii. 20.).

JONAH.

INTRODUCTION.

JONAH (*dove*), son of Amittai (*the truth of the Lord*), was a native of Gath-hepher, a remote town of Zebulun (Josh. xix. 13.), north of Nazareth. He lived in, and exercised his office probably during the whole of, the reign of Jeroboam II (i. e. 824—783, B.C. 2 Kings xiv. 25.). After prophesying of good to Israel, he was, later on in life, commissioned to go and prophesy to Nineveh. God would hereby give an instance of His merciful designs in store for the heathen world, and at the same time, by the efficacy of one prophet's preaching among the Ninevites, convey a reproof to His own people, who, with so many prophets to preach to them, still remained impenitent.

Jonah, no doubt, though using the third person, was the writer of his own history; and, like Moses, he is candid in recording his own faults. The book is all prose, except ch. ii.; and all history, except the single line of prediction, ch. iii. 4. The style is simple, full of characteristic touches, and marked by steady direction to the end designed by the narrative.

The instructiveness of the whole rests upon the truth of the facts recorded. That they are not an allegory, or the report of a vision, but facts, rests upon the clear and unchallengeable testimony of our Lord Himself. He says: "The men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of "Jonas." "Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's " (or rather, great fish's) belly" (St. Matt. xii. 41, 40.).

But the chief reason for the book of Jonah's having a place in the prophetic division of the Old Testament Scriptures is that his history was itself a concealed prophecy. This also rests upon the clear attestation of our Lord. Three times He calls Jonah "a sign" (see St. Matt. xii. 38—40; xvi. 4. St. Luke xi. 16, 29, 30.). He says: "So shall "the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the "earth." "So shall also the Son of man be (a sign) to this generation." The supernatural facts of the life of Jonah, whether the physical miracles recorded of himself, or the great moral miracle recorded of the Ninevites, we are taught, symbolized and foreshadowed the supernatural facts, whether physical or moral in their nature, recorded of our Lord and of the preaching of His Gospel. Such were His Propitiation and Atonement (ch. i. 12—15.); His Burial (ch. i. 17.); His Resurrection (ch. ii. 10.); His proclamation, afterwards, to the Gentiles (ch. iii.), and His acceptance among them (ch. iii. 5—10.), with the grudging of the Jews thereat (ch. iv.).

This is the only key, and it is a sufficient one, for the right interpretation of this wonderful book; for, "behold, a greater than Jonas is "here."

It is interesting to know that Cyprian, afterwards the celebrated bishop of Carthage and martyr, in the third century, was converted from idolatry to the Christian faith, by hearing the book of Jonah read and expounded by a priest of the Church, Cæcilius (*St. Jerome on Jonah*).

JONAH, I.

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CHAPTER I.

1 *Jonah, sent to Nineveh, fleeth to Tarshish. 4 He is bewrayed by a tempest, 11 thrown into the sea, 17 and swallowed by a fish.*

^a 2 Kin. 14. 25.
² Called,
Matt. 12. 39,
Jonas.

NOW the word of the LORD came unto ^a 2 *Jonah*
the son of Amittai, saying,

^b Gen. 10. 11,
12.
ch. 3. 2, 3.
& 4. 11.

2 Arise, go to Nineveh, that ^b great city, and cry
against it; for ^c their wickedness is come up before
me.

^c Gen. 18. 20,
21.
Ezra 9. 6.
Jam. 5. 4.
Rev. 18. 5.

3 But *Jonah* ^d rose up to flee unto Tarshish from
the presence of the LORD, and went down to ^e Joppa;
and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid
the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with
them unto Tarshish ^f from the presence of the LORD.

^d ch. 4. 2.

^e Josh. 19. 46,
2 Chr. 2. 16.
Acts 9. 36.

^f Gen. 4. 16.
Job 1. 12.
& 2. 7.

4 But ^g the LORD ³ sent out a great wind into the
sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so
that the ship was ⁴ like to be broken.

^g Ps. 107. 25.

³ Heb.
cast forth.

⁴ Heb.
*thought to
be broken.*

^h So Acts 27.
18, 19, 38.

5 Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every
man unto his god, and ^h cast forth the wares that
were in the ship into the sea, to lighten *it* of them.

CHAPTER I.

1. "Now," i. e. after other commissions to Israel, "an ambassador sent among the heathen" (Obad. 1.), to shew that God would to the Gentiles also grant "repentance unto life."

2. "Nineveh, that great city." Great, in compass, being sixty miles in circumference; in population, probably 600,000; and in power, which was then at its height.

"come up before me." As of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. xviii. 20, 21. Comp. Nah. iii. ult.). It was a threatening of excision, yet with remedial intent, as we learn from ch. iv. 2.

3. "Tarshish." Probably Tartessus in Spain, the very opposite direction to Nineveh. Jonah would go anywhere, and sacrifice anything, to flee from the established place of Divine worship (comp. Gen. iv. 16. Ps. xcv. 2.), and more especially from standing before God as His minister. It was a renunciation of duty and of his prophetic office, the result of fear, or of mistaken jealousy for his own country, should the Ninevites be spared. Large ships were wont to go to Tarshish (comp. Ps. xlvi. 7. Ezek. xxvii. 25.).

4. All this, we must remember, is Jonah's own narrative. With penitence he recognised the hand of God in all.

"the ship was like to be broken." Marg. "thought," as though it had a sense of its own danger. The shore is naturally a dangerous one, as described by Josephus; and that part of the Mediterranean is liable to violent winds called Levanters.

5. "every man unto his god." A testimony against atheism, and yet an instance of the folly and ignorance of polytheism.

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But Jonah was gone down ⁱ into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.

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6 So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto ⁱ him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, ^k call ^k upon thy God, ^l if so be that God will think upon ^l us, that we perish not.

1 Sam. 24. 3.
Ps. 107. 23.
Joel 2. 14.

7 And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us ^m cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil *is* upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

m Josh. 7. 14, 16.
1 Sam. 10. 20, 21. & 14. 41, 42.
Prov. 16. 33.

8 Then said they unto him, ⁿ Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil *is* upon us; What *is* thyne occupation? and whence comest thou? what *is* thy country? and of what people *art* thou?

Acts 1. 26.
n Josh. 7. 19.
1 Sam 14. 43.

9 And he said unto them, I *am* an Hebrew; and I fear ² the LORD, the God of heaven, ^o which hath made the sea and the dry *land*.

2 Or, JEHOVAH.
o Ps. 146. 6.
Acts 17. 24.

10 Then were the men ³ exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

3 Heb. with great fear.

11 Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea ⁴ may be calm unto us? for the sea ⁵ ⁶ wrought, and was tempestuous.

4 Heb. may be silent from us.

5 Or, grew more and more tempestuous.

12 And he said unto them, ^p Take me up, and

6 Heb. went.
p John 11. 50.

“the sides of the ship.” The hold, or inner part. It was a decked ship.

“was fast asleep.” After his weary and hurried journey of fifty miles from Zebulun to Joppa, and the mental anxiety he must have undergone.

6. Jonah, a prophet of the Lord, had now laid himself open to the reproofs of a heathen pilot, by whom he was reminded of the One Supreme God, and his duty to Him.

7. “let us cast lots.” An appeal, prompted by a mixture of knowledge and error, to the judgment of God, a sacred thing even among the heathen, and used for detecting guilt in Joshua vii. 14. 1 Sam. xiv. 41, 42. In this case God overruled it to His own purposes.

9. To the questions which, true to nature, the mariners poured out one after the other, Jonah gave one, but that the most pertinent and instructive, answer. The title of “Hebrew,” or “emigrant,” was that by which Israel was known to foreigners. His confession of his nation, religion, profession, and sin, was doubtless made with shame and sorrow, and produced on their hearts corresponding convictions, shewn in their wonderful and concise confession of faith (ver. 14.), and their humble acknowledgment of the Divine power of the one Lord.

12. This speech of Jonah’s marks the true penitent, casting all the

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cast me forth into the sea ; so shall the sea be calm unto you : for I know that for my sake this great tempest *is* upon you.

² Heb. *digged*. 13 Nevertheless the men ² rowed hard to bring *it* to the land ; ³ but they could not : for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

14 Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and ^r lay not upon us innocent blood : for thou, O LORD, ^s hast done as it pleased thee.

^t Ps. 89. 9. Luke 8. 24. 15 So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea : ^t and the sea ³ ceased from her raging.

³ Heb. *stood*. ^u Mark 4. 41. Acts 5. 11. 16 Then the men ^u feared the LORD exceedingly, and ⁴ offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made VOWS.

⁴ Heb. *sacrificed a sacrifice unto the LORD, and vowed vows*. 17 ¶ Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And ^x Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

blame upon himself. He knew it, for he was now speaking by revelation. Thus, too, he was a type of Christ, Who gave Himself a ransom for many, as though a sinner.

14. Charge us not with the guilt of the deed we are about to do, the sacrifice of the life of a man innocent as far as we are concerned. We do it unwillingly ; we have endeavoured to avoid it (ver. 13.) ; it is Thy will that is seen in all.

15. God confirmed their faith by causing the sea to cease, marg. to "stand," at once.

16. A still rarer proof (see St. Luke xvii. 15—18.) than the former ones of their true conversion of heart (comp. Deut. vi. 13. St. Luke v. 8.). They seem to have made an offering on board, and vowed future obedience and further offerings, when they should have returned home. Who can tell but that they preached the doctrine of the true God among the heathen ?

17. Some persons have denied the literal truth of this verse ; and have endeavoured, by inventions of their own, to explain it in a figurative manner. But the following points are of conclusive importance the other way. Notice (1) "the Lord had prepared," lit. "numbered, or appointed," as thrice again in this book, with similar meaning (ch. iv. 6—8.). It was a special Divine providence, using a creature already in existence, and suited, as "a great fish," probably here a large shark, for swallowing a man whole. Such fish have been on many occasions found in the Mediterranean. (2) The brief and simple description in the text is widely different from the bombastic narration of a legendary or fictitious marvel. All that would minister to mere curiosity, all the details that happened, are omitted. Only the time is mentioned, that "Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights."

JONAH, II.

CHAPTER II.

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1 *The prayer of Jonah.* 10 *He is delivered from the fish.*

THEN Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly,

2 and said, I ^acried ²by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, ^band he heard me; out of the belly of ³hell cried I, *and* thou heardest my voice.

3 ^cFor thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the ⁴midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: ^dall thy billows and thy waves passed over me.

4 ^eThen I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again ^ftoward thy holy temple.

5 The ^gwaters compassed me about, *even* to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head.

6 I went down to the ^hbottoms of the mountains;

^a Ps. 120. 1. & 130. 1. & 142. 1. Lam. 3. 55, 56.

² Or, out of mine affliction.

^b Ps. 65. 2.

³ Or, the grave, Isai. 14. 9.

^c Ps. 88. 6.

⁴ Heb. heart.

^d Ps. 42. 7.

^e Ps. 31. 22.

^f 1 Kin. 8. 38.

^g Ps. 69. 1.

Lam. 3. 54.

^h Heb. cuttings off.

(3) Above all, remember that we possess the testimony of Him Who is the truth, and Who spake nothing but the truth, to the literal verity of the prophet's record. (4) For the miracle, so unique, there were adequate reasons (see Introduction). (5) This, and all the other equally wonderful works of God, e.g. the passage through the Red Sea, the staying of the lions in the den, &c., have moral meaning and teaching in them of the highest order.

CHAPTER II.

1. "Jonah prayed." The same word is used in 1 Sam. ii. 1 of Hannah's "prayer," which, in fact, is simply a hymn of thanksgiving. The word properly means "appealed to God as a judge." The strong language and vivid pictures of his condition are in accordance with the experience of those who have felt the sensations of drowning, and have then been rescued. Jonah recollected the substance of his prayer, and left it on record. His language was chiefly taken from the Psalms, with which he was, no doubt, familiar. It is good, when in trouble, to use the same words as others have done before us, especially those of the Bible; and especially of the Psalter, which has ever been the favourite storehouse of devotion to the Church of Christ.

2. "hell." Used in the strict, original, sense of the word, of a covered, hidden, place.

3. "the midst of the seas." The margin reads "heart," with which compare the expression "heart of the earth," used by our Lord in the application of the type.

4. Jonah was still assured, such was the strength of his faith, that he would again engage in acts of praise directed through the earthly temple, to heaven, the dwelling place of his God. His prayer now was offered, and answered at once (ver. 7.).

JONAH, III.

Before
CHRIST
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ⁿ Ps. 16. 10.

² Or, *the pit.*

ⁱ Ps. 18. 6.

^k 2 Kin. 17. 15.

Ps. 31. 6.

Jer. 10. 8.

& 16. 19.

ⁱ Ps. 50. 14, 23.

& 116. 17, 18.

Hos. 14. 2.

Heb. 13. 15.

^m Ps. 3. 8.

the earth with her bars *was* about me for ever : yet hast thou brought up my life ^h from ² corruption, O LORD my God.

7 When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD : ⁱ and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.

8 They that observe ^k lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

9 But I will ^l sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving ; I will pay *that* that I have vowed.

^m Salvation *is* of the LORD.

10 ¶ And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry *land*.

CHAPTER III.

1 Jonah, sent again, preacheth to the Ninevites. 5 Upon their repentance, 10 God repenteth.

AND the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,

2 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

3 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an

² exceeding great city of three days' journey.

² Heb. of
God : So
Gen. 30. 8.
Ps. 36. 6.
& 80. 10.

8. The distinction of the true from all false religions had been happily experienced in his own case. The latter were marked by "**lying vanities**," idols of all sorts ; the former by One, Who was "**mercy**" itself (comp. Ps. cxliv. 2. Margin, "my mercy").

9. "**I will sacrifice.**" Lit. "I would fain sacrifice," be ready with words of thanksgiving, and with the obedience of my whole future life.

10. An instance of God's power over all creatures, and of God's mercy to a true penitent ; especially a type of the resurrection of Christ, coming forth to preach repentance and remission of sins, even to the Gentiles (comp. Acts xiii. 37—39.).

CHAPTER III.

1. The prophet's reinstatement in his office was accompanied by trial of his obedience. "**Arise**," as being now, perhaps, at Gath-hepher, his home.

3. "**an exceeding great city of three days' journey.**" Lit. a city great to God, great beyond human, reaching to Divine, estimation ; a description appropriate here, as expressing God's regard for the city, and His designs towards it. And it *was* great ; reckoning one day's journey, as usual, to be twenty miles, its circumference would be sixty. Oriental

JONAH, III.

4 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and ^a he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 862.

^a See Deut.
18. 22.

5 ¶ So the people of Nineveh ^b believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

^b Matt. 12. 41.
Luke 11. 32.

6 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered *him* with sackcloth, ^c and sat ^c in ashes.

^c Job 2. 8.

cities included gardens, pastures, and arable lands (comp. ch. iv. ult.), as well as separate ranges of apartments for the women. The great size of Nineveh may be inferred from the extent of its ruins.

4. Jonah opened his commission at once, and for one day traversed the city across the streets and roads for twenty miles, crying out unceasingly, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown," i. e. at the expiration of them, overthrown; as were Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. xix. 29.).

5. Jonah himself, we know, was a "sign" to the Ninevites, his wonderful history being told them either by himself or others. Their speedy and sincere repentance on the preaching of but one prophet, and that without working of miracles, was a contrast to the hardness of heart of the Israelites of his day, to whom many prophets had been sent in vain. It was also the condemnation of the generation whom our Lord addressed (St. Matt. xii. 41.).

The steps of the repentance of the Ninevites are described, and are to be carefully noticed for our own profit. "They believed (in) God," believed the word of God, delivered them by His prophet, casting themselves on His truth, justice, and mercy, though hitherto unknown to them. They publicly adopted all outward signs of humiliation; entire abstinence from food; coarse and uneasy clothing. They allowed no exception, whether of any that had least to lose, or had lived most at ease. The king, though not the first in the steps taken, evinced his sincerity by stripping himself of his ample and costly upper garment, and occupying a position of extreme penitence. He used his authority, confirming it, constitutionally, by that of his nobles, to institute a national act for the prevention of a national ruin. And, true to nature and custom among barbaric nations, he included the beasts both in outward signs of sorrow and in real suffering too, that, by their moans and pining after food, men might be the more stirred up to humiliation, and through them appeal might be made to God (comp. Ps. xxxvi. 6, 7; civ. 21. Job xxxviii. 41.). And, above all, the act was proved to be sincere by the injunction to each one to forsake his own besetting sin, and to all to put away the characteristic sin of Nineveh (see Nah. ii. 12; iii. 1, 19.). For reformation and amendment begin, but must not end, with the fasting day.

6. "the king" may have been Ivalush III, by some thought to be the Pul of Scripture (2 Kings xvii. 19.): but it is a point of uncertainty.

JONAH, IV.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 862.

d 2 Chr. 20. 3.
Joel 2. 15.
2 Heb. said.
3 Heb.
great men.

e Isai. 53. 6.

f Isai. 53. 6.

g 2Sam. 12. 22.
Joel 2. 14.

h Jer. 18. 8.
Amos 7. 3, 6.

7 ^d And he caused *it* to be proclaimed and ² published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his ³ nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:

8 but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, ^e let them turn every one from his evil way, and from ^f the violence that *is* in their hands.

9 ^g Who can tell *if* God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

10 ¶ ^h And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Jonah, repining at God's mercy, 4 is reproved by the type of a gourd.*

BUT it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.

2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray

9. Sincere repentance is accepted, though marked by partial ignorance and uncertainty. Hope in mercy is the great encouragement to repentance and reformation.

10. It was the reality of their fast and repentance, which God saw and approved; the sacrifice of a broken heart: the pattern of true repentance before the coming of Christ.

“God repented.” The change was not really in God, but in themselves. The object of His threatenings was that He might not inflict the conditional punishment which He had threatened against them.

CHAPTER IV.

1. Jonah records his own morbid and irritable jealousy (1) for the honour of his country, (2) for his own credit as a prophet. We infer that he had not assisted the Ninevites in their repentance, for he now grudged them the consequent mercy. It was a compound sin in him: want of self-government, irreverence at what God had done, untempered zeal, and lack of affection to men. The Scribes and Pharisees were of this temper, when our Lord accepted publicans and sinners (comp. also St. Luke xv. 28—31. Acts x. 13—15; xi. 2, 3.).

2. In this temper, with renewal of his old disobedient spirit, Jonah prayed. How unlike his prayer in ch. ii.! It was a passionate wish for death, when he was unfit to die. Perhaps it was that he despaired of the salvation of his own people, and prayed to be discharged from a ministry that would but benefit their enemies.

JONAH, IV.

thee, O LORD, *was* not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I ^a fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou *art* a ^b gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 862.
^a ch. 1. 3.
^b Ex. 34. 6.
Ps. 86. 5.
Joel 2. 13.

3 ^c Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for ^d *it is* better for me to die than to live.

^c 1 Kin. 19. 4.
^d ver. 8.

4 Then said the LORD, ² Doest thou well to be angry?

² Or,
Art thou greatly angry?

5 ¶ So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.

6 And the LORD God prepared a ^{3 4} gourd, and made *it* to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah ⁵ was exceeding glad of the gourd.

³ Or,
palmcris.
⁴ Heb.
Kikajon.

7 But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.

⁵ Heb. *re-joiced with great joy.*

8 And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that

4. Against this vehemence, excited not only against the sins of men, but against men themselves, God expostulates, and how mildly! See the marg.

5. Though convinced that God would spare Nineveh, Jonah still sullenly expected some mark of the Divine displeasure, and created inconvenience to himself, that, resolving to complain, he might have something still to complain of. A figure of the carnal Jews, watching, with jealousy, the salvation of the Gentiles.

“a booth.” Such extempore sheds are used now by the Arabs and Eastern shepherds. Layard’s *Nineveh*, i. 123.

6. “a gourd.” “*Ricinus communis* ;” the Palm-christ. A shrub with broad leaves like vine leaves, each supporting itself on its own stem, and giving a very dense shade. If the seed is cast into the ground, it is soon quickened, rises marvellously into a tree, and in three months attains a full growth of thirteen feet. It is its nature also to decay rapidly. More details are supplied by Dr. Pusey from St. Jerome and others.

Observe the tender provision of God for His fretful and froward servant. He “prepared” the gourd, its natural qualities being supernaturally quickened. Jonah was “exceeding glad,” as a man of impulsive temperament, who is often pleased by a trifle. It was more than was becoming. And probably he thought it favoured his waiting and watching as he did.

7. “it withered.” Thus being rendered of no use, though still there; and that by means of a despicable cause, and at once.

JONAH, IV.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 862.

² Or, *silent*.
^e ver. 3.

³ Or, *Art thou greatly angry?*

⁴ Or, *I am greatly angry*.

⁵ Or, *spared*.

⁶ Heb. *was the son of the night*.

^f ch. 1. 2.
& 3. 2, 3.

^g Deut. 1. 33.

^h Ps. 36. 6.
& 145. 9.

God prepared a ² vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, ^e *It is better for me to die than to live.*

9 And God said to Jonah, ³ *Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?* And he said, ⁴ *I do well to be angry, even unto death.*

10 Then said the LORD, Thou hast ⁵ had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which ⁶ came up in a night, and perished in a night:

11 and should not I spare Nineveh, ^f that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons ^g that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and *also* much ^h cattle?

8. "vehement." Lit. silent, as in margin, expressing the effect of the wind, still, deafening, and sultry. Such a storm is described by *Layard*, i. 124, who also says, "Few European travellers can bear the perpendicular rays of an Assyrian sun."

9. Excess of joy in the possession of a perishing earthly blessing turns into excess of grief at the loss of it. Both are wrong. In Jonah it evinced lack of faith. But the more unreasonable his anger was, the more force lay in the argument of God with him.

10. Out of his own mouth God judges him, and condescends to justify Himself; arguing by force of contrasts. Not speaking of the repentance of Nineveh, God rests His appeal upon the multitude of innocent children, who knew not yet whether the right hand or the left were fitter for use, and even upon the cattle; for "His tender mercy is over all His works."

"Let me fall now into the hands of the Lord; for very great are His mercies" (1 Chron. xxi. 13.).

MICAH.

INTRODUCTION.

MICAH, or, as in the longer and fuller form of the name, Micaiah, (1 Kings xxii.) (*who is like the Lord?*) was a native of the village Moresheth-Gath, i. e. near Gath, in the lowlands, or maritime plain, south-west of Jerusalem. He prophesied during portions of the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, beginning a little later, and ending a little earlier than Isaiah, probably from 758—721. His office, if not his life, must have closed before the sixth year of Hezekiah. Nothing more is known of him personally.

But Micah, of all the prophets, is the one, of whom two remarkable utterances had so penetrated into the minds and memories of the people, as to be adduced publicly on two solemn occasions in later times, and with marked effect. The first, from ch. iii. 12, quoted by "the elders of the land," and addressed to "all the assembly of the people," in the time of Jeremiah; the second, from ch. v. 2, quoted by the scribes, in answer to the question of Herod the Great, "Where Christ should be born?"

The book of Micah falls easily into three divisions, each beginning with the words, "Hear ye," viz. chs. i., ii.; chs. iii.—v.; chs. vi., vii. Each division is marked by transitions from threatening to promise, and vice versâ, though there is a predominance, especially towards the end, of tenderness and comfort. The style is vigorous, abounding in grammatical changes of person gender and time, full of beautiful tropes, and especially rich in pastoral and rural images.

CHAPTER I.

1 Micah sheweth the wrath of God against Jacob for idolatry. 10 He exhorteth to mourning.

THE word of the LORD that came to ^a Micah the ^a Jer. 26. 18. Morasthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, ^b which he saw concern- ^b Amos 1. 1. ing Samaria and Jerusalem.

CHAPTER I.

1. "Samaria." Named first, as about to be first punished (vv. 5, 6.).

MICAH, I.

Before
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² Heb. *Hear, ye people, all of them.*

^c Deut. 32. 1. Isai. 1. 2.

³ Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

^d Ps. 50. 7. Mal. 3. 5.

^e Ps. 11. 4. Jonah 2. 7. Hab. 2. 20.

^f Isai. 26. 21. ^g Ps. 115. 3.

^h Deut. 32. 13. & 33. 29.

ⁱ Amos 4. 13. ^j Judg. 5. 5.

^k Ps. 97. 5. Is. 64. 1, 2, 3.

^l Amos 9. 5. Hab. 3. 6, 10.

^m Heb. *a descent.*

ⁿ 2 Kings 19. 25. ch. 3. 12.

^o Ezek. 13. 14.

^p Hos. 2. 5, 12.

2 ² Hear, all ye people; ^c hearken, O earth, and ³ all that therein is: and let the Lord God ^d be witness against you, the Lord from ^e his holy temple.

3 For, behold, ^f the LORD cometh forth out of his ^g place, and will come down, and tread upon the ^h high places of the earth.

4 And ⁱ the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters *that are* poured down ^k a steep place.

5 For the transgression of Jacob *is* all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel. What *is* the transgression of Jacob? *is it* not Samaria? and what *are* the high places of Judah? *are they* not Jerusalem?

6 Therefore I will make Samaria ^k as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will ^l discover the foundations thereof.

7 And all the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces, and all the ^m hires thereof shall be

2. "Hear." Taking up the words of his namesake (1 Kings xxii. 28.), and of other prophets (Deut. xxxii. 1.), calling forth witnesses, even God Himself in heaven, that his prophecies were divinely inspired.

3, 4. "cometh forth out of his place." Quits His mercy-seat for judgment, the effects being represented by imagery from the effects of an earthquake. Comp. also 2 St. Pet. iii. 10 for the imagery.

5. "Jacob" in this verse properly stands for the ten tribes; "Judah" for the two: and on Samaria and Jerusalem, as the chief cities, and the most wicked, is charged the true cause of the punishment.

6. "an heap of the field." Comp. Ps. lxxix. 1. Isa. xxv. 2.

"plantings of a vineyard." Terraces of earth raised to plant vines in.

"I will pour down the stones thereof." Samaria was on the crest of the hill (1 Kings xvi. 24.), to the foot of which its walls were to be rolled down, so that the very foundations should be uncovered. All these particulars are verified in the present aspect of the place, on the testimony of travellers. "The whole face of this part of the hill suggests the idea, that the buildings of the ancient city had been thrown down from the brow of the hill. Ascending to the top, we walked round the whole summit, and found marks of the same process everywhere." *Narrative of Mission. Church of Scotland.*

7. "shall be beaten to pieces." This was in accordance with the custom of the Assyrians towards the idols of the nations they conquered, as appears on their monuments.

"the hires thereof," i. e. the presents they gave their idols: including also the good things they imagined their idols gave them. Comp. Hos. ii. 12.

burned with the fire, and all the idols thereof will I lay desolate: for she gathered *it* of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of an harlot.

8 Therefore ^aI will wail and howl, ^oI will go stripped and naked: ^pI will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the ²owls.

9 For ³her wound *is* incurable; for ^qit is come unto Judah; he is come unto the gate of my people, *even* to Jerusalem.

10 ¶ ^rDeclare ye *it* not at Gath, weep ye not at all: in the house of ⁴Aphrah ^sroll thyself in the dust.

11 Pass ye away, ⁵thou ⁶inhabitant of Saphir, having thy ^tshame naked: the inhabitant of ⁷Zaanan came not forth in the mourning of ⁸Beth-ezel; he shall receive of you his standing.

[†] Isai. 20. 4. & 47. 2, 3. Jer. 13. 22. Nah. 3. 5. ⁷ Or, the country of flocks. ⁸ Or, a place near

Before
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ⁿ Isai. 21. 3.

& 22. 4.

Jer. 4. 19.

^o Isai. 20. 2,

3, 4.

^p Job 39. 29.

Ps. 102. 6.

² Heb.

daughters

of the owl.

³ Or, she is

grievously

sick of her

wounds.

^q 2 Kin. 13. 13.

Isai. 8. 7, 8.

^r 2 Sam. 1. 20.

⁴ That is,

Dust.

^s Jer. 6. 26.

⁵ Or, thou

that dwell-

est fairly.

⁶ Heb. in-

habitrass.

“of the hire of an harlot . . . to the hire of an harlot.” Probably, the riches got by means of leagues with idolatrous nations shall be as wages to an army of idolaters, the Assyrians, who in turn shall offer them to their own gods. The literal sense of the words is also true to history, and not to be excluded here.

8. “stripped and naked.” Throwing off my upper prophetic garment, says Micah, I would mourn on at such a prospect, with the doleful wail of the jackals and the screech-owls—creatures which are wont to frequent desolate places, and do at this time the ruins of Samaria. Here, observe, is the spirit of a true prophet, bewailing the calamities of those whose sins he yet denounces.

9. “unto the gate.” Literally fulfilled at this very time. From Samaria, who was “grievously sick of her wounds,” or punishment, and of which she politically died, the Assyrian overran the land of Judah, and invested the city of Jerusalem; but Sennacherib’s power was broken, and he returned by the way he came. 2 Kings xviii. 13; xix. 33.

10—16. The mourning prophet draws vivid pictures of the disastrous effects of the Assyrians’ march onward to the Jewish capital and the south. Places, many of them obscure, in the neighbourhood, are chosen, the names of which shall now be verified in deed, or in contrast. See the margin.

10. “Declare . . . it not at Gath.” A proverbial saying, derived from 2 Sam. i. 20; i. e. weep not so as the enemies of the Lord shall see it and exult.

11. “the inhabitant of Zaanan.” Perhaps the place where men are wont to go forth; thence they shall not go forth.

“in the mourning of Beth-ezel; he shall receive of you his standing.” Perhaps, the mourning of the house of shade shall take from you its standing, i. e. all use of such a shade or shelter. If we adopt the sense of the margin, it will mean, the country of a people as

MICAH, II.

Before
CHRIST
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² Or, *was*
grieved.

^u Amos 3. 6.

^x 2 Kings 18.
14, 17.

^y 2 Sam. 8. 2.

^z 2 Kings 18.
14, 15, 16.

³ Or, *for.*

⁴ That is,
a lie.

^a Josh. 15. 44.

^z Josh. 15. 44.

⁵ Or,

the glory of
Israel shall
come, &c.

^b 2 Chr. 11. 7.

^c Job 1. 20.

Isai. 15. 2.

& 22. 12.

Jer. 7. 21, &

16. 6. & 47. 5.

& 48. 37.

^d Lam. 4. 5.

12 For the inhabitant of Maroth ² waited carefully for good: but ^u evil came down from the LORD unto the gate of Jerusalem.

13 O thou inhabitant of ^x Lachish, bind the chariot to the swift beast: she *is* the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion: for the transgressions of Israel were found in thee.

14 Therefore shalt thou ^y give presents ³ to Moresheth-gath: the houses of ^{4 z} Achzib *shall be* a lie to the kings of Israel.

15 Yet will I bring an heir unto thee, O inhabitant of ^a Mareshah: ⁵ he shall come unto ^b Adullam the glory of Israel.

16 Make thee ^c bald, and poll thee for thy ^d delicate children; enlarge thy baldness as the eagle; for they are gone into captivity from thee.

CHAPTER II.

1 *Against oppression.* 4 *A lamentation.* 7 *A reproof of injustice and idolatry.* 12 *A promise of restoring Jacob.*

cir. 730.

^a Hos. 7. 6.

^b Ps. 36. 4.

WOE to them ^a that devise iniquity, and ^b work evil upon their beds! when the morning is

numerous as flocks will be so taken up with its own calamities, as not to come forth to relieve those of the next town.

12. "the inhabitant of Maroth waited carefully for good." Expecting it, selfishly, from God; but they reaped only the truth of their own name, "bitternesses."

13. "Lachish," i. e. the compact one. The strongest of all the fortified cities of Judah; which the army of Sennacherib besieged in Hezekiah's time (Isa. xxxvi. 2.). The swift horses, to which the inhabitants had trusted, would now avail them only for flight.

"the beginning of the sin." The guilt was all the greater, because Lachish was on the south-west of Judah, far removed from Israel. Known to the all-seeing God are the occasion, the circumstances, the aggravations, of every sin.

14. "presents to Moresheth-gath," i. e. the place which God gave thee for an inheritance (Moresheth) shall have passed over to the Philistines, and be courted, as by bridal presents, to help thee, but in vain. Another place, "Achzib," shall also verify its name, and be as a winter brook, failing in time of need.

15. "an heir." Sennacherib, who shall take even the ancient city Adullam (Gen. xxxviii. 1.), now used for a refuge, as once by David.

16. "enlarge thy baldness." A climax: out-do in grief what others do.

"the eagle." Probably the vulture, as the bald-headed eagle is not an inhabitant of Palestine.

light, they practise it, because ^c it is in the power of their hand.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 730.

2 And they covet ^d fields, and take *them* by violence; and houses, and take *them* away: so they ² oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.

^c Gen. 31. 29.
^d Isai. 5. 8.
² Or, defraud.

3 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, against ^e this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily: ^f for this time *is* evil.

^e Jer. 8. 3.
^f Amos 5. 13.
Eph. 5. 16.
^g Hab. 2. 6.
^h 2 Sam. 1. 17.
³ Heb. with a lamentation of lamentations.
¹ ch. 1. 15.

4 ¶ In that day shall *one* ^g take up a parable against you, and ^h lament ³ with a doleful lamentation, and say, We be utterly spoiled: ⁱ he hath changed the portion of my people: how hath he removed *it* from me! ⁴ turning away he hath divided our fields.

⁴ Or, instead of restoring.
^k Deut. 32. 8, 9.
⁵ Or, Prophecy not as they prophesy.

5 Therefore thou shalt have none that shall ^k cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the LORD.

6 ⁵ ⁶ ¹ Prophecy ye not, *say they to them that* prophesy: they shall not prophesy to them, *that they* shall not take shame.

⁶ Heb. Drop, &c. Ezek. 21. 2.
¹ Isai. 30. 10.
Amos 2. 12. & 7. 16.

CHAPTER II.

1. In every expression of these verses there is an aggravation of the guilt charged, which makes the woe denounced all the heavier.

2. "covet fields." Illustrated by 1 Kings xxi.

3. "I devise." As they have "devised" (ver. 1.).

"ye shall not remove your necks." The metaphor of a yoke is used to signify the severity of their bondage, and how full of evil, or calamity, the time would be.

4. "a parable," i. e. a mournful song, explained by the corresponding clause, "a doleful lamentation," couched in brief, abrupt sentences, and figured language: and consequently, as in this case, often obscure. If it is the enemy supposed to utter it, they are words of derision; if the Israelites themselves, on their own account, they are attributing, in irritation, to God's doing, that which was the result of their own sin, viz. the reversal of the original partition of the land, and the division of it among apostates, instead of the restoration of it to themselves.

5. Such as these, an ungodly generation, shall have no part in the promised restoration of the people and worship of God.

6. The words in italics are better left out. Their next step is to forbid Micah and the other servants of the Lord to prophesy these calamities. Yet, says he, they shall prophesy: though they shall not prophesy to these; like Ephraim, joined to idols, they shall be let alone (comp. Hos. iv. 17.). Yet the manifold shame shall not depart from them (comp. Isa. xxx. 10. Amos vii. 16. Jer. xi. 21.).

Before
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² Or,
shortened?

³ Heb.
upright?

⁴ Heb.
yesterday.

⁵ Heb. *over
against a
garment.*

⁶ Or, *wives.*

7 ¶ *O thou that art* named the house of Jacob, is the spirit of the LORD ² straitened? *are* these his doings? do not my words do good to him that walketh ³ uprightly?

8 Even ⁴ of late my people is risen up as an enemy: ye pull off the robe ⁵ with the garment from them that pass by securely as men averse from war.

9 The ⁶ women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children have ye taken away my glory for ever.

^m Deut. 12. 9.

ⁿ Lev. 18.

25, 28.

Jer. 3. 2.

⁷ Or, *walk
with the
wind, and
lie falsely.*

^o Ezek. 13. 3.

10 Arise ye, and depart; for this *is* not *your* rest: because it is ⁿ polluted, it shall destroy *you*, even with a sore destruction.

11 If a man ⁷ walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, *saying*, I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink; he shall even be the prophet of this people.

^p ch. 4. 6, 7.

12 ¶ ^p I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will

7. Once again the prophet addresses himself to them, in a strain of tender reproof. "O thou that art named (Isa. xlvi. 1.), and only named (St. John viii. 33. Rom. ii. 17.), after a pious ancestor, can you restrain the Spirit of the Lord from prophesying by us, whether for evil or for good to you? Are these perverse doings such as are pleasing to Him? Would not these prophetic words be for good only, did you but walk uprightly?" (comp. 1 Kings xxii. 8, 24.).

8—10. That it was otherwise was altogether their own fault; shewn by the charge of guilt on them, and the consequent appropriate punishment. The latest stage of their violence was the worst; committed upon peaceful neighbours, followed up by wanton extrusion of their wives, or newly-made widows, each one from her pleasant home, and the heartless interdict of their young children, for the rest of their lives, from the glory of religious privileges. On such the just sentence is passed, Prepare to quit this land: it shall be no rest for you, who have polluted it by your corrupt deeds (comp. Rev. xiii. 10.).

11. "My people" of ver. 9 has now become "this people." So far gone in sensuality, that only to such as will pander to it, in a lying spirit, the very windiness of falsehood (comp. Ezek. xiii. 2, 3, 17.) will they listen at all; had I been such, they would have listened to me for ever.

12. The purifying effects of their captivity are here supposed, and the prophet at once bursts in with the announcement of their happy restoration; partially in the time of Ezra (ch. vi. 16, 17, 21.), more fully in the times of the Apostles (Acts ii; xxi. 20.), fullest of all, "all of them," in the last days (Rom. xi. 25, 26.).

MICAH, III.

put them together ^a as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: ^r they shall make great noise by reason of *the multitude of men*.

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^q Jer. 31. 10.
^r Ezek. 36. 37.

13 The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and ^s their king shall pass before them, ^t and the LORD on the head of them.

^s Hos. 3. 5.

^t Isai. 52. 12.

CHAPTER III.

1 *The cruelty of the princes.* 5 *The falsehood of the prophets.* 8 *The security of them both.*

AND I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; ^a *Is it* not for you to know judgment? 710.
^a Jer. 5. 4, 5.

2 Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones;

3 who also ^b eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and ^c as flesh within the caldron. ^b Ps. 14. 4.
^c Ezek. 11.3,7.

4 Then ^d shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings. ^d Ps. 18. 41.
Prov. 1. 28.
Isai. 1. 15.
Ezek. 8. 18.
Zech. 7. 13.

“Bozrah” was celebrated for its sheep (Isa. xxxiv. 6.), and its stronghold, shewing the multitude, the peace, the defence, and the extension of the Church (comp. Obad. 19. Ezek. xxxvi. 37, 38. Isa. xlix. 19, 20.).

13. Observe the rise in the titles in the successive clauses: “the breaker,” or, breaker through (a name of the Messiah usual among the Jews); “their king;” “the LORD,” i.e. Jehovah. A magnificent prophecy of Christ, going before His people, in His sufferings, His Resurrection, His Ascension, typified by the pillar of fire and of the cloud, by the Captain of the Lord’s host (Josh. vi.), by Samson carrying off the gates of Gaza, by Cyrus breaking through the gates of the city of Babylon (Isa. xlv. 1—3; comp. Isa. lvii. 14; lxii. 10.). And His people conquer in Him, doing as He did, and will pass through the gate of death to life eternal.

CHAPTER III.

1—4. The prophet, entering upon the second division of his recorded preaching, continues his enumeration of the specific causes which brought down the Divine indignation, and addresses himself first to the heads and magistrates. He describes their flagrant rapacity, under the metaphor of flaying and preparing animals for food (comp. Ezek. xxiv.

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710.

^c Is. 56. 10, 11.
Ezek. 13. 10.
& 22. 25.

^f ch. 2. 11.
Matt. 7. 15.

^g Ezek. 13.
18, 19.

^h Is. 8. 20, 22.
Ezek. 13. 23.
Zech. 13. 4

² Heb. *from
a vision.*

³ Heb. *from
divining.*

ⁱ Amos 8. 9.

⁴ Heb.
upper lip.

^k Ps. 74. 9.
Amos 8. 11.

¹ Isai. 58. 1.

5 ¶ Thus saith the LORD ^e concerning the prophets that make my people err, that ^fbite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and ^ghe that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him:

6 ^htherefore night *shall be* unto you, ²that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, ³that ye shall not divine; ⁱand the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them.

7 Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their ⁴lips; ^kfor *there is* no answer of God.

8 ¶ But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, ¹to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

9 Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity.

10 ^mThey build up Zion with ⁿ⁵blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.

11 ^oThe heads thereof judge for reward, and ^pthe priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: ^qyet will they lean upon the LORD, ⁶and say, *Is not the LORD among us?* none evil can come upon us.

4, 5.); and forewarns them that, in the day of the Lord, they too should have judgment without mercy, who had shewed no mercy (comp. Ps. xviii. 41. Prov. xxi. 13. Isa. lix. 2.).

5—7. He next charges the false prophets with flattering and fawning ways to those who will feed their appetite, and with instant enmity to those who decline to do so. Their punishment shall accordingly be, the darkness of temporal calamity, and perpetual shame in the covering up of those lips, that had spoken lies, in token of mourning (Ezek. xxiv. 17, 22.) and uncleanness (Lev. xiii. 45.).

8. Micah takes fit occasion to announce his own supernatural commission, and to assert the qualities of Divine might, judicial discrimination, and boldness infused into him by the Spirit of the Lord; and in this consciousness he renews his denunciations.

10, 11. It might be literally true that these decorations of the city were provided at the expense of men's lives, or, metaphorically, by the harshest extortion and oppression (comp. Jer. xxii. 13.), or the word "build" may be used by way of irony. In the present charge the priests are especially implicated, and with them it was aggravated and

MICAH, IV.

12 Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ^r plowed
as a field, ^s and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and
^t the mountain of the house as the high places of the
forest.

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710.

^r Jer. 26. 18.

^s ch. 1. 6.

^t Ps. 79. 1.

^t ch. 4. 2.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *The glory, 3 peace, 8 kingdom, 11 and victory of the church.*

BUT ^a in the last days it shall come to pass, *that*
the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be
established in the top of the mountains, and it shall
be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow
unto it.

^a Is. 2. 2, &c.
Ezek. 17. 22,
23.

presumptuous guilt, because they made a pretence of religion, and
assured themselves of the perpetuity of the Divine favour (as in Jer.
vii. 4, 8—11.); and also because the Lord was their inheritance. Deut.
xxxiii. 10.

12. "Zion," the city of David, on the south. "Jerusalem," the
central portion of the city. "The mountain of the (Lord's) house,"
Mount Moriah on the east: meaning, that the whole city, in its political
and religious condition, should be brought to desolation.

This prophecy, thus boldly delivered by the faithful Micah, is remark-
able as having produced some reformation at the time, and as having
exercised a salutary influence a century afterwards, when it was quoted
by the elders for the protection of Jeremiah, and was the means of
preserving him from the malice of his enemies (see Jer. xxvi. 18.). Yet
did the awful prediction receive its accomplishment, first in the time of
Nebuchadnezzar, and still more entirely and literally in the times of the
Romans. Not one stone of all the beautiful buildings of the Temple was
left upon another, but all was thrown down. Josephus says (*Wars of
the Jews*, vii. 1. 1.): "The Romans so levelled to the ground the whole
"circuit of the city, that to a stranger it presented no token of ever having
"been inhabited." The Jews relate how the Temple area, and the city
generally, were ploughed by Hadrian; a symbolical act for "unmaking"
the whole place. And subsequent travellers recorded how it had been
ploughed and cultivated as a field, or become like the uncultivated
woodland heights (see Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*,
iv. 100.).

CHAPTER IV.

1. From the desolation and desertion of the "mountain of the house"
the prophet makes a direct bound to the glory of the "mountain of the
"house of the Lord," in one of the grandest and most comprehensive
predictions to be found in the whole range of the Old Testament. The
fulness of its accomplishment is reserved for "the last days;" i. e. not
only at the beginning of the last dispensation of the Messiah, in the
days of the Apostles, but at the consummation and climax of it still to
come.

The glowing imagery under which the prophet describes the future
will be better understood by looking into the several details of his vision.
Even after the destruction of the Jewish Church (ch. iii. 12.), there

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2 And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

3 ¶ And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into ^b plowshares, and their spears into ² pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, ^c neither shall they learn war any more.

^b Isai. 2. 4.
Joel 3. 10.
² Or, *scythes*.

^c Ps. 72. 7.

^d 1 Kin. 4. 25.
Zech. 3. 10.

4 ^d But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make *them* afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken *it*.

^e Jer. 2. 11. 5 For ^e all people will walk every one in the name

shall be still "the mountain of the house of the Lord," i. e. the Church and religion of Christ, firmly established upon a rock, "on the top of **the mountains**," in many places besides Mount Zion, and "exalted **above all the hills**," with better provision for enlargement, conspicuous as a city set upon a hill; and it shall be the centre of unity. From small beginnings, receiving, by supernatural power as of rivers flowing up-hill, a constant stream of converts from the Gentile world, not males only as at the feasts, not tribes only, but many nations ("all nations," Isa.); and they exciting and encouraging one another (as Andrew did Peter, and Philip Nathanael) for three purposes; (1) to join the Church, "going up" as to a place of dignity; (2) to receive instruction; (3) to form good resolutions of holy habits. For this "law" of grace and rule of life shall begin to be spoken of by the Lord Christ, and shall go forth from Zion and Jerusalem, shewing the connexion between the Old and the New Testaments.

3. With righteousness and in peace shall He judge the world (Ps. xcvi. 13; xcvi. 10; lxxii.). And this will be fulfilled (1) in the characteristic of the Gospel itself, a "Gospel of peace;" (2) in the fact of there being universal peace at the time of the birth of Christ; (3) in the civil peace among the professors of Christianity in the early ages; (4) in the final happy state of the Church. By His Spirit, too (St. John xvi. 8.) He shall judge, with power, with awe, and with winning efficacy.

4. It will be a condition of perfect and lasting security. This is exhibited under a proverbial expression, taken from a custom in Palestine, even amongst the poor, from the days of Moses even to modern times (comp. Deut. viii. 8. 1 Kings iv. 25. Zech. iii. 10.). This beautiful touch of description is not found in Isaiah. If all this is almost beyond belief, remember "the mouth of the Lord of hosts," the Almighty and the Faithful One, hath solemnly promised it.

5. Upon this sure ground believers will stir up one another, whether

MICAHA, IV.

of his god, and ^fwe will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.

6 In that day, saith the LORD, ^gwill I assemble her that halteth, ^hand I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted;

7 and I will make her that halted ⁱa remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD ^kshall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.

8 ¶ And thou, O tower of ²the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.

9 Now why dost thou cry out aloud? ¹is there no king in thee? is thy counsellor perished? for ^mpangs have taken thee as a woman in travail

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^f Zech. 10. 12.

^g Ezek. 34. 16.

^h Z. ph. 3. 19.

ⁱ Ps. 147. 2.

Ezek. 34. 13.

& 37. 21.

^j ch. 2. 12.

& 5. 3, 7, 8.

& 7. 18.

^k Isai. 9. 6.

& 24. 23.

Dan. 7. 14, 27.

Luke 1. 33.

Rev. 11. 15.

² Or, *Edar* :

Gen. 35. 21.

¹ Jer. 8. 19.

^m Isai. 13. 8.

& 21. 3.

Jer. 30. 6.

& 50. 43.

Jews or Gentiles, to religious constancy, in perpetuity (Zech. x. 12.) by the constancy which nations customarily shew to their respective gods (comp. Jer. ii. 11.).

“Glorious things of thee are spoken,
“Zion, city of our God.”

6. More, and that of a special kind, shall characterize “that day.” Notwithstanding dispersions, distress, and infirmities (ch. ii. 12, 13. Ezek. xxxiv. 15, 16. Jer. l. 6, 17. Deut. xxx. 4. Zeph. iii. 19. St. Matt. xv. 24.) there shall be a bringing in of the Jews; “a remnant,” and yet that remnant “a strong nation:” and the Messiah shall be King in Zion, i. e. the Church, which began in Zion. Repeated from Joel iii. 20, 21. Obad. 21, and continued in Isa. ix. 6. Dan. vii. 14.

8. “O tower of the flock.” Marg. “of Edar” (comp. Gen. xxxv. 21.), possibly, by that reference, representing Bethlehem, from which it was about a mile distant, and thus supplying a prophetic allusion to the shepherds of St. Luke ii.; perhaps, equivalent in purport to the corresponding clause, “stronghold,” or Ophel (comp. 2 Chron. xxvii. 3. Neh. iii. 27.), “of the daughter of Zion,” near to which was “the sheep-gate” (Neh. iii. 1.), thus representing Jerusalem as the city to which flocked the people of Israel at the great feasts. The words suggest the thought of Jacob and David as having been shepherds.

“unto thee.” The Hebrew runs thus: “Quite up to thee shall reach, “and shall come, the first dominion, even the kingdom to the daughter “of Jerusalem.” The fulfilment of this restoration of the former dominion of the house of David was but very partial in Zerubbabel, but amply verified in Christ. St. Luke i. 32. Ps. ii. 6: lxxxix. 27; and comp. St. Matt. xxi. 5; Zech. ix. 9; St. Mark xi. 10. It was also a true fulfilment of this prophecy, that “the Gospel of the kingdom” was first preached in Jerusalem.

9, 10. By a common method with him, the prophet recalls his hearers

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710.

10 Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail : for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field, and thou shalt go *even* to Babylon ; there shalt thou be delivered ; there the LORD shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies.

ⁿ Lam. 2. 16.

11 ¶ⁿ Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye^o look upon Zion.

^o Obad. 12.
ch. 7. 10.
^p Isai. 55. 8.
Rom. 11. 33.

12 But they know not ^pthe thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel : for he shall gather them ^qas the sheaves into the floor.

^q Isai. 21. 10.
^r Isai. 41. 15,
16.
Jer. 51. 33.

13 ^r Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion : for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass : and thou shalt ^sbeat in pieces many people : ^tand I will consecrate their gain unto the LORD, and their substance unto ^uthe Lord of the whole earth.

^s Dan. 2. 44.

^t Isai. 18. 7.
& 23. 18.
& 60. 6, 9.

^u Zech. 4. 14.
& 6. 5.

from those future glories to their own times, and the impending calamities. His words seem to point to three separate times of trouble, each introduced by the word "now" (vv. 9, 11 ; ch. v. 1.). After depicting the universal panic, under which the people lay at the sight of the Assyrian army, by an expressive metaphor common in Scripture (Ps. xlviii. 6. Isa. xiii. 8.), (1) he predicts their captivity in Babylon (one of the first of its class, for Babylon was as yet an obscure kingdom) and exposure to the misery of exile and homelessness ; yet, like the pangs of a woman, all would end well and happily at last, by the Divine interposition.

11. (2) Even after that (comp. Obad. 13. Ezek. xxxv. 5, 10, 15.) many petty nations round about them would take advantage of the Syrian's oppression of them, pointing at them, and devoting them with secret pleasure (Ps. xxxv. 21.) to profanation and ruin (comp. 1 Macc. v. 1, 2.) ; but, says the prophet, "they know not the thoughts of the Lord," Who would raise up deliverers to preserve even the literal Jerusalem, till all should be fulfilled in "the Jerusalem which is above."

12, 13. These nations, the enemies of the Jews, had gathered themselves by their own will, for one purpose, but were for another purpose, which they little imagined (comp. Isa. viii. 9 ; x. 7.) gathered together by God ; and, under the metaphor of threshing out corn (a favourite one with the prophets, e.g. Jer. li. 33. Isa. xxi. 10 ; xli. 15.), is predicted the victory of the Jews over their enemies, subjugated to their dominion by the Maccabees, as corn was threshed out by wheels of iron and by horned and strong-hoofed oxen. Yet it was not to be for destruction, but rather for that which could and would be consecrated to God, as seed-corn, converted and gained to the Lord, now acknowledged to be the Lord of the whole earth. Ps. xlv. 5 ; cxlix. 7—9.

CHAPTER V.

1 *The birth of Christ.* 4 *His kingdom.* 8 *His conquest.*Before
CHRIST
719.

NOW gather thyself in troops, O daughter of ^a troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall ^b smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.

2 But thou, ^b Beth-lehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little ^c among the ^d thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is to be* ^e ruler in Israel; ^f whose goings forth *have been* ^g from of old, from ^h everlasting.

^a Lam. 3. 30.
Matt. 5. 30.
& 27. 30.^b Matt. 2. 6.
John 7. 42.^c 1 Sam. 23. 23.^d Ex. 18. 25.^e Gen. 49. 10.

Isai. 9. 6.

^f Ps. 90. 2.^g Pro. 8. 22, 23.

John 1. 1.

^h Heb.*the days of**eternity.*

CHAPTER V.

1. (3) "Now." The prophet bids the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "the daughter of troops," i. e. accustomed to assemblages of violent bands of robbers, to gather together within the city, and prepare for a state of siege at the hands of the Romans, and for degradation in the persons of her chief rulers. "He," by anticipation, refers to ver. 5.

2. At the very lowest depth of degradation, comes the promise of deliverance (comp. chs. iii. 12; iv. 1.) by One Who should be distinguished thus: (1) He should be born in Beth-lehem Ephratah, both names being given for distinction's sake (Gen. xxxv. 19; xlviii. 7.); (2) that place, too small indeed in its actual size to be enumerated in Joshua xv. among the towns of Judah, being but a village (St. John vii. 42; see the Greek word) or reckoned among "the thousands," i. e. the old divisions of a tribe for fighting men (Judg. vi. 15, marg. 1 Chron. xii. 20.), should be really great in its future history (as the scribes in their quotation, St. Matt. ii., represented it) by being the birthplace of the coming Deliverer; (3) by implication He should be of the seed of David; yet (4) His birth would be a "coming forth to God," i. e. by His power, and to do His will; and (5) His "goings forth," a continual or majestic going forth (so the plural signifies). His generation was not to be reckoned only from David, from Abraham, but from eternity, from afore—an expression used only of the being of God; (6) His birth in Bethlehem would be, distinctively, of a woman (ver. 3.); (7) there would be an accession to Him, by conversion, of the remnant of His nation, incorporated into Him (Heb. ii. 11. Mal. iv. 6.); (8) His rule and pastoral office should abide in the abiding security of His people (ver. 4.), shewing that God's Name, i. e. the character and attribute of the Divine being, was in Him (comp. St. Matt. vii. 29.); (9) His dominion should be universal; and (10) should be happy for His subjects. For "this" (emphatic) man (ver. 5.) shall be, i. e. is the peace, the Prince of peace, to them against all assaults of their foes, of whom the Assyrians, then the actual foes of Jerusalem, and the Babylonians (comp. Gen. x. 10, 11.) are but types. Jerusalem may be given up (ver. 3.) for a time, and the Assyrians deface its outward glory, yet this Redeemer will always provide a sufficient number (comp. Eccl. xi. 2.), equal to the emergency, of spiritual teachers and temporal deliverers.

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^g ch. 4. 10.

^h ch. 4. 7.

² Or, rule.

¹ Isai. 40. 11.

& 41. 10.

Ezek. 34. 23.

ch. 7. 14.

^k Ps. 72. 8.

Isai. 52. 13.

Zech. 9. 10.

Luke 1. 32.

¹ Ps. 72. 7.

Isai. 9. 6.

Zech. 9. 10.

Luke 2. 14.

Eph. 2. 14.

³ Heb.

princes

of men.

⁴ Heb. eat up.

^m Gen. 10.

8, 10, 11.

⁵ Or, with her

own naked

swords.

ⁿ Luke 1. 71.

^o ver. 3.

^p Dent. 32. 2.

Ps. 72. 6.

& 110. 3.

3 Therefore will he give them up, until the time *that* ^g she which travaileth hath brought forth: then ^h the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.

4 And he shall stand and ² ⁱ feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now ^k shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

5 And this *man* ¹ shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight ³ principal men.

6 And they shall ⁴ waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of ^m Nimrod ⁵ in the entrances thereof: thus shall he ⁿ deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders.

7 And ^o the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people ^p as a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.

8 And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of ⁶ sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

9 ¶ Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.

10 ^q And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots:

6—9. The future fortunes of the Church are described by instances of representative victories gained by the Jews through the agency of the Persians; by the diffusion, through heavenly and softening influences like those of the dew, of the knowledge of the true God and the spirit of His religion; and by the bold and, through God, mighty overthrow of all heathenism: fulfilled especially in "the remnant," whom the Lord should call, the Apostles and their converts (comp. Ps. cx. 2; St. Luke xxi. 15; 2 Cor. x. 4—6.).

10—14. In these verses is exemplified and prophesied the entire dependence of the Church upon her Divine deliverer alone, and her abandonment of all wor'dly defences, lawful and unlawful.

11 and I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strong holds : Before
CHRIST
710.

12 and I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand ; and thou shalt have no *more* ^r soothsayers : r Isai. 2. 6.

13 ^a thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy ² standing images out of the midst of thee ; and thou shalt ^t no more worship the work of thine hands. a Zech. 13. 2.
2 Or, statues.
t Isai. 2. 8.

14 And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee : so will I destroy thy ³ cities. 3 Or, enemies.

15 And I will ^u execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard. u Ps. 149. 7.
ver. 8.
2 Thess. 1. 8.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *God's controversy for unkindness, 6 for ignorance, 10 for injustice, 15 and for idolatry.*

HEAR ye now what the LORD saith ; Arise, contend thou ² before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice. 2 Or, with.

2 ^a Hear ye, O mountains, ^b the LORD'S controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth : for ^c the LORD hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel. a Deut. 32. 1.
Ps. 50. 1, 4.
Isai. 1. 2.
b Hos. 12. 2.
c Isai. 1. 18.
& 5. 3, 4.
& 43. 26.

3 O my people, ^d what have I done unto thee ? and wherein have I wearied thee ? testify against me. Hos. 4. 1.
d Jer. 2. 5, 31.

15. Then will ensue the final and utter destruction of all heathenism and its votaries (comp. 2 Thess. i. 8.).

CHAPTER VI.

1. Very awakening and magnificent is this dramatic passage, with its rapid succession of addresses, calculated to excite the earnestness of the prophet, and to expose the stupidity of the people (comp. Ezek. vi. 2—4.). The prophet addresses the people (ver. 1.) ; the Lord, the prophet (ver. 1.) ; the prophet, the mountain (vv. 2 and 3 margin) ; the Lord, the people (vv. 3—5.) ; the people, the prophet (vv. 6, 7.) ; the prophet, each man among them (ver. 8.).

“Such sounds as make deep silence in the heart,

“For thought to do her part.” *Christian Year.*

2. “He will plead.” Lit. implead, in the passive voice, offering to clear Himself, if Israel has anything to say against Him.

3. “O my people.” A tender appellation, twice repeated, giving point to the expostulation, and enhanced by the mention of certain great benefits bestowed on them at different stages of their history, and of the teachers He had sent them ; viz. Moses, to deliver and instruct them, Aaron, to atone and pray for them, Miriam, to lead them (the women

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e Ex. 12. 51.
& 14. 30.
& 20. 2.
Deut. 4. 20.
Amos 2. 10.
f Num. 22. 5.
& 23. 7. &
24. 10, 11.
Deut. 23. 4, 5.
Josh. 24. 9, 10.
Rev. 2. 14.

e Num. 25. 1.
& 33. 49.
Josh. 4. 19.
& 5. 10.

h Judg. 5. 11.

2 Heb. *sons of a year?*

1 Ps. 50. 9.
& 51. 16.
Isai. 1. 11.

k Job 23. 6.

1 2 Kin. 16. 3.
& 21. 6. &
23. 10.

Jer. 7. 31.
& 19. 5.

Ezek. 23. 37.

3 Heb. *belly.*

4 ° For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

5 O my people, remember now what ^f Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from ^s Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know ^h the righteousness of the LORD.

6 ¶ Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves ² of a year old?

7 ⁱ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of ^k rivers of oil? ¹ shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression, the fruit of my ³ body *for* the sin of my soul?

8 He hath ^m shewed thee, O man, what is good; ^m Deut. 10. 12. 1 Sam. 15. 22. Hos. 6. 6. & 12. 6.

especially) in thanking and praising God. Comp. Isa. xliii. 23. Jer. ii. 5, for similar appeals.

5. From the second stage of their experience, a special instance of Divine interposition on their behalf is selected, the same which Joshua also (ch. xxiv. 9, 10.) had pressed upon them in his review of God's dealings with them, viz. how Balak had "sent and called Balaam to "curse" them, "consulting" how he might destroy them, and how "God would not hearken unto Balaam," so that he "blessed them still."

"from Shittim unto Gilgal." A brief expression for, Remember, too, all that passed, all the provocation, the mercy, the guidance, from Shittim, the last place of encampment in the wilderness, stained by the foul sin of Baal-peor, to Gilgal, the first in the promised land, marked by the renewal of the Divine covenant (see Josh. v. 2—10.). How full of wholesome reminiscences to a nation, or to an individual, is past history and providence!

"righteousness." Lit. righteousnesses; i. e. how just the cause of God is (ver. 2.); how faithful He is, especially to His mercy and promise.

6. Judgment is now supposed to have been given against Israel: the people are smitten with remorse; and with ignorant and exaggerated zeal offer unbounded terms of acceptance with God. Their plausible and eager enquiries, however, were mere hypocrisy. This mistaken view of their duty is, therefore, reproved by the prophet's appeal, made to each one of them, as to a reasonable being, that God had told him long since, e. g. by Moses (Deut. x. 12.) and by Samuel (1 Sam. xv. 22.), what it was He sought so anxiously from them. Would they obtain an interest in the pardon purchased and promised, they must fulfil the second and the first tables of the law, in all their essence (comp. Hos. xii. 7. Isa. v. 7. Hos. vi. 6.).

and what doth the LORD require of thee, but ¹to do justly, and to love mercy, and to ²walk humbly with thy God?

9 The LORD's voice crieth unto the city, and ³*the man of wisdom* shall see thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.

10 ¶ ⁴Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the ⁵scant measure ^o*that is abominable*?

11 ⁶Shall I count *them* pure with ^pthe wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?

12 For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and ^qtheir tongue *is* deceitful in their mouth.

13 Therefore also will I ^rmake *thee* sick in smiting thee, in making *thee* desolate because of thy sins.

14 ^sThou shalt eat, but not be satisfied; and thy casting down *shall be* in the midst of thee; and thou shalt take hold, but shalt not deliver; and *that* which thou deliverest will I give up to the sword.

15 Thou shalt ^tsow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the olives, but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil; and sweet wine, but shalt not drink wine.

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¹ Gen. 18. 19.

Isai. 1. 17.

² Heb. *humble thyself to walk.*

³ Or, *thy name shall see that which is.*

⁴ Or.

Is there yet unto every man an house of the wicked, &c.

⁵ Heb.

measure of leanness,

Amos 8. 5.

^o Deut. 25.

13.—16.

Prov. 11. 1.

& 20. 10, 23.

⁶ Or, *Shall I be pure*

with, &c.

^p Hos. 12. 7.

^q Jer. 9. 3, 5,

6, 8.

^r Lev. 26. 16.

Ps. 107. 17,

18.

^s Lev. 26. 26.

Hos. 4. 10.

^t Deut. 28. 38,

39, 40

Amos 5. 11.

Zeph. 1. 13.

Hag. 1. 6.

9. The action is renewed against Israel. The punishment the people were suffering was God's voice to them: in this dispensation His name, i. e. His attributes, were manifest to the wise and understanding (Hos. xiv. 9.); but now all are bidden to mark, in the time and place of the punishment, the Divine author of it (comp. Job v. 6; xxiii. 14.).

10—14. The people are to be tried by the criteria in ver. 8, and are shewn how fearfully they fall short in them. First, as to the duties of the second table, they are charged with injustice. "Are there yet," even after all warnings, such as those in Deut. xxv. 13—16, the ill-gotten wealth, and the scant measure for selling to the poor (Amos viii. 5.), by means of which it has been acquired, and all the fraud which that practice implies?

11. "Shall I count them pure?" Read as in margin, "Shall I (i. e. any one) be pure with," &c.

13, 14. The punishment by the rod, upon their persons, their property, and their children. They should have a "casting down," as it were, a sinking within them from inward decay; they shall not recover from a foreign foe what was dearest to them; what they save for a time shall be reserved for a severer stroke; what they have laboured for, they shall not enjoy. The threatenings of the law in Levit. xxvi. Deut. xxviii., shall all be fulfilled.

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2 Or, *he doth much keep the, &c.*

u 1 Kings 16. 25, 26.

x Hos. 5. 11.

y 1 Kings 16.

3), &c.

& 21. 25, 26.

2 Kin. 21. 3.

z 1 Kin. 9. 8.

Jer. 19. 8.

3 Or, *astonishment.*

a Isai. 25. 8.

Jer. 51. 51.

Lam. 5. 1.

2 Heb, *the gatherings of summer.*

a Isai. 17. 6.

& 24. 13.

b Isai. 28. 4.

Hos. 9. 10.

c Ps. 12. 1.

& 14. 1, 3.

Isai. 57. 1.

3 Or, *godly,*

or, *merciful.*

d Hab. 1. 15.

e Hos. 4. 18.

f Isai. 1. 23.

ch. 3. 11.

4 Heb, *the mischief of his soul.*

16 For ²the statutes of ^uOmri are ^xkept, and all the works of the house of ^yAhab, and ye walk in their counsels; that I should make thee ^za ³desolation, and the inhabitants thereof an hissing: therefore ye shall bear the ^areproach of my people.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *The church, complaining of her small number, 3 and the general corruption, 5 putteth her confidence not in man, but in God. 8 She triumpheth over her enemies. 14 God comforteth her by promises, 16 by confusion of the enemies, 18 and by his mercies.*

WOE is me! for I am as ²when they have gathered the summer fruits, as ^athe grape-gleanings of the vintage: *there is no cluster to eat:* ^bmy soul desired the firstripe fruit.

2 The ^cgood man is perished out of the earth: and *there is none upright among men:* they all lie in wait for blood; ^dthey hunt every man his brother with a net.

3 That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, ^ethe prince asketh, ^fand the judge *asketh* for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth ⁴his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up.

16. Secondly, as to the duties of the first table, they are charged with idolatry, and that of the worst type, imported from the impious statutes of Omri and Ahab, father and son, who, reckless in their impiety, had long since perished in their sin. The corresponding punishment is now to fall on this guilty people, as threatened of old (1 Kings ix. 8.), and the heaviest of all would be, that what had been their highest glory, viz. to be called the people of God (comp. vv. 3, 5 above), would now be their bitterest reproach (comp. Ezek. xxxvi. 20, 23.).

CHAPTER VII.

1. After the judgment which he had just denounced, the prophet utters a lament for the cause of it, viz. the almost entire disappearance of any good and pious man from the land. He first expresses this figuratively, in language such as a carnal people could understand, likening himself to a man looking out, hopelessly, for a fig in early summer, which is the first ripe fruit in Palestine and very choice (Isa. xxviii. 4. Hos. ix. 10.); or, again, as after vintage, longing for a cluster of grapes still, perchance, left, but in vain. The second verse explains the meaning of the simile (comp. Ps. xii. 1. Isa. lix. 2, 3.).

3, 4. The existing state of society is described in its sad details, marked by predetermined violence, against men's nearest kindred, both hands being upon evil, to do it "**earnestly**," i. e. thoroughly, as if evil were their good, and worth excelling in, the highest in station being the

MICAHA, VII.

4 The best of them ^ε is as a brier : the most upright *is sharper* than a thorn hedge : the day of thy watchmen *and* thy visitation cometh ; now shall be their perplexity.

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5 ^h Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide : keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.

^ε 2 Sam. 23. 6, 7.
Ezek. 2. 6.
See Isai. 55. 13.
^h Jer. 9. 4.

6 For ⁱ the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law ; a man's enemies *are* the men of his own house.

ⁱ Ezek. 22. 7.
Matt. 10. 21, 35, 36.
Luke 12. 53.
& 21. 16.
2 Tim. 3. 2, 3.

7 Therefore ^k I will look unto the LORD ; I will wait for the God of my salvation : my God will hear me.

^k Isai. 8. 17.

8 ¶ ^l Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy : ^m when I fall, I shall arise ; when I sit in darkness, ⁿ the LORD *shall be* a light unto me.

^l Prov. 24. 17.
Lam. 4. 21.
^m Ps. 37. 24.
Prov. 24. 16.
ⁿ Ps. 27. 1.

chief in corruption, wrapping up, i. e. perplexing, the course of justice, by the intertwining of sin with sin (Isa. v. 18.). Like thorny plants, with sharp spines pointing in every direction, it is dangerous to go near them (comp. 2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7. Ezek. ii. 6.). If such are the best, what must the worst be? For such the prophetic watchman has but one message, instantaneous judgment and extreme confusion.

5. The utter selfishness, which had been their sin, would now become their bitterest punishment, and source of perplexity to them, in the general treachery of friend against friend, intimate against intimate, even wife against husband, and children against parents. So it was (2 Kings vi. 28. Lam. iv. 3—16. Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, vi. 3. 8.) ; so shall it be in the hatred of the Gospel, and at the end of the world (St. Matt. x. 16, 17, 21, 35, 36.). The contempt and violation of the laws of domestic duties are always a sad symptom of the universal corruption of morals.

7—10. The contents of this chapter, as given in our Bibles, suggest an instructive explanation. "The Church, complaining of her small number, and the general corruption, putteth her confidence not in man, but in God." The scene is suddenly changed from Judæa to Babylon ; where the people, now in captivity, express their deep penitence. The prophet, as on other occasions, intimates his deep sympathy with them, by using his own person for this wholesome employment. The marks of genuine repentance are exemplified in these verses : humble, yet hopeful and confident, looking to God ; assured deliverance from spiritual enemies, symbolized by Babylon as in Isa. xlvi. 5, 6, or Edom, as in Ps. cxxxvii., and Obad. ; yet waiting God's time ; uncomplaining submission to the chastisement, as amply deserved ; patient reference of the whole case to His righteousness, the equity of His proceedings, and the performance of His promises.

The whole is a touching picture of an individual soul receiving its chastisement aright.

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o Lam. 3. 39.

p Ps. 37. 6.

2 Or,

And thou
will see her
that is mine
enemy, and
cover her
with shame.

q Ps. 35. 26.

r Ps. 42. 3, 10.

& 79. 10.

& 115. 2.

Joel 2. 17.

s ch. 4. 11.

3 Heb. she
shall be for
a treading
down.

t 2 Sam. 22. 43.

Zech. 10. 5.

u Amos 9. 11,

&c.

v Isai. 11. 16.

& 19. 13, &c.

& 27. 13.

Hos. 11. 11.

4 Or, even to,

5 Or, After

that it

hath been.

9 °I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: ^phe will bring me forth to the light, *and* I shall behold his righteousness.

10 ²Then *she that is mine enemy shall see it*, and ^qshame shall cover her which said unto me, ^rWhere is the LORD thy God? ^smine eyes shall behold her: now ³shall she be trodden down ^tas the mire of the streets.

11 *In the day that thy ^uwalls are to be built, in that day shall the decree be far removed.*

12 *In that day also ^xhe shall come even to thee from Assyria, ⁴and from the fortified cities, and from the fortress even to the river, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain.*

13 ⁵Notwithstanding the land shall be desolate because of them that dwell therein, ^yfor the fruit of their doings.

14 ¶ ⁶Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of

^v Jer. 21. 14. ch. 3. 12.

⁶ Or, Rule, Ps. 28. 9. ch. 5. 4.

9, 10. The people of God are punished for a time, remedially. When God deems it to have been enough, He shall judge between them and those through whose hand the punishment has come, and as to whom they are innocent (comp. Ps. xlii. 10; xxxv. &c., which are to be explained on this principle). The impious taunts of the heathen, really directed against God Himself, would be followed by utter ruin to them, which His people would behold, and that with satisfaction at the vindication of the Divine laws.

11, 12. The coming day of joy to them would be marked by three blessings; (1) the building of their fences (comp. Amos ix. 11.); (2) the removal far away, i. e. the abrogation, of the decree for their captivity; (3) the extension of that liberation and return from Babylon to other directions, e. g. to Assyria (comp. Isa. xix. 23, 24; xxvii. 13; xi. 16. Hos. xi. 11.), and to the "fortress," a name for Egypt adapted from the Hebrew, and to "the river," i. e. Euphrates, which was the old boundary of the promised land (Gen. xv. 18.). From all these quarters, the banished and scattered children of the captivity would again assemble at Jerusalem, as it were one by one, signified by the use of the word "he" (comp. Ps. lxxxvii. 4—6.). Neither "sea" nor "mountain," no discouragements or obstacles, would stand in the way of nations, the most widely distant. All this received a special fulfilment, both literal and spiritual, in Acts ii. 5—11.

13. Yet must the deserved desolation be first fulfilled (Ps. cvii. 34.); as indeed it was (1) in the Babylonish captivity; (2) after the sacking of the city by Titus: "for the fruit of their doings," i. e. their evil desert. Isa. iii. 10.

14. The prophet resigns his pastoral office by committing his charge

thine heritage, which dwell solitarily *in* ² the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed *in* Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.

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² Isai. 37. 24.

15 ^a According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things.

^a Ps. 68. 22. & 78. 12.

16 The nations ^b shall see and be confounded at all their might: ^c they shall lay *their* hand upon *their* mouth, their ears shall be deaf.

^b Isai. 26. 11.

^c Job 21. 5. & 29. 9.

17 They shall lick the ^d dust like a serpent, ^e they shall move out of their holes like ² worms of the earth: ^f they shall be afraid of the LORD our God, and shall fear because of thee.

^d Ps. 72. 9. Isai. 49. 23.

^e Ps. 18. 45.

² Or, *creeping things*.

^f Jer. 33. 9.

18 ^g Who is a God like unto thee, that ^h pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of ⁱ the remnant of his heritage? ^k he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth *in* mercy.

^g Ex. 15. 11.

^h Ex. 34. 6. 7. Jer. 50. 20.

ⁱ ch. 4. 7. & 5. 3, 7, 8.

^k Ps. 103. 9. Isai. 57. 16. Jer. 3. 5.

to the true Shepherd with prayer, thanksgiving, and ascription of praise, in language taken from the old Scriptures.

“which dwell solitarily in the wood.” Of old, such was a description of Israel’s blessing and security, as in the mouth of Balaam (Num. xxiii. 9.) and of Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 28.); here it is rather a description of their destitution and lack of human aid, made the ground of a prayer that they may regain their old pastures in “Carmel,” the “fruitful field” (comp. Isa. xxix. 17; xxxii. 15; xxxv. 2.), and in the fertile territory of “Bashan” and “Gilead” (comp. Deut. xxxii. 14. Jer. l. 19. Ezek. xxxix. 18. Num. xxxii. 1.).

15. The prophet’s prayer is answered at once, more than he asked or thought. The marvels of the great deliverance from Egypt (comp. Exod. xiv. 14—16.) should be renewed, even out-done, in the effects of this promised salvation, upon the enemies of God’s people (comp. Ps. cxxvi. 2.); viz. confusion at their own utter failure, inability to say a word more (comp. Acts iv. 16.), silence as of deaf men, servile subjugation as to a curse (comp. Gen. iii. 14; Num. v. 17, 18.), and trembling abasement (comp. Ps. lii. 9. Deut. xxviii. 10. Ps. xviii. 45. Isa. xlix. 23. Esth. viii. 17.). Such is the difference of the dispensations of God to the penitent and to the reprobate.

18. Having exemplified in ch. i. the meaning of names, Micah here uses his own name to usher in his final exclamation of the incomparable mercy of God, identifying himself, as before, with the remnant of God’s heritage. The nations are amazed at the effects (vv. 16, 17.), Micah at the cause, and gives glory absolutely to the Lord for redemption, pardon, and subdual of sin. He borrows (1) the words of Miriam in her great thanksgiving ode (Exod. xv. 11.), and of Moses, after the great transgression (Exod. xxxiv. 7.); (2) the metaphor of the great deliverance (Exod. xv.); and (3) the spirit of Ps. lxxxv. 1, 2. Isa. xxxiii. 24; xxxviii. 17; xl. 1, 2.

MICAH, VII.

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19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

¹ Luke 1. 72,
73.
^m Ps. 105. 9,
10.

20 ¹Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, *and* the mercy to Abraham, ^mwhich thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.

19. "He will turn again, He will have compassion," i. e. according to a common Hebrew idiom, He will again have compassion.

20. "Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham." There is propriety in the words chosen. What was free, preventing "mercy" to Abraham became, when God had once promised it, His "truth" or faithfulness to His promise. Or, again "Jacob" may stand for the seed of Jacob, to whom pertained the promises; Abraham, for Jews and Gentiles, who walk in the steps of his faith. The same distinction is dwelt on by St. Paul (Rom. xv. 8, 9.). Yet here "mercy and truth are" also "met together" (see Ps. lxxxv. 10; lxxxix. 14; xcvi. 3. St. Luke i. 54, 55, 70, 72.). And both are made sure by two immutable things, the Divine promise and the Divine oath.

How precious, how full, how free are the promises of this covenant of grace "declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu our Lord!" May the reader and the writer find them so to their own present and eternal joy! Amen.

NAHUM.

INTRODUCTION.

NAHUM (about B.C. 700.) was, probably, a contemporary of the prophet Isaiah, and a witness of the terrible Assyrian invasions, under Shalmaneser and Sennacherib, which destroyed the kingdom of Israel, and *threatened* with destruction the kingdom of Judah (2 Kings xviii. 9—17.). It pleased God, however, to defer for yet a century longer the punishment of Judah. And accordingly—as Isaiah had foretold—on the frontiers of Egypt, to which he had pushed forward the main body of his army, Sennacherib lost in a single night 185,000 of his men. This disaster compelled him to flee ignominiously back to Assyria. And there can be no doubt that so signal a manifestation of the Divine mercy and justice, so striking a proof that the Lord's arm, which in former times had saved His people at the Red Sea, was not now “waxed short,” must have awakened an enthusiastic devotion to His cause in the hearts of all good men, and have especially stirred the prophets of that time to forecast, under Divine inspiration, the total downfall of that wicked power which had “reproached and blasphemed the Holy One of Israel” (2 Kings xix. 22.).

Now Nahum—a native of Elkosh, in Galilee—was evidently both a good man and a prophet full of the highest inspiration. And it is not unlikely that he had himself witnessed, and had suffered from, the earlier devastations of Northern Palestine, by Tiglath-Pileser (B.C. 740.), and by Shalmaneser and Sargon (B.C. 721.). He may then have taken refuge at Jerusalem under the faithful king Hezekiah, whose religious reforms were giving fresh heart and hope for the future to all true servants of Jehovah throughout the land. Hence his encouraging words addressed to Judah in ch. i. 15. For Hezekiah had not only re-established, in its ancient dignity and honour, the worship of the true God at Jerusalem, but he had also sent messengers “from city to city” “through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun,” inviting the whole population of Israel, that was left in those ravaged districts, to reunite with Judah and to come up to a solemn passover about to be held at Jerusalem (2 Chron. xxx. 1—13.).

INTRODUCTION.

Amid these inspiring events, it appears that Nahum felt himself aroused to write the sublime ode against Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, which has been providentially preserved to us among the (so called) Minor Prophets. The composition is full of fire and spirit. It is a priceless specimen of the truest and highest kind of religious poetry. The magnificent and stately opening is of almost unequalled grandeur. And the predictions of Nineveh's downfall, and of its subsequent erasure and concealment under the crumbling heaps of its own ruin, have received so remarkable and literal a fulfilment, that some critics have been tempted to think that the prophecy was written after the event. The event, however, took place seventy-five years later, viz. in B.C. 625, at a period when such pages as these could hardly have been penned; when Judah was much farther gone towards her own ruin; and when Manasseh's wicked reign had left small feelings of hope and exultation among the prophets of Jehovah,—except for some far future Messianic epoch, when “a remnant” should return from captivity and be restored to His favour. (Contrast the tone of Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah, who all lived at that later period.) The destruction also of No-Amon, or Thebes in Upper Egypt, by Sargon the Assyrian invader,—an event which seems referred to, as of recent occurrence, in Nahum iii. 8,—took place about B.C. 720. Throughout this prophecy, there is no detail, no mention of the special enemies (the Medes and Babylonians), by whose combined forces Nineveh was most unexpectedly overthrown. All is couched in general terms. The terrible features of ancient Oriental warfare and ruin, which strike the modern reader of this book with horror, are all of them such as a Jew of Hezekiah's times must have been too fearfully familiar with,—when he saw with his own eyes, or heard the panic-stricken fugitives recount, the scenes which accompanied Shalmaneser's invasion of the Israelite kingdom and which marked with footsteps of blood his successor's ruthless attack upon the neighbouring country of Egypt.

The fulfilment of Nahum's “burden of Nineveh” took place in the following way. The vast Assyrian empire,—which included all Western Asia, and had seized with the one hand Media and Persia, and with the other Egypt and Cyprus,—must have become, as time went on, a seething mass of rebellion and discontent. For its policy had been, for more than a century, the wicked and cruel policy of crushing all patriotism, and paralyzing all resistance, by a vast system of transportation. Under this ruthless system, whole populations were torn from their homes and planted forcibly in some strange land; while the conquered inhabitants of this other land were broken up and distributed, in like manner, in some foreign region no less strange and hateful to them. Thus the fragments of twelve crushed nations are recorded, in 2 Kings

INTRODUCTION.

xvii. 24, and Ezra iv. 8, as having been transported from the opposite ends of the empire to the small district of Samaria; while the inhabitants of Samaria, in their turn, were compelled to migrate *en masse* to "the cities of the Medes." But at length this shocking and heartless policy was to receive its just reward. The Medes rose in revolt against Saracus, the great-grandson of Sennacherib; and who can say what part may have been taken in this avenging revolt by the great colony of Jews, who had been forcibly carried thither less than a century before? The Assyrian king detached his trusted general, Nabopolassar, to Babylon to make head against the rebellion; but Nabopolassar himself joined the rebels, and carried over with him to the side of the invading Medes the whole of his army. In spite of this defection, however, Saracus seems to have held out for two years. And then, finding a breach made in his mighty walls by an inundation of the Tigris, he suddenly despaired of success; and collecting all his treasures and his harem in the royal palace, consumed them and it and himself by fire. The city was then taken, and was utterly and for ever destroyed by its unrelenting foes. Everything that would burn was burnt, the population was removed, and the Mesopotamian seat of empire was transferred to the rival city, Babylon, on the Euphrates. Ere 300 years had elapsed, the very name of Nineveh and all its eventful history had been forgotten. Its vast constructions of sun-dried bricks had crumbled back to dust and clay, forming ridges and mounds of rubbish three or four miles in extent,—over which the tide of Alexander's conquests rolled eastwards, without any consciousness that a buried empire lay beneath. And it was reserved for the year 1843 after Christ, to reveal to the eyes of our own generation the astonishing fact that the tell-tale records of Assyrian violence and rapine, the calcined and blackened proofs of the fulfilment of Nahum's prophecy, and the very portraits of Sennacherib himself and of his Jewish captives, reposed untouched beneath those mounds, and needed but a little expenditure of toil and money to transport them to the museums of Paris and London, where they are now deposited.

To no generation, therefore, has the great lesson of Nahum's prophecy come home so clearly and forcibly as to our own. It is the lesson, that *empires founded on force and fraud are destined inevitably, in God's good time, to come to ruin*; while much weaker states, whose bases are laid in "patient continuance in well-doing" will survive and profit by their enemies' fall; so that (in our Lord's own words) "the meek shall inherit the earth."

CHAPTER I.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

The majesty of God in goodness to his people, and severity against his enemies.

a Zeph. 2. 13.

2 Or, *The*

LORD is a jealous God, and a revenger, &c.

b Ex. 20. 5.

& 34. 14.

Deut. 4. 24.

Josh. 24. 19.

c Deut. 32. 35.

Ps. 94. 1.

Isai. 59. 18.

3 Heb. *that*

hath fury.

d Ex. 34. 6, 7.

Neh. 9. 17.

Ps. 103. 8.

Jonah 4. 2.

e Job 9. 4.

f Ps. 18. 7, &c.

& 97. 2.

Hab. 3. 5,

11, 12.

g Ps. 106. 9.

Isai. 50. 2.

THE burden ^aof Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

2 ² God is ^bjealous, and ^cthe LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and ³is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth *wrath* for his enemies.

3 The LORD is ^dslow to anger, and ^egreat in power, and will not at all acquit *the wicked*: ^fthe LORD *hath* his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds *are* the dust of his feet.

4 ^g He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: ^hBashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth.

h Isai. 33. 9.

CHAPTER I.

1. "The burden of Nineveh." This expression is very frequent in the prophets of the Old Testament (see, for instance, Isa. xiii. 1, &c. Zech. xii. 1. Hab. i. 1. Mal. i. 1.). The Hebrew word does not necessarily mean "a heavy message of threatening and woe:" it is merely "a lifting up," viz. of the voice to speak (or to weep, Gen. xxvii. 38.), an utterance, an oracle.

2. "God is jealous . . . and is furious." Lit. "God is flushed with anger (or jealousy for His honour), and is lord of heat (or dispenser of the cup of blind headstrong passion, by which men rush hotly to their ruin)." Both expressions are, of course, highly figurative. They labour to depict in intelligible language the solemn truth, that our God "is a jealous God" (Exod. xx. 5.),—not apathetic and indifferent when mankind, whom He loves, forsake Him: and also that when men do forsake Him, He often punishes them by leaving them to be taught by experience what are the wages of a headstrong continuance in evil-doing. "Whom God is purposing to destroy, He first deprives of common-sense," said the old heathen adage,—an observation which is confirmed before our eyes every day.

3. "The Lord is slow to anger." Here is the other, and more evangelical, side of the picture of God's relations to men. How does our own conscience, and the remembrance of our numerous sins, bear out the truth of the prophet's words! Were the Lord merely "jealous" and "furious," where should we sinners appear? Yet this trait of God's sublime patience adds to the moral grandeur and awfulness of the prophet's picture. "There is mercy with Thee; therefore shalt Thou be feared" (Ps. cxxx. 4.).

4. "Bashan . . . Carmel . . . Lebanon." All home-scenes to the prophet. He appears to have been one, then, who loved the magnificent hills and forests, and the cool rushing streams of Northern

NAHUM, I.

5 ⁱThe mountains quake at him, and ^kthe hills melt, and ^lthe earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.

6 Who can stand before his indignation? and ^mwho can ²abide in the fierceness of his anger? ⁿhis fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.

7 ^oThe LORD is good, a ³strong hold in the day of trouble; and ^phe knoweth them that trust in him.

8 ^qBut with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies.

9 ^rWhat do ye imagine against the LORD? ^she will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.

Before
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ⁱ Ps. 68. 8.

^k Judg. 5. 5.

Ps. 97. 5.

Mic. 1. 4.

^l 2 Pet. 3. 10.

^m Mal. 3. 2.

ⁿ Heb.

stand up.

ⁿ Rev. 16. 1.

^o 1 Chr. 16. 34.

Ps. 140. 5.

Jer. 33. 11.

Lam. 3. 25.

^s Or,

strength.

^p Ps. 1. 6.

2 Tim. 2. 19.

^q Dan. 9. 26.

& 11. 10, 22,

40.

^r Ps. 2. 1.

^s 1 Sam. 3. 12.

Palestine, amid which his youth had been spent; and who failed not to see in nature nature's God. Happy those who, like him, can find in the mountains and the seashore and in loving contemplation of the common sights and sounds of their own native land a rich feast of pleasure and of religious emotion ever within their reach. "For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, —being understood by the things that are made,—even His eternal "power and Godhead" (Rom. i. 20.). And with reference to the book of nature, as well as to the book of grace, Holy Scripture seems ever to say: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

7. "he knoweth them that trust in him." Amid all the "troubles "of the righteous" (Ps. xxxiv. 19.), and those fears of abandonment, which sometimes bring to the lips our Lord's own cry, "My God, my "God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (St. Matt. xxvii. 46.) let this thought be our comfort: "I know My sheep, and am known of Mine" (St. John x. 14.); "The Lord knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. ii. 19.). If even man can recognise Christ's people, and "take knowledge "of them that they have been with Jesus" (Acts iv. 13.), how much more can God's eye discern, amid the crowd, those that really "trust in "Him!"

8. "an utter end of the place thereof." That is, of the Lord's great enemy at this time, the great "troubler of Israel," Nineveh. This abrupt introduction of a new subject,—which had however been hovering before the seer's own mind,—and this obscure usage of various pronouns, are both highly characteristic of the Hebrew prophets and poets. (See, for instance, Ps. lxxxvii. Hos. x. Isa. xxii.)

9. "affliction shall not rise up the second time." That is, against Judah,—at least, not from the same quarter, viz. the hostility of Nineveh. This prediction was literally fulfilled. For when a similar "affliction" from hostile invasion returned, a century later, it was from Babylon that it arose and not from Nineveh, which had in the interval been utterly destroyed.

Before
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† 2 Sam. 23.
6, 7.

u ch. 3. 11.

x Mal. 4. 1.

y 2 Kings 19.
22, 23.

2 Heb. a
counsellor
of Belial.

3 Or, if
they would
have been

at peace, so should they have been many, and so should they have been shorn, and he should have passed away. 2 Kings 19, 35, 37. 4 Heb. shorn. a Isai. 8. 8. Dan. 11. 10.

10 For while *they be* folden together ^t as thorns,
u and while they are drunken *as* drunkards, ^x they
shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.

11 There is *one* come out of thee, ^y that imagineth
evil against the LORD, ^z a wicked counsellor.

12 Thus saith the LORD; ³ Though *they be* quiet,
and likewise many, yet thus ⁴ shall they be ⁵ cut
down, when he shall ^a pass through. Though I
have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more.

10. "folden . . . as thorns." The meaning is, that "while they intertwine their defences, like a hedge of thorns, and boast (like the Scotch thistle) 'no one without paying for it shall grapple with me,'—and while (as Elijah's sacrifice was drenched thrice over, 1 Kings xviii. 34.) they are soaked and dripping with strong drink,—nevertheless, they shall blaze up and be utterly annihilated." This metaphor is not uncommon in the Hebrew writers (see especially 2 Sam. xxiii. 6: "The sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns. The man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron. And they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place"). History relates the fact that the great defeat, which led to the capture of Nineveh, took place while "the king and his whole army were negligent and drunken." In a precisely similar way, Babylon was afterwards taken while Belshazzar and his lords "drank wine and praised the gods of gold" (Dan. v. 4.); and in earlier times, Ben-hadad, king of Damascus, was smitten and routed before Samaria while he "was drinking himself drunk at noon in the pavilions, he and the kings" (1 Kings, xx. 16.). How many an unwatchful soul has been smitten and destroyed in the same way! "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 St. Pet. v. 8.).

11. "a wicked counsellor." No doubt, Sennacherib is meant; who, with his ruthless armies, had passed through the Holy Land a short time before the prophet wrote. A sculptured slab has been found, among the ruins of this king's palace at Nineveh, representing (it seems) the mighty despot himself upon his throne, while Jewish captives, male and female, are being brought before him. A full account of these events may be read in 2 Kings xviii. and in Isa. xxxvi. and xxxvii.; where the pious Hezekiah prays in the following words: "Open Thine eyes, O Lord, and see! and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God."

12. "Though they be quiet," &c. That is, "though they be unimpaired in numbers and thus many, yet even so shall they be mown down, and he (their king) shall pass away and go to ruin." How frequently it happens that, at the very height of their power and prosperity, the rulers of great kingdoms and vast armies are brought to destruction! How often too, when the pampered and selfish soul whispers to itself, "thou hast much goods laid up for many years," does God sternly reply, "Thou fool! this night shall thy soul be required of thee!" (St. Luke xii. 20.) "For when they shall say, 'Peace and safety,'

NAHUM, II.

13 For now will I ^b break his yoke from off thee, and will burst thy bonds in sunder. Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

14 And the LORD hath given a commandment ^b concerning thee, *that* no more of thy name be sown: out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image: ^c I will make thy grave; for thou art vile. ^b Jer. 2, 20.
& 30, 8.
^c 2 Kin. 19. 37.

15 Behold ^d upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, ² keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for ^{3 e} the wicked shall no more pass through thee; ^f he is utterly cut off. ^d Isai. 52, 7.
Rom. 10, 15.
² Heb. *feast*.
³ Heb. *Belial*.
^e ver. 11, 12.
^f ver. 14.

CHAPTER II.

The fearful and victorious armies of God against Nineveh.

HE ^{2 a} that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face: ^b keep the munition, watch the way, make *thy* loins strong, fortify *thy* power mightily. ² Or, *The disperser, or, hammer*.
^a Jer. 50, 23.
^b Jer. 51, 11, 12, ch. 3, 14.

“then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape” (1 Thess. v. 3).

15. “Behold upon the mountains,” &c. The prophet sees, in imagination, the messengers hastening westwards across the mountains that separate Judæa from Assyria; and hears their joyful news that Nineveh, the tyrannical oppressor of all the smaller nations, is destroyed. Compare the similar cry of exultation over the fall of Babylon in Isa. lii. 7: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings!” And over the approaching fall of heathen Rome, in Rev. xviii. 1: “I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen! . . . Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets! For God hath avenged you on her.’” Far different are the feelings and the expressions, which Holy Scripture suggests to us, when any portion of the *Church* apostatizes and falls. When Jesus “was come near, He beheld the city and wept over it: saying, If thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes” (St. Luke xix. 41.). God forbid, then, that we should exult over the fall and ruin of anything, except over the fall of heathenish tyrannies and satanic barriers against the progress of the kingdom of God. All that is built on the true foundation is capable of being restored and even rebuilt from its foundations. But that which is built on a false foundation must be destroyed. For other *foundation* can no man lay, but that which is laid, viz. Jesus Christ (1 Cor. iii. 11.). Of Judah, therefore, in spite of all her corruptions, the prophets never despair.

CHAPTER II.

1. “He that dasheth in pieces.” The Hebrew is simply “the hammer.”

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^c Isai. 10. 12.
Jer. 25. 29.

² Or,
*the pride of
Jacob as
the pride
of Israel.*

^d Ps. 80. 12.
Hos. 10. 1.

^e Is. 63. 2, 3.

³ Or, *dyled
scarlet.*

⁴ Or, *fiery
torches.*

⁵ Heb.
their show.

⁶ Or,
gallants.

⁷ Heb.
*covering,
or, coverer.*

⁸ Or, *molten.*

⁹ Or,
*that which
was esta-
blished, or,
there was a
stair made.*

2 ° For the LORD hath turned away ² the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel: for ^d the emptiers have emptied them out, and marred their vine branches.

3 The shield of his mighty men is made ° red, the valiant men *are* ³ in scarlet: the chariots *shall be* with ⁴ flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the fir trees shall be terribly shaken.

4 The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall justle one against another in the broad ways: ⁵ they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.

5 He shall recount his ⁶ worthies: they shall stumble in their walk; they shall make haste to the wall thereof, and the ⁷ defence shall be prepared.

6 The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be ⁸ dissolved.

7 And ⁹ Huzzab shall be ² led away captive, she ² Or, *discovered.*

And the personage in whom this was afterwards fulfilled was Cyaxares, king of the Medes, who—like “Charles Martel” (or, the “Hammer,”) the saviour of France, in A.D. 732, from the Saracens—broke the power of Assyria, and besieged and destroyed Nineveh. Thus was the godless power, which had caused the “dispersion” of the Jews, itself dispersed and broken up; and that in spite of “keeping the defences, watching the “way, and making its loins strong.”

2. “turned away the excellency of Jacob.” Rather, “bath turned “back (or restored) the prosperity both of Judah and of Israel.” The prophet sees in vision a restoration which was not really to take place till the Medes and Persians had shattered Babylon, in addition to Nineveh,—and even then only with very partial results (see Ezra ii. 64.).

3. “The shield . . . is made red,” &c. It seems that scarlet was the favourite colour with the Assyrian warriors. The steel of their chariots flashed in the sun like torches; and the cypress-staves of their lances quivered terribly in their eager grasp. Through the streets of Nineveh dashed madly the chariots, this way and that; like lightning, they drove furiously towards the threatened quarters of the city. The king musters his chieftains. The defence is prepared. But all is in vain. “Unless “the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” Ps. cxxvii. 1.

6. “The gates of the rivers shall be opened,” &c. Here begins a vivid description of the capture of the city. The river-gates were always, it seems, a weak point; for Babylon, a city placed on the Euphrates as Nineveh fronted the Tigris, was taken a century later by Cyrus in the same way. They were to be burst open; the royal palace should stand then undefended and be swept away by fire and sword; while its inmates were led away into shameful captivity.

7. “Huzzab shall be led away.” This word is very obscure. It

shall be brought up, and her maids shall lead *her* as with the voice of ^fdoves, tabering upon their breasts.

8 But Nineveh *is* ²of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand, *shall they cry*; but none shall ³look back.

9 Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold: ⁴for *there is* none end of the store *and* glory out of all the ⁵pleasant furniture.

10 She is empty, and void, and waste: and the ⁶heart melteth, and ^hthe knees smite together, ⁱand much pain *is* in all loins, and ^kthe faces of them all gather blackness.

11 Where *is* the dwelling of ^lthe lions, and the

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

^f Isai. 38. 14.

& 59. 11.

² Or, from

the days

that she

hath been.

³ Or,

cause them

to turn.

⁴ Or, and

their infinite

store, &c.

⁵ Heb. vessels

of desire.

⁶ Is. 13. 7, 8.

^h Dan. 5. 6.

ⁱ Jer. 30. 6.

^k Joel 2. 6.

^l Job 4. 10,

11. Ezek.

13. 2,-7.

should probably be taken with the preceding verse; "the palace shall be dissolved and *made to flow down* or crumble away into mounds of dust and rubbish." Others derive it from a different Hebrew root, and make it mean: "It is decreed [God's decree stands firm] she [Nineveh] shall be exposed to shame." Others again, in despair of any better meaning, take it for a proper name of the queen of Nineveh. No such name, however, is known to history. Any way, this vivid picture of a miserable captivity is completed by the additional touch, that Nineveh's attendant maidens (perhaps her secondary cities) shall lead her along moaning with a subdued murmur, like that of doves; and beating their breasts for despair.

8. "like a pool of water." Nineveh had been for many ages,—as the Roman historian said of Rome, and as London is now,—a "colluvies omnium gentium," a reservoir into which men of all nations had flowed. Moreover, it seems to have been part of the singular Assyrian policy in dealing with conquered nations, to transplant whole populations within the vast areas of their enclosed cities,—areas so vast, that crops of corn and fodder could be raised in security, within the protection of the walls. It must, however, have been a dangerous policy thus to fill their suburbs with a host of broken-spirited and disaffected foreigners. No wonder that when the "hammer" was heard at the gates and the wall was broken through by an enemy, there were few found to make head against him. Thus do the cruel and ruthless contrivances of the wicked, sacrificing the poor and weak to increase their own security, and trampling upon all the sacred feelings of home, often turn to their own ruin. "The wicked is caught in his own net: in the trap that he laid privily is his foot taken" (Ps. ix. 15.). "Come, let us kill him," said the worldly and violent Jews, "that the inheritance may be ours:" but this very rejection of the "Prince of Peace" issued eventually in war against the Romans, by whom they were utterly destroyed. "Be not thou afraid, though one be made rich, or the glory of his house be increased" (Ps. xlix. 16.). "Put thou thy trust in the Lord, and be doing good: dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed" (Ps. xxxvii. 3.).

NAHUM, III.

Before
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cir. 713.

feedingplace of the young lions, where the lion, *even* the old lion, walked, *and* the lion's whelp, and none made *them* afraid?

12 The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravin.

m Ezek. 29. 3.
& 38. 3.
& 39. 1.
ch. 3. 5.

13 ^m Behold, I *am* against thee, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions: and I will cut off thy prey from the earth, and the voice of ^a thy messengers shall no more be heard.

n 2 Kin. 18.
17, 19. &
19, 9, 23.

CHAPTER III.

The miserable ruin of Nineveh.

² Heb. *city of bloods.*

^a Ezek. 22. 2, 3.
& 24. 6, 9.
Hab. 2. 12.
^b Jer. 47. 3.

WOE to the ^{2a} bloody city! it *is* all full of lies *and* robbery; the prey departeth not; 2 the noise of a whip, and ^b the noise of the

13. "thy messengers." That is, thy ambassadors; such as were Rab-shakeh and Rab-saris (the chief cup-bearer and the chief eunuch), sent as messengers by Sennacherib, "to reproach the living God" (2 Kings xviii. 17; xix. 23).

CHAPTER III.

1. "full of lies and robbery." It is a common characteristic of those who have lived long in prosperous sin, that the "eye of their mind" becomes blinded. They then cease to feel the evil and hatefulness of their wicked doings, and learn at last to call evil good and good evil, and to gloss over the most crying sins by giving them complimentary names. Thus, no doubt, in Nineveh the "robbery" and plunder of so many subject nations was often glibly talked of as "a fair method of weakening the enemy's resources;" the shameful treatment of women was called the "fortune of war;" the massacre and frightful torture of prisoners—as depicted on the sculptures now in the British Museum—was the "just punishment of rebellion," or, a "striking example to the enemy." And just so in our modern and more peaceful life, treacherous selfishness towards women is often called "gallantry;" gross adulterations and short measure are called "the customs of trade;" godless unbelief and indifference are called "free-thinking;" and a course of heartless frivolity and dissipation is called, "seeing life." Such disguises, however, do not deceive the eye of the Almighty; nor do they parry the stern and faithful rebukes of His ministers.

2. "the noise of a whip," &c. These are the signals of the approaching "woe;" (1) the distant sound of the cracking whips, as the clouds of hostile chariots approach; (2) the thunder of their rattling wheels; (3) the prancing horses, now in visible proximity, and the chariots

rattling of the wheels, and of the pransing horses, and of the jumping chariots.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

3 The horseman lifteth up both ² the bright sword and the glittering spear: and *there is* a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcases; and *there is* none end of *their* corpses; they stumble upon their corpses:

² Heb. the flame of the sword, and the lightning of the spear.

4 because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, ^c the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.

^c Isai. 47. 9, 12. Rev. 18. 2, 3.

bounding over every slight obstruction in their course; (4) the horsemen, at length, actually brandishing their weapons for the encounter; (5) the slain falling and encumbering the streets of the city.

4. "the wellfavoured harlot." Such is the frequent Biblical description of a nation or a city, which has abandoned its allegiance to the true God, and has preferred worldly gain or worldly ambition to justice, mercy, and truth. Thus, in Hos. ii. 2, apostate Israel is so addressed: "plead with your mother, plead! For she is not my wife, neither am I her husband. Let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight!" Judg. viii. 33, records how, "as soon as Gideon was dead, the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after Bualim." And Ezek. xvi. 32, complains of Jerusalem as of "a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband." We thus understand what Holy Scripture means, when it speaks of God as a "jealous God;" and we learn to estimate aright the terrible enormity of the two sins which are thus linked together in God's curse; viz. adultery and apostasy from religion.

"the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations." All heathenisms, without exception, seem to fall into the sin and folly of attempting to conciliate the powers of the world unseen by immoral means. Hence, whenever "faith" begins to fail, necromancy, spirit-rapping, and similar absurdities, are sure to make their appearance and to deceive many. Thus Jezebel, the Phœnician idolatress, is accused by Jehu of "whoredoms and witchcraft" (2 Kings ix. 22.). The Egyptians employed "wise men and sorcerers" (Exod. vii. 11.). Even the Jews under Manasseh "used enchantments and witchcraft" (2 Chron. xxxiii. 6.); and the Babylonians were especially addicted to these superstitions (Isa. xlvi. 12.). It seems to have been the policy of the Assyrian empire to entangle the surrounding nations with subtle webs of commercial intercourse, and to undermine their nationality by the introduction of foreign superstitions, before proceeding to overpower and incorporate them. Thus they became "sold" into slavery before they were fully aware of their danger. It should be an anxious moment, then, in any country, when the national religion is being tampered with; whether by being transmuted into a foreign form, or by suffering a gradual exclusion from all departments of the public life, and being made a matter of merely private concern. It is remarkable that a false liberalism was the cause of Israel's downfall and absorption by the Assyrian power in the time of the prophet Nahum; while an equally

NAHUM, III.

Before
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cir. 713.

d ch. 2. 13.

e Isai. 47. 2. 3.

Jer. 13. 22, 26.

Ezek. 16. 37.

Mic. 1. 11.

f Hab. 2. 16.

g Mal. 2. 9.

h Heb. 10. 33.

5 ^d Behold, I *am* against thee, saith the LORD of hosts; and ^e I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, ^f and I will shew the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame.

6 And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and ^g make thee vile, and will set thee as ^h a gazing-stock.

i Rev. 18. 10.

k Jer. 15. 5.

l Amos 6. 2.

2 Or,

nourishing.

3 Heb

No Amon.

m Jer. 45. 25,

26,

Ezek. 30.

14.—16.

7 And it shall come to pass, *that* all they that look upon thee ⁱ shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste: ^k who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for thee?

8 ^l Art thou better than ^{2 3} populous ^m No, that was situate among the rivers, *that had* the waters round about it, whose rampart *was* the sea, and her wall *was* from the sea?

false and exaggerated conservatism led to the overthrow of Judah by the Romans, in A.D. 70.

8. "Art thou better than populous No." Rather, "Art thou better than No-Amun?" This was the native Egyptian name for the great city of Thebes, 500 miles up the Nile, the ancient and magnificent capital of Upper Egypt. Homer, about B.C. 900, mentions it as "having a hundred gates, from each of which issued forth 200 warriors with horses and chariots" (*Iliad* ix. 381.). And, under the name of Sesostris, its victorious monarch is recorded by the Greek historians to have penetrated far into Asia, and—in far earlier times than those we are now concerned with—to have captured even Nineveh itself. Its own monuments, many of which are now in the British Museum, fully corroborate these traditions. And the ruins of its majestic temples to the god "Amun" and to other divinities, with the profoundly interesting sculptures and paintings discovered in its royal cemetery on the opposite side of the Nile, form the theme of endless descriptions in all modern books of Egyptian travel. "Yet," says the prophet, "this great and mighty city has been utterly vanquished and destroyed. Its gates and bulwarks, lofty as thine, O Nineveh! have been demolished. Its river-sluyces, secure as thine,—its broad sea of Nile-water, as broad as thy boasted Tigris,—were all in vain. Its allies, in whom it trusted, and its subject populations ['Put and Lubim,' that is the Lybians and Nubians] were as numerous as thine; and yet they averted not the catastrophe. Why shouldst *thou* dream of immunity from a similar disaster?" It is most likely that this downfall of No-Amun ("the patrimony of Amun") took place a few years before the prophet wrote; viz. about B.C. 720, when Sargon, king of Assyria, after destroying Samaria and taking Israel away captive, penetrated into Egypt and probably carried his arms as far as Thebes. Subsequent conquerors completed its ruin; till, in our Lord's time, it was visited by a great Roman general, Germanicus, and was then only to be known—like Nineveh at present—by its "traces" and its massive ruins. How do such scenes, and a thousand others like them, preach to the most mighty modern nations: "Be not highminded, but fear!" (Rom. xi. 20.)

9 Ethiopia and Egypt *were* her strength, and *it was* infinite; Put and Lubim were ² thy helpers.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.

10 Yet *was* she carried away, she went into captivity: ^a her young children also were dashed in pieces ^o at the top of all the streets: and they ^p cast lots for her honourable men, and all her great men were bound in chains.

² Heb. *in thy help.*
ⁿ Ps. 137. 9.
Isai. 13. 16.
Hos. 13. 16.
^o Lam. 2. 19.
^p Joel 3. 3.
Obad. 11.

11 Thou also shalt be ^a drunken: thou shalt be hid, thou also shalt seek strength because of the enemy.

^q Jer. 25. 17, 27.
ch. 1. 10.

12 All thy strong holds *shall be like* ^r fig trees with the firstripe figs: if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater.

^r Rev. 6. 13.

13 Behold, ^s thy people in the midst of thee *are* women: the gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies: the fire shall devour thy ^t bars.

^s Jer. 50. 37.
& 51. 30.

14 Draw thee waters for the siege, ^u fortify thy strong holds: go into clay, and tread the mortar, make strong the brickkiln.

^t Ps. 147. 13.
Jer. 51. 30.
^u ch. 2. 1.

15 There shall the fire devour thee; the sword shall cut thee off, it shall eat thee up like ^x the cankerworm: make thyself many as the cankerworm, make thyself many as the locusts.

^x Joel 1. 4.

16 Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven: the cankerworm ³ spoileth, and fleeth away.

³ Or, *spreadeth himself.*

11. "thou shalt be hid." That is, "shalt go into utter obscurity "and remain there." This came to pass. During twelve centuries Nineveh lay buried and forgotten under her mounds; and she has now been disinterred only to become a "gazing-stock" to a modern world, who have with the greatest difficulty deciphered the hidden secrets of her inscriptions. Antiquarians have made something of them: but the results are not so satisfactory as those which have attended the deciphering of the Egyptian hieroglyphics. Little rewards the toil of the decipherer, beyond the discovery of a few historical facts imbedded among the pompous titles which these kings of Assyria—true "scourges of God"—gave to themselves.

14. "go into clay, and tread the mortar." The prophet mockingly bids them repair their neglected fortifications. In ancient times clay was mixed and kneaded by compelling slaves to tread it with their bare feet. The process may be seen represented on the monuments of Egypt.

16. "Thou hast multiplied thy merchants." Nineveh was marked out by nature for a great trading emporium. For while the Tigris gave water-carriage for goods between Armenia and the Persian gulf, the tributary river Zab, and the mountain-passes eastward towards which it led, gave access to Media and the countries beyond. Thus Mosul—a

NAHUM, III.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 713.
v Rev. 9. 7.

17 Thy crowned *are* as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges in the cold day, *but* when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they *are*.

z Ex. 15. 16.
Ps. 76. 6.
a Jer. 50. 18.
Ezek. 31. 3,
&c.

18 Thy shepherds slumber, O ^aking of Assyria : thy ²nobles shall dwell *in the dust* : thy people is ^bscattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth *them*.

2 Or, *valiant ones*.
b 1 Kin. 22. 17.
3 Heb.
wrinkling.

19 *There is* no ³healing of thy bruise ; ^cthy wound is grievous : ^dall that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee : for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually ?

c Mic. 1. 9.
d Lam. 2. 15.
Zeph. 2. 15.
See Isai. 14.
8, &c.

town on the opposite bank of the Tigris—remained an important place of commerce throughout the Middle Ages, and is so still. Our word “muslin” is derived from this great market, whence it first came into Europe.

18. “Thy shepherds slumber.” Chieftains are often so called in Scripture; for instance, after Ahab’s death, “all Israel were scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd” (1 Kings xxii. 17.). Their “slumber,” no doubt, was the sleep of death.

19. “upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?” Thus this wonderful strain of prophecy comes round at last, like some majestic oratorio, to the idea with which it began: “the Lord re-venge” (ch. i. 2.). “Vengeance is Mine” (Deut. xxxii. 35.). “The Lord is the avenger of all such, as we have also forewarned you and testified” (1 Thess. iv. 6.).

HABAKKUK.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS prophet (about B.C. 610.) lived a century later than Nahum, and is concerned with quite a different order of events. Babylon and the Chaldeans have now taken the place of Nineveh and the Assyrians. Nebuchadnezzar is the dreaded monarch into whose hands have been gathered all the formidable powers, once guided from the (now ruined) council-chambers of Nineveh. Jehoiakim is on the throne of Judah; and his tottering kingdom is wholly dependent on the support of Pharaoh-Necho and of Egypt, whose help—far more *now* than in the time of Isaiah—was like that of a broken reed, “whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it” (Isa. xxxvi. 6.). The central figure around whom the prophets and other good men clustered, and whose words they quoted as words of high authority, was the great prophet of the approaching captivity, Jeremiah. Beyond these facts nothing is known of Habakkuk; for the absurd legends, with which the Rabbis and the author of “Bel and the Dragon” amused themselves, are not worthy of serious attention.

His short prophecy, however, which is here providentially preserved to us, merits the most reverential study. It lacks indeed the magnificence and solemnity of Nahum; it does not reach the profound spirituality of Isaiah; nor descend to the melancholy pathos of Jeremiah. Its interest lies (like that of the Book of Job and of Psalm lxxiii.) mainly in its answer to the terrible enigma of the *apparent* injustice and carelessness with which the world is governed. And its solution of this problem has supplied St. Paul with the motto for his profoundest epistle, in the words “the just shall live by his FAITH” (Hab. ii. 4; quoted Rom. i. 17; and again, Gal. iii. 11.). In the expansion of this thought, the sacred poet begins with a dialogue between himself and the Almighty, in which he deals with the more immediate and pressing part of his moral difficulty. “How can it be,” he says, “that Thy children are called upon to witness—in these days of the unrighteous and vacillating Jehoiakim—such ‘spoiling and violence,’ such ‘strife and contention,’

INTRODUCTION.

“such failure of justice and the successful tyranny of the wicked against the good?” (ch. i. 2—4.). To this question Jehovah Himself vouchsafes an answer, “Vex not thy righteous soul! I am about to bring upon these sinners in Judah the scourge of the Chaldæan invasion.” On this, a second difficulty occurs to the prophet; and he inquires once more, “Alas! Thy scourge seems to smite the sinners and the righteous indiscriminately. These idolatrous and ruthless Chaldæans seem to deserve Thy rod, even more than the people whom they are employed to destroy!” Habakkuk then stands anxiously upon his watch-tower (ch. ii. 1.) to see what the Lord will say in reply; and the answer ere long comes to him: “Write the vision, and make it plain, that he may run who readeth it. These are mysteries of the Lord’s dealings: reason has no key for their solution. Mankind must wait. And meanwhile a *practical* solution is found in religious FAITH—in confidence, that is, that justice and truth shall eventually prevail, and that ‘the Judge of all the earth’ shall not fail to do right. Nevertheless, the prophet is bidden to feel assured, that woe shall fall on the Chaldæans for their violence and idolatry; and that they shall shortly be recompensed for their rapacity and selfishness, with which they had overdone the Lord’s appointed work of vengeance on Judah, by being themselves destroyed by Cyrus and the Persians.” On this, the prophet breaks out into a prayer, or hymn of thanksgiving and of unshaken faith (ch. iii. 1.). “O Lord,” he says, “be it so! Even so come; and fulfil Thy work—thus promised at *some* time—speedily, even in *our* time! Let us too see some grand Redemption, equal to that of the olden days, when Thou didst deliver Thy people from Pharaoh and his Egyptians at the Red Sea? Yet, any way, though the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, I will joy in the God of my salvation.”

It is obvious how easily this glorious language of religious faith and hope is capable of adaptation to all times and circumstances. It may be made—as St. Paul clearly saw—the keynote of Christianity itself; and it may be applied—as Bishop Butler has done, in his *Analogy of Religion*—to answer the most puzzling questions of modern unbelief. “God’s universe (it seems to say) is a vast thing, and His government of it a scheme imperfectly comprehended by us. Have patience! Judge nothing before the time! And, in practice, walk by faith and not by sight!” As a modern writer, on “the future of England,” has well put it: “They who have persevered, they who have *believed*, they who have *hoped* against all hope, have found at last that *reason* too was on their side.”

CHAPTER I.

B fore
CHRIST
cir. 626.

1 *Unto Habakkuk, complaining of the iniquity of the land, 5 is shewed the fearful vengeance by the Chaldeans. 12 He complaineth that vengeance should be executed by them who are far worse.*

THE burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see.

2 O LORD, how long shall I cry, ^a and thou wilt not hear! *even* cry out unto thee *of* violence, and thou wilt not save! ^{a Lam. 3. 8.}

3 Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause *me* to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence *are* before me: and there are *that* raise up strife and contention.

4 Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the ^b wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore ² wrong judgment proceedeth. ^{b Job 21. 7. Ps. 94. 3, &c. Jer. 12. 1. 2 Or, *wrested*.}

5 ¶ ^c Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for *I* will work a work in your days, *which* ye will not believe, though it be told *you*. ^{c Isai. 29. 14. Acts 13. 41.}

CHAPTER I.

1. "The burden," &c. See note on Nahum i. 1.

4. "the wicked doth compass about the righteous." ^a The Hebrew word here used is one which often occurs in the figurative language of the Old Testament. It suggests the triumphant exultation on the one side, and the depression which follows on the other, when the enemy has succeeded in *surrounding* his victim. This same word is used in Ps. xxii. 12: "Many oxen are come about me; fat bulls of Bashan *close me in on every side*."—Thus it was with the poor and innocent at Jerusalem, in the last years of the declining monarchy. Bad kings, such as Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, had neither the power, nor the will, to check the violence and rapacity of the princes by whom they were surrounded; and who shamefully entreated those who made remonstrance against their iniquity (comp. Jer. xxxvii. 15, &c.). So too it sometimes is in the modern world. Men, and perhaps still oftener women, find themselves (as it were) "compassed about" with the treachery and violence of the wicked. The only sound advice then is: "Trust in the Lord, and be doing good;" break boldly and at once through the enemy's lines; and say, with the prophet Habakkuk, "The Lord God is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds' feet," swift to escape.

5. "Behold ye," &c. This verse was long afterwards quoted by St. Paul in his address to the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts xiii. 40).

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^d Deut. 28.
49, 50.

Jer. 5. 15.

² Fulfilled,
2 Chr. 36. 6.

³ Heb.
breadths.

⁴ Or, from
them shall
proceed the
judgment of
these, and
the captivity
of these.

⁵ Heb. sharp.

⁶ Jer. 5. 6.

Zeph. 3. 3.

^f Jer. 4. 13.

⁶ Or, the
supping up
of their
faces, &c.
or, their
faces shall
look toward
the east.

⁷ Heb. the
opposition
of their faces
toward the
east.

^g Dan. 5. 4.

6 For, lo, ^{d 2} I raise up the Chaldeans, *that* bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the ³ breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces *that are* not their's.

7 They *are* terrible and dreadful: ⁴ their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves.

8 Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more ⁵ fierce than the ^e evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; ^f they shall fly as the eagle *that* hasteth to eat.

9 They shall come all for violence: ^{6 7} their faces shall sup up *as* the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand.

10 And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it.

11 Then shall *his* mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, ^g *imputing* this his power unto his god.

They were in danger of rejecting and disbelieving the Gospel, a work of God's *beneficence* and goodness no less clearly from heaven, than the impending *chastisements* from the Babylonian invasion of Judæa were in Habakkuk's time. In fact, this inability of those who having eyes see not God's hand, and who having ears hear not God's word, is the standing wonder of prophets and preachers in all ages. "Lord," they cry, "who hath believed our report; and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isa. liii. 1.)

6. "that bitter and hasty nation." Rather, "that vehement and impetuous nation." These two Hebrew words occur again, for instance, at Gen. xxvii. 34: "Esau cried with a great and exceeding *bitter* cry;" and Ps. xvi. 4: "They that *run after* another god." Such headlong impulsiveness is characteristic, in the Bible, of a mere heathenish condition. Let us remember this. A main feature in the character of a Christian is a tranquil self-command (comp. 1 Cor. xii. 2: "Ye know that ye were Gentiles, *carried away* unto these dumb idols, even as ye *were led*").

11. "Then shall his mind change, and he shall pass over," &c. That is, "the Chaldaean invader shall be puffed up by his own successes, and shall transgress or trespass." It is the Hebrew word usually employed in the Pentateuch for a "trespass" or trespass-offering. This sin would be the common one that attends upon prosperity. He would come to attribute his success to "his star," his "good luck," perhaps to his own personal skill and prowess. But, all the while, it was not so. It was God Who had "ordained him for judgment," and had "established

HABAKKUK, I.

12 ¶ ^h *Art* thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, ⁱ thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O ² mighty God, thou hast ³ established them for correction.

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^h Ps. 90. 2.
& 93. 2.
Lam. 5. 19.
ⁱ 2 Kin. 19. 25.
Ps. 17. 13.
Is. 10. 5, 6, 7.
Ezek. 30. 25.

13 ^k *Thou art* of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on ⁴ iniquity: ¹ wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, *and* holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth *the man that is more righteous than he?*

² Heb. *rock*,
Deut. 32. 4.

³ Heb.
foundled.

^k Ps. 5. 5.

⁴ Or,

grievance.

¹ Jer. 12. 1.

⁵ Or, *moving*.

14 And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the ⁵ creeping things, *that have no ruler over them?*

15 They ^m take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their ⁶ drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad.

^m Jer. 16. 16.
Amos 4. 2.

⁶ Or, *flue net*.

16 Therefore ⁿ they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion *is* fat, and their meat ⁷ ⁸ plenteous.

ⁿ Deut. 8. 17.
Isai. 10. 13.
& 37. 24, 25.

⁷ Or, *dainty*.

⁸ Heb. *fat*.

17 Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?

“him for the correction” of backsliding Judah. So cried the Prophet, about a century earlier, to the Assyrian invader: “Thus saith the Lord; “now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste “defenced cities into ruinous heaps” (Isa. xxxvii. 26.). Moses, too, warns Israel not to say in his heart, “my power and the might of mine “hand hath gotten me this wealth” (Deut. viii. 17.).

14. “that have no ruler over them.” That is, “which go in shoals, “and have not—like mankind—the glorious faculty of organization and “order.” Thus highly does Holy Scripture, not here only but every-where, estimate the heavenly beauty and excellence of subordination and government! Chaos is a thing of darkness, which the Holy Spirit of God makes it His province to reduce to order and beauty. The first thing done after the Exodus, was to *organize* the vast horde which had come out of Egypt into the condition of a nation and a Church. “For God is “not the author of confusion, but of peace” (1 Cor. xiv. 33.).

16. “Therefore they sacrifice unto their net,” &c. See note on ver. 11. A warning is suggested here against thinking *too much* of mere organization and mechanism. Christ’s fishermen, for instance, are often tempted to sacrifice all other considerations, even the highest, to their fear lest the net which He has lent them, as their instrument for inclosing a great multitude of fishes, should be broken. The Church’s system, in our own land, with its network of parishes, is a wonderful instrument for bringing them within the influences of the Gospel. But it is only an *instrument* after all.

HABAKKUK, II.

Before
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CHAPTER II.

1 Unto Habakkuk, waiting for an answer, is shewed that he must wait by faith. 5 The judgment upon the Chaldean for unsatiableness, 9 for covetousness, 12 for cruelty, 15 for drunkenness, 18 and for idolatry.

^a Is. 21. 8, 11.

² Heb. fenced place.

^b Ps. 85. 8.

³ Or, in me.

⁴ Or, when I am argued with.

⁵ Heb. upon my reproof, or, arguing.

^c Isai. 8. 1. & 30. 8.

^d Dan. 10. 14.

& 11. 27, 35.

^e Heb. 10. 37.

I WILL ^a stand upon my watch, and set me upon the ² tower, ^b and will watch to see what he will say ³ unto me, and what I shall answer ^{4 5} when I am reprov'd.

2 And the LORD answered me, and said, ^c Write the vision, and make *it* plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.

3 For ^d the vision *is* yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will ^e surely come, it will not tarry.

4 ¶ Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but the ^f just shall live by his faith.

^f John 3. 36.

Rom. 1. 17.

Gal. 3. 11.

Heb. 10. 38.

^g Or, How much more.

^h Prov. 27. 20.

& 30. 16.

5 ^g Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, *he* is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire ^h as hell, and *is* as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people:

CHAPTER II.

1. "when I am reprov'd." Rather, "I will set me upon my spiritual watch-tower (comp. Ezek. xxxiii. 7.), and will see what Jehovah will say to me, and what answer shall be made to my pleading with Him" (ch. i. 12—17.), against the apparent injustice of the indiscriminate bloodshed and rapine of the Chaldean armies. The answer is: "Wait in patience, and thou shalt see the Chaldean insolence avenged, and the innocent sufferers saved by their faith." The prophet's view seems, then, to extend beyond the horizon of this life. And we are reminded how, in the preparation for "the fulness of times," the eye of the human intelligence was gradually empowered to bear the waxing radiance of God's revelations; and the heart disposed, by suffering under the moral perplexities of life, to embrace with joy the hope of another life, in which all injustice shall be redressed. It was as a "helper of your joy;" "for by faith ye stand" (2 Cor. i. 24.), that the prophet was commissioned to "write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it."

4. "Behold, his soul which is lifted up." Here begins God's answer concerning the Chaldeans. The prophet need not be perplexed at their apparently successful iniquities. A five-fold "woe" is reserved for him, in recompense of his five main sins, viz. oppression, covetousness, bloodshed, insolence, idolatry.

HABAKKUK, II.

6 shall not all these ^b take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, ² Woe to him that increaseth *that which is not his!* ^h how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!

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^h Mic. 2. 4.
² Or, Ho, he.

7 Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them?

8 ⁱ Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; ^k because of men's ³ blood, and *for* the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

ⁱ Isai. 33. 1.

^k ver. 17.

³ Heb. bloods.

9 ¶ Woe to him that ¹⁴ coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may ^m set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the ⁵ power of evil!

¹ Jer. 22. 13.

⁴ Or, gaineth
an evil gain.

^m Jer. 49. 16.
Obad. 4.

⁵ Heb. palm
of the hand.

10 Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned *against* thy soul.

11 For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the ⁶ beam out of the timber shall ⁷ answer it.

⁶ Or,
piece, or,
fastening.

⁷ Or, witness
against it.

12 ¶ Woe to him that buildeth a town with ⁿ ⁸ blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!

ⁿ Jer. 22. 13.
Ezek. 24. 9.

Mic. 3. 10.

Nah. 3. 1.

13 Behold, *is it* not of the LORD of hosts ^o that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves ⁹ for very vanity?

⁸ Heb. bloods.

^o Jer. 51. 58.

⁹ Or, in vain?

14 For the earth shall be filled ² with the ^p knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

² Or, by
knowing
the glory of
the LORD.

^p Isai. 11. 9.

6. "that ladeth himself with thick clay!" This should be translated, "that loadeth himself with goods that do not belong to him,"—goods taken, as it were, in pledge, and which the Chaldaean ravager shall, on God's coming day of vengeance, be summoned to restore. The mistake in our English Version arose from the translators taking as two Hebrew words what is really only one.

13. "the people shall labour in the very fire." Rather, "shall labour merely for the fire;" that is, for nought, for the fire to burn up all the productions of their violence and toil. How true this is, in all times, of the vast structures of ambition, of avarice, or of reputation, which men build up by fraud and oppression! "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (St. Luke xii. 20.)

HABAKKUK, III.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 626.
Hos. 7. 5.
Gen. 9. 22.

15 ¶ Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy ^a bottle to *him*, and makest *him* drunken also, that thou mayest ^r look on their nakedness!

² Or, more
with shame
than with
glory.
^s Jer. 25. 26,
27. & 51. 57.

16 Thou art filled ² with shame for glory: ^s drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the LORD's right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing *shall be* on thy glory.

^t ver. 8.

17 For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts, *which* made them afraid, ^t because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

^u Is. 41. 9, 10.
& 46. 2.

^x Jer. 10. 8, 14.
Zech. 10. 2.

³ Heb. the
fashioner of
his fashion.

^y Ps. 115. 5.
1 Cor. 12. 2.

^z Ps. 135. 17.
a Ps. 11. 4.

⁴ Heb. be
silent all the
earth before
him.

^b Zeph. 1. 7.
Zech. 2. 13.

18 ¶ ^u What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a ^x teacher of lies, that ³ the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make ^y dumb idols?

19 Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, ^z and *there is* no breath at all in the midst of it.

20 But ^a the LORD *is* in his holy temple: ⁴ ^b let all the earth keep silence before him.

^a Ps. 7. title.

² Or,
according
to variable
songs, or,
tunes, called
in Hebrew,
Shigionoth.

CHAPTER III.

1 *Habakkuk in his prayer trembleth at God's majesty.* 17 *The confidence of his faith.*

A PRAYER of Habakkuk the prophet ^a ² upon Shigionoth.

17. "For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee," &c. That is, "the violence done by the Chaldeans, with axe and fire, to the beautiful wooded uplands of Lebanon, and the ruthless slaughter of cattle which pastured there, shall ere long recoil upon their own heads, and cover them with shame and confusion of face."

CHAPTER III.

1. "A prayer . . . upon Shigionoth." The first of these two Hebrew words might equally well be translated "a hymn," or a sacred ode. It occurs in the titles of five of the Psalms, and in the postscript of the whole second book of the Psalter (Ps. lxxii. 20.), as a title for all the Psalms contained in that collection (Pss. xlii.—lxxii.): "The *prayers* of David the son of Jesse are ended."—The second Hebrew word is very obscure. It appears to be a musical direction; and to signify that the following ode—though not itself precisely a "Shiggaion," a song, a

HABAKKUK, III.

2 O LORD, I have heard ² thy speech, *and* was afraid: O LORD, ³ ^b revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 626.

² Heb. *thy report, or, thy hearing.*

3 God came from ⁴ Teman, ^c and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise.

³ Or, *pre-serve alive.*

^b Ps. 85. 6.

⁴ Or, *the south.*

^c Deut. 33. 2. Judg. 5. 4. Ps. 68. 7.

Magnificat—yet should be sung after the manner in which “Shiggaions” were executed in the Temple service. What that manner was we are now quite ignorant.—The ode is a very beautiful piece of religious poetry. It is an outbreak of the prophetic inspiration, under musical forms (comp. 1 Sam. x. 5. 1 Chron. xxv. 3.), in thankful reply to God’s answer in chap. ii. to Habakkuk’s perplexity at the successes of the wicked Chaldeans. The one theme of the ode is the Exodus,—the great deliverance, a thousand years before, at the Red Sea and the subsequent conquest of Canaan. There too the heathen were in the ascendant. Pharaoh then, as Nebuchadnezzar now, seemed to have “compassed about the righteous.” But as, at that glorious epoch of the national history, Jehovah had caused Israel to “walk through the sea” (ver. 15.), had subdued before them the fierce desert tribes (ver. 7.), had caused “the sun and moon to stand still” at Joshua’s bidding (ver. 11.), and had marched at their head “through the land and threshed the “heathen in anger” (ver. 12.), so the prophet hoped it would be at the present terrible crisis. And therefore, in a sublime strain of faith, he concludes: “Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit “be in the vines, . . . yet I will rejoice in Jehovah, I will joy in the God “of my salvation” (ver. 17.). How much rather should the Christian, after a far more striking and complete redemption fulfilled at Calvary, be able to raise up to God a similar *Magnificat* of triumphant faith!

2. “O Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of the years.” This verse is often misquoted, in connexion with revivals of religion. It has, however, no such sense. The meaning is simply: “O Lord, bring to “pass Thy word, Thy promise that the proud Chaldeans shall be hum-“bled (ch. ii. 2.), *now*, speedily, in the midst of our own time, in the “sight of the present generation!” Or, as the Psalmist expresses it: “Shew Thy servants Thy work, and their children Thy glory” (Ps. xc. 16.). This longing, this holy impatience, to see God’s promises fulfilled and the world’s iniquities redressed, is common to good men in all ages. But the prophet has already reminded us, “though the vision tarry, wait “for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry” (ch. ii. 3.). And St. James, in like manner, bids us “be patient, unto the coming of the “Lord. . . Be patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord “draweth nigh” (St. James v. 7.).

3. “God came from Teman,” &c. This verse is an echo of the “Song of Moses,” given in Deut. xxxiii.; where we read, “The Lord “came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth “from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints (angels); “from His right hand went a fiery law for them.” Teman is mentioned, at Gen. xxxvi. 15, as one of the clans of the Edomites, in the neigh-

HABAKKUK, III.

Before
CHRIST
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² Or, *bright beams out of his side.*

^d Nah. 1. 3.

³ Or, *burning diseases,* Deut. 32. 21.

^e Ps. 18. 8.

^f Nah. 1. 5.

^g Gen. 49. 26.

⁴ Or, *Ethiopia.*

⁵ Or, *under affliction,* or, *vanity.*

^h Deut. 33.

26, 27.

Ps. 68. 4.

& 104. 3.

ver. 15.

⁶ Or, *thy*

chariots

were sal-

vation?

⁷ Or, *Thou*

didst cleave

the rivers of the earth.

¹ Ps. 78. 15, 16. & 105. 41.

4 And *his* brightness was as the light; he had ² horns *coming* out of his hand: and there *was* the hiding of his power.

5 ^d Before him went the pestilence, and ^{3e} burning coals went forth at his feet.

6 He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; ^f and the ^g everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways *are* everlasting.

7 I saw the tents of ⁴ Cushan ⁵ in affliction: *and* the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.

8 Was the LORD displeased against the rivers? *was* thine anger against the rivers? *was* thy wrath against the sea, ^h that thou didst ride upon thine horses *and* ⁶ thy chariots of salvation?

9 Thy bow was made quite naked, *according* to the oaths of the tribes, *even* *thy* word. Selah. ⁷ⁱ Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers.

bourhood of the Sinaitic desert. Thus the ode begins by placing us at once amid the scenes of God's wonderful redemption of old.—“Selah” is a musical direction, meaning “pause.”

4. “he had horns coming out of his hand: and there,” &c. The Hebrew is not well rendered. It should be translated, “Rays of light (perhaps, lightnings) proceeded out of His hand; and there—amid the “light—was the hiding-place of His power.” What a magnificent conception is here of the majesty and purity of God! The very light itself is His dark veil, the cloud in which He conceals His ineffable radiance! “He dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto; Whom no “man hath seen, nor can see” (1 Tim. vi. 16.).

7. “the tents of Cushan . . . the curtains of Midian.” That is, the wild and roving tribes of the desert, who dwelt (as they do to this day, and as the gypsies do in England) under tents or curtains. Thus David, when he purposed to build a permanent Temple at Jerusalem, in place of the tent or Tabernacle which had accompanied the wanderings of Israel through the wilderness, said, “See now, I dwell in a house of “cedar; but the Ark of God dwelleth within curtains” (2 Sam. vii. 2.). The attacks of these roving tribes were repulsed by Jehovah's people, with great slaughter. Read, for instance, the defeat of the Amalekites at Rephidim (Exod. xvii. 8—16.).

9. “Thy bow . . . according to the oaths of the tribes, even Thy “word.” This is a very difficult passage. The best sense seems to be this: “Thou didst bare Thy bow, and take it from its case; with its “sevenfold shafts of Thy wrathful threats.” The Hebrew will bear this meaning: and the number “seven” may be simply a sacred number, befitting the Divine armoury; just as Isa. xi. 2 and Rev. iv. 5, present us with “the seven spirits of God;” and the Lamb, as it had been slain, “had seven horns and seven eyes;” and the Son of man appeared “amid

10 ^kThe mountains saw thee, *and* they trembled : the overflowing of the water passed by : the deep uttered his voice, *and* ^llifted up his hands on high.

11 ^mThe sun *and* moon stood still in their habitation : ²at the light of thine "arrows they went, *and* at the shining of thy glittering spear.

12 Thou didst march through the land in indignation, ° thou didst thresh the heathen in anger.

13 Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, *even* for salvation with thine anointed ; ^pthou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, ³by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah.

14 Thou didst strike through with his staves the head of his villages : they ⁴came out as a whirlwind to scatter me : their rejoicing *was* as to devour the poor secretly.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 626.

^k Ex. 19. 16, 18.
Judg. 5. 4, 5.
Ps. 68. 8.
& 77. 18.
& 114. 4.

^l Ex. 14. 22.
Josh. 3. 16.

^m Josh. 10. 12,
13.

² Or, *thine*
arrows

walked in
the light, &c.

ⁿ Josh. 10. 11.
Ps. 18. 14.

& 77. 17, 18.
^o Jer. 51. 33.

Amos 1. 3.
Mic. 4. 13.

^p Josh. 10. 24.
& 11. 8, 12.

Ps. 68. 21.
³ Heb.

making
naked.

⁴ Heb. *were*
tempestuous.

"seven golden candlesticks and with seven stars in His right hand" (Rev. v. 6 ; ii. 1.).

12. "Thou didst march through the land in indignation," viz. during the conquest of Canaan by Joshua. The sacred poets of the Old Testament always reverentially attribute this great and (humanly speaking) impossible success to the assistance of Jehovah. "For they gat not the land in possession through their own sword, neither was it their own arm that helped them ; but Thy right hand and Thine arm and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them" (Ps. xlv. 3.).

13. "even for salvation with thine anointed." The Hebrew is much more clear and simple. It should be rendered, "Even to save Thy anointed,"—that is, Thy consecrated and peculiar people, Israel. In the same way the Apostles speak of the Christian Church, God's spiritual Israel : "Ye have an unction from the Holy One" (1 St. John ii. 20.). He "hath made us kings and priests unto God" (Rev. i. 6.). "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 St. Pet. ii. 9.).

"thou woundedst the head," &c. The obscurity of this verse is diminished, if we remember that Pharaoh is being spoken of as (to use our own common phrase) the "head of his house." This head, says the prophet, Jehovah struck entirely away at the disaster of the Red Sea,—laying bare its very basis, even to the neck. The same figure occurs elsewhere in Holy Scripture ; for instance, "Christ is the Head of the Church" (Eph. v. 23.): "not holding the Head" (Col. ii. 19.): "He who hath builded the house (founded the household) hath more honour than the house" (Heb. iii. 3.).

14. "with his staves the head of his villages." This were better translated : "Thou didst smite through, with his own weapons, the head of his chieftains,"—of his Egyptian captains, who came out so fiercely to "scatter" and "devour" their escaping slaves.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 626.

^q Ps. 77. 19.
ver. 8.

² Or, *mud*.

^r Ps. 119. 120.
Jer. 23. 9.

³ Or, *cut
them in
pieces*.

⁴ Heb. *lie*.

^s Job 13. 15.

^t Isai. 41. 16.
& 61. 10.

^u Ps. 27. 1.

^x 2 Sam. 22. 34.
Ps. 18. 33.

^y Deut. 32. 13.
& 33. 29.

⁵ Heb.

Neginoth,
Ps. 4, title.

15 ^a Thou didst walk through the sea with thine horses, *through* the ² heap of great waters.

16 When I heard, ^r my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble: when he cometh up unto the people, he will ³ invade them with his troops.

17 Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither *shall* fruit *be* in the vines; the labour of the olive shall ⁴ fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and *there shall be* no herd in the stalls:

18 ^s yet I will ^t rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

19 The LORD God *is* ^u my strength, and he will make my feet like ^x hinds' *feet*, and he will make me to ^y walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my ⁵ stringed instruments.

16. "when he cometh up," &c. All this latter part of the verse is expressed in Hebrew in three words. The passage, therefore, is difficult (as very many passages in the Old Testament are) from its extreme brevity. It should probably be understood thus: "When it (the day of trouble, from the Chaldaean invaders, foreseen by the prophet) shall come up against the people, to drive them into straits." For at this verse, it seems, the prophet begins to apply what he had "heard" of those glorious deeds of old, at the Red Sea, to the present circumstances of Judah, with threatening thunderclouds of Chaldaean invasion gathering upon their horizon. And thus he is enabled to rest in peace, and to await in faith the coming of the day of trouble, whose terrors he so clearly foresaw. In the next three verses, which conclude this glorious song of faith and of exulting confidence in God, these feelings find a still more exuberant expression.

19. "he will make me to walk upon mine high places." That is, "He will grant me free and joyful escape to the mountains, as a hind escaping from her pursuers."

"To the chief singer on my stringed instruments." This is the dedication, of which we have such frequent instances in the Psalms. Its peculiar form may indicate that Habakkuk was himself a Levite; and perhaps he here dedicates his ode to the præcentor, or "leader," of the band which played on his own special class of stringed instruments.

ZEPHANIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

OF this prophet (about B.C. 630.) nothing whatever is known, beyond what he himself tells us in the first verse of his short prophecy. From this verse, however, and from various indications scattered up and down in his book, we may gather with tolerable precision his date, the circumstances amid which he wrote, and his object in writing. The date of his prophecy may be fixed in the following way. He wrote "in the days of Josiah" (ch. i. 1.),—later therefore than B.C. 642, when Josiah began to reign: but he speaks of Nineveh as still undestroyed (ch. ii. 13.),—earlier therefore than B.C. 625, when that city was annihilated by the Medes and Babylonians. Moreover, he takes no notice of Josiah's great national restoration of religion, which took place B.C. 624 (2 Kings xxii. 3.): and yet he speaks of "the remnant of Baal" (ch. i. 4.), as though the partial reformation of B.C. 630 had begun (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3.). It was probably, therefore, at or soon after this last date, that his prophecy was written.

But what are the terrible woes, who are the irresistible invaders, what is the threatening storm-cloud, which are gathering on the mental horizon of this "watchman of Jehovah" (for such is the meaning of his name), to execute the Divine vengeance upon the sins of mankind?—In the answer to this question lies the great interest of the prophet Zephaniah. For there seems little doubt that the unnamed enemies, whose invasion he foresees, are neither Assyrians nor Egyptians,—both of whom are to be ravaged by these very invaders (ch. ii. 12, 13.); nor yet Chaldeans, who have not at this time emerged into view, as they abruptly did a few years later on (see Hab. i. 6.). No: they are nothing less than the first appearance, upon the horizon of the ancient world, of those vast moving tribes of *Northern barbarians*, who afterwards overspread the whole of Europe, and of whom we ourselves are the direct lineal descendants. These Northern races were known to the ancients by the vague name of Scythians. The boundary line, which divided them from the more civilised South, was the great mountain chain,—Himalaya, Caucasus, Taurus,—which severs all Asia into two distinct zones. And across this

ZEPHANIAH, I.

barrier, for the first time at least on historical record, they burst in the days of Zephaniah. Their course was at first S.E., and then S.W. They began by invading Media, and so giving Nineveh a short reprieve from Median attack. They then turned towards the rich trading cities and cornfields of Egypt, passing through Syria by the way, and crowding the plains of Philistia with their ever-moving and plundering hordes. On the borders of Egypt they were met by the Pharaoh of those times (Psammetichus), who bought them off by large presents. And so by disease, by the sword, and by re-migration, they gradually melted away, after throwing Asia into confusion for twenty-eight years; leaving only two permanent traces of their locust-like invasion, viz. (1) in the name Scythopolis, or "city of the Scythians," which became attached to the ancient Manassite city of Bethshan (Judith iii. 10. 2 Maccab. xii. 29.), and (2) in this book of the Prophet Zephaniah.

The teaching of this prophet is very simple. His book is one continuous cry of "Woe to the wicked!" whether in Jerusalem or elsewhere; with a gleam of hope at the end. And from it we may learn the important lesson, that not merely in the realm of Nature, but also in that of man—the very wildest and most (apparently) chaotic phenomena are in truth regulated by God's hand, are rational (so to speak) and orderly, when viewed on the large scale and from the watch-tower of religious observation; and that there is a beneficent and moral intention running through all the most tangled web of human history (modern as well as ancient), and illustrating to the "watchman of Jehovah" the growing "purpose of the skies."

CHAPTER I.

God's severe judgment against Judah for divers sins.

THE word of the LORD which came unto Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.

CHAPTER I.

1. "the son of Hizkiah." It is not improbable that this is the good king Hezekiah. The prophet seems to carry back his genealogy, with some pride, to this name. And he might well be proud, not merely of being descended from the royal stock, but of being (in Cowper's words) "the son of parents born into the skies." Good men often have bad sons. But this must surely happen from the injudicious strictness with which such men, in their excessive anxiety, bring up their children.

ZEPHANIAH, I.

2 ² I will utterly consume all *things* from off ³ the land, saith the LORD.

3 ^a I will consume man and beast ; I will consume ² the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and ^b the ⁴ stumblingblocks with the wicked ; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the LORD.

4 I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem ; and ^c I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of ^d the Chemarims with the priests ;

5 and them ^e that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops ; ^f and them that worship *and*

Before
CHRIST
cir. 630.

² Heb.
*By taking
away I will
make an
end.*

Heb.
*the face of
the land.*

^a Hos. 4. 3.
^b Ezek. 7. 19.
& 14. 3. 4. 7.
Matt. 13. 41.

⁴ Or, *idols.*

^c Fulfilled,
cir. 624.

² Kin. 23. 4. 5.
^d Hos. 10. 5.

^e 2 Kin. 23. 12. Jer. 19. 13. ^f 1 Kin. 18. 21. 2 Kin. 17. 33, 41.

2. "I will utterly consume all things," &c. The abrupt severity with which the prophet opens his mission is very striking and, at first sight, almost repulsive. But we must remember that, even in the Gospel of "peace on earth and goodwill towards men," there is also a side of sternness and severity. For God is not—as the events of the world around us quite plainly shew—a God (so to speak) of mere good nature. He "will by no means clear the guilty" (Exod. xxxiv. 7.), and, incongruous as it may appear, there is such a thing as "the wrath of the Lamb" (Rev. vi. 16.). Besides, the prophet was commissioned to threaten the terrible invasion of the barbarous and ruthless hordes of Scythians, which was now impending ; and to call men to repentance, while there was yet time (ch. ii. 2.). The metaphorical language, which includes even the beasts and fishes in God's chastisements, seems borrowed from an earlier prophet (Hos. iv. 3.). We are reminded thereby, on the one hand, of the deluge (Gen. vii. 21.); and, on the other, of the part which all creation is promised in the great final redemption of its elder brother and head, man (Rom. viii. 19—23.).

3. "the stumbling-blocks with the wicked." That is, "the idols along with those who set them up." How enticing idol-worship was, with its fanaticism and its gaudy lascivious rites, is plain from all the earlier books of the Old Testament ; and how fatally prevalent it had become, during these later times of the Jewish monarchy, may be seen in 2 Kings xxi.—xxiii.

4. "the remnant of Baal . . . and the Chemarims with the priests." Baal-worship had been partially rooted out during the earlier reforms of Josiah, in the twelfth year of his reign (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3.) ; but there was a large "residue" still to deal with. No widespread and ancient evil can ever be safely remedied all at once ; and a gradual reformation is always better than a revolution. The kingdom of Heaven itself "is like unto leaven" (St. Matt. xiii. 33.). The "Chemarims" were simply the idol-fanatics, the "religious," the monks and dervishes of the ancient world. The Hebrew word means "burning" "scorched up," with religious passions. Alas, that such passions should be possible in all ages and under all religions ! They are, however, distinctly branded in Scripture as marks of a heathenish and false, not of a true, religious spirit (comp. 1 Kings xviii. 26. Acts xix. 34.).

ZEPHANIAH, I.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 630.

^g that swear ² by the LORD, and that swear ^h by Malcham ;

^f Isai. 48. 1.
^g Hos. 4. 15.

6 and ⁱ them that are turned back from the LORD ; and *those* that ^k have not sought the LORD, nor enquired for him.

² Or, to
the LORD.

^h Josh. 23. 7.
ⁱ Kin. 11. 33.

7 ¹ Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD : ^m for the day of the LORD *is* at hand : for ⁿ the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath ³ bid his guests.

¹ Isai. 1. 4.
² Jer. 2. 13, 17.
& 15. 6.

^k Hos. 7. 7.
¹ Hab. 2. 20.

² Zech. 2. 13.
^m Isai. 13. 6.

8 And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD's sacrifice, that I will ⁴ punish ^o the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.

ⁿ Isai. 34. 6.
^o Jer. 46. 10.

¹ Ezek. 39. 17.
² Rev. 19. 17.

³ Heb.
*sanctified, or
prepared.*

9 In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.

⁴ Heb.
visit upon.

^o Jer. 39. 6.

10 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, *that there shall be* the noise of a cry from ^p the fish gate, and an howling from the second, and a great crashing from the hills.

¹ 2 Chr. 33. 14.

5. "that swear by the Lord . . . and by Malcham." That is, "them that try to serve both God and Mammon;" the worshippers, who swear both by Jehovah and by Milcom (*Molech*) (comp. Jer. vii. 9, 10.). Let no one think thus to avert the wrath of the Lord. "Our God will have ^{the whole heart, or none.} And yet He will accept a broken one." Comp. 1 Kings xviii. 21: "How long halt ye between two opinions?" and Rev. iii. 16: "because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth."

7. "the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice, He hath bid His guests." The metaphor is that of a grand feast like that which Solomon made on the dedication of the Temple (1 Kings viii. 63.), or that which our Lord described in His parable (St. Matt. xxii. 3.). How terrible is the irony, the poetic scornfulness, of this expression! The murderous Scythian horsemen are the agents to be employed; and the blood that is to be shed is the blood of sinful idolaters and "rich fools" in Judæa.

8. "the king's children." These were probably the children, not of Josiah, who was still a young man of twenty or twenty-one, but of the late king Amon. That king's strange, outlandish, Egyptian name suggests, of itself, the fashion that had crept in among the Jews of using strange heathenish customs, wearing "strange apparel" and adoring strange gods. For instance, the next verse mentions a puerile superstition, which seems to have prevailed especially in Persia; viz. that of dreading to touch the threshold, and therefore "leaping over it," on entering a great man's house. Woe to the nation or the Church that becomes ashamed of itself; that tries to ape other people's ways; and, instead of growing from its own root and making the most of its own gifts, drops its solid advantages to grasp the shadow of something not its own!

ZEPHANIAH, I.

11 ^q Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are cut down; all they that bear silver are cut off.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 630.

^q Jam. 5. 1.

12 And it shall come to pass at that time, *that* I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are ² settled on their lees: ³ that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.

² Heb.
curded, or,
thickened.
^r Jer. 48. 11.
Amos 6. 1.
^s Ps. 94. 7.

13 Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but ^t not inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, but ^u not drink the wine thereof.

^t Deut. 28. 30.
39.
Amos 5. 11.

14 ^x The great day of the LORD is near, *it is near*, and hasteth greatly, *even* the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

^u Mic. 6. 15.
^x Joel 2. 1, 11.

11. "Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh." This Hebrew word means simply "a mortar." It occurs, for instance, in the well-known passage of Proverbs (ch. xxvii. 22.) "Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar, yet will not his folly depart from him." And perhaps this passage may suggest its true meaning here: Jerusalem being compared to a "mortar" in which these foolish rebels against Jehovah shall be brayed by God's agents, the Scythians and other invaders. (Comp. Isa. i. 10, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of *Sodom*,"—meaning Jerusalem. Hos. ii. 1, "Say to your brethren, '*Amni*;' and to your 'sisters, '*Ruhamah*'"—meaning the men and women of Israel. Rev. xviii. 2, "*Babylon* the great is fallen,"—meaning Rome.) There is no known village or suburb of Jerusalem which was called by this name.

12. "the men that are settled on their lees." The metaphor is taken from the treatment of wine in the cask. It was often left perfectly still and self-contained (so to speak), till its lees or dregs had all deposited themselves; and then it was racked off into smaller vessels. The men, therefore, here described are persons living a life of perfect repose and of indifference to both good and evil, persons wrapped up in their own private affairs, quietly engaged in making large deposits in their till or at their bank, and tranquilly acquiescent in all that goes on around them so long as they can only make money. Yet how near may be some "great day of the Lord," some "day of wrath and trouble," when (as St. James says) "your riches will be corrupted, and your garments moth-eaten; your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (St. Jas. v. 2).

14. "The great day of the Lord is near." This "day of the Lord," as understood by the prophet Zephaniah himself, was (no doubt) the fast approaching day of Jehovah's chastisements by the inroad of the Scythian horsemen. In like manner the prophet Joel (from whom some of the imagery in this chapter is borrowed) meant by "the day of the Lord" a terrible and devastating invasion by locusts, bringing

ZEPHANIAH, II.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 630.

7 Isai. 22, 5.
Jer. 30, 7.
Joel 2, 2, 11.
Amos 5, 18.
ver. 18.
z Jer. 4, 19.

15 ^y That day *is* a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

16 a day of ^z the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.

17 And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall ^a walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and ^b their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh ^c as the dung.

a Deut. 28, 23.
Isai. 59, 10.
b Ps. 79, 3.
c Ps. 83, 10.
Jer. 9, 22.
& 16, 4.
d Prov. 11, 4.
Ezek. 7, 19.
e ch. 3, 8.
f ver. 2, 3.

18 ^d Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's wrath; but the whole land shall be ^e devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for ^f he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

CHAPTER II.

1 *An exhortation to repentance.* 4 *The judgment of the Philistines; 8 of Moab and Ammon, 12 of Ethopia and Assyria.*

a Joel 2, 16.
2 Or, *not desirous.*

GATHER yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation ² not desired;

famine in their train. But we are told that "no prophecy of the Scripture "is of any private interpretation" (2 St. Pet. i. 20.). And it is easy to see that these lesser "days of the Lord" were, after all, only preludes and (in the language of theology) "types" of still greater and more terrible days of Divine vengeance yet to come. So, too, it was with our Lord's own language about His second coming. He sometimes spoke of it as about to be fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem. "There be some "of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death till they have "seen the kingdom of God come with power" (St. Mark ix. 1.). At other times He clearly spoke of a far greater "coming;" viz. at the judgment day. And of this, all previous sifting crises in the world's history are but prefigurements and types. We may see, therefore, in these words of the prophet Zephaniah, a deeper and larger meaning than they had to him, under the teaching of the same Holy Spirit by whom he was inspired to write them; and may think of the great "day of "wrath and distress," which shall come upon all the world at the final consummation of all things.

CHAPTER II.

1. "gather together, O nation not desired." The prophet is addressing his own people, the Jewish nation; and, echoing the language both of Joel and Hosea, he says "call a solemn assembly! gather the "people! (Joel ii. 15.) O people, who are not God's people, nor is He

ZEPHANIAH, II.

2 before the decree bring forth, *before* the day pass ^b as the chaff, before ^c the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger come upon you.

3 ^d Seek ye the LORD, ^e all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: ^f it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger.

4 ¶ For ^g Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation: they shall drive out Ashdod ^h at the noon day, and Ekron shall be rooted up.

5 Woe unto the inhabitants of ⁱ the sea coast, the nation of the Cherethites! the word of the LORD is against you; O ^k Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant.

6 And the sea coast shall be dwellings *and* cottages for shepherds, ^l and folds for flocks.

7 And the coast shall be for ^m the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening: ⁿ for the LORD their God shall ^o visit them, and ^p turn away their captivity.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 630.

^b Job 21. 18.

Ps. 1. 4.

Isai. 17. 13.

Hos. 13. 3.

^c 2 Kin. 23. 20.

^d Ps. 105. 4.

Amos 5. 6.

^e Ps. 76. 9.

^f Joel 2. 14.

Amos 5. 15.

Jonah 3. 9.

^g Jer. 47. 4, 5.

Ezek. 25. 17.

Amos 1. 6,

7, 8.

Zech. 9. 5, 6.

^h Jer. 6. 4.

& 15. 8.

ⁱ Ezek. 25. 16.

^k Josh. 13. 3.

^l See Is. 17. 2.

ver. 14.

^m Isai. 11. 11.

Mic. 4. 7.

& 5. 7, 8.

Hag. 1. 12.

& 2. 2.

ver. 9.

ⁿ Or,

when, &c.

^o Ex. 4. 31.

Luke 1. 68.

^p Ps. 126. 1.

Jer. 29. 14.

ch. 3. 20.

“your God!” (Hos. i. 9.). He is urging them to repentance, while yet there is time, before it be too late, and “before the decree bring forth” its fast approaching effect.

2. “before the day pass as the chaff.” The figure is that of the chaff set free by winnowing, and passing swiftly away before one’s eyes down the wind. So passes away, if we are not watchful, the time and opportunity for repentance. “Take heed, brethren!—exhort one another “daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through “the deceitfulness of sin” (Heb. iii. 12.).

4. “Gaza shall be forsaken,” &c. Philistia is the country here threatened, all the five cities of the Philistines being mentioned, except Gath (1 Sam. vi. 17.). And in point of fact, it was this maritime plain along the sea-coast, and the city of Ashkelon in particular, with its heathen temple, which is expressly mentioned by the Greek historian Herodotus (B.C. 450.) as having been ravaged by the Scythian hordes, on their way down towards Egypt.

5. “the Cherethites.” This is an old name for “the Philistines,” probably indicating the truth that they were not originally of Syrian, but of Cretan extraction. Hence they are perpetually spoken of in the Old Testament as “the uncircumcised Philistines.” This ancient name occurs again in 1 Sam. xxx. 14. Ezek. xxv. 16.

7. “and turn away their captivity.” Judah had not yet gone into

ZEPHANIAH, II.

Before
CHRIST
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P Jer. 48. 27.
Ezek. 25. 8.
q Ezek. 25.
3, 6.
r Jer. 49. 1.
s Isai. 15.
Jer. 48.
Ezek. 25. 9.
Amos 2. 1.
t Amos 1. 13.
u Gen. 19. 25.
Deut. 29. 23.
Isai. 13. 19.
& 34. 13.
Jer. 49. 18.
& 50. 40.
x ver. 7.
y Isai. 16. 6.
Jer. 48. 29.

8 ¶^p I have heard the reproach of Moab, and ^q the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached my people, and ^r magnified *themselves* against their border.

9 Therefore *as* I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely ^s Moab shall be as Sodom, and ^t the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, ^u *even* the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: ^x the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.

10 This shall they have ^y for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified *themselves* against the people of the LORD of hosts.

11 The LORD *will be* terrible unto them: for he will ^z famish all the gods of the earth; ^a and *men* shall worship him, every one from his place, *even* all ^a the isles of the heathen.

12 ¶^b Ye Ethiopians also, ye *shall be* slain by ^c my sword.

13 And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and ^d destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, *and* dry like a wilderness.

^z Heb.
make lean.
z Mal. 1. 11.
John 4. 21.
a Gen. 10. 5.
b Isai. 18. 1.
& 20. 4.
Jer. 46. 9.
Ezek. 30. 9.
c Ps. 17. 13.
d Isai. 10. 12.
Ezek. 31. 3.
Nah. 1. 1.
& 2. 10. &
3. 15, 18.

captivity, and therefore the phrase may perhaps simply mean, as it does at Job xlii. 10, "and shall restore them to their former prosperity." But, of course, it may possibly refer to the return from exile at Babylon, a century later on.

8. "magnified themselves against their border." It is clear, from many passages in the Old Testament that these small neighbouring kingdoms, Ammon, Moab, and Edom, on the south-east border of the Israelites, were a perpetual thorn in their sides; and that, on every occasion of calamity, they acted on the exasperating maxim that "Israel's calamity was Moab's opportunity." They especially aimed at extending their "border" at Israel's expense (comp. Judg. xi. 13. Isa. xvi. 6. Amos i. 13.).

11. "he will famish all the gods of the earth." The Hebrew is an expressive word, meaning "He will abrade, make lean, reduce gradually" to nothing, all the false gods of the world." How striking, how (humanly speaking) inexplicable is this confidence which is always expressed by the Hebrew prophets, that the worship of Jehovah would eventually supersede and swallow up the worship of every other (supposed) god throughout the whole world!

12. "Ye Ethiopians also." The prophet selects for his two instances, in proof of God's far-reaching sword, (1) the Ethiopian subjects of Egypt in the far south; (2) the Ninevites in the extreme north (comp. Nahum, Introd.).

14 And °flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all ^f the beasts of the nations : both the ^{2 s} cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the ³ upper lintels of it ; *their* voice shall sing in the windows ; desolation shall be in the thresholds : ⁴ for he shall uncover the ^h cedar work.

15 This is the rejoicing city ⁱ that dwelt carelessly, ^k that said in her heart, I am, and *there is* none beside me : how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in ! every one that passeth by her ^l shall hiss, and ^m wag his hand.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 630.
° ver. 6.
^f Is. 13, 21, 22.
² Or, *pelican*.
³ Is. 34, 11, 14.
³ Or,
*knops, or,
chapiters.*
⁴ Or,
*when he
hath un-
covered.*
^h Jer. 22, 14.
ⁱ Isai. 47, 8.
^k Rev. 18, 7.
^l Job 27, 23.
Lam. 2, 15.
Ezek. 27, 36.
^m Nah. 3, 13.

CHAPTER III.

1 A sharp reproof of Jerusalem for divers sins. 8 An exhortation to wait for the restoration of Israel, 14 and to rejoice for their salvation by God.

WOE to ^{2 3} her that is filthy and polluted, to the ² Or, *gluttonous.*
oppressing city !

2 She ^a obeyed not the voice ; she ^b received not ³ Heb. *craw.*
⁴ correction ; she trusted not in the LORD ; she drew ^a Jer. 22, 21.
not near to her God. ^b Jer. 5, 3.

3 ° Her princes within her *are* roaring lions ; her ⁴ Or, *in-
struction.*
judges *are* ^c Ezek. 22, 27.
^d Mic. 3, 9,
^e Hab. 1, 8.
evening wolves ; they gnaw not the ^e Jer. 23, 11,
bones till the morrow. ^f Lam. 2, 14.
^g Hos. 9, 7.

4 Her °prophets *are* light and treacherous

CHAPTER III.

1. "Woe to her that is filthy," &c. In conclusion, Zephaniah turns round, almost fiercely, upon his own city and people, the highly-favoured Jerusalem, so often—even already—visited by "prophets and righteous men," so often chastened, remonstrated with, invited back by her "just Lord," even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings,—and they would not (St. Matt. xxiii. 37.). It is clear, from the later chapters of 2 Kings, as well as from the contemporary prophets, that Judah had by this time gone the way of her sister-kingdom Israel, and that nothing but the very sharpest punishment, viz. her temporary overthrow by Babylon, could possibly restore her to religious soundness and national health. Yet the Lord never cast off utterly "His own people, which He foreknew" (Rom. xi. 2.). His promises, to whomsoever made, are not first "yea," and then "nay ;" but are a standing "yea and Amen" (2 Cor. i. 20.) ; "which promises He, for His part, will surely keep and perform" (*Baptismal Service*). And hence, in ver. 9, a new turn is given to this prophecy. A great reformation is confidently foretold ; and then a return of God's favour. The partial fulfilment of all this is to be seen in Messianic or Christian times.

4. "Her prophets are light . . . her priests have polluted the

ZEPHANIAH, III.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 630.

- persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done ^f violence to the law.
- ^f Ezek. 22. 26. **5** ^s The just LORD ^h is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: ² every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but ⁱ the unjust knoweth no shame.
- ^h Deut. 32. 4. **6** I have cut off the nations: their ^o towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.
- ^h ver. 15, 17. **7** ^k I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, and ^l corrupted all their doings.
- See Micah 3. 11. **8** ¶ Therefore ^m wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to ⁿ gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth ^o shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.
- ² Heb. morning by morning. **9** For then will I turn to the people ^p a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one ⁵ consent.
- ⁱ Jer. 3. 3. & 6. 15. & 8. 12. **10** ^q From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, *even* the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.
- ³ Or, corners. **11** In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of
- ^l So Jer. 8. 6. **12** ¶ Therefore ^m wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to ⁿ gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth ^o shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.
- ¹ Gen. 6. 12. **13** ¶ Therefore ^m wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to ⁿ gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth ^o shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.
- ^m Ps. 27. 14. & 37. 34. **14** ¶ Therefore ^m wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to ⁿ gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth ^o shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.
- ⁿ Joel 3. 2. **15** ¶ Therefore ^m wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to ⁿ gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth ^o shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.
- ^o ch. 1. 18. **16** ¶ Therefore ^m wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to ⁿ gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth ^o shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.
- ^p Isai. 19. 18. **17** ¶ Therefore ^m wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to ⁿ gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth ^o shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.
- ⁴ Heb. lip. **18** ¶ Therefore ^m wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to ⁿ gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth ^o shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.
- ⁵ Heb. shoulder. **19** ¶ Therefore ^m wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to ⁿ gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth ^o shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.
- ^q Ps. 68. 31. Isai. 18. 1, 7. & 60. 4, &c. Mal. 1. 11. Acts 8. 27. **20** ¶ Therefore ^m wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to ⁿ gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth ^o shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

“sanctuary.” “A wonderful and horrible thing,” indeed, when “the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means” (Jer. v. 30.). This is the last token of an expiring Church, viz. the conscious maintenance of a system of false teaching, in order to prop up the power of a sinking hierarchy. “If the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?” (St. Luke xiv. 34.)

7. “I said, Surely thou wilt fear me.” How tender and fatherly is this expostulation of Jehovah with His own people, and the city “which He had chosen, to place His name there!” (Deut. xvi. 2.) How unwilling He is to chasten!

9. “then will I turn to the people a pure language.” That is, “I will restore, change, convert, the language of mankind from impurity to purity, from falsehood and irreligion to truth and piety.” O happy prophecy! when will its complete fulfilment dawn?

ZEPHANIAH, II.

thee them that ^r rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty ² because of my holy mountain.

12 I will also leave in the midst of thee ^s an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD.

13 ^t The remnant of Israel ^u shall not do iniquity, ^x nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for ^y they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make *them* afraid.

14 ¶ ^z Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

15 The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: ^a the king of Israel, *even* the LORD, ^b is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.

Before
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cir. 630.

^r Jer. 7. 4.
Mic. 3. 11.
Matt. 3. 9.
² Heb. *in my holy.*
^s Isai. 14. 32.
Zech. 11. 11.
Matt. 5. 3.
¹ Cor. 1. 27, 28.
Jam. 2. 5.
^t Mic. 4. 7.
ch. 2. 7.
^u Isai. 60. 21.
^x Isai. 63. 8.
Rev. 14. 5.
^y Ezek. 34. 28.
Mic. 4. 4.
& 7. 14.
^z Isai. 12. 6.
& 54. 1.
Zech. 2. 10.
& 9. 9.
^a John 1. 49.
^b Ezek. 48. 35.
ver. 5. 17.
Rev. 7. 15. & 21. 3, 4.

11. "no more be haughty because of my holy mountain." Here is another token of an utterly corrupt Church; viz. when her ministers and people indulge in a godless pride and self-gratulation; in a mere acceptance of the outward mechanism of the time-honoured sanctuaries and endowments of religion, without remembering the purpose for which alone all these things were intended. This senseless pride seems, a little later on, to have taken still fuller hold of the Jewish mind. And the prophets were obliged to say: "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, 'The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, are these.' For if ye thoroughly amend your ways . . . , then will I cause you to dwell in this place" (Jer. vii. 4.). We meet also with the same feeling in the Pharisees of the New Testament.

12. "an afflicted and poor people." This was literally fulfilled in the Christian Church of the Apostolic age, when, even among the more prosperous and richer Gentiles, "not many mighty, not many noble were called" (1 Cor. i. 26.), and the Jewish converts were recommended to their charity, under the modest title of "the poor saints which are at Jerusalem" (Rom. xv. 26.).

14. "Sing, O daughter of Zion," &c. From this point to the end of his prophecy, Zephaniah breaks out into a triumphant strain of Messianic exultation,—as do almost all the Jewish prophets. And it was doubtless the possession of these glorious ideals, never—from human infirmity and sin—to be fully realized till the great restoration of all things, which nerved the hearts of holy men and women and inspired their lips as the "fulness of times" drew nigh. Hence arose, 600 years later, the *Magnificat* and the *Nunc dimittis*,—antiphons or echoes, as it were, of this earlier teaching of the Hebrew prophets; and themselves preparatory, on our own lips, for some fuller and loftier strain of praise, when the Messiah Himself "shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father," and when He shall have "put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. xv. 24.).

ZEPHANIAH, III.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 630.

16 In that day ^cit shall be said to Jerusalem,
Fear thou not: *and to Zion,* ^dLet not thine hands
be ^eslack.

^c Is. 35. 3, 4.
^d Heb. 12. 12.

^e Or, faint.

^f ver. 15.

^f Deut. 30. 9.

Isai. 62. 5.

& 65. 19.

Jer. 32. 41.

17 The LORD thy God ^ein the midst of thee *is*
mighty; he will save, ^fhe will rejoice over thee with
joy; ^ghe will rest in his love, he will joy over thee
with singing.

^g Heb. *he will*
be silent.

^g Lam. 2. 6.

^h Heb.

the burden
upon it was
reproach.

^h Ezek. 34. 16.

Mic. 4. 6, 7.

ⁱ Heb. *I will*

set them for

a praise.

^j Heb. *of*

their shame.

^j Isai. 11. 12.

& 27. 12 &

56. 8.

Ezek. 23. 25.

& 34. 13. &

37. 21.

Amos 9. 14.

18 I will gather *them that* ^g*are* sorrowful for the
solemn assembly, *who* are of thee, *to whom* ^hthe
reproach of it *was* a burden.

19 Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict
thee: and I will save her that ^hhalteth, and gather
her that was driven out; and ⁱI will get them
praise and fame in every land ^jwhere they have
been put to shame.

20 At that time ⁱwill I bring you *again*, even in
the time that I gather you: for I will make you a
name and a praise among all people of the earth,
when I turn back your captivity before your eyes,
saith the LORD.

20. "turn back your captivity." See note on ch. ii. 7.

HAGGAI.

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS UPON HAGGAI.

REMARKABLE are the endings of the books of Kings and Chronicles (2 Kings xxv. 27—30. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23.). Of the former we might say, "The darkness of midnight is passing;" of the latter, "here is the dawn of a brighter day." The marked kindness of Evil-Merodach king of Babylon, shewn in the midst of the seventy years' captivity, to Jehoiachin his royal prisoner, is followed, after a space of twenty-five years, by the still more remarkable kindness of Cyrus king of Persia, shewn to the whole remainder of the Jewish nation (Ezra i. 1—8.). And, about fifteen years later, Darius follows in the footsteps of Cyrus. Like Cyrus, and after his example, Darius powerfully aids the Jews, now no longer in Babylon, but already returned to Jerusalem. And further, although a heathen prince, he requests their prayers for himself and his children: "that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savour (Gen. viii. 21.) unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons" (Ezra vi. 10.). At this interesting and encouraging point of history the prophet Haggai begins,—Haggai, whose very name, signifying, "My feasts," "My festivals," would seem to speak of joy and gladness¹. And as our Lord sent both His Apostles and seventy disciples "two and two before His face," so now in the very same year, at no longer interval than between August and October, Zechariah prophesies with Haggai. They were now His two witnesses, and His word from their lips "prospered" (Isa. lv. 10, 11.). "Then" (in this second year of Darius Hystaspis, king of Persia) "the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them. Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel"—(how interesting are these names as ancestors of the Messiah),—"and Jeshua the son of Jozadak"—(names full of precious and comforting allusion to a Divine Saviour and His Divine righteous-

¹ In accordance with this, Haggai's name with Zechariah's is connected in the LXX. with several Psalms of the fifth and most jubilant book of the whole Book of Psalms (Pss. cxxxviii, cxlvi, cxlvii, cxlviii.); and he is said to

have been the first (some traditions speak of him as a *Priest*) to chant an Hallelujah in the second Temple. (See Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, on "Haggai," second paragraph.)

INTRODUCTION.

ness),—"and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: "and with them were the prophets of God helping them" (Ezra v. 1, 2.). They supported their brethren in this their good work, strengthened their hand, and encouraged them. In the highest sense they bade them "God speed."

But every good work in this evil world is sure to have its own difficulties and hindrances. And as more than fifty years afterwards, Ezra the priest, the scribe, and Nehemiah, the Tirshatha, the appointed governor and ruler, appear to deal principally with *outward* and external difficulties, so here Haggai and Zechariah, the two prophets of God, have first to deal with internal, *moral*, and spiritual hindrances. In order to the building of the house of God, not only must Darius by his royal decree say to "Tatnai governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and their companies—"Be ye far from thence: let the work of this house of God "alone,"" but also in Jerusalem itself, God by the mouth of His holy prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, is to "stir up the hearts of His faithful "people." Doubt and diffidence, delay and procrastination have to be shaken off, if not some measure also of sloth, and possibly even of self-indulgence, ere they "come and do work in the house of the LORD of "hosts, their God."

The prophet Haggai, then, as all God's prophets, is a preacher of "repentance." And at this particular time and crisis, the repentance of men was to be shewn in this: that, instead of attending to the comfortable completing of their own dwellings, they should attend at once and without further delay to God's own dwellingplace (ch. i. 4.). So that the longing desire of God's prophet for his people seems expressed in the Passover hymn of the devout Jew of the present day:

"Lord, build, build Thy temple speedily,
"In our days speedily."

CHAPTER I.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 520.

1 *Haggai reproveth the people for neglecting the building of the house.*
7 *He inciteth them to the building.* 12 *He promiseth God's assistance to them being forward.*

IN ^a the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD ² by Haggai the prophet unto ^b Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, ³ governor of Judah, and to ^c Joshua the son of ^d Josedech, the high priest, saying,

2 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD's house should be built.

3 Then came the word of the LORD ^e by Haggai the prophet, saying,

4 ^f *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?*

5 Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; ^g Consider your ways.

^a Ezra 4. 24. & 5. 1.
Zech. 1. 1.

² Heb. *by the hand of Haggai.*

^b 1 Chron. 3. 17, 19.

Ezra 3. 2.

Matt. 1. 12.

Luke 3. 27.

³ Or, *captain.*

^c Ezra 3. 2. & 5. 2.

^d 1 Chr. 6. 15

Ezra 5. 1.

^e 2 Sam. 7. 2.

Ps. 132. 3, &c.

^f Heb. *Set your heart on your ways.*

^g Lam. 3. 40. ver. 7.

CHAPTER I.

1. "the second year of Darius the king." This was a year memorable for God's mercies. See Ezra iv. 24; v. 1, 2. Hindrances which had lasted during two previous kings' reigns—Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes the First—were now removed, and "the time *was* come—the time that "the Lord's house should be built."

2. See Gen. xix. 15, 16. Delay in religious duties is displeasing to God, draws down punishment from Him, and forfeits His blessings (see ch. ii. 19.). All neglecting of *present* duty is a delaying to build God's Temple (Ps. cxix. 60.).

"The time is not come." We may fancy we are waiting on God's providence, when really we are waiting on our own procrastination and indifference. As was the case 250 years previous, in the time of king Jehoshaphat (see 2 Kings xii. 4—8. 2 Chron. xxiv. 4, 5.), Church work went on all too slowly, so now again. Always should *God's* time be *our* time.

4. "cieled houses." Covered in, roofed over. A word not perhaps so much of luxury, as of comfortable completion. *Their* houses were finished; God's house was not begun! See in a subsequent generation a far different spirit in that good layman and true-hearted patriot Nehemiah. Nehemiah cares 1st, for God's *palace*; 2nd, for the walls of his beloved city Jerusalem; and 3rd, and lastly, for his own dwelling (Neh. ii. 8.).

"waste." Not merely in ruins, but bearing marks of burning, as the word implies "scorched and burnt with fire" (2 Kings xxv. 9. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19. Ps. lxxiv. 6—8; lxxix. 1; lxxx. 15, 16.).

5. In Isa. i. 3, "My people doth not consider" = consider with themselves. Here and again in ver. 7 still more forcible language is employed,

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^h Dent. 28. 38.

Hos. 4. 10.

Mic. 6. 14.

ⁱ 15. ch. 2. 16.

ⁱ Zech. 8. 10.

² Heb.

*pierced
through.*

6 Ye have ^h sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and ⁱ he that earneth wages earneth wages *to put it* into a bag ² with holes.

7 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

8 Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.

^k ch. 2. 16.

9 ^k Ye looked for much, and, lo, *it came* to little;

“Apply your heart to your ways;” both past and present “ways,”—God’s ways and dealings with them in their own waywardness to Him. Afterwards, in ver. 7, it looks to immediate duties also. In both it is a powerful yet gracious call of the Holy Spirit to *repentance*; consider ye, each one of “you, each in your own heart, your ways.” How many of us sin—how much and how often, especially, as here, by sins of omission, not so much out of malicious intent, but rather through a culpable want of thought. (Compare the eleventh of the Introductory “Sentences,” the fifth clause in “The General Confession,” and the “Absolution” in “Morning and Evening Prayer.”)

6. There was a failure of all earthly resources. Neither did their sowing prosper, nor had they food or drink or clothing sufficient, and their earnings went only a very little way to supply their wants. Their wages’ money seems to slip through the purse as if it had holes in it, because of the high price alike of food and clothing. For the cause of all this, in God’s providence, comp. vv. 9—11, and ch. ii. 15—17, 19. Compare also the fearful denunciation, Mal. ii. 2, “I will curse your blessings.”

7. All true penitence has these two parts: (1) a looking back upon the past, and (2) a looking forward to the future. Therefore God by His Spirit directs His people (ver. 8.) how to act henceforward.

8. “the mountain.” Probably the Mount of Olives (comp. Neh. viii. 14—16.), extending itself as it does all along to the eastward of the city, nearest to the Temple, from north to south. Thus, in God’s providence, the materials of this His second Temple would be drawn from hallowed spots such as Bethany and Gethsemane, instead of the loftier mountains of Carmel or Lebanon.

“bring wood.” Why is wood only mentioned? Not that the structure was to be of wood (see on Zech. i. 18.), but the stone material was there already, more or less unconsumed by the Chaldean fires; “the stones of the sanctuary were “poured out in the top of every street” (Lam. iv. 1.) seventy years ago, and from their size as well as from the city’s desolate state lay there still.

“take pleasure in it.” In this My House, and be glorified not only “in it” (as the Jews would read the word) but also in the builders of it. Note, that God’s glory is not limited to the House, which His glory fills, but, like Himself, fills earth and heaven. Comp. 2 Chron. v. 11—14; vii. 1, 2, with Ps. lxxii. 19. Isa. vi. 3. Also Isa. lxvi. quoted by St. Stephen (Acts vii. 48—50.).

and when ye brought *it* home, ¹ I did ² blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that *is* waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.

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¹ ch. 2. 17.

² Or, *blow it away.*

10 Therefore ^m the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed *from* her fruit.

^m Lev. 26. 19.

ⁿ Dent. 28. 23

¹ Kin. 8. 35.

11 And I ⁿ called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon *that* which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and ^o upon all the labour of the hands.

ⁿ 1 Kin. 17. 1.

² Kin. 8. 1.

^o ch. 2. 17.

12 ¶ ^p Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him, and the people did fear before the LORD.

^p Ezra 5. 2.

13 Then spake Haggai the LORD's messenger in the LORD's message unto the people, saying, ^q I am with you, saith the LORD.

^q Matt 28. 20.

Rom. 8. 31.

9. "run." How eager were they to build and complete their own dwellings: how slow to repair and build again the sanctuary of their God. David on the other hand was righteously restless and dissatisfied at his own "dwelling in a house of cedar" while "the Ark of God was dwelling" only "within curtains." Comp. also Ps. cxxxii. 1—8.

10. "stayed." Restrained from pouring down her dew.

11. "a drought." The word here used both resembles and doubtless refers to the word "waste," vv. 4, 9: "According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay." They remissly suffered "His House" to remain "desolate," scorched and burnt with fire: consequently "their land" is desolate, scorched and parched, and burnt up by fiery drought. "For the transgression of Jacob is all this" (Mic. i. 5); and God, as a chastening Father, withholdeth at this time "Isaac's fond blessing," "with corn and wine I have sustained him" (Gen. xxvii. 37.).

12. Contrary to so many instances, *here* happily obedience to His word follows the preaching of His word. The rulers in Church and State (Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the High-priest), joined by all the remainder of the Jews returned from Babylon, obey God and His prophet. Moreover it is implied that a salutary sense of His just judgments touched and softened their hearts: "the people did fear before the Lord."

"as" not only = "when," but "according as," "in accordance with," "each time he spoke."

13. An unparalleled expression. God's prophet speaks *as* God's prophet by express direction and immediate message from Him. And what he says, while it is probably the shortest word of prophecy in the whole

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r² Chr. 36. 22.

Ezra 1. 1.

s ch. 2. 21.

t Ezra 5. 2, 8.

14 And ^r the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubabel the son of Shealtiel, ^s governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; ^t and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God,

15 in the four and twentieth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

CHAPTER II.

1 *He encourageth the people to the work, by promise of greater glory to the second temple than was in the first.* 10 *In the type of holy things and unclean he sheweth their sins hindered the work.* 20 *God's promise to Zerubbabel.*

² Heb. *by the hand of.* **I**N the seventh *month*, in the one and twentieth *day* of the month, came the word of the LORD ² by the prophet Haggai, saying,

Bible, is the very concentration and essence of comfort and consolation. It follows here as immediate and strong encouragement to *obediēce* in the fear of God (ver. 12.), and it is perhaps only surpassed by our blessed Lord's own parting words to His Church: "Lo, I am with you alway." And as then, so now, Christ is specially present by His Spirit (ch. ii. 5).

14. "stirred up the spirit." Although the very name of their prince and governor reminded them of their punishment in Babylon, although Joshua was disgraced by the conduct of his children (Ezra x. 2, 18, 19.), although all the people were unclean and polluted in His sight (ch. ii. 14.), yet He graciously works upon them, and stirs up for this purpose the highest part of their nature, their "spirit." And thus He puts in motion and activity the whole "remnant" of His nation, prince, priest, and people, and influences the whole man in each, "body, "soul, and spirit," the "soul" and "body" obeying and following the impulse of the "spirit." Compare the wonderful description in Ezekiel's opening vision (Ezek. i. 12, 20, 21.). The moving, vivifying, forth-rushing power was "the spirit." Compare also in the New Testament 2 St. Pet. i. 21. Acts ii. 2.

15. This chapter then occupies apparently three weeks of the month, nearly = August: ere the next chapter begins, there has intervened (1) the Feast of Trumpets; (2) the Great day of Atonement; (3) the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. xxiii. 24—41.).

CHAPTER II.

1. The word of God from the mouth of His prophet seems to have taken such effect, that, in three weeks' time, they were for three weeks' space diligently employed in rebuilding His Temple (ch. i. 1, 15.). Notwithstanding difficulties and opposition, their enemies' own account of it is this: "The house of the great God is being built with large "stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and 'this work goeth on fast and "prospereth' in their hands" (Ezra v. 8.).

HAGGAI, II.

2 Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying,

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3 ^a Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? ^b is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?

^a Ezra 3. 12.

^b Zech. 4. 10.

4 Yet now ^c be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts:

^c Zech. 8. 9.

5 ^d according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so ^e my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.

^d Ex. 29. 45,

46.

^e Neh. 9. 20.

Isai. 63. 11.

2. "residue." The same word is here used as in ch. i. 12, 14. They were a reserved remnant, for whom there was pardon (Jer. l. 20.) and in whom there was a blessing (Isa. lv. 8.). In these was found notwithstanding their former remissness, God's holy fear and a spirit of diligence in His service (ch. i. 12, 14.). Awakened and cheered by the Feast of Trumpets, humbled by the Great day of Atonement, and refreshed by the Feast of Tabernacles (Neh. viii. 14—18.), the people are now prepared to receive the gracious encouragement which follows: "Be strong" (=be of good cheer, and be not disheartened), and work: for I am "with you, saith the Lord of hosts."

3. The aged are disposed to regard with high esteem the things and the men of their youth. That Temple which they recollected was complete: this is all incomplete. As yet it was but the day of small beginnings, yet none must despise it (Zech. iv. 10.), for this House with the Incarnate Presence of a greater than Solomon shall be more glorious than Solomon's (St. Matt. xii. 6, 42.). Hither He came and here He frequented, here He worshipped, prayed, and sang praises, here He healed and here He taught and shewed forth His power, Who is Himself the One and only perfect Temple among men, and Who is "our Peace" (see below, on ch. ii. 9, latter clause).

5. "my spirit remaineth among you." Some Rabbins say, "Five things were lacking in the second Temple, the Ark, the Urim and Thummim (=oracular breast-plate of the High-priest), the fire from above, the Shechinah (=the abiding cloud of Divine glory), and the Holy Spirit;" yet here God by His prophet assures His people that His blessed Spirit was still "abiding" with them (St. John xiv. 16.). See His promise, first to Moses (Exod. iii. 11, 12.), and, secondly, to His people (Exod. xxix. 45, 46.). Between twenty and thirty generations had passed, but His mercy is on them that fear "Him 'from generation 'to generation'" (St. Luke ii. 50.). It is true that, after Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, prophecy seems in some measure, for 400 years to have ceased. But was not this silence (comp. Rev. viii. 1, 2, 6.) intended to prepare for the lifegiving words of that "Great Prophet," in

HAGGAI, II.

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f ver. 21.
Heb. 12, 26.
E Joel 3, 16.
h Gen. 4, 10.
Mal. 3, 1.

6 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; ^f Yet once, it is a little while, and ^g I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;

7 and I will shake all nations, ^h and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.

Whose days and after Whose exaltation into heaven the Holy Spirit began to be "poured forth on all flesh?" When that blessed Spirit ceases to plead, then "the end of all flesh' comes before God" (Gen. vi. 3, 5, 13.). As yet by many manifest tokens His Spirit is not yet withdrawn from us, but by Christian energy, by prayer and intercession, by preaching and mission-work, "remaineth among us." Let us not "grieve" Him, nor "quench" His grace within us.

"fear ye not." Compare the complaint and consolation of Zion (Isa. xlix. 14—16.), and of David (Ps. xlii. 9—11; lxxi. 11—14.).

6. "a little while." Whether 500 years or more than 2000, it is but "a little while" with Him, in "Whose sight a thousand years are but "as yesterday, when it is past, and as a watch in the night" (Ps. xc. 4.).

7. "I will shake all nations." Both man's dwelling in all the wide domain God has allotted to him, "heavens, earth, sea, and dry land," and man himself in all his nation-multitudes shall be "shaken." The same word is used for the "earthquake" (Amos i. 1.). Contrast the state of men described as "settled on their lees" (Zeph. i. 12, and more fully Jer. xlviii. 11.), whose heart-corruption through long continuance is fixed deep within them. Comp. also Ps. lv. 19, "Because they 'have "no changes,' therefore they fear not God." Sad effect of ease and continued prosperity!

"the desire of all nations shall come." The noun "desire" is in the singular number, the verb is plural. His elect people share with the Messiah in prospect the honour of being "the desire of all nations" (see 1 St. John iii. 2.). They shall also come with Him. See St. Jude ver. 14. 1 Thess. iv. 14—17.

We may further notice that it is in connexion with the "shaking of all nations" (= political commotions, changes, disturbances, revolutions, and fearful wars and battles, vv. 21, 22.) that "the desire of all nations" is to "come." So, in a lesser degree, revolutions and wars in Spain, France, Italy, Russia, have usually paved and prepared the way for a more free entrance of the word of God. So, too, again, more or less, in India, in China, and Japan. Missions have often prospered the more after the "shaking" of those nations where they are located. Many hearts saddened by sorrow and the disasters of war, are more ready to welcome Him, Who is the Desire, "the Comfort" (as Luther translates it) of all nations; Who, amid all their changes, Himself "changeth not," but is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (Mal. iii. 6. Heb. xiii. 8.).

"I will fill this house with glory." As had been the case with the Tabernacle nearly 1000 years before—when completed (Exod. xl. 34, 35.)—and with the Temple, now about 500 years before, when finished and furnished and full of praise (2 Chron. v. 11—14; vii. 1—3.), so here is a gracious promise of the same token of acceptance of this His third dwellingplace among His people.

Note, the indwelling of God's glory is the indwelling of the God of

HAGGAI, II.

8 The silver *is* mine, and the gold *is* mine, saith the LORD of hosts.

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9 ⁱ The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and

John 1. 14.

glory, producing peace and joy (see Zech. ii. 10.) bringing truth and holiness to both old and young (Zech. viii. 3—5.) and “the humility of “righteousness” (Ps. xlv. 4.). When “the Word was made flesh, and “tabernacled among us,” then in this House St. John and his fellow-disciples beheld (St. John i. 14.) “a greater than Solomon.”

8. “The silver is mine, and the gold is mine.” Lit. “To me is “the silver, and to me is the gold,” i. e. belongs to Me, comes from Me, and is yours only by My gift, and is to be returned to Me, as “God Most “High, the Possessor of heaven and earth” (Gen. xiv. 22.). Fifteen years before this, the decree of Cyrus had sustained and “helped” the Jews “with silver and with gold,” their neighbours wherever they sojourned in their captivity, “strengthening their hands with vessels of “silver, with gold, with goods.” Out of the idol-temples of Babylon, Mithredath his treasurer restored the gold and silver vessels to the number of 5,400 to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah (Ezra i. 1—11.). Thus, as of old, nearly 1000 years before out of Egypt, so now out of Babylon, but more honourably than then, “He brought them forth “with silver and gold” (Exod. xii. 35, 36. Ps. cv. 37.). Compare also Isa. lx. 9. Ps. lxxii. 10, 15, a prophecy fulfilled at the Epiphany (St. Matt. ii. 11.), and to be yet more gloriously fulfilled in the days of Israel’s future glory in their King Messiah. Note, all who possess silver and gold should bear in mind that not only is the tenth thereof specially His, but *all* belongs to the Great Giver, and is to be *all* employed in various ways, direct or indirect, to His glory. “The silver,” i. e. *all* silver; “the gold,” i. e. *all* gold.

9. “glory . . . greater than of the former.” See above, on ver. 7 : “I will fill this house with glory.” The presence of Christ, the Son of God Most High, tabernacled in mortal body, was far more glorious than any Shechinah (=abiding cloud of God’s glorious Presence). And the other four things, said to have been lacking to this second Temple, (ver. 5, *note*) were all found in Him or furnished by Him. Was the Ark of the Covenant wanting? He was in Himself both Ark and Mercy-seat; *Ark* as keeping (in every sense) God’s covenant, and *Mercy-seat* as the one blessed Medium of intercessory communion and communication between man and his Maker (see Exod. xxv. 21, 22; xxx. 6.). Was there no longer “a priest with Urim and with Thummim?” (Ezra ii. 63.) Hither He came, and here He taught, Who was “the true ‘Light,’” “the ‘Light’ of the world,” Who was also “the Righteous One,” “the “Lord our ‘righteousness,’” Who imparts His own righteousness to Jerusalem, that *her* name should be called, “The Lord our righteousness,” Who, is also the Light of the Heavenly city (St. John i. 4—9; viii. 12; xii. 46. Acts xxii. 14. St. James v. 6. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; with xxxiii. 15, 16. Rev. xxi. 11, 23; xxii. 5.). Again, was the fire from above upon the altar wanting? Here, and in connexion with this Temple and its Passover-feast and services, the fire of God’s wrath against sin fell upon the Sin-bearer, His sinless Son, upon the altar of the Cross. Nor, fifthly, was it true that the Holy Spirit was wanting to this second Temple. God expressly declares the contrary (ch. ii. 5.): “My Spirit abideth in the

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in this place will I give ^k peace, saith the LORD of hosts.

^k Ps. 85. 8, 9.
Luke 2. 14.
Eph. 2. 14.

10 ¶ In the four and twentieth *day* of the ninth *month*, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying,

^l Lev. 10. 10, 11.
Deut. 33. 10.
Mal. 2. 7.

11 Thus saith the LORD of hosts ; ¹ Ask now the priests *concerning* the law, saying,

“midst of you : fear ye not.” If prophecy ceased for a while (Ps. lxxiv. 9.), yet hither came “of a truth that Prophet which should come into the “world” (St. John vi. 14.), to Whom “the Spirit was given without “measure” (St. John iii. 3, 4.), and according to Whose prayer and promise the Holy Spirit began probably from this very Temple to be “poured “out on all flesh” (Acts ii. 4, 17, 18.).

“in this place will I give peace.” In what place? Clearly the second Temple, “the latter house.” If Jerusalem itself is also here in any way included, it is because the city includes God’s Temple, as His palace, and thus merits the honourable title of “the City of the Great “King” (Ps. xlviii. 2 ; lxxxvii. 3. St. Matt. v. 35.). The word “peace” has in English no exact equivalent. The various ideas of perfection, completion, and completeness,—of setting right, and restitution,—of security, and prosperity, all enter into this one word. Thus it enters into the name of Jerusalem (= vision of peace), and as such is referred to in Ps. cxxii. 6, 7. But the older and original name of Jerusalem was Salem, not vision of peace, but peace itself (Gen. xiv. 18. Heb. vii. 1. Comp. also Isa. xlvi. 18 ; lx. 17 ; lxi. 12.).

In promising to “give peace in this place” God does in effect (as the event 550 years afterwards shewed) promise to give His ever-blessed Son, of whom it is said in connexion with either His Father, or His twofold office of Priest and King, “the counsel of peace shall be between them “both” (Zech. vi. 13.). Hither came “that Man, Who was to be the “Peace” (Mic. v. 5. Eph. ii. 17. Col. i. 20. Rom. v. 5.). Hence, at the close of our Church services, especially of the Holy Eucharist, there comes not in word only but in power that “‘Peace of God,’ which sur-“passeth all understanding” to “keep our hearts and minds in Christ “Jesus” (Phil. iv. 7.).

10. Between this and the previous verse—rather more than two months’ interval—preparation both of timber (ch. i. 8.) and stone (Zech. iv. 7—10.) was being made for the House of God. And now, the actual building began (comp. vv. 15 and 18.). It was November : the works of the year in the field, the garden, the vine-yard, and even the olive-gardens would usually have been completed. But *this* year it was not so ; this season was far different : “I smote you with blasting and “mildew (both threatened, Deut. xxviii. 22 ; and the former found in “the famine in Egypt, Gen. xli. 6, 23, 27.), and with hail,” inflicted on Egypt (Exod. ix. 22—25.), threatened against false prophets (Ezek. xii. 11, 13.). Comp. Rev. viii. 7 ; xi. 19 ; xvi. 21.

11. “Ask now the priests (concerning) the law.” Ask thou, O prophet of the Lord, of the priests of the Lord. The priest is to be listened to as to God’s *law*, as is the prophet as to God’s *will*. To the *priests* here, as a body and collectively, the Divinely appointed inter-

HAGGAI, II.

12 If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No.

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13 Then said Haggai, If *one that is* ^m unclean by ^m a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean.

^m Num. 19.
11.

14 Then answered Haggai, and said, ⁿ So *is* this ⁿ people, and so *is* this nation before me, saith the LORD; and so *is* every work of their hands; and that which they offer there *is* unclean.

ⁿ Tit. 1. 15.

15 And now, I pray you, ^o consider from this day ^o and upward, from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the LORD:

^o ch. 1. 5

16 since those *days* were, ^p when *one* came to an heap of twenty *measures*, there were *but* ten: when *one* came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty *vessels* out of the press, there were *but* twenty.

^p ch. 1. 6, 9.
Zech. 8. 10.

17 ^q I smote you with blasting and with mildew

^q Deut. 28. 22.
1 Kin. 8. 37.
Amos 4. 9.
ch. 1. 9.

preters of the law of God (Deut. xvii. 8—12. Lev. x. 10, 11. Deut. xxxiii. 10. Mal. ii. 7.) is Haggai, God's prophet, sent to put two consecutive enquiries. The first question is: Supposing holy flesh carried in the skirt or fringe of the garment touch (unawares it is presumed and unintentionally) any common food—the bread, the pottage, the wine, and oil, and any kind of ordinary food, can that holy flesh impart holiness to what it touches? The unhesitating answer is—No; it cannot. A further case is put: Since all and every *natural* and non-sacrificial death involves uncleanness, supposing a man, rendered unclean by a dead body, touch any of these above-mentioned, these various kinds of food, is that food then fit and lawful for a man to eat? Assuredly not; "it shall be" (= is and must be) unclean."

14. Thus and in like manner in the sight of a holy God, of God Most Holy, this people, although selected by Him to be His people, is unclean "before Him." His people and all the more because they are His people, need to be reminded that "not for their righteousness" are they thus favoured. The condition of the people was such, that they could not impart holiness, but could and did impart pollution: they themselves were unclean in God's pure sight, and so were their actions. With this preparation for humility and self-abasement before God, He now proceeds to point out their special offence and punishment.

16—19. Compare, as a very exact parallel to this, Zech. viii. 9—15. The harvest and the vintage had yielded but one-half, and less than one-half, what they had expected.

17. "blasting." The blighting influence, probably of the East wind. See above on ver. 10, and references there.

"mildew." Probably some blight causing a pale sickly colour of both

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r ch. 1. 11.
s Jer. 5. 3.
Amos 4. 6,
8, 9, 10, 11.
t Zech. 8. 9.

u Zech. 8. 12.

and with hail ^r in all the labours of your hands ;
^s yet ye *turned* not to me, saith the LORD.

18 Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth *month*, *even* from ^t the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid, consider *it*.

19 ^u "Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth : from this day will I bless *you*."

20 ¶ And again the word of the LORD came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth *day* of the month, saying,

leaf and fruit, corn-blade and ear. The first would wither up, the second would corrupt, and the third, the hail, would beat down, and destroy.

"yet ye turned not to me." Lit. "yet not at all (were) ye unto Me." Ye came not to Me : your heart was not unto Me. Non-repentance is the world's ruin. As before the flood, so also before the final fire : "Except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish." What we are apt to consider exceptional judgments are but *samples* of judgment which shall come upon *all*. See St. Luke xiii. 1—5 (specially vv. 3, 5.). For a sad but common instance of non-repentance, under repeated judgments, compare Amos iv. 4—12 (specially vv. 6, 8—11, last clauses). The "not turning unto Him" here is the antecedent of our blessed Lord's complaint against the Jews and over Jerusalem : "Ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life." "O Jerusalem, how often would I . . . but ye would not" (St. John v. 40. St. Luke xiii. 34.).

18. What are they thus called on twice to "consider?" Is it not the marked change in God's Providence connected with the exact time of the commencement of the rebuilding of God's house? Ever, when there is a turning-point in His people for good, God displays His goodness. Under such circumstances He is ever by His bountiful providence saying, "From this day will I bless." Note—the blessing is absolute ; neither person nor thing is named. We may therefore rightly supply both men and things : "I will bless both *you* and *yours*." In fact, in the parallel passage (Zech. viii. 9—17, specially vv. 12, 13.) both are graciously connected together.

19. "Is the seed yet in the barn?" It would seem that a marvellous, not to say miraculous, change of weather and season now took place. Palestine has summer-like weather frequently on till about Christmas.

"as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth." All these four principal fruits of Palestine should ordinarily have been fully ripened ere this.

20. "again the word of the Lord came." God here vouchsafes to His now faithful and obeying people a second word of prophecy on the same day (ver. 10.). If the former prophecy was given after the morning sacrifice, this second may have been after the evening sacrifice. In any case it is the evening prophecy of the Prophet Haggai. The pro-

21 Speak to Zerubbabel, ^x governor of Judah, saying, ^y I will shake the heavens and the earth ;

22 and ^z I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen ; and ^a I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them ; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother.

23 In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, ^b and will make thee as a

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^x ch. i. 14.
^y ver. 6, 7.
Heb. 12, 26.
^z Dan. 2, 44.
Matt. 24, 7.
^a Mic. 5, 10.
Zech. 4, 6.
& 9, 10.

^b Cant. 8, 6.
Jer. 22, 24.

phesying of Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, each continued for about forty years. Our Lord's own prophesying less than four years. Haggai's, so far as appears, is comprehended in less than four months. What a lesson to listen and obey! "To-day, while it is called to-day, if ye will "hear His voice, harden not your heart." "Take heed how ye hear" (comp. Zech. i. 5, 6.). Yet God was "not leaving Himself without "witness." Before Haggai ends, Zechariah begins (Zech. i. 1. Ezra v. 1, 2.).

21. "Speak to Zerubbabel." The prophecy of Haggai first is addressed to prince and priest (ch. i. 1.). Next, it addresses *all*, governor, priest, and the residue of the people (ch. ii. 2.). Now, thirdly and lastly, it speaks to the ruler alone. Note—the second portion contains within it the fullest prophecies and richest promises, culminating and centering in the Messiah, whether at His Advent already past, or at His Advent yet to come.

21, 22. "I will shake the heavens and the earth ; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms." So Zerubbabel, ruler of Judah, is foretold the overthrow of all rulers. What Haggai *prophesied*, Daniel *saw* : "I beheld till the thrones were cast down" (Dan. vii. 9.). Note—"throne" not "thrones" of kingdoms. Every throne is from Him (Rom. xiii. 1.), and all thrones are *as one*, under His footstool (Pss. ii. 8—10 ; cx. 1, 2, 5, 6.). It is as easy for Him to shake all thrones as one.

22. "strength." An unusual word is here employed, implying not merely physical strength but strength of will, the pride that regarded their strength as their own rather than a strengthening from God. Contrast Daniel's position (Dan. x. 8—10, 15—19.) and Joshua's apparent feelings (Deut. xxxi. 6, 7. Josh. i. 6—9.). Also contrast David's experience (Pss. cxxxviii. 3 ; cxl. 7.), St. Paul (2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.), and our Lord Himself in Gethsemane (St. Luke xxii. 43.).

"every one by the sword of his brother." Compare Ammon, Moab, Mount Seir (2 Chron. xx. 22—25, specially ver. 23, last clause, also Ezek. xxxviii. 21.). So also Midian before Gideon's few but chosen 300 (Judg. vii. 22.), and the Philistines' garrison in Gibeah, before Jonathan and his armour-bearer (see 1 Sam. xiv. 11—20, specially ver. 16, last clause, and ver. 20, the two last clauses). So too now the foes of the faith are divided amongst themselves, thus destroying and weakening the force and consistency of their enmity against God's Truth.

23. "will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of "Shealtiel." Take thee unto Myself as a peculiar possession, and as

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c Isai. 42. 1. & 43. 10.

precious in My sight. Note—Christ Himself as man is called by God the Father, not only "My Shepherd" (Zech. xiii. 7.), "Mine Elect" (Isa. xlii. 1.), but repeatedly, "My Servant" (Isa. xliiii. 10 ; xlix. 3, 6 ; lii. 13.), and lastly (ch. liii. 11.), "My Righteous Servant ;" and in St. Matt. xii. 18, "My Servant" is paralleled by "My Beloved." And we have here two noted ancestors of Christ, the name of the one, Shealtiel, referring to prayer (= I have asked of God), and the name of the other, Zerubbabel, looking back indeed to Babylon (= Babel), but, telling of happy deliverance from exile, and captivity there.

"I will make thee as a signet." Will make thee to be such by thine office and position, as chosen by Me to be My servant. What was the ancient seal or signet? It is first mentioned, in connexion with our Lord's genealogy (Gen. xxxvii. 18, 25.), where it serves to the recognising of a person by identification of his *special property*. Again, to Joseph, that wondrous type both of the humble and of the exalted Saviour, the signet-ring of Pharaoh conveys, by outward sign and pledge, kingly authority and *princely power* (Gen. xli. 38—45.). So too, Jezebel, writing in Ahab's name, "seals" her "letters with his seal." Ahasuerus, in like manner, taking the seal-ring off his hand and giving it first (Esth. iii. 10, 12.) to Haman, and then afterwards (ch. viii. 2, 8, 10.) to Mordecai, conveys to them, severally, *royal authority*, to destroy and (by self-defence) to save from destruction the Jewish people throughout "the 127 provinces from India unto Ethiopia." If, again, from history we turn to prophecy, we find it referred to (Jer. xxii. 24.) as expressive of something especially dear or precious: "Though Coniah . . . were the signet upon My right hand." And, lastly, in the Old Testament, the earnest prayer of the Church that Christ in His wondrous love would both make her and keep her as His own, in His affection and in His constant presence, is thus forcibly expressed: "Set me as a seal upon Thine heart, as a seal upon Thine arm: for love is strong as death" (Cant. viii. 6, 7.), where from the whole context we may infer that the seal, or signet, is external to a man's own self, the most valued and inseparable property belonging to him.

Finally, in the New Testament, the seal, or signet, or signet-ring, seems thrice or four times alluded to, in connexion with the gift of the Holy Ghost, who is also thus fitly spoken of as "the finger of God" (comp. St. Luke xi. 19, with St. Matt. xii. 28.), whereby, as with plenary authority the devils are cast out. God "hath anointed us in Christ, and hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. i. 21, 22.), "ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession" (=peculiar treasure) (Eph. i. 13, 14. Comp. Eph. iv. 30.). So, too, the returning spendthrift son receives, together with his Father's kind welcome home, "the best robe" and "shoes on his feet," "the ring on his hand," the token of sanctification by the Spirit (St. Luke xv. 22.).

Thus is this prophecy to Zerubbabel personally, ours by faith in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. i. 20.). The Christian is not only sealed as with a signet-ring, but also, like Zerubbabel, is himself as a signet marked as

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God's own by His "graving" power (Zech. iii. 9.), and placed and worn on His right hand? Let us not "grieve Him" by any pride, unbelief, or hardness of heart, lest, like Coniah, we be "plucked thence."

"I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts." What cause both for deep humility and self-abasement, and at the same time for gratitude, and love! Of Zerubbabel it might be said by God, "In the furnace of affliction have I chosen thee." And our Lord's disciples needed to be reminded that their "election was of God:" "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you" (1 Thess. i. 4. St. John xv. 16.).

With such a declaration of God's mercy to His elect ends the brief prophecy of Haggai, "the Lord's messenger, speaking in the Lord's message," and prophesying for the short space of about four months. "The time is short" (1 Cor. vii. 29.). "The end of all things is near at hand" (2 St. Pet. iv. 7.). Let not Haggai's prophecy pass away unheeded, since Haggai, speaking to us of Christ, to us "speaketh from heaven." See Heb. xii. 25—29.

ZECHARIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

ERE Haggai had finished his prophecy, Zechariah had already begun. For at least two months of that memorable year, "the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia," and perhaps much longer, they prophesied *together*, and so far to the same intent, urging and encouraging to further repentance, and further, as a special sign and proof of such repentance, urging them to the no longer neglecting, but to the re-building at once of God's Temple (Ezra v. 1, 2. Zech. i. 1—6.).

While the two series of Prophets, the "Four Greater and the twelve Lesser," begin with names of Salvation—Hoshea = A Saviour; Isaiah = the Salvation of the Lord, it is noticeable that the two last Prophets lead by their two names to the forerunner of that Saviour and that Salvation. Zechariah, as being the name of the Father of John the Baptist, and Malachi, as being his prophetic name, "My Messenger" (Mal. iii. 1.), both serve to form a link to join and carry on our thoughts to the New Testament, and particularly to the earlier chapters of St. Luke.

But to Zechariah were committed not only *prophecies* but *visions*—visions, as of wide scope and purport, so also of confessed difficulty and obscurity. This is noticed and acknowledged by the Jewish Rabbis, who compare the visions of this book with Daniel for obscurity and difficulty. May we not, as Christians, compare *both* with the Apccalypse of St. John, and learn thence a lesson of yet deeper humility; and that all Holy Scripture, especially in the more obscure parts of it, is to be received, heard, and studied, with lowliness of heart, as the Word of God, as the Creator speaking to His creature?

Unfulfilled prophecy is ever to be approached with special dread of misapplication and erroneous interpretation. Yet, while we should strive to understand, as all other more difficult portions of Holy Scripture, so too these "Visions" of Zechariah, let us remember that our very inability to understand them should convey that most valuable lesson in Christ's school,—the lesson of humiliation before Him, of *intellect* as well as of heart. And in such a spirit let us humbly look for His special help, Who has said: "With the lowly is wisdom;" and "He giveth grace to the humble" (Prov. xi. 2. St. James iv. 6.).

The Book may be described as containing the following:—

I. Ch. i. 1—6. A brief but very earnest and awakening call to Re-

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penitance. This is the key to the whole book and its object. All the succeeding promises, visions, and prophecies, are unavailing, unless they "lead thee to repentance" (Rom. ii. 4.).

II. Ch. i. 7—ch. vi. 8. Seven visions, chiefly of mercy:—

(1) The man, riding upon the red horse, who is seen standing among the lowly myrtle-trees.

(2) The four horns, and on the other hand the four carpenters (or artisans or artificers) to scare them away and cast them out.

(3) The man with the measuring-line to measure the city Jerusalem, as already rebuilt.

(4) Joshua, the High-priest, opposed by Satan: Joshua's filthy garments taken away from him: Joshua clothed with change of raiment, a beautiful diadem placed upon his head in answer to the prophet's intercession. Joshua receives the twofold promise of Christ, as "My Servant "the Branch," and "the Stone that I have laid before Joshua,"—full of the Spirit,—appointed to suffer, and by suffering to work out remission, salvation, and peace. See ch. iii. 8—10.

(5) The golden candlestick with its seven lamps and seven pipes to each, and the two olive-trees, with two branches "emptying the golden "oil out of themselves."

(6) The roll of remarkable size (30 feet by 15.), seen as flying, and carrying and executing the curse throughout all the earth, against all breach of the second or first Table,—against "every one that stealeth" and "every one that sweareth falsely by My Name."

(7) The four chariots, issuing from the two mountains of brass, with (a) Red, (b) Black, (c) White, and (d) Dappled and strong horses.

Ch. vi. 9—15. The forming of the crowns of silver and of gold to be placed on the head of Joshua.

[Note: typical action follows the seven Visions, and the great and gracious promise of Christ, contained in Vision (4) (ch. iii. 8.), is repeated and enlarged.]

III. Ch. vii. and onwards. An enquiry about fasting gives occasion to further prophecy, first, in a tone of warning for past impenitence and hardness of heart, and, secondly, throughout ch. viii., in a tone of cheering and encouragement. The four fasting days, the occasion being removed and reversed, are now to be as "cheerful feasts."

Then follow, in chs. ix. x., prophecies mainly of mercy—of restoration and honour to God's people: ch. xi. full of warning: and, lastly, chs. xii.—xiv., prophecies of trials and mercies issuing from them to the Jewish people, and judgment upon the nations of the earth, who unite to invade His land and to oppress and besiege His people. Compare Rev. xx. 9 for a similar and still future history of God's "saints" and of "the beloved city."

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CHAPTER I.

1 *Zechariah exhorteth to repentance.* 7 *The vision of the horses.* 12 *At the prayer of the angel comfortable promises are made to Jerusalem.*
18 *The vision of the four horns, and the four carpenters.*

^a Ezra 4. 24.
Hag. 1. 1.
^b Ezra 5. 1.
Matt. 23. 35.

IN the eighth month, ^ain the second year of Darius, I came the word of the LORD ^bunto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

^c Heb. *with displeasure.*

2 The LORD hath been ²sore displeased with your fathers.

^c Jer. 25. 5.
& 35. 15.
Mic. 7. 19.
Mal. 3. 7.
Luke 15. 20.
James 4. 8.
^d 2 Chron. 36.
15. 16.
^e Isai. 31. 6.
Jer. 3. 12.
& 18. 11.
Ezek. 18. 30.
Hos. 14. 1.

3 Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ^cye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts.

4 Be ye not as your fathers, ^dunto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; ^eTurn ye now from your evil ways, and *from* your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the LORD.

CHAPTER I.

1. "In the eighth month." At such a time of the year, "the harvest past, the summer ended," the fruits of the earth all gathered in, except perhaps the olive-berry, the people would be at more leisure to listen to God's prophet. Moreover, the priest's special work and services on the Day of Atonement and Feast of Tabernacles would now be ended, so that the work of the priest would give place to the word of the prophet.

2. "The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers"—"hath been wrath against your fathers with wrathfulness." A distinct sense of God's wrath against sin is a necessary prelude to all true repentance. The preface to this whole book is (vv. 1—6.) "Repent."

3. "Turn ye unto me." Such is God's constant message to erring man. Comp. Isa. xlv. 22. Jer. iii. 12—14. Ezek. xviii. 30—32. Hos. vi. 1—3. Amos iv. 6—11. In Acts iii. 19, "be converted" is equivalent to "turn ye unto me." The strongest expression of this kind is in Joel ii. 12: "Therefore also *now* turn ye *even* unto Me." Remain no longer at a distance, but return and be very near unto Me.

"and I will turn unto you." God's returning to a nation or individual soul is a re-assurance of all richest blessings (comp. ver. 16; and ch. viii. 3.).

4. "Be ye not as your fathers." See the fearful question that follows in ver. 5: "Your fathers, where are they?" We may sorrowfully compare the warning words of the Saviour (St. John vi. 49, 58.). Nineveh stands out in wonderful light, as a nation and city repenting (Jonah iii. 5—10. St. Matt. xii. 41.); else and for the most part, *un*-repentance is the rule, and repentance the very rare exception. Generation after generation rises up,—is instructed and warned concerning

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5 Your fathers, where *are* they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? Before
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6 But ^f my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not ² take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, ³ Like as the LORD of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us. ^f Isai. 55. 1.
² Or,
overtake.
³ Lam. 1. 18.
& 2. 17.

7 ¶ Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month, which *is* the month Sebat, in the cir. 519.

God's will,—disobeys,—refuses to repent,—passes away and perishes. This is, for the most part, the sad history of man in every age, both Jewish and now Christian.

6. "my words and my statutes . . . did they not take hold of your fathers?" That is, reached them, overtook, and grappled with their mind and conscience. Note, the sinner, as such, would fain be, and is in some sort, a runaway and fugitive, like Jonah, from God's word. But *that* word has, by its own power and by conscience, an omnipresence: it has a portrait-look, surveying the whole room and space of our being:

"Eye of God's word, where'er we turn,
Ever upon us." (Keble.)

"they returned." Not, we may fear, necessarily = repented. But yet the acknowledgment of God's justice in punishing us is so far a right step *towards* repentance.

"according to our ways, and according to our doings." Such is the righteous rule and law of God's dealing with man. And this is the case alike with nations, families, and individuals *now*. In the world to come we shall find the same rule prevail: as is our *conduct* now, so will be our *condition* hereafter. The final sentence in the last judgment will be "according to our ways" (= habits and practices) "and according to our doings" (= our several and specific works and actions)—such is the teaching of the prophets (Isa. lix. 18. Jer. xvii. 9, 10; xxxii. 18, 19. Ezek. vii. 27; xxxiii. 20.), and it is confirmed by our blessed Lord Himself and His Apostles. See St. Matt. xvi. 27. Rom. ii. 6. 1 Cor. iii. 8. 2 Cor. v. 10. Rev. ii. 23; xx. 12, 13; xxii. 12.

Thankful should we be that mercy steps in, and enables us to ask in our Litany, "O Lord, deal not with us after our sins. Neither reward us after our iniquities."

Vision I (vv. 7—17.). Peace on earth; intercession, mercy, and restoration for Jerusalem. The man, the red horse's rider, standing among the myrtle trees.

7. "the eleventh month . . . Sebat." As it was in the depth of winter and in shortened days that the "tops of the mountains were seen" above the wide-spread flood, so now at a like dreary season of the year (for Palestine like England is cold after Christmas), and "by night" was this cheering vision seen.

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second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

^h Josh. 5. 13.
Rev. 6. 4.

8 I saw by night, and behold ^h a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that *were* in the bottom; and behind him *were there*

ⁱ ch. 6. 2.—7.
² Or, *bay*.

ⁱ red horses, ² speckled, and white.

9 Then said I, O my lord, what *are* these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these *be*.

8. "a man." Who is this but the man Christ Jesus, with power and authority over angels and among men. The "red horse" may denote (1) His Incarnation, or (2) redemption by His blood and not war only, or (3) it may represent Christ's power to "wash His footsteps in the blood of the ungodly" (comp. Isa. lxiii. 1—3.). The riders are not prominent, as seated upon the red, speckled, and white horses that follow Him. Their colours, however, may denote (1) warfare and bloodshed, (2) varied war and peace, and (3) peace and victory. Christ is the Rider on the horse as commanding His angels: He stands among the myrtle-trees to succour His afflicted people. Thus the three armies or bands of angels follow Him, while His saints as lowly myrtle-trees grace His steps, and if crushed or trampled by the afflictions which come upon them, they are enabled by His blessing to pour forth yet more fragrance and sweetness.

The myrtle, as it abounds on some of the shores of South Italy, so is found to this day plentifully (as we have seen it) on the lower parts and moist valleys of Lebanon. The Jewish interpreters say, "Israel is the myrtle, fragrant in good works." As Christians we may see a beautiful type in the myrtles growing "in the bottom," i. e. the lowest place, and not merely the valley, which may or may not have water: its branches yield readily to the breath of heaven, and its simple white flowers are its emblem of purity. Never ceasing from its leafy green (Ps. i. 3.), its little boughs, when broken or burnt, emit sweet fragrance. Esther is "Myrtle," and her character sets forth the beauty of obedience and the power of purity and the pure offering of fasting, not without prayer and supplication, leading on to signal deliverance.

"red horses, speckled, and white." What is intended by these three different colours? Not so much the different characters of the nations, among whom and from whom went and returned these Angel-messengers, nor yet perhaps their disposition towards Israel, hostile (as Nineveh and Babylon), mixed (as Tyre or the Greek monarch), or favourable and friendly (as Persia) towards God's people. These three colours seem rather to point out the different character of the commission and office and work of the angelic riders, some of judgment, others of mingled mercy and judgment, others of pure mercy. Compare the vision of the white, red, black, and pale horses and their riders, in Rev. vi. 1—8, at the opening of the four first seals by Christ, "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," "the Lamb as it had been slain."

9. "that talked with me." Lit. "in me." "This very rare expression seems meant to convey the thought of an inward speaking,

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10 And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, ^kThese *are they* whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. Before CHRIST
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* Heb. 1. 14.

11 ^lAnd they answered the angel of the LORD ¹ Ps. 103. 20,
21. that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.

12 ¶ Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, ^mO LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation ⁿthese threescore and ten years? ^m Ps. 102. 13.
Rev. 6. 10.
ⁿ Jer. 25. 11,
12.
Dan. 9. 2.
ch. 7. 5.

13 And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me *with* ^ogood words *and* comfortable words. ^o Jer. 23. 10.

14 So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the LORD of

“whereby the words should be borne directly into the soul without the “intervention of the ordinary outward (bodily) organs” (*Pusey*). Comp. Num. xii. 8, and Hab. ii. 1. See also 2 Sam. xxiii.

10. “sent to walk to and fro through the earth.” If Satan be ever “going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it” (Job i. 7; ii. 2.), let us be comforted to think that also good Angels are continually “walking to and fro in the earth.”

11. “that stood,” &c. Three times is He spoken of as “standing,” as with abiding position and office, “among the myrtle trees.” Christ is ever with the lowly, Himself being by His own character of Himself, “meek and lowly in heart.”

“all the earth . . . is at rest.” Whatever wars and commotions there had been previously, at the birth of the Saviour, “the Prince of Peace,” there was peace. The temple of Janus in the Roman Forum was at that time closed in token of universal peace. So too now at the second year of Darius, when the Temple was to be prepared, in which emphatically by His own presence God would give peace, there was peace throughout the world.

12. With the Angel’s intercession for Jerusalem we may compare Christ’s own prayer, and His command and call to His Church to intercede after His example (Isa. lxii. 1, 6, 7.). In Ps. cii. the “Prayer of the afflicted one,” we find prophecy of the fulfilment of these prayers: “Thou wilt arise, Thou wilt have compassion on Zion: for it is time to “be gracious to her, for the appointed time (a second close of the seventy “years) is come.”

13. “good words,” words that are comforts. Such was the message to His prophets (Isa. xl. 1.). “Comfort ye My people.” Such is the Gospel of Christ—“good tidings of good.” Even the Angels in their compassion for us have a share in the comfort which they are sent to convey.

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hosts ; I am ^p jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy.

^p Joel 2. 18.
ch. 8. 2.
^q Isai. 47. 6.

15 And I am very sore displeased with the heathen *that are* at ease : for ^a I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction.

^r Isai. 12. 1.
& 54. 8.
ch. 2. 10.
& 8. 3.
^s ch. 2. 1, 2.

16 Therefore thus saith the LORD ; ^r I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies : my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, and ^s a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.

14. "jealous . . . with a great jealousy." Whence comes this jealousy or "zeal of God?" Is it not from love, injured love, love to which wrong is being done by some counter affection, by love given to an unworthy object? This thought pervades Scripture from Mount Sinai and the second commandment in Exod. xx. to Babylon the harlot (Rev. xix. 2.) and "the bride, the Lamb's wife" (Rev. xxi. 2, 9.). God ever declares Himself to be the loving bridegroom, the ever-faithful husband, of His people, Who is jealous of the usurped dominion of other lords over them (2 Kings xix. 31. Comp. Isa. lxi. 10 ; lxii. 5 (l. i.). Jer. iii. 14 (i. 20.) ; xxi. 32. Ezek. xvi. 8, 14 (15.). Hos. ii. 16, 19, 20. St. Matt. ix. 15. Eph. v. 25—27. And so the like feeling is shared by Christ's faithful ministers (see 2 Cor. xi. 2.). Consequently all alienation of our heart's affection from God and from Christ, and specially and openly all idolatry and honouring of "any graven image," is *fornication*. How much more guilty is the alienation of the Christian's heart from Christ, Whose love to him has been proved "stronger than death?" (Cant. viii. 6.).

15. "heathen that are at ease." That is, Gentile nations in the fancied security of wealth, in the proud contemptuous spirit of unchastened prosperity. See Ps. cxxiii. 4.

"helped . . . the affliction." This seems to mean, naturally, "did more harm to them and afflicted them more than God intended." We have some intimation of the oppressive cruelty of the kings of Babylon in Isa. xiv. 3, 6 ; lii. 5, to the aged Jews, Isa. xvii. 6, and to the young Jewish children (Ps. cxxxvii. 9.). Thus we seem to be warned how man's wrath may go beyond not only God's mercy, but His justice. Compare also two historic cases, somewhat similar, when the Edomites took part against the Jews in their distress (Obad. 10—14.), and when Israel under Pekah slew 120,000 Jews, "slaying them in a rage that reacheth up unto heaven," and intending to retain their 200,000 Jewish prisoners of war as slaves, until God by His prophet Oded turned their purposed oppression and cruelty into compassion and kindness (see the whole most interesting narrative, 2 Chron. xxviii. 5—15.). "It is one thing to punish, it is another thing to persecute "unto death : the one is the act of a father, the other of a foe : the one "is an act of justice, the other of jealousy;" *Cornelius a Lapide* (who also quotes Psalm lxix. 26.).

16. "with mercies." Such mercies as imply not only God's favour, but His tender loving compassion towards His people. It is the same expression, where Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, speaks of the "Dayspring from on high visiting us, through the tender mercies of our

ZECHARIAH, I.

17 Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through ²prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; ^tand the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and ^ushall yet choose Jerusalem.

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cir. 519.

² Heb. *good*.

^t Isai. 51. 3.

^u Isai. 14. 1.

ch. 2. 12.

& 3. 2.

18 ¶ Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns.

19 And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What *be* these? And he answered me, ^xThese *are* ^xEzra 4. 1, 4, 7. & 5. 3. the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.

20 And the LORD shewed me four carpenters.

“God,” with “light,” “forgiveness,” and “the knowledge of salvation” (St. Luke i. 77—79.). These “mercies” shewed themselves first and last in spiritual blessings, while temporal blessings, as in the Lord’s prayer, are thrown into the centre. We might enumerate them thus:—

1. His own return to His returning people.
2. The rebuilding of His house.
3. The preparation to rebuild Jerusalem.
4. The extending on all sides of what He is pleased to call “His cities.”
5. Comfort to Zion, and His electing choice of Jerusalem.

These thoughts will more or less serve as a key to almost the whole book, whether vision (chs. i.—vi.) or prophecy (chs. vii.—xiv.).

Vision II. The scattering of the Jewish people, and the driving away of the powers that scattered them.

Vision of the four horns and four carpenters.

18. “lifted I up mine eyes.” So chs. ii. 1; v. 1, 5, 9; vi. 1, implying that, as he lay down, and was awakened in the “night” (ver. 8.), these different visions appeared and were seen heavenward, above and over him. “It appears as if at the close of each vision Zechariah sank in “meditation on what had been shewn him, from which he was again roused by the exhibition of another vision” (*Pusey*).

“four horns . . . which have scattered.” This scattering (literally sifting or winnowing) by the “four horns,” the heathen kingdoms on all sides went on for about fourteen years, continual hindrances being raised to prevent the rebuilding of the Temple (see Ezra iv.). The four horns may represent either four special powers and kingdoms, or powers in *all* quarters of the world. See the remarkable concluding prophecy in Daniel xii. 7, not yet fulfilled, “the holy people” and their “power” being still scattered in all countries.

20. “carpenters.” Such an emblem might be applied to Christian nations, especially any engaged in ship-building, trade, and handicraft rather than warfare, and as such, joining and working with Him, Who was called “the carpenter,” and “the carpenter’s son,” in reinstating

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^y Ps. 75. 4, 5.

21 Then said I, What come these to do? And he spake, saying, These *are* the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no man did lift up his head: but these are come to fray them, to cast out the horns of the Gentiles, which ^y lifted up *their* horn over the land of Judah to scatter it.

CHAPTER II.

1 *God, in the care of Jerusalem, sendeth to measure it.* 6 *The redemption of Zion.* 10 *The promise of God's presence.*

519.

^a Ezek. 40. 3.

I LIFTED up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold ^a a man with a measuring line in his hand.

^b Rev. 11. 1.
& 21. 15, 16.

2 Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, ^b To measure Jerusalem, to see what *is* the breadth thereof, and what *is* the length thereof.

3 And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him,

the Jewish people in their own country and city. These carpenters "fray," frighten and drive away those who, by paid counsellors and other means (Ezra iv. 5: v. 3.), such as intimidation and insult, had striven to hinder the building.

CHAPTER II.

Vision III. The measuring-line in the Angel's hand, who is sent to measure Jerusalem.

1. "measuring line." The Angel in Ezekiel (ch. xlii. 16.) measures the sanctuary's outer court with a measuring reed. The heavenly Jerusalem, with its gates and wall, the Angel measures with a golden reed (Rev. xxi. 15—17.). The weaker and more pliant *line, cord, or string* of measure better befits the humbled yet hopeful state of the earthly Jerusalem, to which after seventy years of displeasure God was now returning with compassion and mercy and favour (vv. 10—12, and ch. viii. 3.).

2. "what is the breadth," &c. The breadth might be probably from east to west, the length from north to south. Only of the heavenly city is the third and perfecting measure taken: "the length and the "breadth, and the *height* of it are equal" (Rev. xxi. 16.). All other cities are but surface, superficial, and superficial. Any surface-sweeping destruction takes them away. "Here we have no continuing city:" O that we may be ever seeking "that which is to come!" (Heb. xiii. 14.)

3. Beautiful expression of the concurrent action of the angelic messengers (comp. Dan. viii. 13. Rev. xvi. 4—7.). Must not the joint working together of those heavenly intelligences add continually to their mutual happiness and mutual love?

ZECHARIAH, II.

4 and said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, ° Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein :

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° Jer. 31. 27.
Ezek. 36. 10,
11.

5 for I, saith the LORD, will be unto her ^d a wall of fire round about, ° and will be the glory in the midst of her.

^d Isai. 26. 1.
ch. 9. 8.

° Isai. 60. 19.
Rev. 21. 23.

6 ¶ Ho, ho, *come forth*, and flee ^f from the land of the north, saith the LORD : for I have ^g spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD.

^f Isai. 48. 20.
& 52. 11.
Jer. 1. 14.
& 50. 8, &
51. 6, 45.

^g Deut. 28. 64.
Ezek. 17. 21.

4. "this young man." This is the only notice of the age of the prophet: like Jeremiah, so too Zechariah was young, as also the son of Zacharias "fulfilled his course" soon after the age of thirty.

"as towns without walls." Not merely outside its walls, because of its abundance of people and cattle, but perhaps also as not needing walls for defence or security. See Judges xviii. 7. Compare also Isa. xlix. 19, 20; liv. 2, 3; and specially Ezek. xxviii. 11. The words convey a promise of very many instead of but few inhabitants, a promise likewise of peaceful strength and security. (Before 1847 no house was found outside the walls of the modern Jerusalem: now (1876) there are many; so many as to be designated, as a distinct city "the New Jerusalem.") Thus Jerusalem would become again a metropolis, a mother-city, having her "daughters" the lesser towns outside her walls, those walls and the city itself not being now large enough to hold "the multitude of men and cattle," whether for service as camel, mule, or ass, or for food and sacrifice as ox and sheep. The ancient cities of the East, such as Nineveh and Babylon, had much more provision of fields and gardens within their walls, for sustenance of cattle, than modern cities of Europe.

5. "a wall of fire." Impenetrable, and such as to menace certain destruction to any foe, who might attempt to pierce through it. Travellers in countries infested with wild beasts and snakes sometimes surround their night's resting-place with fires for protection. Whereas the tree of life was protected from all approach by "the flaming sword which "turned every way" to guard it, Jerusalem and her people within her are safe under the Almighty protection of God, Who in His "own being, "will be to her a wall of fire, an inner circle around her, however near "an enemy might press in upon her" (Isa. xxvi. 1; liv. 14; lx. 1.). Such was the safety of Elisha when the mountain was "full of horses "and chariots of fire round about him" (2 Kings vii. 13—17.). Comp. also Isa. iv. 5, where the same protection is secured to "each dwelling "place in Mount Zion and 'all' her assemblies."

"glory in the midst of her." To His powerful protection without and around Jerusalem, God adds His glorious presence within. So the faithful Christian is safely fenced around and encircled (Job i. 10.) by God's special providence, and has also the light and grace of God's good Spirit in his heart (2 Cor. iv. 6. 2 St. Pet. i. 19.).

6. "Ho, ho." This is a word of eager calling to summon His people, whether in Babylonia or elsewhere scattered, to come and shelter

ZECHARIAH, II.

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7 ⁿ Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest *with* the daughter of Babylon.

ⁿ Rev. 18. 4.

8 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that ⁱ toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.

ⁱ Deut. 32. 10.

^{Ps.} 17. 8.

² Thess. 1. 6.

^k Isai. 11. 15.

& 13. 16.

9 For, behold, I will ^k shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ^l ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me.

^l ch. 4. 9.

^m Isai. 12. 6.

& 54. 1.

Zeph. 3. 14.

ⁿ Lev. 26. 12.

Ezek. 37. 27.

ch. 8. 3.

John 1. 14.

2 Cor. 6. 16.

10 ¶ ^m Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I ⁿ will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD.

themselves in the city so safe under His encircling protection, so blest by His presence.

7. "Deliver thyself." So then it was both evil and dangerous to remain *in Babylon*. Thus God had already twice warned them, first, by His Prophet Isaiah (xlvi. 20; li. 11.); and then also by Jeremiah (li. 6; l. 8; li. 45.). The same call is repeated in the Apocalypse relative to the mystical Babylon (Rev. xviii. 4, 5, &c.).

8. "After the glory." Not so much to bring about the glory promised to Jerusalem and her king, but rather (as in ver. 5.) after the Lord has become Himself the "glory in the midst of her."

"toucheth the apple of his eye." Either his own eye, or the eye of Him Who sent him: "toucheth so as to hurt or intending to hurt." If it be the eye of him that toucheth God's people, then it is implied that by so doing he injures himself in the tenderest and most sensitive part. Comp. Acts ix. 5; xxvi. 14. But if it be, as is more probable, the eye of the Almighty, as Deut. xxxii. 10, and perhaps Ps. xvii. 8, then severe resentment is implied. The eye is protected by God's care with (1) eye-lid, (2) eye-lash, (3) eye-brow, and (4) the protecting bone around and specially over it. All these imply the care of God, and His tender compassion for His suffering people.

9. The marvellous deliverance of His people is such that His and their enemies become *their* captives instead of their oppressive masters: "they shall be a spoil to those who were serving them." See similar expressions (Judges v. 12. Ps. lxxviii. 18.), in which two passages on comparison with Eph. iv. 8, the probable meaning is in accordance with Isa. xiv. 2. How eminently true was this in the triumphs of Christ's cross. When, by His willingly yielding Himself as a sin-offering, sin, death, and Satan had led Him captive, He by His cross led captive Satan, death, and sin (comp. also Col. ii. 15.).

"that the Lord of hosts hath sent me." So "that great prophet" speaks again and again of His mission from the Father: St. John vii. 16, 18, 28, 29; viii. 29, 42.

10. "I will dwell in the midst of thee." The visible Shechinah was withdrawn, a true spiritual Shechinah returns and remains (ch. vii. 3.).

ZECHARIAH, III.

11 ° And many nations shall be joined to the LORD ^p in that day, and shall be ^q my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and ^r thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.

12 And the LORD shall ^s inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and ^t shall choose Jerusalem again.

13 ^u Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up ^x out of ^y his holy habitation.

CHAPTER III.

1 Under the type of Joshua, the restoration of the church, 8 Christ the Branch is promised.

AND he shewed me ^a Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and ^b ² Satan standing at his right hand ³ to resist him.

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o Isai. 2. 2, 3.
& 41. 22.
& 60. 3, &c.
ch. 8. 22, 23.
p ch. 3. 10.

q Ex. 12. 49.
r Ezek. 33, 33.
ver. 9.

s Deut. 32. 9.
t ch. 1. 17.

u Hab. 2. 20.
Zeph. 1. 7.

x Ps. 68. 5.
Isai. 57. 15.

² Heb. the habitation of his holiness, Deut. 26. 15. Isai. 63. 15.

a Hag. 1. 1.

b Ps. 103. 6.
Rev. 12. 10.

² That is, an adversary.

³ Heb. to be his adversary.

11. "And many nations shall be joined to the Lord." The nations of the earth are "joined to the Lord" by joining and becoming "as a part of His chosen people. Comp. Ps. xlvii. 9. See also the notable prophecies of Micah iv. 1, 2; Isa. iv. 2, 3. Notice, the promise and repeated promise of God's Presence and indwelling (vv. 5, 10, 11.). But the New Testament promises of *mutual* indwelling (St. John xv. 4—7; xvii. 21, 23, 26.) go beyond even these.

13. "Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord." Man in his weakness, flesh and blood; all flesh, the whole human race is to be hushed before God; because His judgments, as His mercies, are over all.

"is raised up." Comp. Ps. lxxx. 2, where the same word is used in prayer and humble entreaty, "Stir up, we pray Thee, Thy strength." See also Ps. vii. 6; xlv. 23.

"his holy habitation" is alike the Tabernacle, the Temple, and Heaven, since His Presence is in all (1 Sam. ii. 29, 32. Ps. xxxvi. 8; lxxviii. 4, 5.).

CHAPTER III.

Vision IV. Joshua the High-priest rescued, cleansed, and clothed: Satan, his adversary, rebuked, and silenced.

This vision, taken in connexion with that which follows in ch. iv., is a most remarkable and truly encouraging one. In the acquittal of Joshua and the success granted to Zerubbabel, we have the grand doctrines of *justification* by Christ and His righteousness, and *sanctification* by His Holy Spirit, set forth under most striking and beautiful emblems.

1. "And he shewed me." That is, God Himself "shewed me." The attendant Angel had to explain the visions, which God Himself shewed.

"standing before the angel of the Lord." As to be tried and judged

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c Jude 9.
d ch. 1. 17.
Rom. 8. 23.
e Amos 4. 11.
Rom. 11. 5.
Jude 23.
f Isai. 64. 6.

2 And the LORD said unto Satan, ° The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan ; even the LORD that ° hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee : ° is not this a brand plucked out of the fire ?

3 Now Joshua was clothed with † filthy garments, and stood before the angel.

by Him, whether for condemnation or acquittal. All God's judgments of sinful man are solemn and serious,—not least so His judgment concerning His ministers, all whose sins are as sacrilege, and who need for their own offences a sacrifice as great as that for the whole nation (Lev. ix. 2, 3; xvi. 3, 5).

“and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.” Satan, answering to “adversary,” more usually “the accuser.” The word, as used three times here, and in 1 Chron. xxi. 1. Ps. cix. 6, is a proper name of the evil one, the original meaning, the enemy, not being lost. The word translated “to resist” is a repeating of the name Satan, as if it had been said, “The *opposer* stood at his right hand to “*oppose* him,” indicating that it was Satan's own and proper work, as Satan—the enemy, to act as an enemy, as one that hates mankind with implacable hatred. Satan's twofold ungracious work is first to tempt, then to accuse, thus to lay to the charge of the sinner the sin to which he has tempted him. In Job's case, Satan was permitted to *spea*k and decry, and depreciate Job's piety. Here, so far as appears, he is in position, act, and readiness to speak, but is rebuked, and is silent.

2. “And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee.” The rebuke of God must ever be with power (see Ps. ix. 5; lxxx. 16; cvi. 9.). The rebuking of the blasted spirit involved a withering rejection of himself and of his accusations, as when Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and he departed out of the man to “enter no more “into him” (St. Mark ix. 25.). The mode of expression here, “The “Lord said—the Lord rebuke thee,” may have served to prepare the mind of the Jewish people for the New Testament revelation of a plurality of persons in the One God. It may be that here Christ the Son, Who continually rebuked evil spirits in His ministry, here in the name of the Father rebukes the “prince of the devils.”

“a brand plucked out of the fire.” St. Cyril refers this to the captivity ; “only just now, and scarcely had they escaped the flame of “that intolerable calamity.” Compare the imminent danger through which Lot escaped out of Sodom, referred to apparently in Amos iv. 11. So too in St. Jude. Those who “praying in the Holy Ghost, keep them-“selves in the love of God,” are exhorted thus : “Others save ye with “fear, pulling them out of the fire.” The torch or burning piece of wood is rescued from further burning. In some sort, every soul saved through Christ from the “everlasting burnings” (Isa. xxxiii. 14.) is as Joshua, and may thankfully, and humbly, and hopefully, say of himself, “Is not “this a brand plucked from the burning?”

3. “clothed with filthy garments.” As in Isa. lxiv. 6, “all our “righteousnesses are as filthy rags,” so here too the word implies, under a different figure, no ordinary filthiness. There it is personal defilement ; here, as in Isa. iv. 4, it is loathsome filth of body and of dwelling.

ZECHARIAH, III.

4 And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, ^g and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.

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^g Isai. 61. 10.
Luke 15. 22.
Rev. 19. 8.

5 And I said, Let them set a fair ^h mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by.

^h Ex. 29. 6.
ch. 6. 11.

6 And the angel of the LORD protested unto Joshua, saying,

ⁱ Lev. 8. 35.
^l Kin. 2. 3.
Ezek. 44. 16.

7 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt ⁱ keep my ² charge, then thou shalt also ^k judge my house, and shalt

² Or,
ordinance.
^k Deut. 17. 9.
Mal. 2. 7.

4. "those that stood before him." Who are these? probably the "ministering spirits"—the Angels, who do the bidding of "the Angel of the Lord" Himself. Standing is the posture of constant and ready service.

"Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee," &c. While "the blood of Christ" alone "cleanseth from all sin," God, Who 200 years previous was pleased to declare His prophet purified from sin by the touching His lips with the living coal brought by the seraph from off God's altar (Isa. vi. 5—7.), is here pleased to typify like remission by removal of the filthy garments and the clothing Joshua with "change of raiment," or the High-priest's vesture changed; before in a state of fearful pollution and loathsome filthiness, but now in bright purity and healthful freshness. Moreover, He Himself pronounces this blessed absolution: "Behold, I have caused, &c., and I will clothe thee," &c.

5. "And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head." God, Who can Himself do all, is pleased to let His servants be "fellow-workers together with Him." The clean mitre—the turban-diadem—with the holy crown upon it and the plate of pure gold, whereon was engraven, "Holiness to the Lord,"—this was "the glory and completion of the High-priest's sacrificial raiment." "This seems to have been purposely omitted, in order to leave the completion of all to be done at the intercession of the prophet."

"stood by," as superintending, directing, ordering, and as "the faithful and true witness" (Rev. iii. 14.), testifying and approving by look and countenance, as well as by actual and visible presence. While Satan our enemy delights and desires to accuse, censure, and condemn, the loving Saviour delights in the acquittal of His people. Comp. St. Matt. ix. 2. See also St. John v. 24.

7. "keep my charge." That is, observe and keep that I bid thee to observe and keep. God testifies of Abraham, after his death, that he had done so, and thereby brought blessings upon his son Isaac (Gen. xxvi. 5.). So all Israel is charged to "keep God's ordinance" (Lev. xviii. 30.), and His priests in particular (Lev. xxii. 9.).

"judge my house." This was part of the priest's office, to judge for God (Deut. xvii. 9—13; xix. 17, 18.). It is also part of the reward

ZECHARIAH, III.

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also keep my courts, and I will give thee ² places to walk among these that ¹ stand by.

² Heb. *walks*.

¹ ch. 4. 14.
& 6. 5.

^m Ps. 71. 7.
Isai. 8. 18.
& 20. 3.

³ Heb. *men*

of wonder, or, *sign*, as Ezek. 12. 11. & 24. 24. ⁿ Isai. 42. 1. & 49. 3. 5. & 52. 13. & 53. 11. Ezek. 34. 23. 24. ^o Isai. 4. 2. & 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. & 33. 15. ch. 6. 12. Luke 1. 78.

8 Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they *are* ^m ³ men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth ⁿ my servant the ^o BRANCH.

of Christ's Apostles and saints at His coming and His kingdom (St. Matt. xix. 28. St. Luke xxii. 30. 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3).

"keep my courts." Not only by supervision of priests and Levites therein and the captain of the Temple, who acted under him, and by keeping those courts from any entrance of things or persons unclean, but also personally by trimming the lamps and burning incense morning by morning, and lighting the lamps and burning incense evening by evening.

"places-to-walk-in." Expressed in one word, a word found nowhere else. It seems either to mean, pathways or cloister-like porticoes, as Jesus in the winter-feast of the Dedication of the Temple "walked in "Solomon's porch:" or else, walkings to and fro amid the Angels and with angelic messages. In Christian congregations Angels are present, and a certain reverential regard of their presence is inculcated (1 Cor. xi. 10, with St. Matt. xviii. 10.). "In the resurrection of the dead I "will revive thee, and will give thee feet-walking among these seraphim." (*Targum*.)

8. **"sit before thee."** Not only with thee and in thy presence, but as subordinate to thee, and helpers and witnesses with thee.

"men wondered at." Men of portentous sign, men of a remarkable sign and wonder. They, as well as Joshua, are called to "hear," to listen most attentively, that they may bear ear-witness (and possibly eye-witness also) to this wondrous sign.

"my servant." A most choice and highly honoured and honourable name, and title applied to very few: (1) to Moses (Num. xii. 7, 8. Ps. cv. 26.); (2) to Job (chs. i. 8; ii. 3; xlii. 7, 8.); (3) to David (1 Kings xi. 13. 2 Kings xix. 34. Ps. lxxviii. 70. St. Luke i. 69.); (4) to Isaiah (ch. xx. 3.); and (5) to the prophets generally, e. g. Jer. xxvi. 5. Dan. ix. 6. Zech. i. 6.; (6) claimed by Ezra, the priest, the scribe (Ps. cxix. 125.); (7th), and lastly, given to the whole Church (Rev. vii. 3; xxii. 3; Angels being so called also, ver. 9.). All services of Angels and men are collected, consecrated and perfected in the all-perfect service of Christ, Whom God the Father here and in Isa. xlii. 1, 19; lii. 13, speaks of and says, My servant.

"the BRANCH." This title of the Messiah had already been declared by former prophets. Isaiah had foretold "the Branch of the "Lord" which should be "beauty and glory" (Isa. iv. 2.); "the rod" (or shoot) which should "grow out of the roots" of Jesse (ch. xi. 1.); who should become in His humiliation "a tender plant (or sucker) and a root "out of a dry ground" (ch. liii. 2.). By Jeremiah too the Lord had promised that He would "raise up unto David a righteous Branch,"—"the Branch of righteousness" (Jer. xxii. 5; xxxiii. 15.). And by the common thought of "springing up" and "rising," the Zacharias of the New

ZECHARIAH, III.

9 For behold the stone that I have laid before Before
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Joshua; ^P upon one stone *shall be* ^Q seven eyes: P Ps. 118. 22.
Isai. 28. 16.
behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Q ch. 4. 10. Rev. 5. 6.

Testament, applying this prophecy, speaks of "the Dayspring from on high" having "visited us" (St. Luke i. 78.). By this twofold title of "Branch" and "Dayspring" (=dawn of morning light), the Old and New Testament are beautifully linked together, Zechariah the prophet is joined to Zacharias the priest, and we are prepared for the yet brighter title in Malachi's prophecy: "The Sun of Righteousness rising with healing in His wings" (Mal. iv. 2.). See also below, on ch. vi. 12.

Our Lord also Himself seems to claim these prophecies by the kindred title and twofold name, uttered by His own lips to His Church by St. John: "I am the Root and Offspring of David" (Rev. xxii. 16.).

9. "the stone that I have laid before Joshua." That he may observe it, what it is, and what is said concerning it. This is that same stone, of which we might say that God "spake by His holy prophets since the world began." For Joseph's genealogy as well as Judah's being connected with our Lord, the dying patriarch Jacob says of Christ "From thence" (i. e. from Joseph) is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel" (Gen. xlix. 24.). So, too, David: "The stone which the builders refused and rejected" (Ps. cxviii. 22.); quoted alike by our Lord Himself and St. Peter (St. Matt. xxi. 42—44. St. Luke xx. 17, 18. Acts iv. 11, 12. Also Isa. xxviii. 16.). "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone" (or, stone of trial and testing): quoted by St. Paul (Rom. ix. 32, 33.) in warning, and by St. Peter both in encouragement and warning (1 St. Pet. ii. 4—9.): "Coming to Him, as unto a living stone, rejected of men but chosen of God."

"upon one stone seven eyes." That is, not so much directed and turned towards that Stone, but rather in and upon that Stone Itself. As the circles, rings, or wheels, of the four cherubim seen by Ezekiel were "full of eyes all round" (Ezek. i. 18.) as well as the cherubim themselves (Ezek. x. 12. Rev. iv. 6, 8.), "full of eyes before and behind," and "full of eyes within," "He, the living Stone, is pictured with an universality of sight, whereby with a Divine knowledge, He surveys and provides for the well-being of His whole Church" (St. Gregory). Here, however, the "seven eyes" seem to point not so much to God's omnipresence, as to the fulness of His Spirit (See Rev. i. 4; iii. 1; iv. 5.): "God giveth not the Spirit by measure" "unto Him, but in all His fulness" (St. John iii. 34; and i. 16.).

"behold, I will engrave the graving thereof." When God Himself calls man, His creature, to "behold" what He is about to do, we may rest assured that it is something of no slight import. What then is this "graving" of the Stone? It is the painful and beautiful working, fashioning and preparing thereof, such was Christ's life of suffering. "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." And so, "being perfected, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Heb. v. 8, 9.). To "engrave" in Hebrew is to "open," as though the graving caused and worked openings in that which is graven. Hence the Targum of Jonathan renders "I will reveal the visions thereof." As Christians, however, we may apply it more closely and literally to the cruel flesh

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LORD of hosts, and ^r I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

^r Jer. 31. 34.
& 50. 20.
Mic. 7. 18,
19. ch. 13. 1.
^s ch. 2. 11.
^t 1 Kin. 4. 25.
Isa. 36. 16.
Mic. 4. 4.

10 ^s In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour ^t under the vine and under the fig tree.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *By the golden candlestick is foreshewed the good success of Zerubbabel's foundation.* 11 *By the two olive trees the two anointed ones.*

^a ch. 2. 3.

^b Dan. 8. 18.

AND ^a the angel that talked with me came again, ^b and waked me, ^b as a man that is wakened out of his sleep,

rendings of the iron-scourge, and the deep piercings of the nails and of the soldier's spear (Ps. xxii. 16. St. John xix. 34—37.).

“and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.” That is, clearly on the day of our Lord's crucifixion, when the “graving” of that “Living Stone” was completed, and those consoling words were uttered from the cross, “It is finished!” Hence we can point definitely to Good Friday, and say, “I believe in Jesus Christ Who was crucified;” “I believe the forgiveness of sins.” “That land” is, first, Jerusalem (see Isa. xl. 2.); second, Judah and Israel (see Jer. l. 20.); and then, in some sort, thirdly, the whole earth (see St. John i. 29. 1 St. John ii. 2, and Rev. vii. 9, 14.).

10. “call every man his neighbour (to come) under the vine and “under the fig tree.” Guilt being removed, social intercourse is both allowed and enjoyed. The vine for its shade and shelter, and the fig-tree, whose shade is wonderfully cool and refreshing, are both resorted to; the fruit of either is partaken of, whether in its ripe cluster, or “the “pure blood of the grape,” or the ripe fig in its season, and God is blessed alike for His temporal bounties and His spiritual mercies.

CHAPTER IV.

Vision V. The golden candlestick with its seven lamps and the olive-trees on either side. The mountain removed and levelled before Zerubbabel.

1. “as a man that is wakened out of his sleep.” He had seen what no mortal man, unless Micaiah, had ever seen the like, “the Angel of “the Lord,” and ministering Angels, it may be, in multitudes, “standing “by:” he had seen also the great foe of mankind, Satan, the adversary. Can we wonder, then, that the prophet sank down, oppressed and overcome as Daniel also had been (Dan. viii. 27; x. 8, 16, 17.).

We may, however, notice how the Divine and perfect number seven is usually divided for man, in God's wisdom, into two parts and portions: first four and then the remaining three (Gen. i. 1—20; ii. 1—3. Rev. ii., iii., also vi. 1—9; vii., viii. 1, 2—13; ix., x. 1—7.). Four encouraging visions have been seen by God's prophet: in the first he had seen

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2 and said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold ^c a candlestick all of gold, ² with a bowl upon the top of it, ^d and his seven lamps thereon, and ³ seven pipes to the seven lamps, which *are* upon the top thereof:

3 ^e and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.

4 So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What *are* these, my lord?

5 Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This *is* the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, ^f Not by ⁴ might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

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^c Ex. 25. 31.
Rev. 1. 12.

² Heb. with
her bowl.

^d Ex. 25. 37.
Rev. 4. 5.

³ Or, seven
several
pipes to the
lamps, &c.

^e ver. 11, 12.
Rev. 11. 4.

^f Hos. 1. 7.

⁴ Or, army.

Christ, as man; in the last he sees Him as *God*. What shall he see now? first a beautiful vision of the work of Christ's Spirit (ch. iv.): then three connected visions of God's judgment (ch. v. 1—4.), of the prevalence, power, and earthly permanence of iniquity and rebellion against God (ch. v. 5—11.), and then a brief survey and history of the kingdoms of the world to the end (ch. vi. 1—8.).

2. "a candlestick all of gold." We may consider this candlestick as standing, in point of order and history, between the first candlestick (Exod. xxv. 31—40.), exactly and accurately, with its almond-like ornaments, "made according to the pattern shewed to Moses on the mount," and those seven mystic candlesticks, seen by St. John in Patmos, the seven Churches, in whose midst the Saviour "walketh" as with constant vigilant care and supervision (Rev. i. 10—13, 20; ii. 1.).

"and seven pipes to the seven lamps." That is, not one to each, but seven to each one. This implies the plenteous and perfect supply to each.

3. "two olive trees." These are explained hereafter, vv. 11—14.

6. "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel." That is, this is the purport and scope and intent of these visions, and especially of this vision, which was now before the eyes of the prophet.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." In their primary meaning these words guide the thoughts and trust of Zerubbabel and the Jews, so lately returned from their captivity, to the help of *God* rather than of *men*. The Temple was to be rebuilt not merely under the sanction of a Cyrus or a Darius, but by the guidance and help of their God. But they convey the strongest consolation and encouragement to every spiritual work in Christ's Church, undertaken (as so often) in the midst of difficulties and hindrances of all kinds. All "armies" of kings, all powers of men are but weakness: the Spirit of God is almighty, and can remove every obstacle. "The things which are impossible with man are possible with God" (St. Luke

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7 Who art thou, ^gO great mountain? before Zerubbabel *thou shalt become* a plain: and he shall bring forth ^hthe headstone *thereof* ⁱwith shoutings, *crying*, Grace, grace unto it.

8 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

9 The hands of Zerubbabel ^khave laid the foundation of this house; his hands ^lshall also finish it; and ^mthou shalt know that the ⁿLORD of hosts hath sent me unto you.

10 For who hath despised the day of ^osmall

xviii. 27.). "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 13.).

7. "Who art thou, O great mountain?" There may be an allusion to the cutting away of stones from the mountain-rock for the building of the Temple. But, the mountain also represents Sanballat and all the other adversaries (nine nations are enumerated, Ezra iv. 9, 10.) who opposed the building of God's House. St. Cyril, connecting it with the previous vision, says: "These words seem to rebuke the Great Mountain, even Satan, who riseth up and leadeth against Christ the power of his own stubbornness." All, who oppose Christ's kingdom and the work of His good Spirit within us, are as this "great mountain." But "every mountain and hill shall be made low" (Isa. xl. 4. St. Matt. xxi. 21. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.).

"with shoutings, Grace, grace unto it." As the question was put disparagingly, making the great mountain of no account—"who art thou?"—so here great account is made of the completing *that* to which the mountain was a mighty hindrance. These shoutings then are shoutings of joy, congratulation, and blessing. "Grace, grace," that is, God's favour in abundance, His favour renewed, fresh favour from Him, "grace upon grace." Comp. St. John i. 16, and Rom. v. 17: abundance "of grace."

9. "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation." Seven months after the setting up of the Altar in the autumn, the foundation of the Temple was laid in the early spring. See Ezra iii. 8—13. But now nearly, if not fully, twice seven years had passed, and the work had been hindered (Ezra iv. 23, 24.). Fourteen years is a considerable portion of the life and government of one ruler. No little encouragement must it have been to the afflicted people to be assured that the same Zerubbabel should complete it. How different was the rebuilding of Jericho! (see 1 Kings xvi. 34.) But what Christ, our Zerubbabel, begins, He will also complete (Phil. i. 6. 1 Thess. v. 23, 24.).

"thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you." Thus the evidence of the reality of the prophet's message from God is addressed at once to one, "thou shalt know," and to many, "hath sent me unto you." Probably Zerubbabel is addressed personally and then the whole remnant of the people.

10. "For who hath despised the day of small things?" (see Neh. iv. 2, 3.) How many have from age to age, upon the strength of this

things? ² for they shall rejoice, and shall see the ³ plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel *with* those seven; ^p they *are* the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

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11 Then answered I, and said unto him, What *are* these ^a two olive trees upon the right *side* of the candlestick and upon the left *side* thereof?

² Or, since the seven eyes of the LORD shall rejoice.

12 And I answered again, and said unto him, What *be* these two olive branches which ⁴ through the two golden pipes ⁵ empty ⁶ the golden oil out of themselves?

³ Heb. stone of tin. P 2 Chr. 16. 9. Prov. 15. 3. ch. 3. 9.

13 And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these *be*? And I said, No, my lord.

⁴ ver. 3.

14 Then said he, ^r These *are* the two ⁷ anointed ones, ^s that stand by ^t the Lord of the whole earth.

⁵ Heb. by the hand.

⁶ Or, empty out of themselves oil into the gold.

⁷ Heb. the gold.

^r Rev. 11. 4.

^s Heb. sons of oil.

³ ch. 3. 7. Luke 1. 19. ^t See Josh. 3. 11, 13. ch. 6. 5.

question, drawn just encouragements to some good work in its feeble commencement! How slow then should we be, through doubt, disparagement, unbelief, discouragement or despondency, to "despise the day of "small things," when the growth of such things into greatness is for His glory, Who giveth life to the dead, and calleth forth even those things that are not, as if they were (Rom. iv. 17.).

"they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of "Zerubbabel." The perpendicular line, weighted with a stone or tin in place of a stone. Such line is in some sense a perfect measure, pointing as it does to earth's centre. The "eyes of the Lord" are first, as in 2 Chron. xvi. 9, His omnipresent and ever-watchful providence. But secondly, "with those "seven" it seems specially to betoken the Spirit, Who alone builds and completes the spiritual Temple of God (Eph. ii. 22.). That Temple is now being formed by "living stones" gathered together from "the whole earth." While Satan "walketh up "and down" in the earth, let us be thankful that "the eyes of the Lord "are in every place," and that "they run" with more swift and mighty agency "to and fro through the whole earth."

11, 12. The prophet enquires first as to these wondrous trees themselves, and then enquires again, ere the Angel answers him, as to a part of them. The language is remarkable in the original: these finer and extreme branches seem to have resembled "ears or spikes of corn;" and the two "golden pipes" are spoken of, as if they were not inanimate but *living agents*—agencies instinct with life. Thus the course and means of supply seem somewhat as follows: (1) The two heavenly and mystical olive-trees; (2) then, specially, two fine tender and extreme boughs thereof; (3) the living tubes or conduits, conveying a plentiful and un-failing stream; (4) the bowl, or reservoir, close to the burning lamps, and furnishing them with a plentiful supply of "the golden oil." Well is it called "golden," seeing that grace is better and brighter than gold.

14. "the two anointed ones." Kings and priests are both typical and representative persons; the expression (see *marg.*) is unusual: "sons "of oil" seems to have not so much a passive as an active meaning.

CHAPTER V.

1 *By the flying roll is shewed the curse of thieves and swearers. 5 By a woman pressed in an ephah, the final damnation of Babylon.*

THEN I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and
 a Ezek. 2. 9. looked, and behold a flying^a roll.

2 And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll; the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits.

b Mal. 4. 6. 3 Then said he unto me, This is the^b curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for

passing on to others,—channels of Divine grace conveyed by them, and through their means, to others placed under their rule and “committed to their charge.” Some would understand here (1) the Divinely inspired volume of the Old and New Testament, divided into those its two main parts or branches. Others (2) compare them with the two witnesses. May it be (3) that even the Son and Holy Spirit are here intended? If so, how ennobling the connexion of Christ with all kings and rulers; and of the Holy Spirit with all God’s priests and ministers, and what respect is due to them on this account! God’s Holy Spirit is, for the good of *others*, specially given to *them*, and they are by office and by their holy calling near to God and constantly in Christ’s Presence; “stand by the Lord of the whole earth.” See 1 Sam. xxiv. 5—7; xxvi. 9, 11, 23. 2 Sam. i. 14, 16, 21. Also 2 Chron. xxvi. 16—23. 1 Chron. xiii. 9—12; xv. 12, 13.

Hitherto all has been bright and joyous, hopeful, happy and prosperous. The messages and visions (chs. i., ii.) have been of mercy, reinstatement into God’s favour, rebuilding and restoration; the later visions have betokened remission of guilt, and the bestowal of free and abundant gifts of the Holy Ghost (chs. iii., iv.). Now comes a sad change. We have the curse coming upon the whole world for man’s transgression, and we have also the establishment of a counter kingdom of this world, with idolatry instead of a pure worship, and worldly kingdoms arising and falling, until the visions end and close (as it would seem) in wrath (chs. v., vi. 1—8.).

CHAPTER V.

Vision VI. The flying Roll unfolding the twofold curse.

The Ephah, with the woman sitting therein, carried into the land of Shinar.

2. “a flying roll.” Its size is very great, sevenfold the usual size of the larger rolls of the synagogue, and full tenfold the size of rolls of the prophets. Its size is that of the sanctuary (1 Kings vi. 3.), to shew that “judgment is to begin at the House of God” (Ezek. ix. 5, 6. 1 St. Pet. iv. 17.). Some also have seen in its dimensions a reference to the land of Judea and Israel,—the length double to the breadth.

3. “This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth.” Although the measure agrees with the sanctuary, and God’s

ZECHARIAH, V.

² every one that stealeth shall be cut off *as* on this side according to it; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off *as* on that side according to it.

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4 I will bring it forth, saith the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of ^chim that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and ^dshall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.

² Or, *every one of this people that stealeth holdeth himself guiltless, as it doth.*

^c Lev. 19, 12. ch. 8. 17. Mal. 3. 5.

^d See Lev. 14. 45.

5 ¶ Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see what *is* this that goeth forth.

6 And I said, What *is* it? And he said, This *is* an ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover, This *is* their resemblance through all the earth.

judgments are severest and most strict towards His own people, yet "the whole earth" is guilty before God. The roll, in its rapid flight, will extend its course and carry its effect and sentence throughout the world. Judgment will at last descend on this earth with speed and power irresistible: "I will be," saith God, "a swift witness" (Mal. iii. 5. Comp. Eccles. viii. 11.). God is swift at last to judgment, swift as the "devouring fire" and as the "overflowing stream" (Isa. xxx. 27, 28.). But, blessed be His name, He is also swift and strong "as the lion" and "as birds flying" to rescue and save and protect His Church and people. Isa. xxxi. 4, 5. St. Luke xviii. 8.

"every one that stealeth . . . every one that sweareth." God is pleased here to place *first* man's duty to man, and then man's duty to his God. These two heads, comprehend *all*. In "theft" is included *all* sin against our neighbour: in "false swearing" is included every sin against our God. See St. James ii. 8, 10, 11.

4. "it shall remain," &c. A plain and unmistakeable reference to the plague of leprosy (see Lev. xiv. 33—45.). Sin, bringing God's curse, entails destruction on both house and householder. The house of the sinner is ever unsafe, insecure as "the spider's web" (Job viii. 14, 15.), but the "tabernacle of the upright shall flourish" (Prov. xiv. 11.).

5. "went forth." Came forth from the choirs of Angels among whom he had retired in the interval.

6. "an ephah that goeth forth . . . This is their resemblance." By the ephah, the largest Jewish measure, seems to be intended the full measure of iniquity. Comp. ver. 8: "This is wickedness." Every nation and people is, as each individual, an object of God's long-suffering and forbearance. But, as they proceed in evil courses unrepentant, then at last and at length comes judgment. And so "this is their resemblance" (appearance, character, nature), not in any particular country, but "through all the earth." On the full measure of sin in a nation (see Gen. xv. 16. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 11—21. Dan. viii. 23. St. Matt. xxiii. 29—33. 1 Thess. ii. 14—16.).

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² Or, *weighty*
piece.

7 And, behold, there was lifted up a ² talent of lead : and this *is* a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah.

8 And he said, This *is* wickedness. And he cast it into the midst of the ephah ; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof.

9 Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came out two women, and the wind *was* in their wings ; for they had wings like the wings of a stork : and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven.

10 Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah ?

^e Jer. 27. 5,
28.

^f Gen. 10. 10.

11 And he said unto me, To ^e build it an house in ^f the land of Shinar : and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base.

7, 8. The talent also is the largest measure of weight, as the ephah of capacity : all lesser ones are comprehended under these two greatest ones. The "sitting" of the woman marks settled persisting in evil and habits of evil (Ps. i. 1. 2 Thess. ii. 4. Rev. ii. 13.). The ephah with the woman sitting therein is covered and closed with the talent of lead not merely as against escape by penitence (St. Matt. xiii. 15. St. Mark iv. 12. St. John xii. 40.), but as betokening that the measure is full and complete. It also prepares perhaps for the facility and security of convoy.

9. "two women, and the wind was in their wings ; for they had wings like the wings of a stork." The action then and course of these two women was partly voluntary, partly involuntary : they used their wings for flight and speed, but the "wind" also was "in their wings" to bear them along, as they carried the weighty and weighted ephah "between the earth and the heaven." The stork, is a common bird of Palestine : flocks of several hundreds of snowy whiteness are often seen crossing the plain of Esraëlon, near Shumen and Jezreel. Though a model of motherly love, "the pious bird," it was unclean, and seems here to indicate unclean spirits of evil, working with and upon man's evil (St. Matt. xiii. 32.).

11. "To build it an house in the land of Shinar." The *first* and possibly also the *last* scene and site of combined rebellion against God (see Gen. x. 2, 9.). And in Rev. xvii—xix. there is the description of the mystical Babylon which continues until Jerusalem becomes, for a brief season, the seat and throne of Antichrist. In that land, then, is the ephah, with the woman enclosed, imprisoned, and in some sort enshrined herein, to be established and set "as an idol in its temple, until the end come."

We may learn, then, generally, from this remarkable vision, that the sin of Babel is being continually repeated, and that the sins of Babylon have "their resemblance throughout all the earth ;" that there is many a "Pergamos where Satan's seat is" and "where Satan dwelleth," sitting enthroned, to sway and persuade to evil, to pervert and to persecute, and that "the whole world lieth in wickedness" and in the power of the Evil One (Rev. ii. 12, 13. 1 St. John v. 19.).

CHAPTER VI.

1 *The vision of the four chariots. 9 By the crowns of Joshua is shewed the temple and kingdom of Christ the Branch.*

AND I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass.

CHAPTER VI.

Vision VII. and last. The four chariots going forth between the mountains of brass.

1. "four chariots." Unquestionably four kingdoms, or rather the spirit (ver. 5.) and power animating and characterizing those kingdoms. Some have supposed the scene "between two mountains" to be "the valley of Jehoshaphat" (= the Lord is Judge). If so, these are the mountains which God speaks of as specially *His own*, "My mountains" (ch. xiv. 4, 5). "Brass" is probably selected among other metals, as being at that time altogether the most precious and valuable, just as iron is now, for war. "Brass" also betokens durability, strength, and, in some cases, splendour. Here, probably, it implies the fixedness and stability of God's providence, in the issuing and progress of earthly kingdoms. What kingdoms then do these four chariots indicate? The generally received interpretation is this: First, the Assyrian and Babylonian, both of whom by *war* under Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar, carried away God's people into captivity and exile. Secondly, the Persian, of whom Cambyses hindered the Temple-building, and Ahasuerus consented at first to the *death* and extermination of the whole Jewish people. Thirdly, the Grecian, who in the person of Alexander shewed forbearance, respect and *honour* to God's people at Jerusalem in the person and office of the High-priest Jaddæus. The kindness also of Ptolemy Philadelphus may be indicated, under whose favouring care the Jews in Alexandria translated the Old Testament out of Hebrew into that which was hereafter to be the language of the New, i. e. Greek, with various Jewish forms of expression. Fourthly, the Roman, who in some of their rulers shewed kindness, as the senate who made a treaty with the Jews in the time of the Maccabees (1 Macc. viii. 22—29.); in others, as Titus, were instruments of strength and of iron-like *power* for their punishment. The meaning of the colours of the horses in the three first chariots is explained in the case of the three horses, white, red, and black in Rev. vi. 2—6. The "*grisled and bay*" in the fourth chariot probably mean "dappled," or spotted, partly light and white, partly dark and "strong." This last is also the special description of Daniel's fourth kingdom: "strong as iron;" "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly;" "devouring and breaking in pieces and stamping the residue with its feet" (Dan. ii. 40; vii. 7, 23.). Let the Christian notice with awe, that it was *this* kingdom, so strong, so fierce and cruel, which was reserved and appointed in God's

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2 In the first chariot *were* ^a red horses; and in the second chariot ^b black horses;

^a ch. 1. 8.

Rev. 6. 4.

^b Rev. 6. 5.

^c Rev. 6. 2.

² Or, *strong*.

^d ch. 5. 10.

3 and in the third chariot ^c white horses; and in the fourth chariot grised and ² bay horses.

4 Then I answered ^d and said unto the angel that talked with me, What *are* these, my lord?

5 And the angel answered and said unto me, ^e These *are* the four ³ spirits of the heavens, which go forth from ^f standing before the Lord of all the earth.

^e Ps. 104. 4.

Heb. 1. 7, 14.

³ Or, *winds*.

^f 1 Kin. 22. 19.

Dan. 7. 10.

ch. 4. 14.

Luke 1. 19.

^g Jer. 1. 14.

6 The black horses which *are* therein go forth into ^g the north country; and the white go forth after them; and the grised go forth toward the south country.

7 And the bay went forth, and sought to go that they might ^h walk to and fro through the earth: and he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth.

^h Gen. 13. 17.

ch. 1. 10.

8 Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my ⁱ spirit in the north country.

ⁱ Judg. 8. 3.

Eccles. 10. 4.

providence to put in force that most cruel and agonized torture, and "to crucify the Lord of Glory" (1 Cor. ii. 8.).

5. "four spirits of the heavens," &c. The kingdoms of the earth, then, are swayed by angelic powers, whether of good or evil, under the control and guidance of God. The chariots are explained to be (angelic) "spirits."

6. "north country." Usually, in the prophets, Babylonia.

"after them," either in time and sequence, or in conquest.

The "grised" may perhaps point to the Roman power in its earlier stages.

7. "the bay...sought to go," &c. The "bay" or "strong" (their strength being perhaps indicated by the colour), aim at extent of dominion. They "besought that they might go." Their request is granted. And with subduing crushing power, from Persia and India eastward to Spain and Britain westward; from Scythia northward to Africa and Ethiopia southward, "they walk to and fro through the earth," leaving the impress of Roman roads, streets, cities, camps, everywhere among us until this day.

8. "have quieted my spirit." Perhaps both by vengeance on the foes of God's people, and by succouring and aiding them. For "these" may not only refer to the "black horses," but to the "white," which "go forth after them." Others suppose that the quieting of the spirit is the pacifying of God's wrath against Babylon for oppressing His

ZECHARIAH, VI.

9 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto me, Before
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saying,

10 Take of *them* of the captivity, *even* of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah, which are come from Babylon, and come thou the same day, and go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah ;

11 then take silver and gold, and make ^k crowns, k Ex. 28. 36.
& 29. 6.
Lev. 8. 9.
ch. 3. 5.
and set *them* upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest ;

12 and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh

people (see Isa. xlvii. 6 ; lii. 5.) by its overthrow and destruction by the Persians.

Thus ends the series of visions, closing with what it appears may be understood either (1) as a lasting curse "resting" on a certain nation or a pair of nations ; or else (2) as of God's anger pacified and satisfied by the deliverance of His people—first by the destruction of their foes, and secondly, by the powerful aid of their friends and benefactors. May we not hope, that as Canaan's curse is so worded that hereafter it may promise a blessing, Gen. ix. 27 : "Canaan shall be His (i. e. God's) "servant ;" so here, too, "the Spirit of God" may be caused to "rest" in the North country, not for ever in wrath, but in mercy, grace, and blessing? See the prophecies of hope for Assyria, Persia, and other nations. Isa. xix. 25. Jer. xlix. 39.

The making and placing of the crowns of gold and silver from Babylon on the head of the High-priest Joshua (vv. 9—15.).

The visions, seven in number, having now closed, a beautiful *typical action* follows, ere the direct word of prophecy, devoid of vision or outward symbol, begins.

10. "the same day." It would seem not unlikely that these three Jews, whose names seem to indicate (1) man's *frailty*, (2) God's *goodness*, and (3) God's *omniscience*, had only just returned from Babylon. It may be that they brought this "silver and gold" as votive offerings for God's Temple and service, upon their return. The language implies throughout that *no delay* was to take place in this instructive action. Some suppose "the house of Josiah" to have been either near to the Temple, or else a chamber of the Temple, such as that where the Rechabites were received (Jer. xxxv. 4.).

11. "make crowns." Crowns more than one, or several bands or circlets, forming what we should now consider perhaps but as one crown. Yet here was assuredly a royal kingly crown "set upon the head of Joshua "the son of Josedech, the high priest." A *kingly* crown would in his case be more plainly typical : but it is probable that, as it is said of Christ, "on His head were many crowns" (Rev. xix. 12.), so now on Joshua's head were placed several such "diadems." Priest he was confessedly : king he was not.

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the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold ¹ the man whose name is The ^m BRANCH; and he shall ² grow up out of his place, ⁿ and he shall build the temple of the LORD :

¹ See Luke 1. 78. John 1. 45. ^m ch. 3. 8. ² Or, *branch up from under him.* ⁿ ch. 4. 9. Matt. 16. 18. Eph. 2. 20, 21, 22. Heb. 3. 3. ^o Isaï. 22. 24. P Ps. 110. 4. Heb. 3. 1.

13 even he shall build the temple of the LORD ; and he ^o shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne ; and ^p he shall be a priest upon his throne : and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

12. "The BRANCH." See on ch. iii. 8. This title is a most comprehensive one. As "branch" it is that which grows by the light, and as "dayspring" it is the Light which causes that Branch to grow. Thus such a title points on to Christ's own words; "I am the bright and "morning Star" (Rev. xxii. 16.). "I am the Light of the World" (St. John viii. 12; viii. 44—46.). Here is added what we had not before in ch. iii. 8, that "he shall branch forth from under him" ¹ (see *margin*), that is, probably by His own power, not as having or acquiring strength thus to grow and spring forth from elsewhere or from any other, but by His own inherent power.

13. "even he shall build the temple of the Lord." He, and in some sort, He alone,—He as none other can; He, Who is the Great Architect of the universe of countless stars and worlds (St. John i. 3. Col. i. 15—17. Prov. viii. 22—32.), He, emphatically, and with special care and cost and costliest self-sacrifice, builds His Church, cemented with His precious blood.

"he shall bear the glory." Probably both *priestly* and *princely* majesty and honour, such as is matter for *praise*. The word here used is not the more common word translated "glory," but rather "majesty" and "praise:" it goes to form the name of Christ's ancestor Judah; "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise." Rom. ii. 29.

"he shall rule upon his throne, and be a priest upon his throne." This cannot be said of any of the saints, because it is the right of none "of these to call the throne of his rule or of his priesthood *his own*" (St. Cyril). When we consider that these crowns were placed not on the head of Zerubbabel, a princely type of Christ, but upon Joshua a priestly type of Christ, we see that thus a prominence is given to the Priesthood of Christ, which was manifested in the Great Atonement and Sacrifice of Himself for our sins, when He, Who here "bears the "glory," "bare the sin of many and for the transgressors maketh continual "intercession" (Isa. liii. 12.).

"the counsel of peace shall be between them both." A counsel for the benefit of others than the parties counselling. Who are meant by "both?" (1) Some would understand it of the uniting together by Christ's Gospel both Jew and Gentile (comp. Eph. ii. 14, 16, 18.). (2)

¹ Another meaning given to this "growing up from his own place," refers it to the unobtrusive retired life of privacy, the still, Divine life at Nazareth, unknown of man, known to God. Others

refer it to Christ's resurrection-birth out of the grave (see St. John xii. 23—25.); and others again to the secret growth of His kingdom (St. Mark iv. 26—32.).

ZECHARIAH, VII.

14 And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, ^q for a memorial in the temple of the LORD.

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Ex. 12. 14.
Mark 14. 9.

15 And ^r they *that are* far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ^s ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And *this* shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.

r Isai. 57. 19.
& 60. 10.
Eph. 2. 13, 19.
s ch. 2. 9.
& 4. 9.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *The captives enquire of fasting.* 4 *Zechariah reproveh their fasting.*
8 *Sin the cause of their captivity.*

AND it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, *that* the word of the LORD came unto 518.

Others of the Godhead and manhood, or the royal and the priestly offices, both united in Christ. (3) Others of counsel between both God the Father and Christ His Son. See Col. i. 19, 20.

14. "Helem" is supposed to be another name or form of the name Heldai; and "Hen" another name of Josiah. In any case, whether the same parties be intended or not, the name Hen (= grace, favour, mercy) is instructive, as repeated in ch. iv. 7, and entering into the name, John = Johannan = the Lord is gracious. If Zacharias, as a priest, read and studied the prophet of his own name, the name foretold by Gabriel to be the Divinely appointed name of his son, would seem less strange to him (St. Luke i. 13, 59—63.).

"for a memorial in the temple of the Lord." Where suspended, it may be, from some pillar, or "hung upon" some "nail in a sure place," these crowns of blended silver and gold would be a visible record and reminder to the worshippers who entered there of this typical action, which made Joshua (in some sort) a Melchizedec, and led them to look forward to a Messiah, that should be a Priestly Prince and a Princely Priest—Priest to atone and reconcile, Prince to rule in the hearts of His people.

15. From Babylon, to join in building the visible Temple at the earthly Jerusalem, but from all nations however "far off" believers and saints in Christ Jesus are coming to build and to be themselves built up as living stones in His spiritual Temple "in the Spirit" (Isa. xxviii. 16. Acts iv. 10—12. 1 Cor. iii. 9—11. Eph. ii. 19—22.).

"and ye shall know." "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." See St. John vii. 17; viii. 47; xviii. 37.

So closes this typical action of the "crowns of silver and of gold." As the visions were ushered in with a solemn warning call to *repentance* (ch. i. 2—6.): so this portion concludes with an earnest exhortation, and gracious promise to *obedience*: "And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God."

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Zechariah in the fourth *day* of the ninth month, *even* in Chisleu ;

2 when they had sent unto the house of God Sherezer and Regemmelech, and their men, ²to pray before the LORD,

3 *and* to ^aspeak unto the priests which *were* in the house of the LORD of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Should I weep in ^bthe fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years ?

4 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD of hosts unto me, saying,

² Heb. *to intreat the face of the LORD* ;
1 Sam. 13. 12.
ch. 8. 21.
^a Deut. 17.
9, 10, 11.
& 33. 10.
Mal. 2. 7.
^b Jer. 52. 12.
ch. 8. 19.

CHAPTERS VII, VIII.

The enquiry as to the continuing the observance of certain national Fasting-days, connected with their overthrow as a nation. Their manner of fasting re-proved : but there follow afterwards (ch. viii.) gracious promises of restoration, blessing, and honour.

1—3. The month “ Chisleu ” (November) was so named from the constellation Orion (= Chisel) (Job xxxviii. 31. Amos v. 8.). It occurs also in Neh. i. 1. Two full years had now passed, since the prophecy of ch. i. : the enquirers are supposed, from their names and other tokens, to have been noted and leading men, proselytes from Babylon. If so, the enquiry is all the more natural. Foreigners and strangers could hardly be expected to feel like sorrow as the Jews themselves in commemorating, by fasting and retirement (= “ separating myself,” ch. xii. 12—14.), such events as—

(a) The climax of famine in Jerusalem, the evacuation of the city, the seizure and cruel blinding of Zedekiah, and “ binding him in fetters of “ brass,” as soon as his nobles and sons had been put to death before his eyes (ninth day of fourth month, Jer. lii. 6—11.).

(b) The burning of Jerusalem, the Temple, the king’s palace, and all the “ great men’s houses,” and “ all the houses of Jerusalem by Nebuzar-adan ; so that it continued three days burning ” (seventh day of fifth month, 2 Kings xxv. 8, 9. Jer. lii. 12, 13.).

(c) The murder of Gedaliah (in the seventh month).

(d) The beginning of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (tenth day of the tenth month).

4—7. The enquiry by prayer (= “ entreating the face of the Lord”) and the appeal at the same time to His priests is made apparently by a few ; but the answer extends far beyond the enquirers : “ **Speak unto all “ the people of the land.”** The gracious benefits of prayer extend far beyond those who pray. Here it extends to learners and teachers also ; “ **Speak unto the priests,**” who were both to give rules and regulations,

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5 Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye ° fasted and mourned in the fifth ^d and seventh *month*, ° even those seventy years, did ye at all fast ^f unto me, *even to me* ?

6 And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, ² did not ye eat *for yourselves*, and drink *for yourselves* ?

7 ³ *Should ye* not hear the words which the LORD hath cried ⁴ by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities thereof round about her, when *men* inhabited ⁵ the south and the plain ?

8 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah, saying,

9 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying,

^h ⁵ Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother :

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^c Isai. 58. 5.

^d Jer. 41. 1.

ch. 8. 19.

^e ch. 1. 12.

^f See Rom.

14. 6.

² Or, be

not ye they

that, &c.

³ Or, Are

not these

the words.

⁴ Heb. *by the*

hand of, &c.

⁵ Jer. 17. 26.

^h Is. 58. 6, 7.

Jer. 7. 23.

Mic. 6. 8.

ch. 8. 16.

Matt. 23. 23.

⁵ Heb. *Judge*

judgment

of truth.

and also to set examples in these things, to "all the people of the land," "high and low, rich and poor, one with another." To "mourn" is, properly and strictly, to beat upon the breast, and smite (as it were) the sinful heart in repentance or sorrow. So at the Crucifixion (St. Luke xxiii. 48.). See below on ch. xii. 10. The religious thoughtfulness and forethought of these enquirers seems to be shewn in that their question relates to the fast, eight months hence. The full answer we find given in ch. viii. 19—23, after the rebuke here.

5. "did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?" Whether they fasted or feasted, God was not really regarded by them either in their fasts or in their festivals. Their feasting was selfish, and in a spirit of self-love instead of brotherly love and charity. For if the Passover was specially a *domestic* feast (not, however, excluding the Levite), the two later feasts of Pentecost and Tabernacles were distinctly appointed to be feasts of charity, love-feasts indeed: "Thou shalt rejoice "in thy feasts," "and "the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow which are "among you." See Deut. xvi. 11, 14, with xii. 7, 18; xiv. 26, 27. See also our Lord's rule, if we would have our feast "recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (St. Luke xiv. 12—14, 15.). Also, as to fasting (Isa. lviii. 3—8. St. Matt. vi. 16—18.).

7. "when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity." "I spoke "unto thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear" (Jer. xxii. 21.). Under (1) Jerusalem and her (mountain) cities, (2) the South, and (3) the Plain, would all Judea be comprehended, the naturally defended parts, i.e. the mountainous district, and the low and unprotected and defenceless south, and level plain of Sharon, &c. How sad, that national prosperity should lead, as it has led so often, to national presumption and to the rejection of God Who alone gives prosperity (vv. 11, 12.).

9. "true judgment." Lit. "judgment of truth," is when truth and

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10 and ⁱ oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; ^k and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

11 But they refused to hearken, and ^l pulled away the shoulder, and ^m stopped their ears, that they should not hear.

12 Yea, they made their ⁿ hearts as an adamant stone, ^o lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit ⁴ by the former prophets: ^p therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.

13 Therefore it is come to pass, *that* as he cried, and they would not hear; so ^q they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts:

14 but ^r I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations ^s whom they knew not. Thus ^t the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid ^u the ⁵ pleasant land desolate.

ⁱ Ex. 22. 21, 22.
^k Deut. 24. 17.
^l Isai. 1. 17.
^m Jer. 5. 28.
ⁿ Ps. 36. 4.
^o Mic. 2. 1.
^p ch. 8. 17.
^q Neh. 9. 29.
^r Jer. 7. 24.
^s Hos. 4. 16.
^t Heb. they gave a back-sliding shoulder.
^u Heb. made heavy.
^v Acts 7. 57.
^w Ezek. 11. 13. & 36. 26.
^x Neh. 9. 23, 30.
^y Heb. by the hand of.
^z Chr. 36. 16.
^{aa} Dan. 9. 11.
^{ab} Prov. 1. 24.—28.
^{ac} Isai. 1. 15.
^{ad} Jer. 11. 11. & 14. 12.
^{ae} Mic. 3. 4. ^r Deut. 4. 27. & 28. 64. Ezek. 36. 19. ch. 2. 6. ^s Deut. 28. 33. ^t Lev. 26. 22. ^u Dan. 8. 9.
^{af} Heb. land of desire.

righteousness prevail in judgment, as when the Saviour, the Righteous Judge, "brings forth judgment unto victory" = "unto truth" (Isa. xlii. 1—4. St. Matt. xii. 17—20.). Contrast Hab. i. 2—4. Ps. lxxxii. 2.). "Mercy" (= kindness) is to all; "compassions" (= heart-sympathy) to the unhappy and afflicted—such as are enumerated.

10. "let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart." Important: for it is repeated in ch. viii. 17. Comp. Prov. i. 29.

11, 12. Fearful and most vivid description of the unwilling, recusant heart. "The heart, which will not hearken, becomes duller by the "outward hearing." See Ps. xc. 7, 8.

12. "in his spirit." Rather, perhaps: "By His Spirit, by the hand (instrumentality) of the former prophets." For, as Christ said to His Apostles, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (St. Matt. x. 19, 20.).

13. Compare Prov. i. 23—33; also Jer. xi. 6—14, and xiv. 10—12. "Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet." "When they fast I will not hear their cry." Isa. i. 15: "Even when ye make many prayers (Heb. multiply prayer) I will not hear."

14. The original is very forcible, being in one word: "scattered as "with a storm of violent tempestuous wind." So in Ps. lviii. 9. Comp. also Jer. xxiii. 19. The whirlwind or hurricane's speed is calculated at 80—100 miles an hour: were it greater than this, it would carry with it utter and hopeless destruction. The whirlwind is usually a token of the presence of the Almighty in *wrath*, but not always. Ezek. i. 4. Job xxxviii. 1; xl. 6, and specially 2 Kings ii. 11 (Elijah's rapture) seem to be, in a measure, exceptions.

"they laid the pleasant land desolate," or, land which God had

1 *The restoration of Jerusalem.* 9 *They are encouraged to the building by God's favour to them.* 16 *Good works are required of them.* 18 *Joy and enlargement are promised.*

AGAIN the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; ^a I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury. ^a Nah. 1. 2. ch. 1. 14.

3 Thus saith the LORD; ^b I am returned unto Zion, and ^c will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem ^d shall be called a city of truth; and ^e the mountain of the LORD of hosts ^f the holy mountain. ^b ch. 1. 16. ^c ch. 2. 10. ^d Is. 1. 21, 26. ^e Is. 2. 2, 3. ^f Jer. 31. 23.

4 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; ^g There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand ^h for very age. ^g See 1 Sam. 2. 31. ^h Is. 65. 20, 22. Lam. 2. 20, &c. & 5. 11,—14.

5 And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. ⁱ Heb. for multitude of days.

desired for them, and which all men would desire. Thus they made that "land of beauty and adornment" (Dan. xi. 16, 45.), that "glory of all lands" (Ezek. xx. 6, 15.), "a desolation" even to this day. For they were the doers of what their sins caused, by bringing down the judgments of God.

CHAPTER VIII.

Chapter viii. appears closely connected with ch. vii. : for the answer to the enquiry made in ch. vii. 2, 3, is given in ch. viii. 18, &c.

2. On God's "jealousy for Zion," see ch. i. 14, and notes.

3. "Without change in Myself I am turned to that people from the effect of justice to the sweetness of mercy."

"shall be called a city of truth." Being indeed what she is called, since God could not call her untruly (comp. Isa. i. 26; also Zeph. iii. 13.). Of the King of that city it is said: "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth" (1 St. Pet. ii. 22.). And so of her citizens hereafter (Rev. xiv. 5.).

4, 5. Beautiful and peaceful sight in Jerusalem, according to her name, "Vision of Peace." The happy inhabitants come, like Abraham, to "a good old age" (Gen. xv. 15; xxv. 8.). They have not been cut off by war, or brought early and untimely to the grave by disease, or by excess and intemperance and impurity, or by disobedience to parents. And whereas *now* (as in the modern Jerusalem) there is a marked absence of children, *then* "the streets shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." Thus God sanctions by His word here our joy in the joyousness of children, shewing that He also, the Father of all, takes pleasure in it (St. Matt. xxi. 15, 16.).

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² Or, *hard*,
or, *difficult*.

^h Gen. 18. 14.

Luke 1. 37.

& 18. 27.

Rom. 4. 21.

¹ Is. 11. 11, 12.

& 43. 5, 6.

Ezek. 37. 21.

Amos 9. 14,

15.

³ Heb.

the country

of the going

down of the

sun : See

Ps. 50. 1.

& 113. 3.

Mal. 1. 11.

^k Jer. 30. 22.

& 31. 1, 33.

ch. 13. 9.

¹ Jer. 4. 2.

^m Hag. 2. 4.

ver. 18.

ⁿ Ezra 5. 1, 2.

6 Thus saith the LORD of hosts ; If it be ²marvel-
lous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in
these days, ^h should it also be marvellous in mine
eyes ? saith the LORD of hosts.

7 Thus saith the LORD of hosts ; Behold, ⁱ I will
save my people from the east country, and from ³the
west country ;

8 and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in
the midst of Jerusalem : ^k and they shall be my
people, and I will be their God, ¹ in truth and in
righteousness.

9 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts ; ^m Let your
hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these
words by the mouth of ⁿ the prophets, which *were* in
^o the day *that* the foundation of the house of the LORD
of hosts was laid, that the temple might be built.

^o Hag. 2. 18.

6—8. “The things which are impossible with men are possible with
“God” (St. Luke xviii. 27 ; i. 37.). Resting on God’s Word, the faith,
both of Abraham and of the blessed Virgin, surmounted impossibilities.

7. Lit. “from the land of the sun-rising, and from the land of the
“going down of the sun.”

8. “they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.” “Dwell” is
here a peculiar and consecrated word. It is contrasted with “sojourner,”
and connected with Shechinah. On the mutual expressions of blessed
relationship, see below on ch. xiii. 9 (comp. Ezek. xi. 20 ; xiv. 11, and
specially xxxvii. 26, 27.).

“in truth and in righteousness.” Comp. Hos. ii. 19, 20. “In
“truth,” really, abidingly and faithfully, since Christ her King is
“The Truth :” “in righteousness,” which implies justice, equity, and,
in some sort, holiness, because “He is made of God unto us right-
“eousness.” Beside which the “faithful city” bears the name of her
King Who “shall reign in righteousness :” for “this is the name where-
“with she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness” (St. John xiv. 6.
1 Cor. i. 30. Isa. xxvi. 1. Jer. xxxiii. 15, 16. Comp. also Isa. i. 26,
and 27.).

9—13. A gracious work for the Lord’s Prophets, both Haggai
and Zechariah, to “strengthen the hands” of His people. See Hag.
i. 4. *Before*, so little was the produce, that no labourer or beast of
burden was employed to gather it in. *Now*, what a contrast ! Comp.
vv. 12, 13 with Hos. ii. 21—23. God gives His repentant and now
obedient people peaceful plenteousness of produce (“the seed of
“peace”), foreshewing and leading onwards and upwards to spiritual
fruitfulness. “Ye shall be a blessing.” They were this : for “of them,
“according to the flesh, Christ came ;” “of them were the Apostles
“and Evangelists” (Rom. ix. 5.). We trust that Israel is yet to become
a blessing, as foretold (Rom. xi. 12, 15.), to “the Gentiles” and to the
“world” at large.

ZECHARIAH, VIII.

10 For before these days ² there was no ^p hire for man, nor any hire for beast; ^q neither *was there any peace* to him that went out or came in because of the affliction: for I set all men every one against his neighbour.

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11 But now I *will not be* unto the residue of this people as in the former days, saith the LORD of hosts.

² Or,
the hire of man became noth. n^o, &c.
^p Hag. 1. 6, 9,
10. & 2. 16.
^q 2 Chr. 15. 5.

12 ^r For the seed *shall be* ³ prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and ^s the ground shall give her increase, and ^t the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these *things*.

^r Hos. 2. 21,
22.
Joel 2. 22.
Hag. 2. 19.
^s Heb.
of peace.
^t Ps. 67. 6.
^u See Hag.
1. 10.

13 And it shall come to pass, *that* as ye were ^u a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ^x ye shall be a blessing: fear not, *but* ^y let your hands be strong.

^u Jer. 42. 18.

14 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; ^z As I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the LORD of hosts, ^a and I repented not:

^x Gen. 12. 2.
Ruth 4. 11,
12.
Is. 19. 24, 25.
Zeph. 3. 20.
Hag. 2. 19.

15 so again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not.

16 These *are* the things that ye shall do; ^b Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; ⁴ execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:

^y ver. 9.
^z Jer. 31. 28.
^a 2 Chr. 36. 16.
ch. 1. 6.

17 ^c and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and ^d love no false oath: for all these *are things* that I hate, saith the LORD.

^b ch. 7. 9.
ver. 19.
Ephes. 4. 25.
⁴ Heb. *judge truth, and the judgment of peace.*
^c Prov. 3. 29.
ch. 7. 10.
^d ch. 5. 3, 4.

18 ¶ And the word of the LORD of hosts came unto me, saying,

14. "As I thought." Just according as I *purposed*—so in like manner now am I *purposed*. His chastisements were the earnest of His mercies; "for they too were an evidence of His love."

16, 17. "in your gates." Always the seat and scene of judgment. Comp. Ps. cxxii. 2, 5. "Love no false oath," against the third and ninth Commandment, and bringing down a swift judgment. Comp. "the roll flying" (ch. v. 1—4.).

18—23. We now have (ver. 19.) a special answer to the enquiry as

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19 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; ^eThe fast of the fourth *month*, ^fand the fast of the fifth, ^gand the fast of the seventh, ^hand the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah ⁱjoy and gladness, and cheerful ²feasts; ^ktherefore love the truth and peace.

^e Jer. 52. 6, 7.
^f Jer. 52. 12, 13.
ch. 7. 3, 5.

^g 2 Kin. 25. 25.
Jer. 41. 1, 2.

^h Jer. 52. 4.

ⁱ Esth. 8. 17.
Isai. 35. 10.

² Or, *solemn*,
or, *set times*.

^k ver. 16.

¹ Isai. 2. 3.
Mic. 4. 1, 2.

³ Or, *con-*
tinually.

⁴ Heb. *going*.

⁵ Heb. *to*
intreat the
face of the
LORD,
ch. 7. 2.

^m Isai. 60. 3.
&c. & 66. 22.

20 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; *It shall yet come to pass*, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities:

21 and the inhabitants of one *city* shall go to another, saying, ¹Let us go ³⁴speedily ⁵to pray before the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also.

22 Yea, ^mmany people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD.

23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days *it shall come to pass*, that ten men shall ⁿtake hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall

ⁿ Isai. 3. 6.
& 4. 1.

to fasting (ch. vii. 3.). The correcting reproof came first (ch. vii. 5—7, &c.), and now comes the gracious answer. For the occasions of these four seasons of fasting, see above, upon ch. vii. 3. “The sorrows they commemorated were but harbingers of joy, when the chastisements were ended. Only,” He adds, “love the truth and peace” (ver. 19.). Compare a like change from days of mourning to days of rejoicing (Esth. iii. 7; ix. 1; xxiv. 17—19. Ps. xxx. 11, 12.).

19. “cheerful feasts.” Lit. good seasons. For such seasons—set times—solemn occasions of rejoicing before God, were the sun and moon in the skies appointed at the beginning. Comp. Gen. i. 14.

21. “Let us go speedily together,” &c. This is not only “Let us by all means go,” but, “Let us go continuously as a stream” (comp. “flow unto it” (Isa. ii. 2. Mic. iv. 1.).

“I will go also.” Each one, that exhorts others to go, humbly and earnestly purposes and determines to go himself. This personal example is the ground of all effective exhortation; as Chaucer says of Wycliffe:

“The love of Christ and His Apostles twelve
He taught: but first he followed it himself.”

22. These nations, although both “many” and “strong,” find that without God’s strength they are but weak. Therefore, in a flowing current of devoutest pilgrimage, from their own lands however distant, they come to “seek” Him in His own city, and “to pray before Him.”

23. “ten men . . . out of all languages of the nations.” The early counting being by the hand, its fingers became the usual basis of numeration. And so “ten is the symbol of a whole.” The number also answers to the ten kingdoms of Europe, where the Jews have been scattered.

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take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard ^o *that* God is with you.

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^o 1 Cor. 14. 25.

CHAPTER IX.

1 *God defendeth his church.* 9 *Zion is exhorted to rejoice for the coming of Christ, and his peaceable kingdom.* 12 *God's promises of victory and defence.*

THE ^a burden of the word of the LORD in the land of Hadrach, and ^b Damascus shall be the rest thereof: when ^c the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the LORD.

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^a Jer. 23. 33.

^b Amos 1. 3.

^c 2 Chr. 20. 12.

Ps. 145. 15.

“take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew.” “It is evident “that our Lord sprang out of Judah” (Heb. vii. 14.). We may, however, understand it also more generally of any pious Jew returning in the latter days to worship at Jerusalem. St. Jerome, however, understands this as said of Christ: “And when they shall lay hold of Him, “they shall desire to tread in His steps, since God is with Him.”

“for we have heard that God is with you.” “With you” as a people and nation: “with you” in your homeward and heavenward pilgrimage: “with you” in your city, whose name shall then be “The “Lord is there” (Ezek. xviii. 35. Comp. also Ps. xlvi. 5, 7, 9. Comp. also Ps. xlvi. 5, 7, 9. Isa. vii. 14; viii. 10; lxi. 9.).

CHAPTERS IX—XI.

These chapters probably contain one entire prophecy. Chs. ix., x., “sing” almost entirely “of mercy” to God’s people, while ch. xi. is chiefly “of judgment.” Ch. ix. 9—17, is one of the most remarkable prophecies of Christ, His Gospel, His Apostles, and Church. The commencement of it (ver. 9.) is quoted by two Evangelists.

1. “land of Hadrach.” This place is only mentioned here, and its locality is not known: some suppose it near Damascus, but the Targum translates it, “land of the south.” A valuable mystical meaning, however, is derived from it: it appears to signify “sharp” and “tender,” describing thus the twofold character of God’s dealings and prophecies, yet combining in one:

“How wise Thy dealings now appear,
“Most merciful when most severe.”

Both “burden” and “rest,” are words which in prophecy may imply either mercy or judgment. “When” (or, For) “unto the “Lord” (shall be) “the eye of man, and” (specially?) “of all the “tribes of Israel.” Probably this refers not to God’s watchful care over mankind and over His people, but rather that all men shall then be led to look to Him. Comp. Ps. cxxxiii. 1, 2. Ps. cxlv. 15. But the sense here seems a higher one, not for food, or for things of this life, but watching His dealings with them, or in devotion to Him, and looking for salvation from Him alone.

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- ^d Jer. 49. 23. 2 And ^d Hamath also shall border thereby ;
- ^e Isai. 23. ^e Tyrus, and ^f Zidon, though it be very ^g wise.
- ^e Ezek. 26, & 27, & 28. 3 And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and
- Amos 1. 9. ^h heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the
- ^f 1 Kin. 17. 9. 4 Behold, ⁱ the Lord will cast her out, and he will
- Ezek. 28. 21. smite ^k her power in the sea ; and she shall be
- Obad. 20. devoured with fire.
- ^g Ezek. 28. 3, &c. 5 ^l Ashkelon shall see *it*, and fear ; Gaza also *shall*
- ^h Job 27. 16. see *it*, and be very sorrowful, and Ekron ; for her ex-
- Ezek. 28. 4, 5. pectation shall be ashamed ; and the king shall perish
- ⁱ Isai. 23. 1. from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.
- ^k Ezek. 26. 17. 6 And a bastard shall dwell ^m in Ashdod, and I
- ^l Jer. 47. 1, 5. will cut off the pride of the Philistines.
- Zeph. 2. 4. 7 And I will take away his ² blood out of his
- ^m Amos 1. 8. mouth, and his abominations from between his
- ² Heb. *bloods*. teeth : but he that remaineth, even he, *shall be* for
- our God, and he shall be as a governor in Judah,
and Ekron as a Jebusite.

2—4. “Where is the king of Hamath” (2 Kings xix. 13. Comp. also Jer. xlix. 23—27.). In Ezek. xlvii. 16, it is mentioned in connexion with “Berothah” = Beyroot. Tyrus (Heb. “Tzor” = the Rock) gave the name to Tyria (= Syria). Zidon is continually associated with Tyre, but her sins seem to have been somewhat less, and her judgments less severe. There, in its daughter-city Zarephath, mercy came to the poor widow, through Elijah (1 Kings xvii. 9.).

2. “though it be very wise.” Or, perhaps, “For she is very “wise,” and her pride of wisdom has proved her destruction. See the whole of those remarkable prophecies and descriptions of Tyre (Ezek. xxvi.—xxviii.), especially as to her skill, cleverness, and wisdom (ch. xxviii. 3—5, 12, and 17.).

4. “he will smite her power in the sea.” See Ezek. xxvii. 27, and for her destruction by fire, Ezek. xxviii. 18. In the maritime power, wealth, commerce, and skill of Tyre, we may see a type of our own nation, and the downfall of Tyre with Zidon, should be a salutary warning to us. Her island-like position did not secure Tyre on her fortified rock. Unless we truly make “the Rock of Ages” our strength, the day will assuredly come when our island position will no more protect us, and with a more fearful fall than that of Tyre shall England fall.

5—7. The alarm and terror of the cities of the Philistines may be called forth by the fearful destruction of Tyre, a greater and more powerful city than they. See Ezek. xxvii. 35 ; xxviii. 19. Compare the alarm of the rulers of Jezreel at the message of Jehu: “Behold, “two kings stood not before him: how then shall we stand?” Yet there is a saved remnant out of Philistia, when God has humbled them, and “cut off their” (national) “pride”—not merely their causes of pride, but their pride itself (vv. 6, 7.).

7. “as a Jebusite.” Spared from destruction, and left as Araunah

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8 And ⁿ I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and ^o no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now ^p have I seen with mine eyes.

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ⁿ Ps. 34. 7.
ch. 2. 5.
^o Isai. 60. 18.
Ezek. 28. 24.
^p Ex. 3. 7.

9 ¶ ^a Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, ^rthy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and ²having salvation; lowly,

^q Isai. 62. 11.
ch. 2. 10.
^r Mt. 21. 5.
John 12. 15.
^r Jer. 23. 5.
& 30. 9.

Luke 19. 38. John 1. 49. ² Or, *saving himself.*

in honour as a proselyte in Jerusalem (2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 18, 23. 1 Chron. xxi. 18—28.).

8. By protection to His House He graciously promises protection and peace to His worshippers therein: "In this place will I give peace." Comp. Hag. ii. 9. Alexander, sweeping rapidly over the nations, as "the he-goat from the West" (Dan. viii. 5, 6.), paused before Jerusalem, and paid reverence to the One true God, in the person of Jaddua, or Jaddues, the High-priest, who came out of Jerusalem in his priestly robes to meet him, and shewed the impetuous king the prophecies concerning himself.

By "him that passeth by and him that returneth," we may understand both Alexander himself and his army, abstaining from any assault, or injuring of Jerusalem and its Temple.

"now have I seen with mine eyes." Taking notice of My people's affliction, so as to cause it to cease. Comp. Exod. iii. 7 with Acts vii. 34. "With God compassion is so intrinsic an attribute, that He "is pictured as looking away, when He does not put it forth: to behold is to help" (*Pusey*).

9. "Rejoice greatly," &c. To see the beauty and force of this call to "great rejoicing" at the coming and presence of her King and Saviour, we should comp. ch. ii. 10. Isa. xii. 6, and Zeph. iii. 14—17.

"Zion" is the highest part of Jerusalem, a "way-mark" to the approaching pilgrim (Jer. xxxi. 21.). The higher towns and walls of Zion might catch the first sight of her approaching King and the crowds that accompanied Him (St. Matt. xxi. 8, 9. St. Mark xi. 1—10. St. Luke xix. 28—38. St. John xii. 12—16.). And yet in the midst of all this "great rejoicing," He, her King, before Whom, and at Whose coming, they so greatly rejoiced, Himself wept (as with floods of tears) over her impiteness.

"thy King," Who is also "King of all the earth," "King of kings" and "Lord of lords," but specially "King of Israel" (St. John i. 49.).

"he is just" as none other; righteous in all the perfection of righteousness. He is "the Holy One and the Just:" He is "that Just One" (Acts iii. 14; vii. 52.). God the Father speaks of Him (Isa. liii. 11.), "My just Servant shall by His knowledge justify many."

"having salvation," that is, probably, "saved" through death and out of all His sufferings, and so able to save others (comp. Ps. xcvi. 1.). The thought and meaning of "conquest" is frequently combined with that of "salvation;" and here He is spoken of as the Righteous King of Zion and Jerusalem, Who has salvation. And this salvation He

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and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

^s Hos. 1. 7.
& 2. 18.
Mic. 5. 10.
Hag. 2. 22.
^t Eph. 2. 14,
17.
^u Ps. 72. 8.
² Or, *whose*
covenant is
by blood,
Ex. 24. 8.
Heb. 10. 20.
& 13. 20.
^x Isai. 42. 7.
& 51. 14.
& 61. 1.
^y Isai. 49. 3.

10 And I ^s will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak ^t peace unto the heathen: and his dominion *shall be* ^u from sea *even* to sea, and from the river *even* to the ends of the earth.

11 As for thee also, ² by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy ^x prisoners out of the pit wherein *is* no water.

12 Turn you to the strong hold, ^y ye prisoners of

won by His humiliation. Comp. St. Luke i. 68, 69. 2 Cor. ii. 14. Col. ii. 15. Heb. ii. 14, 15. 1 St. Pet. iii. 22; iv. 1. Rev. xii. 10, 11; xix. 11—16.

“lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” For the use of the ass by rulers and judges, see Judg. v. 10; x. 3, 4; xii. 13, 14. David, on the insurrection of Adonijah, “caused Solomon his son to ride on his own mule.” The riding then on the ass seems to mark the Saviour as the Judge of Israel, Whom they should soon “smite with a rod upon the cheek.” Hence appears Christ’s lowliness, even as a Ruler and in the midst of triumph. With “lowliness” is joined the thought of affliction and suffering, as in the New Testament, “poor” (humble) “in spirit,” and “poor” “of low degree” (St. Matt. v. 3. St. Luke vi. 20; i. 52.). In Ps. xlv. 4, Christ’s righteousness and lowliness are, as here, mentioned together, where also the words imply that through meekness comes righteousness.

10. “I will cut off the chariot,” &c. All reliance on human strength for defence and for the conflict is taken away. From Jerusalem whose name is “visions of peace,” peace should go forth through all the world, the Prince of peace proclaiming His Gospel of peace (Rom. x. 15. Eph. ii. 14, 17.). For the extent of His kingdom, see Ps. lxxii. 8—11. The boundaries are here, first, East and Westward; and “the River” is, first, the Euphrates. His kingdom brings peace *within* (Rom. v. 1. St. John xvi. 33; xiv. 27.).

11—14. “the blood of thy covenant,” that is, the covenant made and sealed by Christ’s blood with thee, O Zion and Jerusalem. See the marginal references.

11. “the pit wherein is no water.” Like the pit into which Joseph was let down, or that dungeon into which Jeremiah was thrown. The pit is also the grave and the place of death due to sin. To the rich man hell is a pit wherein is no water (St. Luke xvi. 24.). Christ’s redeemed ones, even in death and through death “turn to” Him, their “stronghold” and “Rock of defence,” for they, even when “tied and bound with the chain of their sins,” are yet looking for release and liberty both from sin and from death. They are “prisoners of hope,” and though the pit be indeed “without water,” yet they shall not die in it. They are as “captive exiles hastening to be loosed” (Isa. li. 14.).

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hope : even to day do I declare *that* ^z I will render double unto thee ;

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13 when I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow ^z with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man.

14 And the LORD shall be seen over them, and ^a his arrow shall go forth as the lightning : and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet, and shall go ^b with whirlwinds of the south.

^a Ps. 18. 14.
& 77. 17.
& 144. 6.

^b Isai. 21. 1.

15 The LORD of hosts shall defend them ; and they shall devour, and ² subdue with sling stones ;

² Or, *subdue the stones of the sling.*

12. "I will render double unto thee." Restore and repay for twofold and double sufferings, twofold and double prosperity and blessings. See Isa. xl. 2, and lxi. 7.

13. "when" (or, for) "I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim." The going forth of Christ's Gospel is described as a mighty warfare ; but "the weapons are not carnal," as Mahomet's by the sword, or as the Papal power of Rome by the Inquisition. When Christ sent forth His Apostles to "the dispersed among the Greeks," and to "go into all the world," He did what is here described, and made "Zion" and "her sons," His Apostles and Evangelists, "as the sword of a mighty man."

14. "the Lord shall be seen over them," as sheltering and empowering them, as their Leader and Protector.

"his arrow" is His Word, which "runneth very swiftly." Comp. Ps. xix. 4—6.

"the trumpet" may be the sound of call to reconciliation through the blood of the covenant, or if that note of "peace" (ver. 10.) is rejected, then it may become a summons to judgment. In "Teman" (= "the south") allusion seems sometimes made to the Presence of God in the wilderness-mountains, where He gave His Law (Hab. iii. 3.). "Out of the whirlwind," in the South land, God, speaking to Job, taught him deeper and deeper penitence (Job xxxvii. 1 ; xl. 6. See also Ps. 1. 3.). Among other signs, storm-tossed seas prelude Christ's Second Coming (St. Luke xxi. 25.).

15. "shall defend them," "as with a shield" (Ps. v. 12.). "Thou, O Lord, art a shield around me" (Ps. iii. 3.), ready to turn and shelter on all sides. Comp. Isa. lv. 8 : "shall be thy rereward," protecting behind and after thee.

"with sling stones." As David subdued the mighty giant of Gath "with a sling and with a stone." Sling-stones, like arrows, do their work even at a distance. Christ's word healed the nobleman's son and the Syrophenician's daughter at a distance. The Holy Scriptures, translated and printed in one country, subdue men's hearts at a distance in another. His messengers are filled with His Spirit, which makes them more joyous than with wine, "whereby man is exhilarated as it were beyond himself."

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² Or, *shall fill both the bowls, &c.*

^c Lev. 4. 18, 25.
Deut. 12. 27.

^d Isai. 62. 3.
Mal. 3. 17.

^e Isai. 11. 12.

^f Ps. 31. 19.

^g Joel 3. 18.
Amos 9. 14.

³ Or, *grow, or, speak.*

and they shall drink, *and* make a noise as through wine; and they ² shall be filled like bowls, *and* as ^c the corners of the altar.

16 And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for ^d *they shall be as* the stones of a crown, ^e lifted up as an ensign upon his land.

17 For ^f how great *is* his goodness, and how great *is* his beauty! ^g corn shall make the young men ³ cheerful, and new wine the maids.

“they shall be filled like bowls.” They shall be consecrated to God, “as the bowls of the Temple from which the sacrificial blood is “sprinkled on the Altar, or as the corners of the Altar which receive “it.” Tertullian refers this to the blood of Christ’s martyrs, whereby, finally and in death, they were consecrated to Him. So St. Paul, when by beheading his blood was soon to be poured forth, says: “For I am “now ready to be offered” (2 Tim. iv. 6.).

16. “save them . . . as the flock of his people.” Comp. Ezek. xxxiv. 11—16, 22, 31.

“as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign.” Some see here a reference to the precious stones on the High-priest’s breast-plate. They are stones of holiness and hallowed separation: the word translated “crown” is “Nezer” = Nazarite, or Nazarene, the common name for Christian to this day in Syria. But the comparison may be as in Isa. lxii. 3. The “ensign” is also the “standard” of Christ’s Cross. The Apostles, as precious stones, were themselves thus lifted up, when they, in their preaching and teaching, became His standard-bearers, whom He suffered not to faint or fail. Moreover, the word “ensign” is also “trophy,” set up (1) as a means of “turning to flight the armies of Christ’s enemies, and then (2) as a raised token that they *have* been so put to flight. Compare, for instance, the effect of St. Paul’s preaching and teaching at Ephesus (Acts xix. 10—12, 17—20, 26, 27.).

17. “For how great is his goodness.” Here is the adoring praise of Christ by His Church and people. Comp. Ps. xlv. 2. Cant. v. 16. Isa. xxxiii. 17. In this passage goodness is not so much = kindness, mercy, as “goodliness,” corresponding with “beauty.” The Church, in these two expressions praises Christ not only for what He is to her, but for what He is in Himself. “We give thanks unto Thee for Thy great “glory.” Comp. Rev. iv. 11.

“corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the “maids.” Jacob’s blessing, “With corn, wine, and oil, have I sustained “him,” is here renewed to Israel in the Lord’s land (ver. 16.), and is also heightened and spiritualized. Bread, thankfully partaken of, gives *growth* and *strength* to the young, and leads to *cheerful* conversation. Such too is the exhilarating effect even of what is fermented, if only used in moderation. See ch. x. 7. But, as the former part of this joyous verse leads up to the Beatific Vision of God in heaven, so this latter part leads us to Christ’s heavenly Feast on earth, which prepares His faithful and thankful people for Heaven. The Eucharistic bread

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CHAPTER X.

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1 God is to be sought unto, and not idols. 5 As he visited his flock for sin, so he will save and restore them.

ASK ye ^a of the LORD ^b rain ^c in the time of the latter rain; so the LORD shall make ² bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.

2 For the ^d ³ idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they ^e comfort in vain: therefore they went their way as a flock, they ⁴ were troubled, ^f because *there was* no shepherd.

3 Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, ^g and I ⁵ punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts ^h hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and ⁱ hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle.

4 Out of him came forth ^k the corner, out of him

^a Jer. 14. 22.
^b Deut. 11. 14.
^c Job 29. 23.
Joel 2. 23.
² Or,
lightnings,
Jer. 10. 13.
^d Jer. 10. 8.
Hab. 2. 18.
³ Heb.
teraphims,
Judg. 17. 5.
^e Job 13. 4.
⁴ Or,
answered
that, &c.
^f Ezek. 34. 5.
^g Ezek. 34. 17.
⁵ Heb. visit-
ed upon.
^h Luke 1. 68.
ⁱ Cant. 1. 9.
^k Num. 24. 17.
1 Sam. 14. 38.
Isa. 19. 13.

and wine "make cheerful" indeed. For "the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of Christ? the cup which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ?" (1 Cor. x. 16, 17.).

CHAPTER X.

A second part, or continuation of the Prophecy in ch. ix.

1. "Ask . . . in the time of the latter rain." God's gifts are free, but certain gifts may be specially asked for in their season. "Rain" is to be asked for "in the time of the latter rain:" and the gift of the Holy Ghost, both specially at Pentecost, and also whenever the Spirit of God may be noticed as moving over the dark waters and chaos of man's natural heart, and the spiritual sky is ready from the "bright lightning-clouds" to pour down "showers of rain," "showers of blessing" (Ezek. xxxiv. 26.), upon *that* naturally dry and dreary wilderness. Comp. also Isa. xxxv. 7.

2. "they went their way," &c. That is, they were removed as a wandering lost flock. And if they were enquired of, their answer (see marg.) was "Because there is no shepherd." Comp. Ezek. xxxiv. 5, 6.

3. "Mine anger was kindled," &c. For the guilt of the shepherd, the leaders of the flock, "the he-goats" themselves, also not guiltless, are punished. The "goodly horse," with the idea of strength, and majesty, signifies the chosen instruments whereby God's kingdom triumphs over all opposition. Such was the zeal and faith of the Apostles, and such the Jewish people, when converted, may yet be,—a mighty missionary nation. See Rom. xi. 12, 15.

4. All these implements, whether of peace or war, whether of home to dwell in or host for the battle, proceed from Judah; for He, Who

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¹ the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together.

¹ Isai. 22. 23.

^m Ps. 18. 42.

5 And they shall be as mighty *men*, which ^m tread down *their enemies* in the mire of the streets in the battle: and they shall fight, because the LORD *is* with them, and ² the riders on horses shall be confounded.

² Or, *they shall make the riders on horses ashamed.*

ⁿ Jer. 3. 18.

Ezek. 37. 21.

^o Hos. 1. 7.

6 And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and ⁿ I will bring them again to place them; for I ^o have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I *am* the LORD their God, and ^p will hear them.

^p ch. 13. 9.

^q Ps. 104. 15.
ch. 9. 15.

7 And *they of* Ephraim shall be like a mighty *man*, and their ^r heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see *it*, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD.

^r Isai. 5. 26.

^s Isai. 49. 19.
Ezek. 36. 37.

8 I will ^r hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: ^s and they shall increase as they have increased.

is all and each of these, cometh forth thence. He is the Corner-stone of the building (Ps. cxviii. 22. Isa. xxviii. 18.), the "Nail fastened in "a sure place," whereon are hung all the vessels of "His Father's house" (Isa. xxii. 23, 24).

"oppressor" is "exactor" = "ruler," as requiring obedience (Isa. iii. 12; lx. 17.). It is implied that Christ is the foundation,—the stay of His people. It is He, Whose "battle-bow," i.e. His, Word and Gospel, conquers rebel hearts, and "all power is given unto Him" (St. Matt. xxviii. 18.). And so out of Him proceedeth every oppressor (= ruler) together (i.e. absolutely, one and all). "There is no power but of God," and in the Church no power but of Christ.

5. "because the Lord is with them." Thus they fight not in their own strength, but conscious of a strength that is not their own. See the faith and conduct of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xx. 12, 15, 17, &c.), and of Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxxii. 8.).

"confounded." As in the last verse of the Te Deum—"put to shame"—here, as haughty riders defeated in battle.

6. "will bring them again to place them." This is expressed in the Hebrew by one remarkable word implying at once "restoration" and "dwelling." "Mercy" is here God's tenderest mercy, as in St. Luke i. 78, and their former rejection is as a matter no longer remembered.

"will hear," and answer them. His people then have their prayers turned into praise, as is implied (ver. 7.) by "their heart rejoicing in "the Lord."

8. "hiss for them," with the loud shrill cry to be heard at a great distance. In Isa. v. 26, it is in wrath: here in mercy. For the wonderful and wonderfully rapid increase of the Israelites, see Exod. i. 7, 12, 20.

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- 9 And ^t I will sow them among the people : and they shall ^u remember me in far countries ; and they shall live with their children, and turn again. Before
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^t Hos. 2. 23.
^u Deut. 30. 1.
^x Is. 11. 11, 16.
Hos. 11. 11.
- 10 ^x I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria ; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon ; and ^y place shall not be found for them. ^y Isai. 49. 20.
- 11 ^z And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and all the deeps of the river shall dry up : and ^a the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and ^b the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away. ^z Isai. 11. 15, 16.
^a Isai. 14. 25.
^b Ezek. 30. 13.
- 12 And I will strengthen them in the LORD ; and

9. "I will sow them among the people." In mercy, as in Hosea i. 11 and ii. 23, "Israel" (= "having princely power with God") shall become a "Jezreel" (= "a sowing of God") among the nations (comp. also Micah v. 7). "They shall remember me in far distant lands," as promised (Deut. xxx. 1—4). The mention of "their children" (ver. 7, and here, ver. 9.), points to *domestic* as well as *national* happiness. Parents shall rejoice in their children, and children in dutiful love to their parents. Comp. also Mal. iv. 6.

10. From both scenes of slavery and captivity they shall be brought and planted in the most choice portions of their own "pleasant land." "Thou art Gilead unto Me, and the head (or height or best portion) of Lebanon" (Jer. xxii. 6). "Place shall not be found for them." As Jerusalem, for its multiplied inhabitants became, and had added to it "towns outside (her) walls" (ch. ii. 4.).

11. Seas and rivers are made to serve for the protection of His people, and for the destruction of their foes, at every turning point of their history. The crossing of the Red Sea, the pathway through Jordan causing such dismay to the Canaanites, the turning aside of the river Euphrates by Cyrus (Isa. xlv. 27. Jer. l. 38 ; li. 36.) to secure free entrance into Babylon,—all seem to point to some similar event yet to come. The depths of "the river" (= the Nile) shall dry up to be a pathway for His people. Euphrates is similarly dealt with in Isa. xi. 15, 16. Of Israel's two great enemies, the character of the one was *haughtiness* and of the other an *oppressive* spirit. Therefore "the *pride of Assyria*" is to be humbled, and "the *sceptre-rod of Egypt*" is to be removed, so that even "the land of Judah shall be a terror" to her (see Isa. xix. 16, 17.). Nebuchadnezzar, "the golden head" of kings and kingdoms, was thus humbled in penitence (Dan. iv. 34—37.).

12. "I will strengthen them in the Lord." Make them mighty in Him. It is implied that each of Christ's servants shall be, like Him, a "mighty one" (Ps. xlv. 3.). Compare below, ch. xii. 8. Also Micah vii. 16. A righteous nation has a *tendency* to become a strong nation. But the strength of the Israel of God is never in themselves, but in Israel's God. Of this blessed assurance the Scriptures are everywhere full : e. g. Ps. cxxxviii. 3 ; cxi. 7. Isa. xlv. 24. Dan. x. 16—19. Joel

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° they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the LORD.

^c Mic. 4. 5.

CHAPTER XI.

1 *The destruction of Jerusalem.* 3 *The elect being cared for, the rest are rejected.* 10 *The staves of Beauty and Bands broken by the rejection of Christ.* 15 *The type and curse of a foolish shepherd.*

^a ch. 10. 10.

OPEN ^a thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars.

² Or,
gallants.

^b Isai. 32. 19.

³ Or, *the
defenced
forest.*

2 Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen; because the ² mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; ^b for ³ the forest of the vintage is come down.

3 *There is* a voice of the howling of the shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions; for the pride of Jordan is spoiled.

^c ver. 7.

4 Thus saith the LORD my God; ° Feed the flock of the slaughter;

iii. 16. Also Eph. i. 19; iii. 16; vi. 10. Col. i. 11. Comp. also above, ch. iv. 6. By "walking up and down" is implied the whole life and conduct, as a life of (1) liberty, (2) active power, and (3) diligence.

"in his name" implies (1) open profession of Him; (2) an eye to Him in all they do and wherever they go; and (3) as from, and in the former clause, that their power is not in themselves, but all drawn and derived from Him and found in Him.

CHAPTER XI.

The prophetic word here changes from the "song of mercy" to judgment. Jerusalem is to be destroyed, her Temple, her palaces. And "the elect being cared for (= the poor of the flock and persecuted), the "rest are rejected."

1. "Open thy doors, O Lebanon." In the grand language of these three verses is pictured, apparently, a second and possibly a final destruction of Jerusalem, before the notable rebuilding foretold afterwards in ch. xiv. 10, 11. If it be "forest of the fortress," it marks the strong position of Jerusalem on her hills and cliff-like rocks, especially on the Temple side. If it be "forest of the vintage" it may imply the offering of "first-fruits," the "drinking of the pure blood of the grape" (Deut. xxxii. 14.), and then the sacrifices.

3. The "glory" and boast of the shepherds, whether rulers or priests, was specially Jerusalem with its Temple and palaces.

The "pride of Jordan" may be (1) its overflowing, or (2) the fertile and warm and forward soil which it watered, and which supplied them plentifully with food. The cry of the false shepherds is as the roaring of young lions who prey upon the flock instead of feeding them. See ver. 5, and Ezek. xxxiv. 1-10, and Mic. iii. 1-3.

4. "Thus saith the Lord my God." The prophet or Christ Himself claims a personal interest and possession in God the Lord as His God.

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5 whose possessors slay them, and ^dhold themselves not guilty: and they that sell them ^esay, Blessed be the LORD; for I am rich: and their own shepherds pity them not.

6 For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD: but, lo, I will ²deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand, and into the hand of his king: and they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver *them*.

7 And I will ^ffeed the flock of slaughter, ³*even* you, ^gO poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called ⁴Bands; and I fed the flock.

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^d Jer. 2. 3.
& 50. 7.
^e Deut. 27. 19.
Hos. 12. 8.

² Heb. *make to be found.*

^f ver. 4.

³ Or, *verily the poor.*

^g Zeph. 3. 12.
Matt. 11. 5.

⁴ Or,
Binders.

Thus Thomas exclaimed in adoring faith, "My Lord and my God." So, too, Hosea ix. 17.

The "**flock of the slaughter**" is whence lambs or sheep have been taken already and are still being taken for slaughter (Ps. xliv. 22. = Rom. viii. 36.). Here it is the flock, slaughtered for luxury (see Amos vi. 4, and here ver. 5.). In ver. 8 it may be the flock for whose sake their good Shepherd was slaughtered, and poured forth His life-blood.

5. "**they that sell them say, Blessed be the Lord; for I am rich.**" Such is the selfish, and self-deceiving language of the shepherds, who have no real compassion for the flock entrusted to them. A parish, a definite flock under definite "possessors," cannot be neglected either by pastors, or landowners, or employers, without such neglect leading to a like state of mind. See Hosea xii. 8, and compare the contemptuous words of the Pharisees in the council to their servants whom they had sent to seize Jesus (St. John viii. 48, 49.).

6. "**they shall smite the land.**" Smite with repeated blows, so as to crush and ruin the country and its inhabitants. And it seems as though rulers and ruled alike join in this work of destruction.

7. The prophet, or, rather, Christ Himself, the good Shepherd, takes oversight of His oppressed and untended flock. If He "destroy" and "feed with judgment the fat and the strong" (Ezek. xxxiv. 16.), He "feeds you, O poor of the flock" with loving-kindness. Comp. Zeph. iii. 12, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." See also Isa. v. 17. Jer. xxxix. 10. Our Lord's own teaching commenced "Blessed are the poor in spirit." The "little flock" is invited to "sell that they have and give alms" (St. Luke xii. 32, 33.). Thus are they both poor in position and poor by giving. The Shepherd of the flock Himself "for our sakes became poor" (2 Cor. viii. 9.).

7. "**two staves.**" Such as shepherds might use (Ps. xxiii. 4.). Whatever is specially meant by the staff named "**Beauty**," it is clear that it has reference to the *nations* of the earth (ver. 10.), and that the staff named "**Bands**" has reference to the Jewish people (ver. 14.). "**Beauty**," an unusual word, occurs in Ps. xxvii. 4; xc. 17, "Let the *beauty* of the Lord be upon us." Clearly then the staff "**Beauty**"

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^h Hos. 5. 7.

² Heb. was
straitened
for them.

¹ Jer. 15. 2.
& 43. 11.

³ Heb. of his
fellow, or,
neighbour.

⁴ Or, the poor
of the flock,
i.e. certainly
knew.

^k Zeph. 3. 12
ver. 7.

8 Three shepherds also I cut off ^h in one month ; and my soul ² lothed them, and their soul also abhorred me.

9 Then said I, I will not feed you : ⁱ that that dieth, let it die ; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off ; and let the rest eat every one the flesh ³ of another.

10 And I took my staff, *even* Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people.

11 And it was broken in that day : and ⁴ so ^k the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it *was* the word of the LORD.

signifies the gentler work of the shepherd, as "Bands" denotes severity and correction. To what times then and to what dealings of God do these two "staves" apply? The idea of "Beauty" might correspond to the period of the Maccabees as a time of mercy and comparative faithfulness, combining such dealings as "good pleasure," "beauty," with the idea of kindness. Then came, after the selling of the Saviour by Judas, and the rejection of Him by the council and nation, the sterner dealing described as "Bands," and at last the destruction by Titus, which brought indeed "bands" and bonds of sorrow and anguish upon them, and began a bondage and captivity not yet ended, although it has lasted and kept them in "bands" and slavery, more or less severe, these 1800 years.

8. "Three shepherds also I cut off in one month." Who were these, and in what single month (or, as some would explain it, "month of years" = thirty years) were they cut off?

In earlier times, Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, had been removed within a short time. Afterwards we read of the successive removal of the Jewish princes Jehohaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah. But this prophecy is better applied to the three orders of "shepherds," princes, prophets, priests, who all alike ceased and were (for at least 1800 years) finally "cut off" at the excision of the Jewish people and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

"my soul lothed." It is the fearful effect of habitual and wilful sin that God and His all-righteous ways become detestable and loathsome to the sinner. So Ps. xviii. 26. 2 Sam. xxii. 27.

9. It is often thus that *general* destruction is followed by *mutual* destruction, as the locusts when they have consumed all around them, consume and devour one another.

11. "so the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew." God's judgments as well as His mercies strengthen the faith of His humble people, who observe His dealings. Thus the destruction of Jerusalem, whereby Christ's words were fulfilled, would confirm the faith of the Jewish Christians : and the taking away of the daily sacrifice, by which event it may be said that "the covenant" "was broken," would lead them to trust in *Christ's* sacrifice on the cross. See also ver. 14.

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12 And I said unto them, ² If ye think good, give *me* my price; and if not, forbear. So they ¹ weighed for my price thirty *pieces* of silver.

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² Heb. *If it
be good in
your eyes.*

13 And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the ^m potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty *pieces* of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD.

¹ Matt. 26. 15.
See Ex. 21. 32.
^m Matt. 27. 9,
10.

14 Then I cut asunder mine other staff, *even* ³ Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

³ Or,
Binders.

15 ¶ And the LORD said unto me, ⁿ Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd.

ⁿ Ezek. 34. 2,
3, 4.

16 For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, *which* shall not visit those that be ⁴ cut off, neither ⁴ Or, *hidden*. shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor ⁵ feed that that standeth still: but he ⁵ Or, *bear*.

12, 13. Circumstances of want or distress, or hardships connected with his teaching seem to lead to the request which the prophet here makes for some reward for his labours, corresponding to their peculiar difficulties. Yet he left it open to them to give or not to give. And what was their reply? A paltry price, the ordinary price of a slave, thus shewing, their covetousness and their contempt for the prophet and his work. He is Divinely directed what to do with this paltry sum; he is to “cast it to the potter.” And, under a sense of injustice and disvaluing of his work, which is not his own but God’s, he calls it ironically “a goodly price” = a mean and sorry price for such a work.

13. “cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.” Was the potter there, as a worshipper only, or as an artificer? He may have been a maker of vessels of inferior use for the Temple (comp. Isa. xxii. 24. 2 Tim. ii. 20.). It is noticeable, although not conclusive for such a rendering, that the word for “potter” is such as easily and with but slight change becomes “treasury” (St. Matt. xxvii. 6.), and is so understood by many Jews.

14. “the brotherhood.” As in the prosperous days of the yet undivided kingdom of David and Solomon. But such brotherhood, though broken under Rehoboam, was fully and finally (for that period) broken under the arms of Titus, when “God casting them off” they became “wanderers among the nations” (Hosea ix. 17.).

15. “instruments of a foolish shepherd.” Such, as some ancient commentators explain it, as the scrip and wallet, the pipe and the small harp, rather than the rod and the staff. That is, the “evil” shepherd furnishes himself with instruments of amusement and self-gratification rather than for the good of his flock, which yet is not his but “the Lord’s flock,” which through *his* neglect “is carried away captive.” See Jer. xiii. 17, 20. Ezek. xxxiv. 1—10.

16. Who is this shepherd, who fulfils none of these duties and offices of care and kindness to the flock, (1) “visiting,” (2) “seeking,” (3)

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o Jer. 23. 1.
Ezek. 34. 2.
John 10. 12,
13.

shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces.

17 ° Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword *shall be* upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *Jerusalem a cup of trembling to herself, 3 and a burdensome stone to her adversaries. 6 The victorious restoring of Judah. 9 The repentance of Jerusalem.*

a Isai. 42. 5.
& 44. 24.
& 45. 12, 18.
& 48. 13.

THE burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, ° which stretcheth forth the

“healing,” (4) “feeding?” It seems to belong to teachers rather than rulers, to priests and ministers rather than to “magistrates,” governors, or sovereign. And yet this description probably reaches on to the final Antichrist, whose oppression and cruelty, as St. Hippolytus shews, would be fitly set forth in the two last clauses.

“tear their claws (=hoofed feet) in pieces” seems to mark the completing of an insatiate gluttonous meal. Meantime those that are “cut off” are not looked after, or “visited;” the “young” are not “sought for,” the “broken” are not “healed,” and such as “standeth still,” stopping by the way through weakness and weariness, is not “fed.” Sad state indeed, of the flock, but far more fearful the state of the shepherd! “woe to thee idol shepherd, that leavest the flock!” Compare and contrast St. Matt. ix. 35, 36. St. Mark vi. 35. St. Luke xii. 42. St. John x. 9, 10. Acts v. 42; xx. 28. 1 St. Pet. v. 1—4. See a similar description generally of the “shepherds of Israel” (Ezek. xxxiv. 4.). If we are teachers, which of these duties do we most neglect? If we are among the flock, which of these four classes describes our individual state in Christ’s Church and flock?

17. “Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock!” One who is worthless and useless as a dumb “idol.” To “leave the flock” is not merely to go away from them, but to neglect them even though placed in the midst of them. See vv. 5 and 16.

The “arm” should afford strong and safe protection, as Christ “gathers the lambs with His arm” (Isa. xl. 11.), and the “eye” watchful care (Deut. xi. 12. Ps. xxxii. 8; xxxiii. 18, 19; and Job xxxvi. 7.). Both these had been misused for selfish purposes: therefore we are told here and “know what horrible punishment ensues,” viz. utter powerlessness, utter darkness.

CHAPTER XII.

The main subject of this and the two following chapters appears to be God’s mercy to Judah and Jerusalem, penitent and purified, passing through great tribulation on to great honour and settled and holy prosperity. All three chapters may be regarded as one entire prophecy, in which are embodied at least two distinct references (chs. xii. 10; xiii. 6, 7.) to a *suffering Messiah*, and quoted as such by our Lord Himself and by St. John in the New Testament.

1. “The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel,” i.e. probably

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heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and
^b formeth the spirit of man within him.

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2 Behold, I will make Jerusalem ^c a cup of
² trembling unto all the people round about, ³ when
 they shall be in the siege both against Judah and
 against Jerusalem.

Num. 16. 22.
 Eccles. 12. 7.
 Isai. 57. 16.
 Heb. 12. 9.
^c Isai. 51. 17,
 22, 23.

3 ¶ ^d And in that day will I make Jerusalem ^e a
 burdensome stone for all people: all that burden
 themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though
 all the people of the earth be gathered together
 against it.

² Or, slumber,
 or, poison.
³ Or, and
 also against
 Judah shall
 he be which
 shall be in
 siege against
 Jerusalem.

4 In that day, saith the LORD, ^f I will smite every
 horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness:
 and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah,
 and will smite every horse of the people with
 blindness.

^d ver. 4, 6,
 8, 9, 11. &
 ch. 13. 1.
 & 14. 4, 6,
 8, 9, 13.
^e Matt. 21. 44.
^f Ps. 76. 6.
 Ezek. 38. 4.

5 And the governors of Judah shall say in their
 heart, ⁴ The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be
 my strength in the LORD of hosts their God.

⁴ Or, There
 is strength
 to me and
 to the inha-
 bitants, &c.
 Joel 3. 16.

concerning Israel, and sent and addressed to him, whether the song be
 of mercy or of judgment. Here, however, "mercy rejoiceth against
 judgment."

"formeth the spirit of man." In this lower creation God's highest
 work is man's spirit. Thus in the Old Testament He is called "the
 God of the spirits of all flesh;" and in the New Testament the Father
 "of spirits" unto Whom, if we "subject ourselves," we "shall live."

2. "Behold, I will make Jerusalem." In this twofold comparison,
 the "cup of trembling" and (ver. 3.) the "burdensome stone," is
 pictured the powerlessness of the nations against God's own people and city.
 The "cup of trembling" is probably a large bason or drinking vessel,
 from which all nations may drink that which will make them drunken
 and powerless for action. The "burdensome stone" is a large stone or
 piece of rock, to take up which is a trial and feat of strength. But what
 is the effect of all the efforts of the nations to take up and to remove it?
 They only hurt themselves in the attempt, and are "cut in pieces"
 (=are sacrificed, cut themselves and bear long-lasting scars) in conse-
 quence. Such was the fate of Sennacherib "the great king, the king
 of Assyria," who, after the loss in one night of his army of 185,000,
 returned with shame of face to his own country to be murdered, while
 worshipping in the temple of Nisroch, by two of his own children.

4. "I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah," to notice their
 peril and distress. So Hezekiah prayed in the hour of danger, and Daniel
 in the captivity (2 Kings xix. 16. Dan. ix. 18.).

"people" here is "peoples," as in ver. 3; "all the nations of the earth
 gathered together against Jerusalem."

5. There shall be heartfelt gratitude to God in the hearts of the

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† Obad. 18.

6 ¶ In that day will I make the governors of Judah ^g like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, *even* in Jerusalem.

7 The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify *themselves* against Judah.

8 In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and ^h he that is ² ³ feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David *shall be* as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.

^h Joel 3. 10.

² Or, *abject*.

³ Heb. *fallen*.

rulers of the nation for the Divine strength and succour imparted to the inhabitants of their chief city.

6. "will I make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire." A like power to conquer and to consume is foretold in Micah v. 8, 9, of "the remnant of Jacob among the nations in the midst of many peoples." Here, the governors of Judah are as "fire" amid what is fit and easy to be consumed—logs of "wood" in the house, a dry "sheaf" in the harvest-field. There, the dispersed remnant of Jacob, after being first "as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass" to revive and refresh the nations (Rom. xi. 12, 15.), become to their enemies, who are also His enemies, "as a lion among the beasts of the forest, and as a "young lion among the flocks of sheep." As other beasts of the forest cannot stand against that king of the forest, and as the sheep are powerless before him, so the nations cannot stand, but are powerless against the governors of Judah at Jerusalem. They become as *dry timber* placed in the *fire*, and as the *dry sheaf* to which is applied the *burning torch*.

"in her own place," whereas, ere this, her sons had been scattered far away from her throughout the whole world.

7. "The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first." Man is apt to put the city before the country,—the rich before the poor: God places here the country people, the dwellers in tents, simple, poor, and defenceless, *first* in His kind care and powerful protection. And why? To prevent pride: that there may be no boasting of one part of the nation against another part, but that (1) the royal family, (2) the citizens of the royal city, and (3) the people of the land of Judah in their villages may all rejoice together in that great deliverance. It is the duty of kings, rulers, and pastors, to attend *first* to the wants of the poor and needy.

8. As in behalf of God's people a day of increased brightness is foretold, when "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun" (see Isa. xxx. 26.), so here the weak shall be strong (Ps. cv. 37.); and the house of David, that "mighty man of valour," shall be even as "the "angel of the Lord before them;" even as Christ, in Whom and through Whom St. Paul could do all things (Phil. iv. 13.).

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9 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* I will seek to ⁱdestroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 ^k And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall ^llook upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, ^mas one mourneth for *his* only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn.

11 In that day shall there be a great ⁿmourning in Jerusalem, ^oas the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.

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ⁱ Hag. 2. 22.
ver. 3.

^k Jer. 31. 9.
& 50. 4.
Ezek. 39. 27.
Joel 2. 28.

^l John 19. 34,
37.

^m Rev. 1. 7.
Jer. 6. 26.
Amos 8. 10.

ⁿ Acts 2. 17.

^o 2 Kin. 23. 21.
2 Chr. 35. 24.

9. God does not say "I will destroy," but in His forbearing mercy towards even these congregated and opposing nations, "I will seek to destroy." For, as in Isa. lxvi. 18, 19, there are "those that escape of them" (i. e. of the enemies of His people), whom He sends as messengers to "tell of His glory among the nations," so here (see ch. xiv. 16.) a remnant of the nations is left to come back again year by year to Jerusalem, "to worship the king" "over all the earth," "the Lord of hosts, and to keep" the closing feast of the year—"the feast of tabernacles."

10. God pouring His Spirit upon His rescued people, their hearts are melted (1) by a sense of His great mercies,—specially now in their deliverance from a whole world gathered against them, and (2) by a sense of their own deep guilt in crucifying their own Saviour. Their crowning sin in this matter is here distinctly mentioned. Their previous insults, taunts, mockery, disparaging His miracles, ill-treatment, blindfolding, beating and scourging,—all were summed up in *this*, (1) they pierced His sacred brows with the crown of thorns (St. Matt. xxvii. 29. St. Mark xv. 17. St. John xix. 2.), (2) they "pierced His hands and His feet," nailing them to the Cross, and (3) the Roman soldier, intending probably to prove and test His actual death, "pierced His side, and forthwith came thereout "blood and water,"—mighty for atonement, mighty for cleansing and sanctifying His people (comp. ch. xiii. 1, "the fountain" set "open"). After this they shall "look" upon Him, as their forefathers "looked" with steadfast gaze upon "the serpent of brass" (Num. xxi. 6—9.). See also Isa. xlv. 22. St. John i. 40.

10. "only son . . . firstborn." Comp. Jer. vi. 26, and the grief of the widow of Nain (St. Luke vii. 12, 13.). Also the "great cry" in Egypt, when at midnight the Lord smote all their first-born (Exod. xii. 29, 30. Ps. lxxviii. 51; cv. 36.).

11. The mourning for Josiah so touchingly described in 2 Chron. xxxv. 24, 25. "Hadadrimmon" was probably a place marked by beautiful gardens of pomegranates, the exact spot where Josiah received his death-wound from the Egyptians. "Megiddo," on the valley of Jezreel, is the battle-field of Palestine from age to age, until it becomes the great battle-field Armageddon of all the nations of the earth (Rev. xvi. 14—16.).

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^p Matt. 24. 30.
Rev. 1. 7.

² Heb.
families,
families.

^q 2 Sam. 5. 14.
Luke 3. 31.

³ Or, of
Simeon,
as LXX.

12 ^p And the land shall mourn, ² every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of ^q Nathan apart, and their wives apart;

13 the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family ³ of Shimei apart, and their wives apart;

14 all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.

CHAPTER XIII.

a ch. 12. 3.

b Heb. 9. 14.

1 Pet. 1. 19.

Rev. 1. 5.

² Heb.

separation
for uncleanness.

1 *The fountain of purgation for Jerusalem, 2 from idolatry, and false prophecy. 7 The death of Christ, and the trial of a third part.*

IN ^a that day there shall be ^b a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for ² uncleanness.

12—14. “And the land shall mourn.” Solitude and seclusion is suited for sorrow. “David” is chief mourner (comp. 2 Sam. iii. 31—34). “Nathan,” as direct ancestor of Christ (St. Luke iii. 31). “Levi,” as connected with the priesthood, and “Shimei,” whose name is here likened (in termination) to his brother, and who probably was joined with him in teaching. All these four feel specially their sin in crucifying the Messiah, and so specially “mourn” for Him. But not they only.

14. “all the families that remain,” each family by themselves, alone and apart. Eleven times this “loneliness” is mentioned, that each “heart” for itself might “know its own bitterness” (Prov. xiv. 10), “its own plague” (1 Kings viii. 38.) of sin, and its own part in this great sin of sins—Christ’s Crucifixion—the putting to death the First-born and Only Son of the Lord God, the Father Almighty. Our Lord also refers to the mourning of the tribes in St. Matt. xxiv. 30.

CHAPTER XIII.

1. “a fountain opened.” Not closed over and sealed (as in Gen. xxix. 2, 3, 8. Cant. iv. 12.), but opened by Divine power. This promise and gift, “an opened fountain” for the cleansing of sin, depends (1) on the “piercing” of the Saviour on the Cross, and the pouring forth from His pierced side “blood and water” (St. John xix. 34. 1 St. John v. 6.), and (2) on “the spirit of grace and supplication” poured forth upon the persons for whom that cleansing and healing “fountain” is set “open.” Of that cleansing the Gentile Church has already, since Christ’s “piercing” on the Cross, largely partaken. And there is hope that “in that day” the Jewish people will also partake of its fulness, when His wondrous mercy shall have turned their fearful imprecation into a blessing: “His blood be on us and on our children” (St. Matt. xxvii. 25.).

“uncleanness” appears to signify whatever pollution of sin entails,

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2 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, *that* I will ^c cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause ^d the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

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^c Ex. 23. 13.
Josh. 23. 7.
Ps. 16. 4.
Ezek. 30. 13.
Hos. 2. 17.
Mic. 5. 12, 13.
^d 2 Pet. 2. 1.

3 And it shall come to pass, *that* when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the LORD: and his father and his mother that begat him ^e shall thrust him through when he prophesieth.

^e Dent. 13. 6,
8. & 18. 20.

4 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* ^f the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear ^g a rough garment ^h to deceive:

^f Mic. 3. 6, 7.

^g 2 Kin. 1. 8.
Isai. 20. 2.
Matt. 3. 4.

5 ^h but he shall say, I *am* no prophet, I *am* an husbandman · for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.

^h Heb. a garment of hair.
ⁱ Heb. to lie.
^h Amos 7. 14.

separation and exclusion from either (1) public worship of God, or (2) social sacred feasts (see Lev. vii. 20, 21; xiii. 46; xv. 31. Num. xii. 14, 15. 1 Sam. xx. 26. 2 Chron. xxvi. 16—21.). Sin separates man from his God, and from his fellow-men. Christ's blood not only cleanses, but cements and unites, by removing sin which severs (Isa. lix. 2; xliii. 25, 26; xlv. 22.).

2. "cut off the names of the idols." Not only the images, whether of silver or gold, or wood or stone, carved or "pictured stone," but the very "names" and worship of them. Such is the power of the cleansing fountain; such is the victory of Christ. "The idols shall (all and each) pass away." "The idols He shall utterly abolish" (Isa. ii. 18.). The false prophets also will be disowned (ver. 3.), will be ashamed of their false profession, and abandon the garb and marks of it (vv. 4—6.). As yet, however, the Christian Church is still in danger of idolatry both of eye and heart: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," is St. John's parting warning (1 St. John v. 21.). The "unclean spirit" prompts the false prophets in their prophesying, and becomes "a lying spirit in their mouth" (comp. 1 Kings xxii. 19—23. 2 Chron. xviii. 18—22.). On the condemnation of a false prophet by his parents, see Dent. xiii. 1—11; xxi. 19.

4. "neither shall they wear a rough garment." That is, in order to mislead by putting on the garb and appearance of God's true prophets and servants, such as Elijah, John the Baptist, and many other of His saints, "of whom the world was not worthy" (see 2 Kings i. 7, 8. St. Matt. iii. 4. St. Mark i. 6. Heb. xi. 37.).

5. "no prophet," by birth, training, or education, but like Amos "the herdsman and shepherd," or others specially called and set apart by God (Amos i. 1; vii. 14, 15.). "Taught me to keep cattle." The Hebrew word here seems to imply that he was *purchased* for such service as a slave (Phil. ii. 7.).

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6 And *one* shall say unto him, What *are* these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, *Those* with which I was wounded *in* the house of my friends.

^l Isai. 40. 11. [¶] Awake, O sword, against ⁱ my shepherd, and against the man ^k *that is* my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: ¹ smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon ^m the little ones.

ⁿ Rom. 11. 5. 8 And it shall come to pass, *that* in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off *and* die; ⁿ but the third shall be left therein.

^o Isai. 48. 10. 9 And I will bring the third part ^o through the fire, and will ^p refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: ^q they shall call on

6. As St. Paul "bare in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus," so it seems probable that the prophet had suffered, and his hands, which are so often *first* wounded in a fray and struggle, wounded by his own friends and fellow-countrymen (St. Matt. v. 12.). For "a man's foes are they of his own house" (Micah vii. 6. St. Matt. x. 36.).

7. "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man *that is my fellow.*" The sword is the usual instrument for *justice* as well as weapon of war. Christ, having become the sin-bearer, the sword of God's justice "awakes against" Him. Comp. Jer. xlvii. 6, 7. "My shepherd," as Son of man, "My fellow" (=my equal) as Son of God. As our blessed Lord chiefly speaks of Himself as "the Son of man," so in quoting this prophecy, He omits what refers to Himself as God. "I will smite the shepherd;" in thus quoting our Lord comforts Himself in expectation of all His sufferings, by acknowledging His Father's work and will, and seeing His hand in all that men were that very night about to do to Him. Some of the Jews who were bringing the "sword" to "awake against" Him, were conscious of this; as Caiaphas, when he said (St. John xi. 49—53.), "It is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people." The word translated "My fellow" occurs only in Leviticus, and implies *equality* to the other party spoken of. Thus Christ, Who as man is God's shepherd, is declared by this word to be "equal to the Father as touching His Godhead."

"the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." The original expression implies that the sheep, although scattered, are *one* as a flock. Thus our Lord's quotation (St. Matt. xxvi. 31.) speaks of "the sheep of the flock," whom also He calls "little ones, who believe on Him" (St. Matt. xviii. 6, 10, 14.). "I will turn my hand upon them:" (1) to smite them, even after the manner that the shepherd Himself is smitten, or (2) to bring and gather them back again to the shepherd, after they had "all forsaken Him and fled" (St. Matt. xxvi. 56; xxviii. 16.).

8, 9. Thus does God purify in the fires of tribulation His people, who

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my name, and I will hear them: *I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.*

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^r Ps. 144. 15.
Jer. 30. 22.
Ezek. 11. 20.
Hos. 2. 23.
ch. 8. 8.

CHAPTER XIV.

¹ *The destroyers of Jerusalem destroyed.* ⁴ *The coming of Christ, and the graces of his kingdom.* ¹² *The plague of Jerusalem's enemies.* ¹⁶ *The remnant shall turn to the Lord,* ²⁰ *and their spoils shall be holy.*

BEHOOLD, ^a the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

^a Isai. 13. 9.
Joel 2. 31.
Acts 2. 20.

² For ^b I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and ^c the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

^b Joel 3. 2.

^c Isai. 13. 16.

³ Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

are left as but "one-third in the whole land." He "tries them," and they "come forth as gold" (Job xxiii. 10. 1 St. Pet. i. 7.). And the blessed effect is as Christ speaks of, the mutual recognition of shepherd and flock (St. John x. 14.). All the pronouns here are emphatic: "He shall call upon My name, and I will answer Him; I have said, He is My people; and He shall say, The Lord is My God" (see on Mal. iii. 17.).

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In this prophecy we have (1) "the destroyers of Jerusalem destroyed" (vv. 3, 12—15.); (2) the Advent of Christ, and the changes which take place in the land of Judea and Jerusalem, when "His feet stand" upon the Mount of Olives" (vv. 4—11.); (3) the keeping of the Feast of Tabernacles not by the Jews only, but by the remnant of all the nations of the earth, Egypt included, and also the punishment of such as refuse to keep it (vv. 16—19.); and (4) the consecration of things in common use unto God, and the exclusion from God's House and from His service of all such as might pollute such consecration (vv. 20, 21.).

1. "thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee." So secure are the enemies of Jerusalem, that they do not hasten away with their plunder, but divide it amongst themselves in the midst of the city, as fearing no attack. Comp. Jer. xxxix. 3, where, upon the capture of the city, "the princes of the king of Babylon came in and sat (as undisputed conquerors) in the middle gate" of Jerusalem.

2. "the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." By comparing and connecting the former chapter (ch. xiii. 8, 9.), it would seem that this "residue" is but the *half* of that *third* part, whom God has already "brought through the fire" into close relation to Himself as His own people.

3. "as when he fought in the day of battle." Either such battle as

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^d See Ezek. 11. 23.
^e Joel 3. 12, 14.
² Or, *my mountains.*
³ Or, *when he shall touch the valley of the mountains to the place he separated.*
cir. 787.
^f Amos 1. 1.
^g Matt. 16. 27. & 24. 30, 31. & 25. 31.
Jude 14. ^h Joel 3. 11.

4 And his feet shall stand in that day ^d upon the mount of Olives, which *is* before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, ^e and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

5 And ye shall flee to the valley of ² the mountains; ³ for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the ^f earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: ^g and the LORD my God shall come, and ^h all the saints with thee.

in the days of Joshua, when five kings were taken at one time "because the Lord fought for Israel" (Josh. x. 14, 42.). Or, as in the days of Jehoshaphat, when "He fought against the enemies of Israel," the united armies of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, causing among them, confusion and mutual slaughter, "each one helping to destroy the other" (2 Chron. xx. 22, 23.). Compare also as perhaps describing the same battle (Rev. xvi. 14, 16; xvii. 14.). The word here translated "battle" signifies a close engagement between two armies.

4. "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives." This would lead us to expect Christ's second appearance on earth in the place and spot of His departure from earth to heaven. "It (the mount of Olives) united the greatest glory of our Lord on earth, His Ascension, with the deepest sorrow in Gethsemane." Comp. St. Luke xxiv. 50, 51. Acts i. 9—12. St. Luke xix. 29, 37. The removal of this same mountain may be hinted at in our Lord's words (St. Matt. xxi. 21. St. Mark xi. 23.). "The mountain is perhaps to be literally divided, in order to form a way of escape from Jerusalem." Seas and rivers (the Jordan and Euphrates) had been dried up and divided in behalf of His people: so here it is predicted that a mountain shall be cleft asunder hereafter.

Three great changes are described:—

(1) The Mount of Olives being divided becomes two mountains which God speaks of as: "My mountains;" comp. also Isa. lxx. 9, 11, 25.

(2) A wide valley is formed between these two parts, extending throughout the whole length of the mountains. "Azal" may be the same with Bethi-Azel (Micah i. 11.). It marks a place, where, as in Zoar or in Pella, fugitives may safely rest.

(3) An elevated plain is to become the site of the rebuilt city Jerusalem. Comp. ver. 10. Isa. ii. 1. Ezek. xl. 2. Micah iv. 1.

5. "the Lord my God shall come." This coming of Christ has a special reference to the deliverance of the Jewish people, hence, Christians, also learn the duty of watching and preparing constantly for His coming: "Watch and pray always" (see St. Luke xxi. 34—36. Rev. xxii. 12. 2 St. Pet. iii. 14.).

"all the saints with thee." The prophet, turns abruptly from speak-

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6 And it shall come to pass in that day, ² *that* the light shall not be ³ clear, *nor* ⁴ dark :

7 but ⁵ it shall be ⁱ one day ^k which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night : but it shall come to pass, *that* at ¹ evening time it shall be light.

8 And it shall be in that day, *that* living ^m waters shall go out from Jerusalem ; half of them toward the ⁶ former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea : in summer and in winter shall it be.

shall be one. ⁱ Rev. 22. 5. ^k Matt. 24. 36. ¹ Isai. 30. 26. & 60. 19, 20. Rev. 21. 23. Joel 3. 18. Rev. 22. 1. ⁶ Or, *eastern*, Joel 2. 20.

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² *i. e.* it shall not be clear in some places, and dark in other places of the world.

³ Heb. *precious.*

⁴ Heb. *thickness.*

⁵ Or, *the day*

^m Ezek. 47. 1.

ing of God to speak to Him. Compare Jonathan's words to God and to David (1 Sam. xx. 12, 13.). The "saints" are in Joel iii. 11 called "His mighty ones"—Angels, "excelling in strength" (Ps. ciii. 20.). Compare Deut. xxxiii. 2. Jude 14. St. Matt. xxv. 31. St. Luke ix. 26.

6, 7. The light of the judgment-day and the lengthening of that day were probably foreshewn in the days of Joshua (Josh. x. 12—14.) and of Hezekiah (2 Kings xx. 9—11.). At both those occasions probably "at eventime it was light." The words might be rendered: "The bright ones shall contract themselves" (see Joel ii. 10. Isa. v. 30.). St. Matt. xxiv. 29. St. Mark xiii. 24. Or thus: "Not—brightnesses and thick darkness," but a peculiar and pervading light spread over the whole world,—a light independent perhaps of the sun, like the first created light (Gen. i. 3.), or the brightness above the noon-day's sun (Acts xxvi. 13. Comp. Ezek. xliii. 2.). In either case it is implied that the natural sources of light, "the powers of heaven," are "shaken" and altered, and a prolonged day and peculiar light takes their place. Then and thus "all mankind shall see it and fear, and own that it is His work" (Ps. lxiv. 9.). It seems that the darkness of the crucifixion is to be repeated in the day of judgment, thus connecting Christ suffering with Christ our judge. As at the crucifixion it was dark at noon, so at His second coming "it shall be light at eventide." Then came an unlooked-for darkness, *here* unlooked-for light comes and is continued. As in Gen. ii. 1—3, no "evening" is recorded of the seventh day, so of this peculiar day it is said that it is "not day" like common day-light, "nor night" as ordinary night. Comp. Isa. xxx. 26; lx. 20. Also Rev. xxi. 11, 23, 24; xxii. 5.

Spiritually applied, it may indicate (1) blessings vouchsafed to us late in life; (2) relief and deliverance, at a time when we are looking for and expecting only more trouble; "light always breaks in, when all seems darkest;" (3) light and peace in Christ, on our entering the usually dark "valley of the shadow of death."

8. "living waters shall go out from Jerusalem." Jerusalem is now, as of old, supplied with water *from without*, namely, (1) by conduits from the three pools of Solomon beyond Bethlehem; (2) by "the upper pool" of Hezekiah, outside the Jaffa gate, and (3) by the rain collected in the low basement reservoirs from the flat housetops (see Eccles. ii. 6. 2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4. 2 Kings xviii. 31. Jer. xiv. 3; ii. 13.) Even Siloam is outside the city, and Bethesda within is as yet perfectly dry (St. John ix. 7, 11; v. 2—4.). *Here* Jerusalem herself unfaillingly pours forth fertilizing and healing waters in two

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^m Dan. 2. 44.
Rev. 11. 15.
^o Eph. 4. 5, 6.
² Or,
compassed.
^p Isai. 40. 4.
^q ch. 12. 6.
³ Or, *shall*
abide.
^r Neh. 3. 1.
& 12. 39.
Jer. 31. 38.

^s Jer. 31. 40.
^t Jer. 23. 6.
⁴ Or, *shall*
abide.

9 And the LORD shall be ^aking over all the earth: in that day shall there be ^oone LORD, and his name one.

10 All the land shall be ²turned ^pas a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and ^q³inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, ^rand *from* the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.

11 And *men* shall dwell in it, and there shall be ^sno more utter destruction; ^tbut Jerusalem ⁴shall be safely inhabited.

12 ¶ And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought

plentiful streams, one eastward to the Dead Sea, one westward to the Mediterranean. These streams convey and produce fertility and healing wherever they come, for "their waters—they issued out of the sanctuary" (Ezek. xlvi. 12.), "and their fountain came forth from the "house of the Lord" (Joel iii. 18.). And what is the source of the like river in the heavenly Jerusalem? That most "pure river" the Angel shewed St. John, "proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb" (see Ezek. xlvi. 12, and the whole passage vv. 1—12. Joel iii. 18. Rev. xxii. 1.). This is indeed the "river, whose streams gladden the "city of God" (Ps. xlvi. 4; also xxxvi. 8, 9.). Spiritually, God's people do even now taste thereof, when, by the power of the Holy Ghost, they are "filled with all joy and peace in believing" on Christ (Rom. xv. 13. See also 1 St. Peter i. 8. St. John iv. 14; vii. 37—39.).

9. The idol-worship of false gods and of devils being everywhere abolished, the whole earth shall own in Christ her true and rightful King.

"and his name" shall be "one." This implies a certain *oneness of worship* as well as the worshipping of *one*. How blessed a contrast to the present various ways (so many of them, more or less, erroneous and faulty) of worshipping the one true God and His Christ.

10. "All the land shall be turned as a plain . . . and it shall be "lifted up." See above on ver. 4. The marginal translation be "compassed" = surrounded, marks the limits on all sides of this uplifted site of the new city. The word translated "shall be lifted up" is a very remarkable one, calling our special attention to this elevation, which together with the divided mount of Olives God claims as His own, "My "mountain," "My holy mountain," "My mountains." For here the Saviour taught daily, wrought many miracles, suffered in Gethsemane, "witnessed before" the High-priest and "Pilate a good confession," suffered, was crucified, was buried, rose again, went up thence into heaven (comp. also Ps. xlvi. 1; lxxxvii. 1. Ezek. xvii. 22, 23; xx. 40.).

12. "all the people." That is, all the nations that have come with their armies in full-armed force against Jerusalem.

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against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

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13 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* ^u a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and ^x his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.

^u 1 Sam. 14.
15, 20.

14 And ² Judah also shall fight ³ at Jerusalem; ^y and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.

^x Judg. 7. 22.
² Chr. 20. 23.
Ezek. 38. 21.

² Or, *thou*
also, O Ju-
dah, shalt.

³ Or, *against.*
^y Ezek. 39. 10,
17, &c.

15 And ² so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.

² ver. 12.

16 ¶ And it shall come to pass, *that* every one

“while they stand upon their feet.” That is, while they seem to be in full vigour. They become in some sort as living skeletons; the eye sunk as in death, deep in its socket, and the tongue within the mouth shrivelled, parched, and wasted away. A fearful sight of living death, and that of vast multitudes (comp. Joel iii. 12—14. Ezek. xxiv. 23.). And even their beasts of burden or of war in the midst of the “tents” of this great army, shall partake of the same living destruction (ver. 15.).

Spiritually, we may compare Rev. iii. 1, “a name to live,” but really “dead.” “She that lives in pleasure” and luxury “is dead while she liveth” (1 Tim. v. 6.).

13. The mighty army is divided, as Babel by language, so here in confusion of plan and purpose. Jerusalem’s fierce foes by disruption among themselves (see above ver. 3, and *notes* there) work out their own destruction. “There is no real unity except in God.”

14. “And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem.” Here again, as above (ch. xii. 5, 7.), the country-folk are not forgotten. The city shall share, it is implied, all the wealth with the country, and the country with the city. So the villages of Attica had equal rights with the dwellers in Athens itself. Everywhere appears in Scripture the care of God for the *poor*. Among other instances, Solomon’s last words are enjoining on his son the protecting of “the poor and needy” (Prov. xxxi. 8, 9.). “The strength of the Church has ever been the hearts of the poor.”

15. “And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass.” The creatures, created for man, suffer together with man and for man’s sin (comp. Gen. vi. 17; vii. 4, 21—23. Jer. xiv. 5, 6, and also Jonah iii. 7.). But when the Man Christ Jesus shall be “king over all the earth” (ver. 9.), all creation rejoices under Him (Ps. viii. 5—9.), and with His redeemed people (Rom. viii. 19—21.). Compare also Isa. xi. 6—9; lxxv. 25.

16—19. The feast of Tabernacles had one great fulfilment, when our

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that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even ^a go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep ^b the feast of tabernacles.

^a Is. 60. 6, 7, 9.
& 66. 23.
^b Lev. 23. 34,
43.
Neh. 8. 14.
Hos. 12. 9.
John 7. 2.
^c Isai. 60. 12.

17 ^c And it shall be, *that* whoso will not come up of *all* the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

² Heb. upon whom there is not.

18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, ^{2d} that *have no rain*; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

^d Deut. 11. 10.
^e Or, *sin*.

19 This shall be the ³ punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

⁴ Or, *bridles*.
^e Isai. 23. 18.

20 ¶ In that day shall there be upon the ⁴ bells of the horses, **HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD**; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

21 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah

Lord "tabernacled" among us (St. John i. 14.). And even the holy, heavenly city, is called the "tabernacle of God" (Rev. xxi. 3.). As the two other Jewish feasts have their counterpart and fulfilment in the Christian Church,—the Passover with Easter and Christ's Death and Resurrection, and Pentecost with Whitsuntide and the gift of the Holy Ghost,—so it would seem that the feast of Tabernacles is reserved as the third, the consummating feast, for the marking and perpetuating all the varied blessings connected with Christ's Incarnation. The seventh month, like the seventh day, speaks of completion, and rest.

The excepting of Egypt, that rainless land, seems all the more strongly to shew that all this prophecy must be taken literally. Upon the Egyptians, neglecting this feast of thanksgiving "for creation, preservation," and "redemption," comes the living death, the stroke inflicted on the nations which fought against Jerusalem. "He that is not with Me is against Me" (St. Matt. xii. 30.).

20. "shall there be upon the bells of the horses, **HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD.**" The commonest things shall be sacred and hallowed to God's glory, although not contained or used in His Temple (1 Cor. x. 31.). We may observe that the "horse" is not now, as in ver. 15, used for war, but for purposes of peace. "Things simply secular (such as bells, bridles, or trappings of the horses) shall bear the same inscription as the plate upon the High-priest's forehead." And in the temple itself the commonest vessels shall be regarded as holy as those reserved for holiest uses—"the bowls," used to receive and pour forth the blood of the victim—"the sacrifice bound with cords to the horns of the altar" (Ps. cxviii. 27. Lev. ix. 8, 9.).

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shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts : and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein : and in that day there shall be no more the ^f Canaanite in ^s the house of the LORD of hosts.

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^f Isai. 35. 8.
Joel 3. 17.
Rev. 21. 27.
& 22. 15.
^s Eph. 2. 19,
20, 21, 22.

21. "there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the "Lord." That is: (1) the idolater shall be excluded, and there shall no more be any idols in the Temple. (2) There shall be no more trading of buyers and sellers in the Temple courts (St. John ii. 16.). (3) There shall be no trafficking in things sacred (Acts viii. 18—20. 2 Cor. iv. 2.). Thus in the future centre of Christendom, as at the first (St. Luke xxiv. 52, 53. Acts ii. 46, 47 ; iv. 32.), "the true worshippers "shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth," and being gathered out of all nations (vv. 16, 17.) the Church will have become "one in Christ "Jesus"—"one fold, one shepherd" (St. John x. 14—16 ; xvii. 20—23. Acts ii. 42—47 ; iv. 31, 32. 1 Cor. i. 10. Eph. iv. 1—6.).

MALACHI.

THE Prophet Malachi, the last of the prophets, approaches nearest both in point of time and in character of teaching, to the New Testament. "Where Malachi ends, the Gospel begins." The prophecies concerning John the Baptist unite the Old Testament with the New. And who is the "ministering spirit" appointed to quote this prophet's concluding words? It is the Angel Gabriel, who in his own person and ministry, first to Daniel, then to Zacharias and Mary, connects what to us seems broken and interrupted on earth, by the unbroken and unceasing ministry of heaven. With the closing words of Malachi, prophecy for 400 years ceased and was silent. "Signs" also had ceased; and as "John did no "miracle" (St. John x. 41.), so also, beyond the wonderful mercies and singular bounties of God's providence (Mal. iii. 10.), no miracle is mentioned in Malachi. Now there "was not one prophet more" (Ps. lxxiv. 9.). Then came, after that long interval, "a prophet indeed," "one "greater," and "much more than a prophet" (St. Mark xi. 32. St. Matt. xi. 9. St. Luke vii. 26.). See also on ch. iii. ver. 1.

What the prophets Haggai and Zechariah were to Zerubbabel, such was Malachi in relation to Nehemiah. Accordingly the best commentary (on Malachi) is to be found in the book of Malachi's contemporary, Nehemiah. Compare Nehemiah xiii. 4—14 and 23—31, with Mal. ii. 11—17; iii. 8—10.

As Malachi prophesies of John the Baptist, so he resembles *him*, who "boldly rebuked vice," and hypocrisy, and foretold, as near at hand, the just judgments of God (Mal. ii. 1—3; iii. 1—2; iv. 1, with St. Matt. iii. 7—12. St. Luke. iii. 7—9, 17.). So also both alike denounce the violation of the sacred covenant of marriage (Mal. ii. 10—16; iii. 5, with St. Matt. xiv. 4. St. Mark vi. 17, 18. St. Luke iii. 19.).

We may notice *progress* in what we may consider the three leading prophecies of Christ in these three last prophets. Haggai sees Him as the object of longing "desire to all nations:" Zechariah, as that desire fulfilled, springing up as the dawn and "dayspring," while on Malachi, as a nearest messenger, He shines forth as the rising "sun of righteousness."

MALACHI, I.

CHAPTER I.

Before
CHRIST
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1 *Malachi complaineth of Israel's unkindness. 6 Of their irreligiousness, 12 and profaneness.*

THE burden of the word of the LORD to Israel² by Malachi.

2^a I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet^b I loved Jacob,

² Heb. by the hand of Malachi.

^a Deut. 7. 8. & 10. 15.

^b Rom. 9. 13.

3 and I hated Esau, and^c laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

^c Jer. 49. 18. Ezek. 35. 3. 4. 7, 9, 14, 15. Obad. 10, &c.

4 Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The

CHAPTER I.

1—5. An opening of the prophecy, declaring God's special good-will and love to Israel, as contrasted with Edom, his own twin-brother.

1. Lit. by the hand of Malachi. The prophet then was but as an instrument. So "by the hand of Moses" (Num. xv. 23.); "of Isaiah" (Isa. xx. 2.).

2. "I have loved you, saith the Lord." An abrupt but all-gracious declaration, shewing God's abiding love to His people. The "burden" here is love. Comp. Jer. xxxi. 3. St. John xiii. 1; xvii. 23. Eph. v. 25. As the Saviour loved His disciples (St. John xiii. 1.), and yet loved with a special love St. John among them; so within this love of the people and nation, God has a special love and regard for His city and sanctuary. Comp. Ps. lxxxvii. 2; cxxxii. 13, 14.

"Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us?" The question itself seems to shew an ungrateful spirit. In Malachi man's ingratitude to his Maker is exhibited in all its nakedness. This is the one voice of all men's murmurings, ignoring all God's past and present mercies, in view of the one thing which He withholds, though they dare not put it into words; "wherein hast Thou loved us?" "They made haste, they forgot "His works" (Ps. cvi. 13.).

The whole of this chapter sets forth most vividly and practically the true principle for all Christian people, of right worship, right service, and true mode of offering to God. And we are taught, at the very outset, that all must be based on a loving and grateful sense of His special love to us: "I have loved you, saith the Lord."

3. "And Esau have I hated." For the sin of Esau and his descendants, namely, pride, hatred, revenge, cruelty, carelessness, and profaneness, see Gen. xxv. 29—34; xxvii. 41. Ezek. xxv. 12—14. Jer. xlix. 16. Obad. 10—14.

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border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever.

^d Ps. 35. 27.

² Or, upon.

³ Heb.

from upon.

^e Ex. 20. 12.

^f Luke 6. 46.

^g ch. 2. 14, 17.
& 3, 7, 8, 13.

⁴ Or, *Bring unto, &c.*

^h Deut. 15. 21.

ⁱ Ezek. 41. 22.
ver. 12.

5 And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, ^aThe LORD will be magnified ²³from the border of Israel.

6 ¶ A son ^ehonoureth *his* father, and a servant his master: ^fif then I *be* a father, where *is* mine honour? and if I *be* a master, where *is* my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. ^gAnd ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?

7 ⁴Ye offer ^hpolluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, ⁱThe table of the LORD is contemptible.

4. "border of wickedness." The frontier is put for the territory itself, as being the important portion in regard of neighbouring nations.

5. "from the border of Israel." As from the southern borders, such as Hebron and "all the hill country of Judea," looking towards Edom, Mount Scir, Petra, Esau's country, and contrasted with it. The one a "delightful land," smiling, and fertile, "flowing, oozing forth, as "from udders and from rocks, with milk and honey," the "glory of "all lands;" the other accursed, barren, and a desolation for ever. There may the jackals (fem.), "the dragons of the wilderness," securely breed and rear their young ones.

6. "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master." God was as a father to His people Israel, but still more plainly revealed to Christians as their heavenly Father (Deut. viii. 5. 1 Chron. xxix. 10. Isa. lxiii. 16.). So Christian people are, like Israel, *His* servants for ever, "Whom to serve is perfect freedom." Isa. xlv. 1, 21, and of Christ also; xlix. 3, 5, 6. 1 Cor. vii. 22. 1 St. Pet. ii. 16. Rev. xxii. 3. "Without love," says St. Bernard, "fear hath punishment, and honour hath no grace. And the honour that cometh not from love is not honour, but adulation. And yet to God alone belong all honour and glory: but neither of these will He accept, unless they be seasoned with the honey of love." "A servant, whose service is of pure and filial love, is also a son."

"O priests, that despise my name." Sad indeed, when those who are specially bound to "honour His holy name and His word" despise both.

"And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?" Before (in ver. 2.) it was ignorance of God's love: now it is ignorance of self and of sin. They said to themselves, doubtless, as many do now, "We cannot help it: we do the best we can under the circumstances." Without some knowledge of God's love, there can be no sense of sin; without some sense of sin, no knowledge of His love.

7. "Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar." Lit. "offering." i. e. making a constant practice of it. If taken literally, it would mean

MALACHI, I.

8 And ^kif ye offer the blind ²for sacrifice, *is it* not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, *is it* not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or ¹accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.

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^k Lev. 22. 22.
Deut. 15. 21.
ver. 14.

² Heb. *to sacrifice.*

¹ Job 42. 8.

³ Heb. *the face of God.*

^m Hos. 13. 9.

⁴ Heb. *from your hand.*

9 And now, I pray you, beseech ³God that he will be gracious unto us: ^mthis hath been ⁴by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts.

10 Who *is there* even among you that would shut the doors *for nought*? ⁿneither do ye kindle *fire* on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, ^oneither will I accept an offering at your hand.

ⁿ 1 Cor. 9. 13.

^o Isai. 1. 11.
Jer. 6. 20.
Amos 5. 21.

^p Ps. 113. 3.
Isai. 59. 19.

11 For ^pfrom the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name *shall be great* ^qamong the Gentiles; ^rand in every place ^sincense *shall be* offered unto my name, and a pure offering: ^tfor my name *shall be* great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

^q Isai. 60. 3. 5.

^r John 4. 21,

23.

¹ Tim. 2. 8.

³ Rev. 8. 3.

^t Isai. 66. 19,

20.

that what they offered either as the shew-bread, or more probably the meat-offering, was coarse and inferior in quality. But here the word "bread," as in Lev. xxii. 19—25, seems to include sacrificial victims. And so in Ezek. xli. 22, the altar is called a "table."

8. "And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil?" Or, ye say and think, "There is no harm in it." Such offerings of blemished victims were expressly forbidden (see Deut. xvii. 1; xv. 21.). An earthly prince or governor (even the meek Nehemiah) would justly be offended at such a present. To our queen we would offer our best: how much more to the King of kings, our God. "Perfectness was an essential principle of sacrifice." See Lev. xxii. 19—25. Deut. xv. 21.

9. Ver. 9 seems to follow on to vv. 6—8, as being the prophet's own remonstrance with God's neglectful priests. (1) Beginning perhaps in irony, he implores them to supplicate God very earnestly for pardon and grace, humbly joining himself with them. (2) He reproves them as the cause of this profanation. (3) He warns them, that God will not accept the person of any of them (Acts x. 34. Gal. ii. 6.).

10. "Who is there even among you that would shut the doors (gratuitously), neither would you kindle Mine altar gratuitously?" That is, even the least services you fulfil for lucre and not for love. Avarice is your motive, and not a loving honouring of Me.

11. "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles." A glorious promise and prophecy. See Zeph. ii. 11. Ps. cxiii. 3. In Isa. lix. 19, the Holy Spirit is the mighty agent, by Whom, in spite of all opposition, it shall be accomplished: "When the enemy cometh in as a mighty river or a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him, and

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^u ver. 7.

12 ¶ But ye have profaned it, in that ye say,
^u The table of the LORD *is* polluted; and the fruit thereof, *even* his meat, *is* contemptible.

² Or, where-
as ye might
have bloun
it away.
^x Lev. 22. 20,
&c.

13 Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness *is* it!
² and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts;
and ye brought *that which was* torn, and the lame,
and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: ^x should
I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD.

^y ver. 8.

³ Or,
in whose
flock *is*.

^z Ps. 47. 2.

¹ Tim. 6. 15.

14 But cursed *be* ^y the deceiver, ³ which hath in
his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto
the Lord a corrupt thing: for ^z I *am* a great King,
saith the LORD of hosts, and my name *is* dreadful
among the heathen.

“puts him to flight.” By “incense” is typified (1) prayer, (2) intercession, (3) thanksgiving and praise. The “pure offering” signifies not only the *minchah* itself, i. e. the wheat-grain, or flour, or bread-offering, mixed with oil; it also includes the victim, the lamb of the daily morning and evening sacrifice, with which it was connected. See Exod. xxix. 38—46, which shews that all special intercourse and communion between God and His priests and His people was based upon that constant sacrifice. In the Christian Church it may justly be understood of the bread and wine in the holy Supper of the Lamb Christ Jesus, our paschal and continually abiding sacrifice, including also the offerings, “the alms and “oblations” of Christ’s people offered therewith. All these should be a “pure offering” by priest and people, having “their hearts purified by “faith” and love in Christ (Acts xv. 8, 9).

12. “The table of the Lord” appears to be His altar, and its “fruit” the victims offered upon it. See above on ver. 7, and compare also vv. 13, 14, where no meat offerings are mentioned. The word rendered “fruit” occurs only here and in Isa. lvii. 19. Zech. ix. 17.

13, 14. These reproofs seem to be addressed to the people as well as the priests.

14. “cursed be the deceiver.” The fraudulent person, who whilst he attempts to defraud God, becomes a self-deceiver and hypocrite. God requires of us only what we have and can give (2 Cor. viii. 12; ix. 7.). “The deceiver” or “hypocrite,” thinks to serve God “cheaply,” as if anything were good enough to offer to Him, Who is the “great King,” and Whose “name is “feared among the nations;” upon *him* falls the just curse from that God, Who “is not mocked,” but “will honour those “who honour Him” (Gal. vi. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 30.). The service of God is its own reward. If not, it becomes a greater toil with less reward from this earth than the things of this earth. There is no choice between love and weariness.

“My name is dreadful among the heathen.” Such fear appears in the past history of Israel (see Josh. ii. 9—11. 1 Sam. v. 1 Kings viii. 41—43. Dan. iii. 29; vi. 25—27.), and was to be manifested yet more in the call of the Gentiles in the New Testament (Acts x. 34, 35; xi. 18. Rev. xv. 3, 4.).

MALACHI, II.

CHAPTER II.

Before
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1 *He sharply reproveth the priests for neglecting their covenant, 11 and the people for idolatry, 14 for adultery, 17 and for infidelity.*

AND now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you.

2 "If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.

^a Lev. 26. 14, &c.
^b Deut. 28. 15, &c.

3 Behold, I will ² corrupt your seed, and ³ spread dung upon your faces, *even* the dung of your solemn feasts; and ⁴ one shall ^b take you away with it.

² Or, *reprove.*
³ Heb. *scatter.*
⁴ Or, *it shall take you away to it.*
^b 1 Kin. 14. 10.

CHAPTER II.

Containing (1) reproof of the priests for their profaneness, contrasting with the good early example of Levi; (2) of the people generally for unfaithfulness, wantonness, and unkindness in marriage.

1. From reprovng the people, he now turns to their teachers and spiritual guides (vv. 1—9.).

2. "to give glory unto my name." All God's servants are bound to glorify Him, and specially those whom He has called to serve Him in the ministry of His House and Church, His Word and Sacraments. We do not "lay this to heart," unless we make it our first thought, our constant endeavour.

The "curse," whether temporal or spiritual; *all* is implied and both by "the curse." Comp. Ps. lxxix. 22—28; cix. 6—20, and specially vv. 17, 18. It has been truly said: "Whatever of the things of this world we receive not from God, we receive from Satan." No wonder, then, if our blessings become a curse. Scriptures, Sacraments, sermons, Sundays,—all have a double edge; if used well, they lead men on to heaven; but, if despised or misused, they aggravate men's sin, and increase their condemnation. We need not here understand the blessing of Aaron (Num. vi. 22—27.) bestowed on Israel, but rather the priests' personal prosperity and blessing.

3. "Behold, I will corrupt your seed." For "seed" some would render "arm" or "shoulder." If "arm," it agrees with Zech. xi. 17: if "shoulder," it is illustrated by Lev. vii. 32—34. If, as is most probable, "seed" be the right rendering, we may compare Deut. xxviii. 38. The seed is "corrupted," or literally, "rebuked;" for if God "rebukes" the seed we sow, it must needs be marred, and corrupted. Because of the avarice and gluttony connected with their irreverence, God's priests become vile as the very dung of their sacrifices, and they are not only covered with this refuse, but "taken away with it."

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4 And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

c Num. 25. 12.
Ezek. 34. 25.
& 37. 26.
d Deut. 33. 8, 9.

5 ° My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him ^dfor the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.

e Deut. 33. 10.

6 ° The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with

Comp. 1 Kings xiv. 10. See also Lev. viii. 17. The disgrace is enhanced by the description of the privileges of Levi in vv. 4—6. "As are the offerings, so shall it be with the offerers."

4—7. A beautiful description of Levi, as a pattern at that time to the Jewish priest, and now to the priest and minister and teacher in Christ's Church. Phinehas's zeal for God and against sin was the occasion for God's renewed covenant, although forfeited afterwards in the case of another Phinehas with Hoplmi his brother, the two sons of Eli (Num. xxv. 6—13. 1 Sam. ii. 27—36.). Levi, on the other hand, reclaims his character, and wins a blessing. See Gen. xlix. 5—7. Exod. xxxii. 26—29. Deut. xxxiii. 8—11.

5. "life and peace," in their fulness, are also the covenanted blessings of the New Testament; "life" to be had more abundantly, and "peace" of God, surpassing all understanding" (St. John x. 10; iv. 10; xiv. 27; xvi. 33. Phil. iv. 7. Col. iii. 15.).

"fear" is here not the common word for fear, and seems to imply almost "the reward of fear:" and he is said to have been "afraid" by shewing the deepest and most humble reverence. Such fear was enjoined in the Saviour's thrice repeated precept to "His friends" (St. Luke xii. 5. Also Ps. xxi. 10; also lx. 4; and cxix. 12, 13, 29, 43, 44, 46, 108, 142, 163, 171, 172; cxxviii. 1, 4. Prov. i. 7. Eccles. xii. 13. Rev. xix. 5.). Note: those who, like Phinehas, are most abased before God, will be boldest before men.

6. "The law of truth was in his mouth." That is, the law of God's truth was faithfully, fearlessly set forth and expounded by him, God "the lawgiver, who is really the Law," guiding and teaching His servant. See Deut. xvii. 8—13, and comp. Eph. vi. 19. 2 Cor. iii. 12. St. Matt. x. 27. Acts xviii. 9—11. (The verb here is emphatic, "was" abidingly and continually.) "To teach the law was part of the office "both of priest and Levite." See Lev. x. 8—11. Deut. xxiv. 8; xxxiii. 10.

"and iniquity was not found in his lips." That is, especially any perverting of the truth (1) by falsehood (Jer. xxviii. xxix. 9, 20—23.); (2) by imperfect statements of God's truth (Acts xx. 27.); (3) by any erroneous doctrine (1 Tim. vi. 20, 21. 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18.); (4) by flattery (1 Kings xxii. 10, 11—14. Isa. xxx. 10.); (5) by hypocrisy (St. Matt. xxiii. 13—33.); (6) by harshness and severity (St. Matt. xxiii. 4. St. Luke xi. 46. St. John vii. 49.); and (7) by want of sympathy for the poor and heart-broken (Ezek. xiii. 22. 1 Sam. i. 12—18.). Compare Jer. i. 17—19. Acts xx. 26, 27. Meekness on the other hand is the character of Christ our great High-priest (Isa. liii. 9. 1 St. Pet. ii. 22.), and of His people (Rev. xiv. 5.).

"he walked with me in peace and equity." Levi, then, like Enoch

me in peace and equity, and did ^r turn many away from iniquity.

7 ^g For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: ^h for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

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^r Jer. 23. 22.

Jan. 5. 20.

^g Lev. 10. 11.

Deut. 17. 9.

10. & 24. 8.

^h Gal. 4. 14.

Ezra 7. 10. Jer. 18. 8. Hag. 2. 11, 12.

and Noah, "walked with God:" he "knew the way of peace," and was a "peace-maker," and a lover not only of justice, but "equity." For "equity" acts according to the "spirit" of God's law, rather than "the letter which killeth." "These brief words comprise the duties of "both Tables." Note: if by constant communion with God in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, we "walk with God," He will walk with us (St. Luke xxiv. 15.), and we shall know and have peace, and act in "equity," and teach accordingly.

"and did turn many from iniquity." This is distinctly promised (Jer. xxiii. 18, 22.) to such of God's prophets as "stand" waiting and continuing "in God's secret counsel." See the whole passage (Jer. xxiii. 9—32.), especially the contrast in vv. 14, 16, 17, 32. Of how few comparatively can it even now be said of Christ's many ministers, that they succeed in the conversion of lost souls to Christ, and, like Levi, "turn many from iniquity." So St. Chrysostom complains: "Our priests are many and yet few: many in name, few in work;" few who "persuade and turn away." Acts xix. 26. St. James v. 19, 20. Dan. xii. 3.

7. "For the lips of the priest should keep knowledge." They should not only retain, but be as a treasure-house of the knowledge of the Most High. The priest must "promote the Christian knowledge" of which he is the keeper and steward. Hence the incalculable importance of every word from the lips of Christ's ministers. Hence St. Bernard: "Words that are mere trifling in the lips of the laity, are blasphemies in the mouth of the priest. Thou hast consecrated thy mouth to Christ's Gospel. To open thy mouth to such remarks is a thing forbidden, to accustom thy lips to such words is sacrilege." Note, the prophets also of Jerusalem are condemned for this same sin (Zeph. iii. 4.). "Her prophets are light" = of frothy conversation, trifling and frivolous. "The lips" then "of the priest should "keep" the rich treasure of "knowledge"—knowledge (1) of God and His Law—knowledge (2) of themselves—knowledge (3) of mankind—knowledge (4) of sin, of its unutterable hatefulness, and its fearful dangerousness—knowledge (5) of faith, hope, love—knowledge (6) of holiness and its unspeakable loveliness, as set forth in the Person and Self-sacrifice of our great High-priest, Christ Jesus, the Deacon and Minister of God's truth in the New Testament, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls (Rom. xv. 8. 1 St. Pet. ii. 25. Heb. xiii. 20.).

"and they should seek the law at his mouth." That is, they both *should* do so and are *wont* to do so. From the mouth of God's priest they look for the words of God's law (Deut. xxxiii. 9, 10.). So will his mouth "be exercised in wisdom" and "his lips feed many," and he himself shall "by his words" be not "condemned" but "justified" (Ps. xxxvii. 30, 31. Prov. x. 21. St. Matt. xii. 35—37. St. Luke vi. 45.). Note: It is the duty and privilege of Christian laity to seek from Christian clergy the true meaning of Holy Scripture,

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ⁱ 1 Sam. 2. 17.

Jer. 18. 15.

² Or, *fall in
the law.*

^k Neh. 13. 29.

^l 1 Sam. 2. 30.

^o Or, *lifted
up the face
against.*

⁴ Heb.
accepted faces.

8 But ye are departed out of the way; ye ^l have caused many to ² stumble at the law; ^k ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

9 Therefore ^l have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but ^{3 4} have been partial in the law.

and to *them* by the Holy Ghost in answer to prayer such knowledge of the Word will be given, as shall be most profitable to both teacher and taught.

“for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.” That is, sent by Him with a distinct message to deliver, and sent in order to certain definite work to be done in His name and under His authority. The word here used, probably, as in ch. iii. 1, contains an allusion to Malachi’s own name, my Angel-messenger. To realize that we are sent by God is our encouragement to work any work for God. Prophets, priests, Apostles, evangelists, the prophets of the New Testament, bishops, priests, and deacons, Scripture-readers, Bible-women, deaconesses, all are in various ways God’s messengers. In the work of God they class with “ministering angels” (Heb. i. 14). And the title chiefly belongs to those who are foremost in authority and responsibility, the Angel-messengers of His Churches, to those who “preside” as bishops, and as having oversight thereof, are as “stars in the right hand” of “Christ” in glory. There is a portion of like honour to all religious teachers, while delivering Christian instruction to their pupils and scholars. With the Bible and Book of God’s Law in their hands and hearts, they too are “Angel-messengers of the Lord of hosts.”

8, 9. “But ye are departed out of the way.” Four classes of offences are laid to the charge of the priests: (1) Turning aside from the right pathway, whether of truth or holiness; (2) becoming thus a stumbling-block to others, and hindering their keeping God’s law; (3) marring and breaking God’s covenant with Levi; (4) regard of persons instead of impartiality in applying God’s law. Comp. Jer. v. 31; xxiii. 11. Ezek. xlv. 12. Zeph. iii. 4. Also see St. Matt. xv. 12—14; xviii. 7; xxiii. 13, 16—22. We might paraphrase, or more exactly render ver. 9, “And so too have I caused *you* to be despised, and to hold a low position in the estimation of every one, in that ye are neither keeping My ways, nor acting without respect of persons in applying God’s law.” Note: If Christ’s ministers magnify and honour God in their office, Christ’s people will highly honour them in their office (1 Thess. v. 12, 13.).

10—17. From reproving the priests, the prophet appears now to turn to the people. Yet the priests were by no means clear from the sins connected with marriage which are here condemned (see Neh. xiii. 23, 28.). (1) Both priests and people had married idolaters in defiance of God’s precept (Exod. xxxiv. 12—16. Deut. vii. 2—4.) and of the warning to be derived from the history of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 1—10. Neh. xiii. 26.). (2) Another sin seems to have been cruel and unkind

MALACHI, II.

10 ¶ ^mHave we not all one father? ⁿhath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?

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^m 1 Cor. 8. 6.
Eph. 4. 6.
ⁿ Job 31. 15.

11 Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he ²loved, ^aand hath married the daughter of a strange god.

² Or, *ought to love.*

^a Ezra 9. 1.
& 10. 2.
Neh. 13. 23.

³ Or, *him that awaketh, and him that answereth.*

12 The LORD will cut off the man that doeth this, ³the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles

treatment of those whom they had married (ver. 13.). (3) Needless and unjustifiable divorce (ver. 16.). As in our Saviour's days, so here in Malachi's, slight pretences seem to have been employed for obtaining divorce, instead of the one and only sufficient ground, namely, adultery. See St. Matt. xix. 3—9. St. Mark x. 2—9, 10—12.

10. "Have we not all one father?" That is, as plainly appears from the next clause, not Adam or Abraham, but God. And the motive is: "We are therefore, as being all alike His children, all one family, "one brotherhood." Not unfrequently is this gracious title, which is *ours* now for constant use in the Lord's Prayer, anticipated in the Old Testament. See Deut. xxxii. 6. 1 Chron. xxix. 10. Isa. lxiii. 16. Jer. xxxi. 9. Ps. lxxxix. 26, prayer, Jer. iii. 4.

"profaning the covenant of our fathers." The covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as renewed by the hand of Moses 400 years after, contained the Ten Commandments. Amongst these was the Divine law, hallowing marriage and saying: "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

11. With other accenting we might render the latter part, "in that he hath loved and become husband to the daughter of a strange god." See Ezra ix. 1, 2, 10—15, and x. throughout. Also Neh. xiii. 23—30. But a higher and holier meaning is found, as it stands: As "the righteous Lord loveth righteousness" (Ps. xi. 7.), so a holy God loveth holiness. Comp. Ps. xxxiii. 5; xlv. 7.

"The Lord is holy, perfect holiness; His name holy; all things relating to Him, holy; His law, covenant, and all His ordinances and institutions, holy; so that whosoever despises any of these 'profanes' the holiness which He loves."

12. "master and the scholar." Lit. "him that awakeneth and him that answereth." So also Christ Himself speaking of His own instruction and teaching from God the Father: "He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as those that are instructed" (Isa. l. 4.). The guilt of teachers and those who are taught by them, is frequently connected together (comp. Ezek. xiv. 10. Isa. ix. 13—16. St. Matt. xv. 14.). The expression used here for "master and scholar" points forcibly to catechetical instruction. Such teaching rightly exercised *awakens* the thoughts both of answerers and hearers. It had the sanction of the wisest among the heathen as Socrates and Plato. It was the custom and practice

B. fore
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^p Neh. 13.
28, 29.

of Jacob, ^p and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts.

13 And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth *it* with good will at your hand.

^q Prov. 5. 18.

14 Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and ^q the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: ^r yet *is* she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.

^r Prov. 2. 17.

^s Mat. 19. 4, 5.

² Or,
excellency.

15 And ^s did not he make one? Yet had he the ² residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That

of the Jewish Church, and was submitted to by our Lord Himself, who sat as a "scholar," in the midst of the Jewish teachers (St. Luke ii. 46, 47, 49.). Catechetical "instruction" was imparted to Theophilus (St. Luke i. 4.). Our Lord Himself often taught by means of questions. St. Matt. xi. 7—9; xvi. 13; xvii. 25; xix. 17; xx. 22; xxi. 24, 25, 31, 40. St. Mark viii. 19, 20, 27; xii. 35—37. St. Luke vii. 41—43; ix. 18—20; x. 36; xx. 3, 4. St. John vi. 5, 6; ix. 35; xxi. 15—17.

"him that offereth an offering." As Jeshua's sons and family (Ezra x. 18, 19.).

13. "covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying." That is, probably, with the tears of their lawful wives (vv. 14—16.), coming thither to weep before God, or with the tears of their children, wronged by the alien-marriages of their fathers. Contrast ch. iv. 6.

14. "Yet ye say, Wherefore?" Again they assume to be innocent or half-ignorant.

"yet is she thy companion." She is "a partaker with thee," and a partner joined with thee in closest companionship, one with one, according to God's covenant and "holy ordinance, till death do part." So then, however man may regard such divorces, God may and does regard the bond indissoluble.

15. "And did not he make one?" "For did not God in the beginning make one and one only—one pair of mankind—one wife for one man, and one man for one wife? Yet, had He so pleased, He could have made more, for with Him was "the residue of the spirit" of life wherewith to make others, beside that portion of spirit which He imparted to Adam. But He was pleased to make one only,—one Eve for one Adam,—one wife for one husband, as conducing most to "holiness whether in themselves or still more in their offspring." See Gen. ii. 18—24. St. Matt. xix. 3—9. St. Mark x. 2—12. 1 Cor. vii. 2, as shewing that polygamy is a violation of the Creator's appointment. Experience also shews how evil and jealousy arise where the husband has more wives than one. Gen. xxx. 1. 1 Sam. i. 4, 6—8. Deut. xvii. 17. 1 Kings xi. 1—9.

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he might seek ² a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal ³ treacherously against the wife of his youth.

16 For ^u the LORD, the God of Israel, saith ⁴ that he hateth ⁵ putting away: for *one* covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

17 ^x Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied *him*? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil *is* good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where *is* the God of judgment?

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² Heb. a
seed of God.

³ Ezra 9. 2.

⁴ 1 Cor. 7. 14.

⁵ Or, un-
faithfully.

^u Deut. 24. 1.

^x Matt. 5. 32.
& 19. 8.

⁴ Or, if he
hate her, put
her away.

⁵ Heb. to
put away.

^x Isai. 43. 24.

Amos 2. 13.
ch. 3. 13, 14,
15.

“a godly seed,” “a seed of God,” i. e. worthy of God; not a mere “seed” or numerous posterity, as the LXX. read it.

“Therefore take heed to your spirit;” for you received that spirit from God, for your covenanted wife’s good.

“wife of thy youth.” Young herself, and thou thyself young likewise, when thou tookest her to wife, and therefore deserving all the more sympathy and kindness from thee.

16. The order and perhaps literal rendering is thus: “For he hateth divorce, saith the Lord God of Israel, and (He hateth when) one covereth violence with his garment.” But this hiding of the wrong done to his wife in secret, although cloaked and covered over as with a garment, is seen and noticed by God. The expression “violence” seems to signify distinct acts of violence and cruelty, and not the act of divorce only. “Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them” (Col. iii. 19. 1 St. Pet. iii. 7.).

17. “Where is the God of judgment?” “That is, of that judgment, the most exact, clear-sighted, omniscient, most just, most free, wherein He regards neither the power of the mighty nor the gifts of the wealthy, nor aught but justice.”

This is connected with ch. iii. 1—6. When men complain that the ungodly prosper as if their ways were well-pleasing to Him, and ask “Where is the God of judgment?” then He speaks of a messenger coming to judgment and of Himself as a “swift witness” against them (ver. 5.). See Ps. lxxiii. 16—20. Hab. i. 2—4, 12, 13; ii. 1—6.

CHAPTERS III, IV.

These two concluding chapters are most closely connected, and in the Hebrew are *one*. We may divide them into six portions. (I.—IV.) Chs. iii. 1—6, 16—18; iv. 1—3, 5, 6: Predictions of the coming of Christ’s messenger and fore-runner, and also of the coming of Christ Himself to judgment. (V.) Chs. iii. 7—15: Reproof of the Jewish people for (1) disobedience to God’s law; (2) sacrilege, and taking for their own use that which belonged to God and His priests; and (3) desponding unbelief instead of cheerful trust in God. (VI.) Ch. iv. 4,

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CHAPTER III.

1 *Of the messenger, majesty, and grace of Christ.* 7 *Of the rebellion, 8 sacrilege, 13 and infidelity of the people.* 16 *The promise of blessing to them that fear God.*

- ^a Matt. 11. 10.
^b Mark 1. 2.
^c Luke 1. 76.
& 7. 27.
^d Isai. 40. 3.
^e Isai. 63. 9.
^f Hag. 2. 7.

BEHOOLD, ^aI will send my messenger, and he shall ^bprepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, ^ceven the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, ^dhe shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

a brief exhortation to continue to observe the law of Moses, God's servant. In this whole passage our special attention is called forth *thrice* by the word "Behold;" (1) to call us to note the sending of Christ's messenger and the coming of Christ (ver. 1.); (2) the coming of the judgment-day (ch. iv. 1.); and (3) the sending of Elijah before that great day (ver. 5.). These three, then, are the closing warnings of the Old Testament voice of prophecy, and they are in full force still. Having been once accomplished in part, they appear to wait their full accomplishment at the "time of the end" (Dan. xii. 4, 9.), at the coming of the great day, the notable and terrible day of the Lord (Acts ii. 20.).

1. "Behold, I will send my messenger." Although Malachi's own name is "My Messenger," and the same word is "Angel," yet here we have a prophecy of him who was "a burning and a shining light" (St. John v. 35.), whose life was heavenly and angelic, as "his baptism was from heaven." John the Baptist was, by our Lord's own testimony, not only a prophet, but "more than a prophet." Of *him* not only Malachi, but also Isaiah (ch. xl. 3.) and perhaps Micah also (ch. ii. 13.) prophesied. How he "prepared the pathway" before the coming Saviour we see both in his preaching and teaching, and in the fact that our Lord's first disciples had been *his* disciples (see St. John i. 35—37.).

"the Lord, whom ye seek." Note here the change of the person speaking: the scoffers and murmurers' questionings (ch. ii. 17.) now begin to be most solemnly answered (ch. iii. 1—6.).

"shall suddenly come to his temple." How or when can Christ have been said to come "suddenly?" Though Simeon and Anna and some few in Jerusalem were looking for Him and for redemption through Him, to the people generally He came "suddenly;" they were unprepared for Him.

But the prophecy is not yet exhausted: there may be yet another material Temple to be built (Ezek. xl.—xlii.): and a still more sudden coming to the spiritual Temple certainly yet remains: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth" (Rev. xvi. 15. Comp. also St. Luke xxi. 34, 35. St. Mark xiii. 36, and Rev. iii. 3.).

"the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in." Christ was sent by the Father (St. John xx. 21. 1 St. John iv. 14.) and is "the Apostle of our profession" (Heb. iii. 1.). There may be in some Christians only a carnal delight in Christ, just as some Israelites "desired the day of the Lord," to whom, notwithstanding, that day would be "darkness and not light" (Amos vi. 18—20.). Comp. Isa. xlvi. 1, 2;

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2 But who may abide ° the day of his coming? and † who shall stand when he appeareth? for ‡ he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' sope :

3 and † he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may † offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

4 Then † shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in † former years.

5 And I will come near to you to judgment; and

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e ch. 4. 1.

f Rev. 6. 17.

g See Is. 4. 4.

Matt. 3. 10,

11, 12.

h Isai. 1. 25.

Zech. 13. 9.

i 1 Pet. 2. 5.

k ch. 1. 11.

2 Or, ancient.

lviii. 2. Again, others "delight in" Him with spiritual delight (Phil. iii. 3; iv. 4. 1 St. Pet. i. 8.).

2, 3. "But who may abide the day of His coming?" The trial and testing is like the fierce action of the "refiner's fire," which few things can endure. Who shall stand when He is openly seen? when He manifests Himself in that glorious epiphany to "every eye." Fire often denotes the searching and purifying power of God's judgment (Isa. i. 25. Job xxiii. 10. Ps. lxxvi. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. 1 St. Pet. i. 7. Rev. iii. 18.).

"like fullers' sope." Probably some purifying plant or herb with strong alkaline properties used by the washers of garments to take out spots, or a mixture of ashes, with chalk or sulphur. The word implies purity. Comp. Ps. cxxxii. 16. Gal. iii. 27. Rev. vii. 14; xix. 13, 14. The gentler comparison seems to come last. For "mercy rejoiceth against judgment" (St. Jas. ii. 13. Hab. iii. 2. Ps. ci. 1.).

3. "he shall purify the sons of Levi." Christ's Church cannot be purified while His ministers are still impure: His first care therefore is about them. Neither must they be as the baser metals and materials, as lead, tin, iron, or wood, but as "gold and silver," when those precious metals, by the melting fire and by the refiner's careful watching, are purified and reflect as in a glass or molten mirror the features and countenance of the Heavenly Refiner (Prov. xvii. 3.). "How careful should Bishops and their examiners be as to whom they admit to Holy Orders, that so the people may have not tin or iron or wooden priests, but golden priests: since upon its priests depends the whole discipline, life, and sanctity of the Church" (*a Lapide*).

4. As once the offering of Abel, being one, as afterwards that of Noah together with his family, so now shall "the offering" (a bloodless offering is here specified) of a whole nation and city be as "a sweet smelling savour" and "pleasing" to God. Blessed effect of the foregoing "fiery trial," and of the "heavenly washing" of Him, Who washeth "so as no fuller on earth can whiten" (Ps. li. 7. Rev. i. 5.).

5. At present, under many circumstances (see Ps. x. 1; lxxiii. 3—12. Jer. xii. 1, 2. Hab. i. 2—4.), "the God of judgment" seems to "stand afar off;" but in the end "we believe that Thou, O Christ, shalt come to be our Judge." Then, as there shall be no delay (St. Matt. xxiv. 48. 2 St. Pet. iii. 9.), so there shall be no escape (St. Luke xxi. 35. 1 Thess. v. 3.). The Judge no sooner comes than the judgment proceeds: for, besides conscience, Satan, and our fellow-men and angels, the

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¹ Zech. 5. 4.
Jam. 5. 4, 12.

² Or,
defraud.

^m Num. 23. 19.
Rom. 11. 29.

Jam. 1. 17.
ⁿ Lam. 3. 22.

^o Acts 7. 51.

^p Zech. 1. 3.

^q ch. 1. 6.

^r Neh. 13. 10,
12.

I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, ¹ and against false swearers, and against those that ² oppress the hireling in *his* wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger *from his right*, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.

6 For I *am* the LORD, ^m I change not; ⁿ therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

7 ¶ Even from the days of ^o your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept *them*. ^p Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. ^q But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

8 ¶ Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? ^r In tithes and offerings.

Judge will Himself be "a swift witness," (Rev. iii. 14.). As the "Refiner," so the Judge "sitteth," carefully watching the effect of His purifying judgments.

"against the sorcerers." These are first judged, as usurping to themselves, through the agency of evil spirits, that power and knowledge which belongs to God alone. Of the six or seven sins against God and man here enumerated the root is *unbelief*: for the fear of the Lord implies faith in Him, and "they fear not Me, saith the Lord of hosts." "The 'widow' and the 'fatherless' stand in a relation of special nearness to God." See Deut. xxiv. 19—21; x. 18; xxvii. 19. Jer. xlix. 11. Job xxix. 11—13. Ps. x. 14, and cxlvi. 9; lxxviii. 5.

6. "For I am the Lord, I change not," &c. Lit. "For I the Lord have not changed, and ye, O children of Israel, have not been consumed." God, being in Himself all-perfect, changes not: and His covenant an "everlasting covenant" (2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Ps. lxxxix. 34—39.) in Christ Jesus, Who "is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8. Rev. i. 8.). Holy men change not when they imitate the steadfastness of God by persevering in His love.

7. An unrepentant nation needs a continual call to repent: "Return unto Me, . . . saith the Lord of hosts." Such was the teaching of God's prophets from the beginning, and such the preaching of our Lord Himself, His twelve Apostles, and St. Paul. Isa. i. 16, 17. Jer. iii. 1, 7, 10, 12, 14, 22. Ezek. xviii. 30—32. Hos. vi. 1—3. Joel ii. 12. Zech. i. 3, 4. St. Matt. iv. 17. St. Mark vi. 12. Acts xxvi. 20. Such too is the daily teaching of the Church in her services.

8—12. God is wronged and "robbed" by the robbing and defrauding His priests of their due maintenance. In this case we find that the Temple-storehouses being left empty or wrongly occupied (Neh. xiii. 4, 5.), the Temple-services were neglected: "The Levites and singers which did that work, were fled each one to his own 'field'" (Neh. xiii. 10—13.). The insufficient maintenance of Christ's ministers is a dis-

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9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, *even* this whole nation.

10 ^sBring ye all the tithes into ^tthe storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the ^uwindows of heaven, and ^{2x}pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

11 And I will rebuke ^vthe devourer for your sakes, and he shall not ³destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be ^za delightful land, saith the LORD of ^zhosts.

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^sProv. 3. 9, 10.

^t1 Chr. 26. 20.

²Chr. 31. 11.

Neh. 10. 38.

& 13. 12.

^uGen. 7. 11.

²Kin. 7. 2.

²Heb.

empty out.

^{x2}Chr. 31. 10.

^yAmos 4. 9.

³Heb.

corrupt.

honouring and defrauding Christ their master. The word translated "rob" is a rare word, and implies the withholding what is right, whether in measure or in quality. Before (see ch. i. 7, 8, 12—14.), what they offered was bad in quality. Here, it is deficient in quantity.

10. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat (= both meat and bread) in mine house." Twice God says: "ye are robbing Me" (vv. 8, 9.), for it was the sin of the whole nation. But, after this, on Nehemiah's remonstrance, aided by Malachi, the tithes of the corn and new wine and oil were brought into the treasury. And "all Judah" combined in this act of repentance by providing for the due maintenance of His ministering servants (Neh. xiii. 12.). See Introduction to the Book of Nehemiah.

"open you the windows of heaven." At the Flood "the windows of heaven were opened" in wrath (Gen. vii. 11.): here God promises to open them in *mercy*.

"And I will empty out to you a blessing until there be not enough." Enough hands to gather it in, or enough room in the storehouses to contain it. So the widow's oil flowed on until "there was not a vessel more" (2 Kings iv. 3—6.). Heaven, even "the heaven of heavens," emptied all its richest store and choicest blessing upon this barren earth, when Christ "emptied Himself" of all His infinite glory with the Father, and became man (Phil. ii. 6—8.). So must we empty our hearts of sin, that we may receive Christ and His blessed Spirit.

11. "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes." That is, either any kind of locust or caterpillar, whose life seems almost a constant "devouring." Comp. Exod. x. 5, 15. Joel i. 4; ii. 3. Amos vii. 2. "They made an end of the grass of the land by devouring." The ravages of the locusts fulfilled God's sentence of wrath: but the power of the creature to hurt or destroy was controlled by the Creator, and His mercy restrained them for man's sake.

12. "a delightful land." It was a pleasant and truly desirable land, because it was (1) such as others might wish to possess; and (2) such as to the rightful possessors is a joy and delight; and (3) such

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^a ch. 2. 17.

^b Job 21. 14,
15, & 22. 17.
Ps. 73. 13.
Zeph. 1. 12.

² Heb. *his*
observation.

³ Heb.
in black.

^c Ps. 73. 12.
ch. 2. 17.

⁴ Heb.
are built.

^d Pa. 95. 9.

^e Ps. 66. 16.
ch. 4. 2.

^f Heb. 3. 13.

13 ¶ ^aYour words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken *so much* against thee?

14 ^bYe have said, It *is* vain to serve God: and what profit *is it* that we have kept ²his ordinance, and that we have walked ³mournfully before the LORD of hosts?

15 And now ^cwe call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness ⁴are set up; yea, *they that* ^dtempt God are even delivered.

16 ¶ Then they ^ethat feared the LORD ^fspake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened,

as God and Christ its King vouchsafes to delight in. See Exod. iii. 8. Num. xiii. 27. Deut. viii. 7—9. Neh. ix. 25. Isa. lxii. 4. Jer. iii. 19. Ezek. xx. 6, 15. Dan. i. 16, 41. Above all, it is “delightful,” because it is “Thy land, O Immanuel” (Isa. viii. 8.). The work of our redemption wrought out and accomplished thereon continues to give to that country alone an *interest* and *delight* (the word implies both) to the Christian beyond all others,

“Over whose acres walked those blessed feet,
“Which eighteen hundred years ago were nailed,
“For our advantage, to the bitter cross.”

Yet it is the people here rather than the land that is praised: “Ye shall “be a delightful land.”

13. “Your words have been stout against me.” Bold, irreverent, and insolent. Lit. “Ye have made your words strong;” shewing that our words are viewed by God as if they were *actions*. Their counter-reply is: “What have we spoken so much” (or been in the habit of speaking) “against thee?” God’s answer is plain: Their words, and so their thoughts also, had been to this effect, that their religion did them no good, that the ungodly were quite as well off or better than they. They make three statements about their own religion: (1) that they had served, not idols, but God; (2) that they had not neglected but kept what He had charged them to keep; and (3) that they had “walked “in sadness before Him,” having the marks and mien and manner of such as constantly humble themselves before God. On the other hand, what were their views and feelings as regards the ungodly? “And now,” since we gain nothing by our religion, “we (1) call the proud happy, “we see that (2) even open evil-doers are ‘built up’ and prosper, and “(3) even those, who by daring sins tempt God, escape unpunished.” Even Job (ch. xii. 6; xxi. 7—13; xxiv. 1—12.), Asaph (Ps. lxxiii. 1—13.), Jeremiah (ch. xii. 1, 2.), and Habakkuk (ch. i. 4, 13.) were perplexed by God’s dealings with men. But they correct themselves. See Job xxi. 17—20; xxvii. 8—23. Ps. lxxiii. 16—20. Jer. xii. 3. Hab. i. 12. The end constrains them to own God to be just. How much more when the light afflictions of this world are balanced against the hope of eternal life! See 1 Cor. xv. 19, 30—32, 54—57. Heb. xi. 24—26.

16. “Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.”

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and heard *it*, and ^s a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

17 And ^h they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my ²ⁱ jewels; and ^k I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

18 ^l Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

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^f Ps. 56. 8.
Isai. 65. 6.
Rev. 20. 12.

^h Ex. 19. 5.
Deut. 7. 6.
Ps. 135. 4.
Tit. 2. 14.
1 Pet. 2. 9.

² Or, *special treasure.*

^l Isai. 62. 3.
^k Ps. 103. 13.
^l Ps. 58. 11.

What these persons, who probably were few against many, *said* one to another we may gather from their *thoughts*: they "thought upon the "name" of that Lord, Whom their hearts reverentially feared; "the "proud speaking of the ungodly called forth the piety of the God-fearing;" their "speech" was "with grace." They took frequent opportunity by conversing one with another to help each other's faith. Such ought communicants' meetings to be; namely, the "speaking often one to another" of such as "fear the Lord," who also reverentially "loving our "Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," have peace in Him (Eph. vi. 24.). The "talk of the lips, tendeth only to penury" (Prov. xiv. 23.), but such communications will issue in more hearty "service" of God (ver. 18.).

"a book of remembrance was written." The writing of this recording book is an answer to the "stout words" complained of by God (ver. 13.), and specified in vv. 14, 15. "Not one pious loyal word "for Him and His glory escaped Him." The wicked may not be immediately punished, but they shall certainly be punished. The shade ever follows our bodies, and punishment ever follows sin, though that shadow may seem sometimes to be indefinitely lengthened. The righteous may not be rewarded immediately, but they shall assuredly be rewarded. As our blessed Saviour says of the little birds of heaven, "not one of them is forgotten before God;" so and much more on behalf of His people, and with their names and deeds therein, "a book of "remembrance is written before Him." On the "book of life," see Ps. lxix. 28. St. Luke x. 20. Phil. iv. 3. Rev. xx. 12.

17. "And they shall be mine," &c. All blessings in heaven and earth are included, when it is said and promised that man shall be his Maker's, and his Maker be his God. Comp. Exod. xix. 4—6. Deut. xxxii. 8—14. Cant. ii. 16; vi. 3; vii. 10. Isa. xliiii. 1. Jer. xxiv. 7; xxx. 22; xxxi. 1, 33. Ezek. xi. 19, 20; xiv. 11; xxxvi. 25—28; xxxvii. 21—28. Ps. cxliv. 15. Compare also 1 Cor. iii. 21, 23: "All things "are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

"and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that "serveth him." God will have compassion and tender sympathy for them, as a father towards a dutiful son, both generally, and specially when that son is in distress, or suffering, on account of his loving dutifulness to his father. Comp. Deut. viii. 5. Ps. ciii. 13, 14.

18. "Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous "and the wicked." Either, "ye shall again view the righteous and "the wicked, and see the wide *difference* between them" (comp. Gen.

CHAPTER IV.

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1 *God's judgment on the wicked, 2 and his blessing on the good, 4 He exhorteth to the study of the law, 5 and telleth of Elijah's coming and office.*

^a Joel 2. 31.
ch. 3. 2.
² Pet. 3. 7.
^b ch. 3. 18.
^c Obad. 18.

^d Amos 2. 9.

^e ch. 3. 16.

^f Luke 1. 78.
Eph. 5. 14.
² Pet. 1. 19.
Rev. 2. 28.

FOR, behold, ^a the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all ^b the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be ^c stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall ^d leave them neither root nor branch.

2 But unto you that ^e fear my name shall the ^f Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his

xviii. 25. Or, "ye shall return and repent of those hard thoughts of God, "and of those your stout and insolent words against Him (above, vv. 14, "15.), and see how different is the 'lot of the righteous from the rod "of the ungodly.'" See Ps. cxxv. throughout, and ver. 3 in particular. Comp. also Exod. ix. 22, 23; x. 23. Ps. xxxiv. 15, 16; xxxvii. 9—11, 28, 29. St. Luke iii. 17; xvi. 26. Rev. xxii. 11.

CHAPTER IV.

(The Hebrew has no break here, but the third chapter is continued to the end of the book.)

1. "For, behold, the day cometh," &c. The same day or a later period of that day foretold and spoken of in ch. iii. 1—3. In both there is "fire," partly (1) as there, purifying; partly (2) as here, consuming. "For even our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. xii. 29.).

"the proud." Whom they, who misjudged of God's dealings, had so lately counted happy (ch. iii. 15.). The "proud," haughty, contemptuous, vain, self-justifying, self-righteous, not having learned of Christ, must in that day be "gathered out of His kingdom." Comp. St. Matt. xi. 29; xiii. 41.

"shall be stubble." The weakest of the three materials mentioned in 1 Cor. xii. 15, as powerless to resist the action of the trying, testing fire. Comp. also Zech. xii. 6.

"the day that cometh shall burn them up." Lit. shall *flame* them, or make them as a flame in the fierce destruction of fire.

"leave them neither root nor branch." Hopeless of any recovery,—any revival or quickening to a better state. Contrast Job xiv. 7—9. Isa. vi. 13. Jer. xi. 16. Comp. Amos ii. 9.

2. "But unto you that fear my name." See chap. iii. 16. What are the thoughts and words of these people, who "fear His name" Whose name alone is to be feared? Ps. lxxii. 7; cxi. 9, 10. Of old their thoughts looked on to our Lord's first coming; and since that coming, they look on to the second, which is the completion of the first, and of all things in time.

"shall the Sun of righteousness arise." The earthly sun in the eastern sky rises as yet upon a world that "lieth in wickedness" under

MALACHI, IV.

wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. * Before CHRIST cir. 397.

3^s And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet * 2 Sam. 22. 43. Mic. 7. 10. Zech. 10. 5.

the power of the Evil One. The heavenly Sun, Christ Jesus, shall then arise to the healing of His people, and shall shine upon a "new" and renovated "earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 St. Pet. iii. 13.). His beams shone forth with uninterrupted splendour (St. Matt. xvii. 1, 2.), for He, as God as well as man, "is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." With Him, as "with the sun," His Church whereon He rises, is "clothed" wondrously (Rev. xii. 1, 2.), making her to be like Himself. Judges v. 31. 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. Cant. vi. 10. St. Matt. xiii. 43.

"with healing in his wings." A winged sun is a frequent and conspicuous ornament in Egyptian temples. The ancient gates of the city Thebes (Carnac) have this remarkable device and emblem in large size and extent carved on the top cross-stone,—a sun in the centre with two long outstretched wings, as of an eagle or other powerfully pinioned bird, on either side. The "wings" of a sun, while they shew its rapid course, seem also here still more to signify its *rays*. The natural sun has a wonderfully healing power in its annual *spring* rays and in its daily *morning* beams especially, causing fruitfulness and imparting fresh life and power. How much more powerfully healing to the longing souls of His people shall be, at His second Advent, the rising of the Sun of righteousness! Christ by his Resurrection has revived and cheered His Church, week by week, for more than 1800 years. How much more cheering, when, at the last He is more fully revealed, and when "He appears to their joy!" Isa. lx. 1, 2; lxvi. 2.

The word, here translated "wings," means also the "fringe," hem, or skirt of a garment. It is so used, in Num. xv. 38, for "the borders" of the garments whereon was to be put the cord or band of bluish purple to be worn by the Israelite in remembrance of the Sabbath-day, and, as such, was worn doubtless, as a Jew, by our Saviour Himself. Compare also the expressions in the Psalms (Ps. xviii. 10; cxxxix. 9.), "wings of the morning." As in "the solar system," the sun is the central power regulating the motions and day and year of every planet: so is Christ, the Sun of righteousness, "all in all" to His people (comp. Col. i. 15—19.). Without the sun, this earth would be utterly uninhabitable: Christ's people live only by Him. His life-giving beams, as the true "light of the world," applied by His Spirit, alone "quicken the dead" soul. Ephes. ii. 1, 5.

"and ye shall go forth," as with the morning light to renewed life and healthful labour. Ps. civ. 22, 23.

"and grow up as calves of the stall." "Grow up" with youthful and joyous energy with the expanding alike of growth and of freedom. The Hebrew word is like the river of Paradise—"Pishon," the broad spreading stream: it occurs only three or four times (Job xxxv. 15. Nah. iii. 18. Hab. i. 8.); and here and in Jer. l. 11, it is equivalent to the word rendered in St. Luke vi. 23, "leap for joy." It seems therefore to imply exuberant joy, connected with healthful vigour and youthful growth and expansion of every limb, and increase of every bodily power. Compare Ps. xviii. 32, 33; ciii. 5. Hab. iii. 19. Isa. xl. 29—31.

MALACHI, IV.

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in the day that I shall do *this*, saith the LORD of hosts.

^h Ex. 20. 3,
&c.

ⁱ Deut. 4. 10.

^k Ps. 147. 10.

4 ¶ Remember ye the ^h law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him ⁱ in Horeb for all Israel, *with* ^k the statutes and judgments.

^l Matt. 11. 14.

& 17. 11.

Mark 9. 11.

Luke 1. 17.

^m Joel 2. 31.

5 ¶ Behold, I will send you ^l Elijah the prophet ^m before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD :

3. "they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet." Fearful destruction, as by fire and "fiery indignation consuming the enemies" of God (Heb. x. 27.). Compare ver. 1 above; also Isa. lxvi. 15, 16, 24.

4. The last of the prophets bears testimony to the law. Where Malachi ends, the Gospel begins. As Christ bears witness to both the "law and the prophets" (St. Matt. v. 17; vii. 12.), so He is distinctly borne witness to by each of the three portions of the Old Testament. See St. Matt. xi. 13. St. Luke xvi. 16; xxiv. 44.

What high honour is this which is here given to Moses, that God should not only call him "My Servant," and "My Messenger," but that God's Law should be called "the Law of Moses!"

"for all Israel." Not for the sacrificing and "teaching priests" (2 Chron. xv. 3.), and ministering Levites only, but for the people also, for the tribes of Israel, as well as for Judah.

"with the statutes and judgments." Laws written and engraven, laws on the two tables of stone, or in the roll of a book, and law spoken and determined by the judges, such as Moses himself, or "the judges," or the priests and Levites. See Deut. xvi. 18, 19; xvii. 8—13; xix. 17, 18. No part or portion is to be passed by or omitted: the whole of God's Law is to be "remembered" in order that it may be kept in its fulness. Comp. Rev. xxii. 19.

5. "Behold, I will send unto you Elijah the prophet." "I and none other; he comes sent by Me, and by Me alone, again to this earth, as I of old, by a chariot of fire and whirlwind, without death, took him from this earth to heaven." St. John the Baptist came before the Lord and His Christ "in the spirit and power of Elias" (St. Luke i. 17.), but not in his very person. In him was *partly* fulfilled this prophecy. But our Lord's words, in reply to His disciples (St. Matt. xvii. 10, 11. St. Mark ix. 12.), may be understood as predicting the return of Elijah in person ¹.

"before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ's first coming in humility and love, although he foretold that "great day" also (see St. Matt. iii. 12. St. Luke iii. 17.). That "great day of the Lord" is ever spoken of

¹ It is the expectation of the Jews to this day that Elijah himself will come again and lead them to accept and believe in the Messiah. That Elijah is yet to come is the prevailing opinion of the early Church. It also seems very probable that he is one of the "two wit-

nesses" (either Moses or Enoch,—more probably Moses,—being the other) who comes down from glory to suffer, as Christ Himself left the glories of Heaven to suffer and die (Rev. xi. 3—12.); thus becoming more like Him than any other of His saints.

MALACHI, IV.

6 and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and "smite the earth with a curse." Before CHRIST
cir. 397.
^a Zech. 14. 12.
^o Zech. 5. 3.

by His prophets at the close, and sometimes also at the commencement, of their prophecies. See Isa. ii. 10—22; xiii. 4, 6, 9, 13. Ezek. vii. 2—19. Joel i. 15; ii. 1, 11, 31. Zeph. i. 7, 14, 18; ii. 2, 3. In the end, God will so "smite the earth," and all not converted to Him. The prayer and zeal of Elijah will gain a reprieve for the world; and then He will accomplish the gathering of His own elect, together with the full conversion of the Jews, "So shall all Israel be saved."

6. "and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Beautiful and most gracious promise. The prophet of fire and destruction from heaven shall be on his return from heaven the prophet of "the fire of love" and mutual affection; of restitution and not of destruction (St. Matt. xvii. 11. Rev. xi. 5.). And these words, as quoted by the Angel Gabriel, are a connecting link between the Old and New Testament (St. Luke i. 17.). But who are "the fathers," and who are "the children?" We may say (1) that here is a wide promise that natural affection shall be restored, and the fifth commandment, the basis of *all* the commandments of the second table, shall be kept. There can be no true love to our fellow-men, where there is no loving obedience to our parents. It is the good and dutiful son who makes the good husband, father, and fellow-citizen and neighbour. It is the good and dutiful daughter who becomes afterwards the good wife and "mother in Israel," and the kind neighbour in hour of need. Or (2) some would render: "Elijah shall turn the heart of the fathers by means of, or together with, their children, as if, through the preaching and suffering of Elijah, children shall be the means of the conversion of their parents to Christ, as well as parents of their children. And so will be fulfilled the promise of "one heart." Jer. xxxii. 39. Ezek. xi. 19. Comp. also Rom. xii. 16. 1 St. Pet. iii. 8.

"lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." "Strike the earth with destruction."

The mission of Elijah is graciously intended to prevent this. Here is the merciful warning, that otherwise He must needs come and "strike" not only the land of Israel, but the whole earth with a terrible "destruction." Compare at large such fearful passages as Isa. xxiv. especially 1—6, 17—20; xiii. 6, 12. Jer. ix. 25, 26. Ezek. xxv.—xxxiii. Micah v. 15. Zeph. i. 2, 3. The earth, which is now, and its works, are "reserved unto fire" (2 St. Pet. iii. 7, 10.). Thus ends the last and latest of God's prophets. Each one of them might well bear from God the name Malachi ("My messenger"). All are His messengers: all are His message. Have we listened to their message? "How shall we escape" the curse and destruction here threatened, "if we neglect so great salvation?" (Rev. xix. 10. Acts iii. 19—26. Heb. ii. 2, 3.)

"SPARE THY PEOPLE O LORD" (Joel ii. 17.).

And "WRITE ALL THESE THY LAWS IN OUR HEARTS, WE
"BESEECH THEE."

MALACHI.

Collect for the Third Sunday in Advent.

O LORD Jesu Christ, Who at Thy first coming didst send Thy messenger to prepare Thy way before Thee; Grant that the ministers and stewards of Thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready Thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at Thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in Thy sight, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

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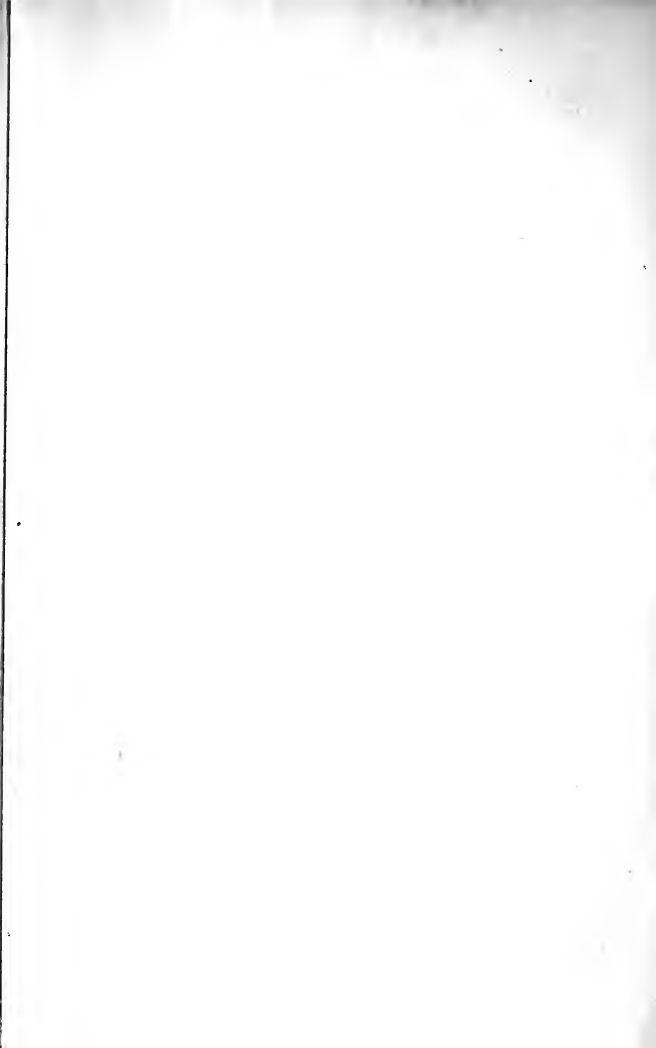
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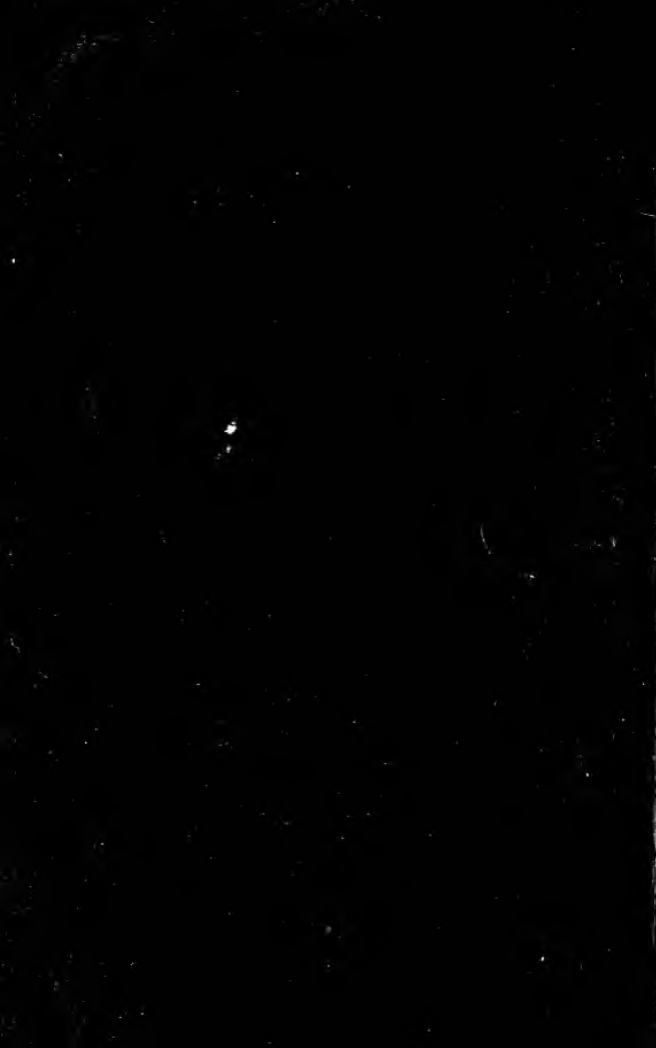
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