THE

HOLY BIBLE,

In the Authorized Version;

WITH NOTES AND INTRODUCTIONS

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ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, LAMENTATIONS, AND EZEKIEL.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

In the age of Isaiah, Prophecy received new functions and ampler proportions. All the Prophets from the beginning were animated by the Spirit of Christ, and prophesied of Him. "To Him give all the Prophets witness;" and therefore, as one well said of old, all the Prophets lived "a Christ-ward life," being filled with His grace; and being His disciples, illumined by His Spirit, waited for Him their Teacher."

The primeval prophecy delivered by God Himself to Adam immediately after the Fall, pre-announced the future struggle between Good and Evil, and foretold that the power of the Evil One would be bruised by the Seed of the woman. It was repeated in succeeding generations with ever-growing clearness. It sounded forth in Enoch, "the seventh from Adam," foretelling the Judgment to come; it spake in Noah, predicting the blessedness of Shem, in whose tents the Lord God would take up His abode. It declared, that in the seed of Abraham, which would "be called in Isaac," "all families of the earth should be blessed;" and that Abraham should be "the heir of the World through faith." It sang a new song in the Patriarch Jacob, proclaiming with his dying voice the glory of Shiloh, who would arise from Judah. It declared the office of the Messiah, as the Great Prophet, by Moses; and it broke forth with a voice of power even from the unwilling lips of Balaam, standing on the top of Peor and looking toward Jeshimon, and on Israel encamped there; and it celebrated the future splendours and conquests of the "Star that would come out of Jacob, and of the Sceptre that should rise out of Israel," and would possess universal dominion, and destroy all the foes of the faithful people of God.

With still greater force and clearness it saluted David, the son of Jesse and "the man after God's own heart," and gave him an assurance from God that "his house and his kingdom should be established for ever before him." God revealed by Nathan the Prophet that Christ would come of the seed of David, and that David would reign for ever in Him. The sweet Psalmist of Israel was also enabled by the Holy Spirit to celebrate the Incarnation and Birth, the Sufferings, Death, Resurrection and Ascension, Kingdom, and Priesthood, of Him Who was to arise from him according to the flesh; and the graces and glory of the Church, His Bride, the Queen at His right hand, united in mystical wedlock with Him; and to foretell the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit on the Church, going forth from Sion to enfold the world. This glorious vision was revealed even in greater splendour to Solomon.

At this point there was a temporary pause and lull in the exercise of the predictive functions of Prophecy.

A treasure of prophetic oracles had been now stored up in the Pentateuch, and in the revelations to David, and to the sons of Korah and Asaph, and to Solomon, in that portion of the Psalter which was then written; and this supplied food for the faith and hope of the people of God.

Besides, the Temple had now been built; its Ritual had now been established; its yearly Festivals brought all the tribes of Israel together continually to one religious centre at Jerusalem.

1 Pet. i. 11.
2 Acts x. 34. Cp. Luke i. 70; xxiv. 25. 44. Acts iii. 18.
3 S. Ignatius, Ad Magnes. e. 8, and e. 9.
4 Gen. iii. 15.
5 Jude 14.
6 Gen. ix. 27.
7 Gen. xii. 18; xvii. 13; xxii. 13; xxvi. 4; xxviii. 14. Cp. Acts iii. 28; Gal. iii. 8.
8 See on Gen. xlii. 8—12.
10 Num. xxiv. 15—19.
11 2 Sam. vii. 16. 19. 25—29; and cp. Ps. lxxix.
12 See above on Ps. lxxii. and Introd. to Gospels.
13 Ps. xxii. 8. 9
14 Ps. xii. 10.
15 Ps. xv.
16 See on Ps. lxxviii.
17 See above, on Ps. lxxii.; and cp. on Ps. lxxviii.
The Temple itself was a Prophecy; its Sacrifices, its Rites and Ceremonies, foreshadowed the future; they had evangelical functions—they preached Christ.

But to foretell the future was only one part of the prophetic office. The ministry of the godly fellowship of the Prophets was not only prospective but retrospective; they were Teachers of the Present, not only by foretelling the Future, but by reminding it of the Past. This didactic function of the Hebrew Prophets was exercised in recalling the attention of the People to the Moral Law, promulgated by God on Mount Sinai, and in reproving them for their violations of it and defections from it; and in reminding them of God's mercies to their fathers and to themselves, and in rebuking them for their unthankfulness. It was more and more developed in proportion as they swerved more and more from the faith and worship of God after the schism of Jeroboam, severing Israel from Judah, and after the introduction of the Sidonian idolatry of Baal, imported into Israel by Jezebel the wife of Ahab.

In the days of the Judges, and when the Priesthood had been polluted by the sins of Eli's sons, and the Ark of God was taken, and Shiloh was destroyed; and when, after the Ark's return, it was severed from the Tabernacle; and in the succeeding reign of Saul, who fell away from God, Prophecy had this comminatory character in Samuel. The degeneracy of Priests and Rulers awoke its stern denunciations. It did not occupy itself so much with revelations of the Future, as in the reformation of the Present by recollections of the Past. It endeavoured, if we may so speak, to bring Israel back to Horeb, to listen to the terrors of the Law sounding forth in peals of thunder, and with flashes of lightning and vapour of smoke, and denouncing woe on the ungodly.

Such especially was the office of the great Prophet Elijah the Tishbite, in the days of Ahab. To bring back the heart of the children to the fathers was his work. "Hear me, O Lord, hear me," was his prayer, when he stood alone on Carmel amid four hundred and fifty priests of Baal, "that this people may know that Thou art the Lord God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again." Elijah was a second Moses; Carmel became another Sinai.

The prophetic work of the Divine Word in Elijah was continued by God working in Elisha, after his going up into heaven, and foreshadowed the operations of the Incarnate Word working in His holy Apostles after His Ascension.

Hence we recognize the reason why Elijah and Elisha were enabled by God to work miracles, which have dazzled some by their splendour, number, and power, and have even been encountered and gainsaid by uncritical scepticism. Why (it is asked) should Elijah and Elisha the Prophets be supposed to have worked miracles, when we hear of no miraculous powers being claimed by succeeding Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel?

Let us discriminate times, and we shall harmonize actions; and Wisdom will be justified of her children.

The prophetic mission of Elijah and Elisha was designed to avouch the Divine origin of the Mosaic Law, and to revive it in its pristine vigour, as a moral Code obligatory on the Hebrew Nation. In this respect there is a striking difference between Elijah and Elisha and the Hebrew Prophets who followed them—Joel, Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zephaniah, Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi. None of these Prophets (as far as we know) worked miracles, properly so called, as Elijah and Elisha had done.

Elijah and Elisha were enabled to work miracles because their prophetic office consisted, not so much in foretelling the future, as in authenticating the past, and in recalling the people to it.

The succeeding Prophets did not work miracles, but (if we may so say) they spoke miracles; that is, their divine mission was proved by the immediate fulfilment of some of the prophecies which they uttered, and this fulfilment was a pledge and earnest that their other prophecies concerning

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1 This is well expressed by S. Hipppolytus, in his recently discovered Treatise, the "Philosophemmena," p. 337: "After Moses, righteous men were born, beloved of God, who were called Prophets, because they foretold the future; to whom the Word came, not of one time only, but through all generations the voices of things spoken before were manifestly present to them, not only when they gave answers to persons who consulted them, but in every age they pre-announced what would happen hereafter, and recalling what was past, they reminded mankind of its duty." Cp. what S. Hippolytus also says on the same subject (De Anti-Christe, § 2).

2 See above, Introd. to the Books of Samuel, p. xiv; and Introd. to the Books of Kings, p. x; and Prelim. Note to 1 Kings xvii.

3 Cp. Mal. iv. 5, 6.

4 1 Kings xviii. 37.

5 See above, on 2 Kings ii. 9–24; v. 1–19.

6 See above, Introd. to Kings, p. x; Prelim. Note to 1 Kings xvii.; and on 1 Kings lii. 17.

7 E.g. Isaiah's prophecy concerning Hezekiah's perfect recovery in three days from "a sickness unto death," and the extension of his life for fifteen years, and the destruction of the Assyrian army in the third year. See above, 2 Kings xx. 5; and cp. below, on Isa. xxxviii.; and Prelim. Note; and note
distant events would be fulfilled also; and in many instances their divine mission was avouched by God Himself by signal interventions in their behalf.

The circumstances of time and place in which the Prophets respectively were raised up to execute their office, and the results arising therefrom, afford additional evidence of God’s presence with them, and of His working in them.

Consider Isaiah.

He prophesied at Jerusalem for more than sixty years, from about 760 B.C. (namely, seven years before the foundation of Rome) to about 688 B.C. Providentially, Isaiah was called to the prophetic office before the destruction of the kingdom of Israel. He had therefore a vast future before him. The kingdom of Syria was still standing, but that Monarchy was soon about to fall. Assyria was rising to the zenith of its glory; Egypt was its rival in the south; Babylon was in the far-off future.

Observe, therefore, Isaiah’s prophetic position.

He was at Jerusalem, the religious centre of Israel and Judah. Judah itself is called in Scripture “the midst of the Nations.” On the north-east was Assyria, and after it Babylon; on the north were the kingdoms of Israel and Syria, and the rich commercial city Tyre on its island rock, the Queen of the Seas; on the east and south-east were Ammon, Moab, and Edom, connected by community of origin with Israel, but Israel’s bitter foes,—and further to the south-east the desert of Arabia, where his fathers had wandered; and on the south-west was Philistia, Judah’s near neighbour and inveterate enemy; on the south was the great kingdom of Egypt, distinguished by arts and arms, and ever and anon making hostile inroads into Judah, or alluring its court to its alliance as a defence against its northern enemy Assyria; and still further south, the tribes of Ethiopia, stately in stature, and renowned and feared for their warlike prowess.

Isaiah looked forth on these empires and kingdoms from his watch-tower in Zion; he contemplated them as a divine Astronomer, with his prophetic telescope, from his spiritual Observatory; and he was enabled by the Spirit of God to foretell the rising and setting of all these stars and constellations.

He looked down also upon what was at his feet, “the Valley of Vision” as it is called, Jerusalem, and he foretold her destiny. And far beyond all these he beheld and described the dread transactions of the Day of Doom.

This he has done in a series of prophecies, beginning with the thirteenth chapter, and reaching to the end of the twenty-seventh.

Let us consider the spiritual results of these prophecies concerning the kingdoms of this world.

He thus refuted the prevalent notion of heathenism, according to which the several kingdoms of earth were governed by tutelary, local deities; and he has shown that all the Empires of the world were under the government of the One Supreme God Who was worshipped at Jerusalem, and Who enabled Isaiah to foresee and to foretell their future destinies.

He has shown also that this One Supreme Governor of all the Nations of the Earth is a moral Governor; and that He rules according to that immutable Code of Morality which is co-existent with His own eternal divine attributes, and is an emanation from them; and which was given to man at the beginning in Paradise, and which was re-published in the Law delivered on Mount Sinai, and which has been promulgated to the world with greater fulness and clearness, and with higher and more authoritative sanctions, in Christianity.

He declared that the approaching destruction of the Kingdom of Israel by the hand of Assyria was the consequence of its rebellion against Him; and, beyond that, he foretold the Captivity of

1. xxxvii. 30. The prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel with regard to the time and circumstances of an impending event,—the destruction of Jerusalem,—in opposition to the predictions of all their contemporary false prophets, were similar proofs of their divine commission.

2. It will be found that Isaiah,—in full confidence in his own divine inspiration,—after having delivered a prophecy concerning some distant event, such as the destruction of Jerusalem, or of Tyre, or of Babylon, introduces another prophecy relating to something which he asserts to be near at hand. See xxvi. 14; xx. 3, 4; xxii. 15—25; xxxvii. 30. And thus he stakes the credit of his prophetic character on something by which it would speedily be tested; and by means of which, when it had been tried and proved (and we may be sure that it was so tested and proved, otherwise his prophecies would never have been received as divine by the Ancient Hebrew Church, and have been read as such in her synagogues), credence would be gained for his other prophecies concerning distant events.

3. As in the case of Jonah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, in addition to the other evidence by interpretation of dreams.

4. Destroyed by Sargon, King of Assyria, B.C. 721. See on Kings xvii. 4.

5. Ezek. v. 5; xxxviii. 12, “The navel of the earth.”

6. See on xviii. 2, 7.

7. See on xxii. 1.

8. xxiv.—xxvii.

9. Called “the Massas, or Burdens.” See on xiii. 1.
Judah by Babylon, and he manifested that Captivity in its true light as a penal visitation for Judah's apostasy from Him.

Thus, on the one hand, Isaiah rescued Israel and Judah from the error of supposing that Assyria and Babylon, in conquering them, had conquered their God.

On the other hand, he warned those heathen Nations against such a presumptuous supposition; and he proclaimed to the world, that Assyria, and Babylon, and all the mightiest Empires of the earth, are only instruments in God's hand for executing His own purposes, and for manifesting His glory, and for punishing those who rebel against Him.

By revealing also the future fall of those proud Monarchies, he has given a solemn warning to all Nations, that if men and States imagine that what they do is done by their own might; and if they magnify themselves, instead of glorifying and adoring God, then they will be shattered in pieces, like brittle vessels of clay, by the iron rod 1 of Him Who uses them as His servants and vessels for vindicating His own honour, and for displaying His Almighty power, and the supremacy of His Divine Law.

He showed, also, that this One Supreme Moral Governor, the God of Nature and the God of Israel, and the God of all earthly empires, does every thing here on earth with a view to one great end and beneficent purpose, namely, the manifestation of His mercy and love to all Nations, both Jew and Gentile, in Christ. He has taught the great truth, that God is ever controlling and directing all things, by inscrutable means and hidden agencies, toward the establishment of His kingdom of grace here, and the consummation of His kingdom of glory hereafter.

Thus, for example, Isaiah represents the future humiliation of Ethiopia and Egypt, and of Assyria, as a merciful dispensation to them, designed with this view, that they may not trust in themselves, or in their own local deities, but may look to the Lord of Hosts, Who is worshipped at Jerusalem, and Whose dispensations are crowned in Christianity 2.

The prophecies of Isaiah reach from his own age, not only to the First Advent of Immanuel 3, God with us, Very God and Very Man, Whose Name will "be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace 4," but also to His Second Coming.

Not only does Isaiah pre-announce Christ's rising from the stem of Jesse, when that stem was hewn down to its roots 5; not only does he speak of His union by the Holy Ghost 6, and of His Ministry in Galilee 7, and of the glorious light kindled by His rising; not only does he describe His miracles of mercy—the eyes of the blind opened, and the ears of the deaf stopped, and the lame man leaping as an hart 8, and the desert rejoicing and blossoming as the rose 9; not only does he paint in beautiful colours the tender love of Christ's pastoral care 10; not only does he portray His Death and Passion with the clearness of an Evangelist, and declare its salutary effects with the wisdom of an Apostle 11, and reveal the grace and glory of the Church Universal flowing forth from the Cross of Christ 12, and the fruitfulness of Zion, the mother of all Christendom 13.

He does this and more; he rises on an eagle's wings from the graces of Christ's First Advent to the glories of His Second Appearing. To the Spirit Who speaks in him, a thousand years are but as one day. And to the Prophet who is inspired by Him, the First Advent of Christ is, as it were, the eve of the Second Advent; and the glories of the Second Advent of Christ coming to judge, are, as it were, the to-morrow's dawn of the graces of the First Advent of Christ coming to save. Therefore, as soon as the Prophet catches a glimpse of Christ's Incarnation, he sees at once, as with a lightning's glance, all the brightness of the Church triumphant revealed to his eye.

Hence it is difficult sometimes to draw a line between what portion of a prophecy belongs to the First Advent, and what belongs to the Second 14. Isaiah beholds with his prophetic eye Jerusalem laid in the dust; but he also sees it spiritualized and transfigured, and stretching itself forth to embrace the world in the arms of the Gospel of Christ. Christ is the promised Seed of Abraham and of David; and the Gospel of Christ goes forth by the ministry of the Apostles filled with the Holy Ghost, from Zion even unto the ends of the earth. The material Temple of Jerusalem is dissolved, but the Church Universal rises on its ruins. The Prophet sees Zion desolate as a ploughed field, and yet lifted up "above the top of the mountains, so that all Nations flow into it" (xi. 2), and rising at last from earth to heaven with a glorious Ascension. The material

Ps. ii. 9.
2 See xviii. 7; xix. 23. Cp. also xvi. 1, with respect to Moab; and xxiii. 17, 18, with regard to Tyre.
3 vii. 14.
4 ix. 6.
5 xi. 1.
6 lxvi. 1—2.
7 ix. 1.
8 xxxv. 6.
9 xxv. 1.
10 xl. 11.
11 lxxi. 1—12.
12 lv. 1—17; lv. 1—13; lx. 1—22.
13 lii. 1—5; xl. 9—11; lili.
14 See lxv. 1—24.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

The fabric on Zion melts away, by an almost imperceptible process of absorption, into the eternal splendors of the heavenly City.

The general Resurrection and the Day of Judgment are unfolded to his view; and the eternal joys of the righteous, and the eternal misery of the ungodly, to whom he declares, with the reiterated tones of a solemn alarum, "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked;" "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked"; "Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched."

The fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecies concerning events near at hand, which were beyond all power of human foresight—such for example as the overthrow of the combined Powers of Egypt and Ethiopia (to which Judah had looked for help against Assyria), within a certain fixed time—that, again, as the prophecy of the still more wonderful destruction of the victorious army of Assyria itself, when, elated with its conquests, and confidently anticipating an easy triumph, it returned to Jerusalem—these and other similar predictions proved to King Hezekiah, and to his contemporaries, the divine mission of Isaiah. His inspiration was further avouched and manifested by the fulfilment of his other prophecies—such as that concerning the siege and capture of Babylon, and the name of its conqueror, Cyrus, and the deliverance and restoration of Judah, which he foretold would be effected by him, after his conquest of Babylon, and the overthrow of that Power which had destroyed Jerusalem.

The name Isaiah signifies Salvation of Jehovah; and a more appropriate name could not have been given him. The contents of his prophecies may be summed up in this word. They all look forward to the Salvation wrought by Jehovah in Christ. Isaiah, whose mission from God has been proved by the fulfilment of his prophecies, makes all his prophecies to converge toward Christ, and they are all concentrated and consummated in Him. This fact shows the paramount importance of Christianity. It proves that the Gospel holds the first place in the counsels of the Divine Mind, in its dealings with man; and it shows the necessity of embracing the Gospel, and displays the great peril of despising it. The dignity and glory of the Gospel as revealed by Isaiah, and the unspakable solemnity of the future retribution of the Great Day, and its everlasting consequences for weal or woe, display its imperative claims on the allegiance of men and Nations.

The divinely inspired Prophet passes immediately onward, from speaking of the overthrow of Sennacherib and the sudden destruction of the Assyrian army by the fiery blast in the valley of Tophet, beneath the southern walls of Jerusalem, to speak of the "everlasting burnings" which are prepared for God's enemies in the "lake of fire," of which that valley of Hinnom was a type. And after predicting the marvellous overthrow of the impious and blasphemous Assyrian, rushing onward in his furious course, against the majesty of the God of Israel, he proceeds to foretell the prostration of all Infidel and Antichristian Powers, symbolized by Sennacherib.

In like manner, after predicting the conquests of Cyrus and his capture of Babylon, and his liberation of the captive Jews, and the promulgation of his decree for the restoration of the Temple at Jerusalem, he bursts forth into a rapturous ecstasy, and echoes the voice of the Baptist, wafted to him from the far-off future, and places before the eye the form of that noble herald of a more glorious victory, and of a more blessed return and restoration, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; Make straight in the desert an highway for our God." He is transported over an interval of seven hundred years, and proclaims the conquests of Christ, and His triumph over His enemies, and the liberation of exiled Israel, and the emancipation of a captive World, from the bondage of Sin and Satan; and the building up of the Temple of the Church Universal, and the restoration of all true Israelites to their Father's home in Christ; and the everlasting felicity reserved for all who believe, love, and obey Him.

To Isaiah's mind, all earthly retributions and all earthly restorations, vanish into utter insignificance in the presence of the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Isaiah thus teaches, that the God of Nature, the God of the Mosaic Law, the God of Nations, and the God of the Gospel, is one and the same God, and that all His dispensations are consummated in Christ.

The prophecies of Isaiah extend over more than twenty-five centuries. They reach from his own age to the Day of Doom.
The World is witness to their Truth. "Liber noster est Orbis terrarum, in quo lego complectum, quod in libro Dei promissum." Isaiah's prophecies concerning the abortive issue of the godless league of Israel with Syria against Judah and the house of David, and concerning the destruction of the Kingdoms of Syria and Israel within a fixed time—his predictions of the overthrow of the forces of Egypt and Ethiopia combined against Assyria, and promising to assist Judah, and of the subsequent destruction of the army of Assyria when it had subdued Egypt and Ethiopia; and the deliverance of Judah from its grasp; and the future captivity and exile of Judah at Babylon; and the deliverance of the Hebrew Nation by Cyrus. All these have been fulfilled.

These prophecies, so numerous, and so circumstantial, and which must have seemed so strange when they were delivered, have been verified. The World is witness to their fulfilment.

But this is not all. The still more marvellous and almost incredible prophecies concerning the Messiah, suffering, despised and rejected by His own people, giving His "back to the smitters and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair," and "numbered with the transgressors," and yet a glorious Conqueror and King—"the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace,"—these have been fulfilled.

Let us put this question: Can it be denied that He was born of a Virgin, as Isaiah foretold He would be? and that He sprang from the stem of Jesse and of David, when it seemed to be hewn down to the roots—that, as was predicted by Isaiah, the principal scene of His ministry was Galilee? and that He wrought miracles such as the Prophet foretold? Can it be questioned, that, according to Isaiah's prophecies, He was rejected and put to death by His own Nation, the Jews; and that therefore the truth of Isaiah's prophecies, and the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, are proved even by their ignorance of the true meaning of those prophecies, which they held in their hands and heard in their synagogues, and by their condemnation of Christ; and that their unbelief is therefore an argument for our belief? As St. Paul, the great Hebrew of the Hebrews, said in his sermon at Antioch in Pisidia, they "that dwell at Jerusalem, and their Rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath Day, have fulfilled them in condemning Him."

Can it be denied, that, as Isaiah also predicted, His Gospel has "gone forth from Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem," and has imparted to Zion and to Jerusalem a spiritual universality in every Nation under heaven? All these things are evident: they are clear as noon-day. And now, what follows?

Surely this: Since all these prophecies of Isaiah have been fulfilled, can any reasonable person entertain a doubt, that the other prophecies of Isaiah, which still remain to be fulfilled, will in due time be fulfilled also?

Shall ninety-nine prophecies of a Prophet be fulfilled, and shall the hundredth fail? No; certainly not. The fulfilment of the former is a pledge of the fulfilment of the latter, and the more so in the present case, because these other prophecies of Isaiah, which remain to be fulfilled, have been reiterated and confirmed to us in the New Testament by the authority of Christ Himself, the Eternal Worn, in Whom the prophecies of the Old are accomplished, and Who is the Divine Author and the End—the Alpha and the Omega—of all Prophecy.

This, therefore, we may hold fast and certain: that, as Isaiah has foretold, all Earthly Powers will be made subject to Christ; and that there is a Resurrection of the Dead; and an Universal Judgment to come; and a future Reward of everlasting glory and bliss to those who believe and obey God, and of everlasting shame and woe to those who resist Him.

Let us also observe this:—

Isaiah sees nothing between the Gospel of Christ and the Day of Judgment. To Him, the days of the Christian Dispensation are "the last days." He knows of no other Law than that which went forth in primitive times from Zion; he knows of no other Word of the Lord than that which went forth from Jerusalem.

Here is a wholesome warning to such persons as dream of some "Church of the future," or who propound or embrace any new "developments of Christian doctrine," which were never preached by Christ or His Apostles, and which form no part of the "faith once for all delivered to the Saints:" or who imagine that Christianity is a plastic thing, which may be modelled, moulded, and adjusted,
by “the human consciousness,” with pliant elasticity, to suit the shifting caprices and fickle fashions of popular opinion.

Isaiah has no sympathy with such religionists as these; and they cannot justly look for any approval from that Divine Spirit Who wrote by him.

Let us pass on to observe, that the Prophecies of Isaiah have cheering consolations and encouragements, as well as salutary and solemn warnings, which are specially applicable to the present age. If we may venture so to speak, Isaiah seems to anticipate the difficulties of the latter days, and to make spiritual provision for them.

The States and Empires of Christendom seem now to be undergoing a process of disintegration and decomposition, if not of disruption.

Isaiah has a special message for such a crisis as this.

From his spiritual watch-tower at Jerusalem, he beheld the sea of the World around him agitated with storms. In the winds and waves raging beneath him, he foresaw the wrecks of mighty Kingdoms—Syria, Israel, Assyria, Tyre, Egypt, Babylon. He saw in the far-off future the dissolution of the fabric of the Earth itself. 1 In this panoramic view of futurity, while contemplating the events present to his prescient eye, he proclaimed the insignificance of all earthly pride, pomp, and power, and the Omnipotence and Majesty of God; and the glory of the Kingdom of Christ. 2 “Thus saith the Lord, Heaven is My Throne, and Earth is My Footstool.” “ Behold the Nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; behold He taketh up the isles as a very little thing.” All earthly Kingdoms will be shaken, all worldly Thrones will fall, all sublunary Empires will float away in dreamlike evanescence, as Assyria, Babylon, and Tyre have done, and be mingled with the shadowy phantoms of the past, as the Prophet describes in that sublimest of all pictures of departed earthly grandeur.

But he assures us that there is one Throne that can never be shaken, one Kingdom that can never be moved—the Throne and Kingdom of Christ.

“Look,” he says, “upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.” “Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty; they shall behold the Land that is very far off.”

And in still more glorious language he says to the Church of God, “O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest . . . I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires; I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. 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 nigh thee. 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, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord.”

Such are the promises of the Holy Spirit, speaking by the Prophet, to the Christian Church militant for a while here, in order to be glorified hereafter.

Therefore, whatever may be the vicissitudes of earthly States and Empires, the Church of God is able to look upon the gathering storms of Revolution with calmness and composure. She raises her eyes upward, and beholds the City of God. And though her own civil relations on earth may be changed, though all her worldly helps and supports may fail, though secular Powers may forsake her, and even be arrayed against her, though her material fabrics may be wrested from her, or fall into decay and ruin—as Isaiah foretold would be the fate of the glorious Temple at Jerusalem, and of all its splendid ceremonial—though she may be a captive and exile, without settled sanctuaries for her sacred assemblies; though she may sing no more the songs of Zion, 4 but hang up her harp on the willows of Babylon, yet even there she may hear the prophetic voice, “Comfort ye, comfort ye My people.”

She knows that it is good for her to learn—as Israel and Judah were taught by Isaiah—that it is a vain thing to rely on earthly Powers, and to resort for help to the Egyptians and Assyrias of this world. She knows that it is well for her to be taught by the severe discipline of affliction to learn

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1 ii. 10—22; xxiv. 20—29. 2 xl. 1. 3 xlv. 1. 4 See xiv. 9—19. Cp. Ezek. xxxii. 21—32. 5 xxxii. 20. 6 lv. 11—17. 7 Ps. xxxvii. 1—4. 8 xl. 1. 9 “Woe to them that go down to Egypt; but they look not to the Holy One of Israel.” Cp. xxx. 2; xxxvi. 6. Judah and Israel are also reproved for resorting to Assyria for help. See on vii. 12; lvii. 9; and 2 Kings xvi. 8. Jer. ii. 18. 30. Hos. v. 13.
INTRODUCTION

upon God’s arm, and to cleave more closely to Him, and to quicken all her own energies, and to cherish more thankfully and lovingly all her own spiritual gifts and graces received from Him. It is well for her to feel, that as long as she is here on earth, she is a pilgrim, a stranger, and a sojourner; that here is not her rest; and that God chastens her in love, in order that her affections may be weaned from earth, and that she may learn more and more to hold communion with what is unseen and eternal; and to have her conversation in heaven, and may dwell in heart and soul in her future home, and may realize more and more that her true heritage is that Kingdom which cannot be moved, and that City which hath foundations, “whose builder and maker is God.”

In the earlier part of the fifth century after Christ, when the World was sounding with the crash of the ruins of the mighty Roman empire, a Christian Father, S. Jerome, dwelling in solitude at Bethlehem, and more venerable by old age, and then recovering from a severe sickness, composed his Commentary on Isaiah; and in the Preface to one of the books of that exposition he uses the following words, which have a special interest for the expounder and reader of the prophecies of Isaiah in the present times:—

“The Lord, Who looketh down upon the earth, and maketh it to tremble, and Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke, and Who saith in the song of Deuteronomy, ‘I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal’; hath made my earth to tremble with frequent sicknesses, and hath said to me, ‘Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.’ When I was forgetting the frail condition of humanity, He often warned me to remember that I am mortal and old, and now on the brink of the grave. But He Who smote me hath healed me, and hath filled me with fear rather than with sorrow, and hath corrected rather than wounded me. Therefore, well knowing, by Whose only gift it cometh that I still live, and that haply my falling asleep in Christ is now deferred for a time, in order that I may complete my labours on the Prophets, I devote myself wholly to this work; and, being placed on a spiritual beacon-tower, I contemplate the hurricanes and shipwrecks of this World, not without sighs and groans. I do not fix my thoughts on the present, but on the future; I do not fear the opinions and petty rumours of this World, but I dread the Judgment of God.”

Another reflection may be allowed here in connexion with this subject. Isaiah made a prophetic provision for the time when the religious services of the Temple of Jerusalem would be abolished, and the Temple itself would be destroyed; and the people of Judah would be carried away captive to Babylon, as Israel in his own age had been taken to Assyria, and was dispersed in that distant land; and he looks far beyond that catastrophe, and sees the time when the spiritual fabric of the Church Universal would rise up on the ruins of the material Temple at Jerusalem.

These works of dissolution would, he shows, be overruled by God to all who love Him, so as to have a conservative and constructive character; and he reminds his readers of every age, that even in the midst of God’s penal visitations, and indirectly by the means of their stern discipline, the principles of vital and essential religion are tested and may be invigorated. He declares in the strongest terms that true religion is a practical thing, a thing of the heart and of the life. He declares that external religious ceremonials, festal anniversaries, and sacrificial oblations, are of little value in comparison with the moral duties of piety, justice, and mercy. He declares that the Temple in which God most delights to dwell, is the human heart; the heart of the meek and contrite; and that all material fabrics, be they even as magnificent as the Temple of Solomon itself, are of no account in comparison with it.

This doctrine—which is inculcated by the Prophets and by our Blessed Lord in the Gospel—contains wholesome and seasonable warnings, instructions, and encouragements to our own age. The time may come, when the faithful servants of God may be driven from the sanctuaries of their own land. Isaiah does indeed declare, that it is the paramount duty, and noblest privilege, of Kings and Queens, to be “the nursing fathers and nursing mothers” of the Church, and that their true welfare consists in promoting hers; and that “the Nation and Kingdom which will not serve her” (that is, will not maintain, cherish, and foster the true Church of God) “shall perish.”

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And how much more will they, who injure, despise, and persecute her, incur misery and ruin!

But he also warns her of evil days to come. The spiritual expansion of the Church may be cramped and hampered by the Powers of this world; her energies may be crippled and paralyzed; her liberty and her life may be imperilled; severe and unjust conditions may be imposed upon her by secular authority, which may render it no longer possible for her faithful members to minister or to worship in her sanctuaries. Such a calamity happened in our own country more than two centuries ago; and it may happen again.

When the Temple of Jerusalem was profaned by worship which God loathed, then the Divine Glory floated away from the Chereubim from the courts of the Hebrew Sanctuary of Sion to the far-off banks of the river of Chebar 1. And the Prophet Ezekiel then delivered a prophetic homily to the exiles there, on the importance and acceptability of personal religion 2. Isaiah had already taught the same truth. And at a time when National Establishments of Religion appear to be threatened, and the condition of some may be, before long, like that of the exiles at Chebar—where every man was thrown on the support of those gifts and graces which he received from spiritual communion with God—it is the duty of all to listen to that prophetic teaching; and, while we have the comfort of knowing that the Scriptures will never perish, and the Sacraments will never cease to be administered 3; and while it is a happy result even of our religious divisions, that there is now no ecclesiastical power on earth which can impair or affect the ancient Creeds, received from an united Christendom; and while we cherish, with grateful reverence and love, all those external accessories which impart dignity and beauty to religion, we shall not allow our own supply of religious light to depend upon those accessories, but shall seek more and more for nearer personal communion with God, and cherish more and more those spiritual graces of Faith, Love, and Holiness, which are most pleasing to Him, Who will impart fresh beauty to that spiritual Temple of the soul, which is adorned by those virtues, and which will acquire new loveliness from Death, and has been solemnly consecrated by the Holy Spirit to His honour and service.

Analysis of the Contents of the Book of Isaiah.

The Book of Isaiah consists of Two great Portions, each of which is subdivided into several Parts.

The First Portion contains chaps. i.—xxxix., and ends with a prophecy of the Captivity of Judah at Babylon.

The Second Portion contains chaps. xl.—lxvi.; it begins with the words, “Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God;” and is continued to the end of the Book.

The first of these two great Portions is formed of five Parts.

The First Part of the First great Portion consists of the first five chapters, which may be called a Prologue to the rest; and, like other Prologues of the Books of Scripture 4, it contains a brief summary of the contents of the whole.

These first five chapters present an introductory and compendious Prophecy, extending from the days of Isaiah to the first Advent of Christ, and even to His Second Coming.

The Second Part, beginning with the sixth chapter, opens with Isaiah’s vision of the glory of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, adored by the Seraphim, in the Temple at Jerusalem 5. He then receives a commission—not his primary commission, as some have thought 6, but a second and enlarged commission—to declare the punishment of the unbelieving Jews for their obduracy 7, and to foretell the evangelization of Israel and of all Nations by Christ.

Henceforth, therefore, he proceeds to predict the birth of Immanuel from the Virgin of the House of David 8. Christ’s double office, in overthrowing all His enemies, and in delivering the faithful residue of His People, is declared by the symbolical names of Isaiah’s two sons, Maher-shalal-hash-baz (spoil speeds, prey hastens), and Shear-jashub (a remnant shall return 9); and the Prophet hails the orient beams of evangelical light, shed forth by His rising on the people that walked in darkness and dwelt in the shadow of death 10, and the glorious career and conquests of Him

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1 Ezek. viii., ix., and x.
2 See Ezek. xviii. 1—32, and xxviii. 1—20.
4 e.g. of the Psalms and Proverbs. See the notes above, on the opening chapters of these Books.
5 See below, on vi. 1—8.
6 vi. 9—11.
7 vii. 13, 14.
8 See on vi. 1.
9 ix. 1—3.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

Who is the Great Deliverer of His People 1, and is a Victorious Warrior and Everlasting King on the "throne of David." And being filled with the Holy Ghost, Isaiah exclaims in the name of redeemed Humanity, "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

The Prophet then displays a view of the proud Power of this World, opposed to God and His Church. This Power is represented by Assyria, the mighty Empire, which in Isaiah's time was the adversary of Judah, and gloried in its own strength 2, and blasphemed the God of Israel.

Observe the contrast between the two successive Kings of Judah to whom Isaiah was sent, Ahaz, and his son Hezekiah.

Ahaz, alarmed by the league of Syria and Israel against him, resorted to Assyria for help. Isaiah assured the faithless king that no confederacy of earthly powers could destroy the House of David, from which Immanuel would be born 3, and that the kingdoms of Syria and Israel would be overthrown by Assyria; and he warned him that Assyria would be used by God to punish him for his sins 4.

Isaiah was also employed by God to comfort Hezekiah, the faithful son and successor of the faithless Ahaz, with the cheering words that he and his city would be delivered from the same power of Assyria, when it appeared to be on the point of destroying them; and that Assyria itself would be broken in the land of Judah 5. These predictions were fulfilled.

Why (it may be asked) does Assyria occupy so large a space in the prophetic picture?

The reason, doubtless, was this, not only because Assyria—by its power, its conquests, its pride, its impiety, and the sudden destruction of its mighty army, in the presumptuous self-confidence of its most brilliant hour of glory, when, laden with the spoils of Egypt and Ethiopia, it encamped before Jerusalem 6 and menaced it with immediate ruin,—displayed in a signal manner to the Nations of the Earth, the supremacy of the God of Israel; but because Assyria stands forth in these prophecies, as the type of that infidel and impious form of Antichristianism which will rise up against God in the latter days; and because, in reading the history of the one, we may see the destiny of the other; and because, in the wonderful deliverance of Hezekiah from the ruthless arm of Assyria, the faithful of every age may see a pledge of their own preservation from all the overflows of Ungodliness in times of deep distress.

This will be evident to an attentive reader of these prophecies. Isaiah passes on by a sublime transition, from speaking of the pride and overthrow of Assyria, to speak of the future prostration of all earthly Powers at the feet of Christ. We shall also see hereafter, in the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of Ezekiel, that Isaiah's language concerning Assyria is adopted by that Prophet, when he foretells the insolent haughtiness of the impious Antichristian Power, and the abortive issue of the assaults which will be made by it on the Church of God in the last days.

These truths are also displayed by Isaiah in a clear light, by the contrast between the overthrow of Assyria, when flourishing in all its vigour, like the cutting down of a mighty forest of Lebanon by a fell swoop of Omnipotence, and the rise of Christ, the lowly Branch and Rod from the stem of Jesse, when hewn down to its roots and seemingly extinct, and His subsequent rapid growth to overshadow the earth, and to receive all Nations under His shade 7. When Antichrist appears to be strongest, then he will be hurled to the ground. When Christ seems to be weakest, He will put all enemies under His feet. When Antichrist rages most fiercely, then will Christ come.

This contrast is followed immediately by a Song of Salvation 8—a prelude to the Song of the Redeemed at the crystal sea, before the Throne of God 9.

This Second Part of the First great Portion of Isaiah's prophecies, closes with a Hymn of Victory and Praise.

The Third Part begins at chap. xiii. and is continued to the end of chap. xxvii. It contains Prophecies, called Burdens 10, of Judgments—tempered with mercy—on the Kingdoms of Earth—on Babylon 11, on Assyria 12, on Philistia, 13, on Moab 11, on Damascus, the capital of Syria, and on Judah, and spreading terror around it, and its sudden destruction (x. 24—34), like that of a forest of stately cedars, hewn down at once in all the lustiness of its strength.

1 ix. 4—7. 2 See xxxvi. 18—20; xxxvii. 23—25. 3 vii. 14. 4 vii. 17. 5 xiv. 25. C. xxxviii. 36. 6 xxviii. 36. 7 See on xi. 1—16: "There shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse," a prophecy following immediately on the prediction of the campaign of the Assyrian army invading

8 xii. 1—6. 9 See Rev. xv. 2—4. 10 See below, on xiii. 1. 11 xiii. xiv. 1—24. 12 xiv. 25—27. 13 xiv. 28—32. 14 xv. xvi.
Israel (joined with Syria against Judah)\textsuperscript{1}, on Assyria\textsuperscript{2}, on Egypt and Ethiopia \textsuperscript{3} (to which Judah, in the days of Hezekiah and Isaiah, had for a time looked for succour against Assyria and Sennacherib); again, on Babylon\textsuperscript{4}, called "the Desert of the Sea," on Edom\textsuperscript{5} (which would rejoice over Jerusalem's capture by Babylon), on Arabia \textsuperscript{6}, on Jerusalem (called "the Valley of Vision"), with a prediction of its capture by the Chaldeans\textsuperscript{7}, on Tyre \textsuperscript{8}, and, finally, on the whole Earth.

In addition to the religious, moral, and political uses of these prophecies, as proving \textsuperscript{9} the Prescience and Omnipotence of the God of Israel, as the One Supreme Moral Ruler of all Nations of the World, they are so framed as to show that all God's dispensations are ordered with a view to the spread of the Gospel of Christ; and that His judicial visitations on earthly Kingdoms are designed to that end; and ought to be made subservient to it by the human Will, co-operating with Divine Grace.\textsuperscript{10}

They serve also the purpose of showing that God in Christ will triumph over all opposition, whatever form it may assume.

Let it not be imagined, that the names of Nations in these "Burdens" or Prophecies of Judgment, are mere general, vague, and indefinite designations of enmity to God. No; this would be a very erroneous and profitless view of them. Let them only be subjected to a careful and discriminating analysis, and it will be found that each several Nation has not only an historic reality of its own, but it also represents some special phase of hostility to God and His Church.\textsuperscript{11}

Assyria symbolizes open Impiety: it is the infidel form of Antichristianism. Babylon typifies another form of Antichristianism—that of Idolatry and Superstition. Egypt, another—that of unsanctified Knowledge and proud Science and Philosophy falsely so called. Ethiopia is the figure of another form—that of physical force inspiring terror by its menaces.\textsuperscript{12} And both Egypt and Ethiopia are exhibited in these prophecies as worldly Powers to which Judah—the People of God—looked, and looked in vain, for help, instead of trusting in God. Judah sought to shelter itself under the "whirring of the wings" of Ethiopia and Egypt, which made a great flapping sound, but afforded no protection, rather than under the wings of the Cherubim, and under the pinions of Him Who sitteth upon them. Edom and Moab typify another form—that of those who are connected with the Church by community of origin and race (as Edom and Moab were with Judah), but who are her deadly enemies, and exult in her affliction, as Edom shouted with triumph at the downfall of Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{11} Philistia represents another form—that of a near neighbour and invertebrate foe. Tyre another form—that of maritime and commercial activity, power, and wealth, not hallowed by Religion, but engendering worldly pride and selfish idolatry.

These prophecies of Isaiah, directed against all these earthly Powers, embody the assurance, that if the Church of God is true to Him, and relies on His help, then He will defend her from all attacks, in whatever quarter they may arise, and whatever form they may assume, whether of open Infidelity, or corrupt Religion, or of a godless Philosophy, or a sensual and slavish Idolatry of Wealth, or unbrotherly hate from treacherous friends, perfidious neighbours, and false brethren; and that no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper;\textsuperscript{13} and that, in the Great Day, when the Lord shall arise to Judgment, and to call all men from their graves,\textsuperscript{14} and to destroy all the Powers of Evil, then she will sing praise to Him Who has swallowed up Death in Victory;\textsuperscript{15} and the Lord God will wipe all tears from all faces of those who have waited patiently on Him.\textsuperscript{16}

The Third Part closes, as the Second did, with a Song of Praise, and a vision of glory.\textsuperscript{17}

The Fourth Part of the Prophecies of Isaiah begins with chapter xxviii. and is continued to the end of chapter xxxv.

It contains six Woes, which are a sequel to God's denunciations of Judgment announced in the foregoing Part; and which extend to the Woes pronounced by Christ Himself on Jerusalem (Matt. xxiii. 13—29); and to the Woes of the Book of Revelation (Rev. ix. 12. 14.); and to the Woe which will be denounced on the wicked at the Great Day, and which is symbolized by the destruction of

\textsuperscript{1} xvii. 1—11. \textsuperscript{2} xvi. 12—14. \textsuperscript{3} xvi. 1—10. \textsuperscript{4} xxi. 13—17. \textsuperscript{5} xvi. 11. 12. \textsuperscript{6} xvii. 11. \textsuperscript{7} xxvi. 1—14. \textsuperscript{8} xxvi. \textsuperscript{9} xxvi. \textsuperscript{10} See this moral idea expressed in the prophecy concerning Philistia (xiv. 31, 32). Moab (xvi. 1—5). Ethiopia (xvii. 7). Egypt, Assyria, and Israel (xiv. 23—25). Tyre (xxvi. 17, 18). \textsuperscript{11} See above, in p. 28, Proven. Note to chap. xiii. S. Jerome, Prefat. in Esaiam, well says, "Post historiae veritatem speculat.
the great and godless power of Assyria with scorching fire 1, and by the desolation of Edom, the representative of false friends and sacrilegious spoilers of the Church of God 2.

These Woes are tempered with mercy; they are blended with promises of eternal benediction to all who repent of their sins 3, and who love and serve God, and receive the Gospel of Christ 4. "The 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 sorrow and sighing shall flee away 5."

The Fourth Part ends, as the two foregoing ones have done, with a revelation of glory and joy, and with a Doxology to God.

The Fifth and last Part of this First great Portion of Isaiah's Prophecies, consists of the historical record of the invasion of Judah by the army of Assyria under Sennacherib. It displays the arrogant pride and impious blasphemy of Assyria; Hezekiah's alarm and temporary weakness; his subsequent repentance, faith, and prayers to God in the Temple; the sudden overthrow of the Assyrian army on its return to Jerusalem in its triumphant march homeward from Ethiopia and Egypt 6. It contains also a relation of Hezekiah's dangerous sickness, his prayers, and his miraculous restoration to health; and the going back of the sun on the dial of Ahaz ten degrees, and the extension of his life for fifteen years 7; and his Psalm of thanksgiving after his recovery.

It ends with the narrative of the arrival of the ambassadors who were sent to Jerusalem by Merodach Baladan, king of Babylon, in order to congratulate Hezekiah on his recovery, and to "inquire of the wonder that had been done in the land 8." It records Hezekiah's weakness in showing them all his treasures, and Isaiah's consequent reproof of Hezekiah; and it concludes with his prophecy that all these treasures "shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left, saith the Lord 9."

Thus ends the Fifth and last Part of the First great Portion of Isaiah's Prophecies. It ends with a prophecy of the captivity of Judah at Babylon. The Second Part begins with a prophecy of Judah's liberation from Babylon.

This Second great Portion commences with chapter xl.—"Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith the Lord," and extends to the end of the Book.

It consists of three Parts, of which an analysis is given below in the preliminary note to that chapter (chapter xl), and in the preliminary notes to the first chapters respectively of the other two Parts, viz. chapter lxxix. and chapter lxxviii.

The reader is invited to refer to those notes for a summary of that portion and of its constituent parts.

Suffice it to say here, that this Second great Portion of the Evangelical Prophet's predictions reveals the deliverance and restoration of Judah from exile and captivity at Babylon, by Cyrus, the Conqueror of that city; and that it thereon passes on, by an easy and beautiful transition, to foretell and describe the far more glorious emmanicipation and recovery of Israel and of the World, from spiritual banishment and bondage, by the Great Antitype of Cyrus—Jesus Christ 10.

The clearness with which the circumstances of those two great Restorations are displayed in these prophecies, has been and is a trial and touchstone of the faith of their readers. The meek and gentle, and they who have that true wisdom which is the fruit of humility, have recognized and adored in them the operation of the Holy Spirit of God, Who speaks by Isaiah, and have greeted with joy, in the history of Cyrus and in the fulfilment of these prophecies, proofs of Divine Inspiration, and evidences of the truth of Christianity which is revealed in them.

The feelings of such readers as these have found utterance in language like the following: —

"To be ignorant of the Scriptures" (says S. Jerome) 11 "is to be ignorant of Christ. Therefore I shall so comment on the Prophecies of Isaiah, that I may show him to have been not only a Prophet, but also an Evangelist, and an Apostle. The Book of Isaiah contains all the mysteries of the Lord. Here He is preached not only as Immanuel, born of the Virgin, but as the Worker of signs and wonders; as dying, buried, and rising again for us; and as the Saviour of all Nations. Isaiah unfolds so

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1 See xxx. 27. 30—33; xxxi. 9; xxxii. 1—14; and on xxxvii. 11. 36.
2 See xxxiv. 5—15.
3 See xxxiv. 5—15.
4 See xxxviii. 16; xxxii. 18—20; xxxiii. 6. 16. 22.
5 See xxxv. 10.
6 See xxxviii. 10.
7 See xxxviii. 10.
8 See xxxviii. 10.
9 See xxxix. 6.
10 The judgment of the ancient Hebrew Church on the exegetical character of these prophecies is expressed by the Son of Sirach (Ecclus. lxxxviii. 22—25): "Easy the prophet was great and faithful in vision, and saw by an excellent spirit what should come to pass in the last times, and he comforted them that mourned in Sion 2 (he refers here to the first words of this Second Portion). "He shewed what should come to pass for ever." This is also a clear testimony from the ancient Hebrew Church to the genuineness of this Second Portion.
11 S. Jerome, Pref. ad Esdras; and see his Epist. ad Paulinum (Ep. 103).
clearly the mysteries of Christ and the Church, that he seems to be an historian of the past, rather than a Prophet of the future."

"Isaiah" (observes S. Cyril of Alexandria) "is ever speaking of the Redemption of the World by Christ; and he foretells that for a time the Jews will be rejected from the favour of God, and that the multitude of the Gentiles will be accepted by Him, being justified by faith; so that God seems to crown the blessed Prophet Isaiah not only with prophetical grace, but with apostolical glory."

"Isaiah" (says S. Augustine) "pre-announces future punishment to the rebellious people of Israel, and he delivers more prophecies than all the rest concerning Christ and the Church, so that by some he is called an Evangelist, rather than a Prophet."

On the genuineness of the Second Portion of this Book (chapters xl. — xlvii.).

But unhappily, others there are, who in the very clearness of Isaiah’s prophecies have seen an argument against them.

They allege, that these predictions concerning the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, and the restoration of the Jews by him, could not have been written in the age of Isaiah; and they would separate this second Portion of Isaiah from the first; and they ascribe this Portion to a writer who lived more than a century after Isaiah’s death, and (to borrow the words of a writer) who has rendered this opinion popular by the attractive graces of his style, "even after Jerusalem had been destroyed, and when the persons to be consoled were already in exile, and Babylon was in the height of her power, and Cyrus and his conquests were already well known."

Objections are urged by that writer against the genuineness of this Portion of Isaiah, which demand notice here; and which, it is earnestly hoped, he may be induced to reconsider.

Objection 1. In this Portion (he says), the Messiah is designated as "the servant of God," (see xiii. 1), which is not the case in the first Portion; therefore, it is alleged, the second Portion was not written by the author of the first—Isaiah.

Reply. The Prophet in this second Portion provides a supply of future comfort to the exiled captives at Babylon; and no better consolation could be ministered to them than that which is derived from the sufferings of "the servant of God," the Messiah, rising by affliction to glory. See chaps. liii. and liv.

Objection 2. In the catalogue of Sacred Books in the Talmud (Bava Bathra, 14. b), the Book of Isaiah is placed after Jeremiah and Ezekiel; therefore we may infer that this second Portion was not written by Isaiah, but was written after Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Reply. In some Hebrew MSS. Jeremiah and Ezekiel are placed after the Second Book of Kings, because they are a prophetical comment on that Book. But Isaiah is placed before Jeremiah in the Masora and in very many MSS. of the Hebrew Bible, and occupies the first place among the Greater Prophets in ancient catalogues of the canonical Books (such as those preserved by Melito and Origen) of the Old Testament.

Objection 3. This latter Portion is popularly ascribed to Isaiah because it has been attached to his prophecies, and "similar instances of agglomerating several works" (by different authors) "under the same name, are to be found, probably in the prophecies of Zechariah—certainly in the Psalter of David."

Reply. As to Zechariah, this allegation will be examined hereafter. As to "the Psalter of David," the case is not parallel. In the Psalter, various Psalms by different authors are intermingled and blended together in one collection; but here, twenty-seven chapters, forming one integral whole, are attached to Isaiah’s prophecies. And all the Psalms are nowhere ascribed to David in the New Testament, nor in the Old; on the contrary, many of the Psalms are expressly assigned to other authors besides David in the titles (which constitute a part of the Psalms to which they are prefixed), in Hebrew Manuscripts, and in our own Authorized Version of the Bible.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

Objection 4. "In Ezra i. 1, it is not Isaiah, but Jeremiah, who is quoted as having foretold the deliverance by Cyrus;" and we are hence intended to infer that Isaiah's prophecies concerning Cyrus were not known to Ezra, or, if known, were not owned by him to be genuine.

Reply. Ezra referred to Jeremiah, because Jeremiah had defined beforehand the precise year in which the edict of Cyrus was issued for the restoration of the Jews (Jer. xxv. 11, 12; xxix. 10). There was something more specific in that definition of the year, than even the mention of the name of the person, Cyrus, by whom the deliverance was to be effected (Isa. xliv. 28; xlvi. 1); and it is of the year in which the liberation took place that Ezra is speaking—"In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia" (he says), "that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled." And precisely the same words are used in the Chronicles (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22) concerning the year, where there is a similar reference to Jeremiah.

In speaking of the year of the restoration of the Jews, it would not have been relevant to refer to Isaiah, who had said nothing concerning the year; but it was very pertinent to appeal to Jeremiah, by whom the year of the return had been foretold. But in referring to the Prophet Jeremiah, Ezra did not intend to exclude the Prophet Isaiah. And Josephus 1 reports the judgment of the Jewish Church on these prophecies of Isaiah, when he says that they were shown to Cyrus, and that he was induced by them to restore the Jews.

The present canon of the Hebrew Scriptures was completed in the days of Ezra; and the fact that the whole of what is commonly ascribed to Isaiah, including chapters xl.—lxvi. is contained in the Hebrew Canon, and was received as genuine by the Hebrew Church, and was acknowledged as such by our Blessed Lord and His Apostles, and is recognized as genuine by the whole Christian Church, is a proof that the whole is the genuine work of Isaiah the Prophet, and was accepted by Ezra as such.

This is further confirmed by the fact, that the language of this Portion of Isaiah is adopted by Prophets who lived before the taking of Jerusalem and during the Captivity, especially Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Compare Isaiah xlvi. 1—3 with Jeremiah xlviii. 18. 22. 26. 27. Compare Isaiah lix. 12 with Jeremiah xlv. 7.

Objection 5. "The style of this Portion, though in many respects similar to the earlier chapters, differs essentially, in its ease and continuous flow, from the first Portion;" and also the differences of language are stated by the most distinguished Orientalists to be "distinctly marked."

Reply. To this objection an answer may be made in the following words from a learned philological work 2:

"The language of the Second Portion of Isaiah vouches for itself, not only by its freedom from later idioms and Chaldaisms, but also by characteristic peculiarities, as that of Isaiah.

"That the mode of representation in chapters xl.—lxvi. has on the whole more clearness, transparency, ease, fluency, detail, and breadth, than the language of the First Portion, which is recognized as genuine—in which conciseness and condensation of expression, rapid change of figures (often only slightly indicated), predominate, and, consequently, here and there obscurity of style arises—cannot but be acknowledged.

"But this difference is fully accounted for by the difference of the subject.

"The language of the First Portion, recognizable by these peculiarities, is denunciatory in its contents; and brevity and vigour of expression are as suitable to this minatory character as, in the present chapters, a clear and easy flow of language, and a rich fulness of graphic description, constituting a life-like representation, are suitable for the announcement of infinite salvation. Here, also, the accumulation of manifold appositions, and especially in regard to the naming of Jehovah, will appear the less surprising, the more we consider the immensity of the salvation, surpassing all hope, which the Lord prepares for His people.

"Besides, it must be added, that the prophecies of the First Part consist of speeches which, under difficult circumstances, and in times of great excitement, were openly pronounced to the

1 Ant. xii. 1. 1. 2 See Kueper, Caspari, Keil, and others. 3 Keil, Einleitung, § 71, p. 245.
people; while, on the other hand, the chapters of this latter Portion contain the well-considered result, wrought out in its relation to the outward life of the Prophet, and recorded for posterity, of his spiritual functions with respect to the future of the Theocracy, and also of the higher revelations and manifestations communicated to him by reason of these functions." Further, "this expressly establishes the greatness of Isaiah, and generally one of his most prominent excellences, that, accordingly as the subject requires it, he has easily at command every variety of language and every species of description."

"Finally, these chapters show not a few of Isaiah’s characteristic peculiarities of manner and setting forth, e. g. the frequent and peculiar application and conjunction of antithesis, paronomasia, and play on words, crowded details, clauses for the formation of refrains and gradual rhythms, insertion of songs, chiefly hymns of thanksgiving, rarity of visions, and symbolical treatment."

Yet further, it is alleged, that the Writer of this Second Portion lived more than a century and a half after Isaiah, and toward the close of the Captivity, and when "Cyrus and his conquests were already well known."

If these allegations were well grounded, then the Author of this Second Portion ought not to be honoured as a Prophet, but to be stigmatized as an impostor.

He represents himself as living long before the age of Cyrus. He propounds it as a marvellous thing, and as a signal proof of divine foresight, that God should call Cyrus by name.

But if "Cyrus and his conquests were already well known" when the author wrote, was it any proof of Omniscience to be able to utter a name with which the world rang?

In other places the writer represents himself as living at a time before the Captivity. For example, he calls the Church 'Hephzibah, the name of the wife of king Hezekiah. Such a designation of the Church was very appropriate in the age of Isaiah and Hezekiah, for the reasons stated in the following notes. But it was not at all likely to have been originated in the latter times of the Babylonian Captivity (to which the author is assigned by the objectors), a hundred and fifty years after the death of Hezekiah. Therefore we do not hesitate to repeat, that if the writer of this Second Portion did not live before the Captivity, he is not to be revered as a prophet, but to be rejected as guilty of forgery; and yet this Second Portion of this Book is quoted as Scripture by the Holy Spirit at least twenty-six times in the New Testament. Would the Holy Spirit of Truth cite the words of an Impostor as the oracles of God?

1. Cpt. the evidence of this in Klein, p. 279, &c.; and Hâbernick, p. 101, &c. The few Chaldaisms, as ḫârâ (xii. 9) and ḥârâ (xii. 10), are of a poetical kind, and testify as little to the period of exile as ḫârâ (xii. 25)—a word Isaiah may very well have appropriated from the intercourse of the Jews with the Assyrians, which took place in his time. Cp. Hâbernick, i. p. 228, &c. The idiom added by the opponents (namely, Kasel, Jesu i. p. xxvii, &c.), and accumulated in an mercurial manner, other explain themselves from the nature of the subject, since a piece of such extent must, it is easily imaginable, contain many peculiar ideas and words (cp. Klein, p. 250; and Delitzsch to Drebek, iii. p. 400); or are not general, as g. e. ḫârâ, of Israel or of the Messiah, is only to be found in ch. xi.—xviii.; or rest only on false interpretation, as Ḫyâh, Ḫyâh in the presumed sense = Salvation, Victory; Ḫyâh for Religion, Ḫyâh for prose, &c.; or occur in the "genuine" Isaiah also, as Ḫyâh, Islands, distant coast-lands, cp. xi. 11; Ḫyâh, cp. xxiv. 21; Ḫyâh, darkness for misfortune, cp. viii. 22.

2. On the other hand, the "Isaianic" idioms are so remarkable and so emphatic, that they cannot be overlooked as trifles, and explained away as imitations or repetitions. So, for example, we often find Ḫyâh, Ḫyâh, xii. 14, 16, 20, &c. (about fourteen times in these chapters); the use of Ḫyâh to be named, for to be, and to be recognized, xlvii. 1. 4, 5; xlviii. 8, &c. (cp. Gesenius, ii. p. 29); the formula Ḫyâh Ḫyâh, xvi. 6; xlvii. 4—cp. iv. 3; xix. 18; the Ḫyâh Ḫyâh in parenthesis for Ḫyâh Ḫyâh (cp. Klein, p. 239—250); Ḫyâh Ḫyâh for God, xlvii. 26; v. 16. Cp. i. 24; the poetical Ḫyâh Ḫyâh, xlii. 5; xlvii. 3; xlvii. 19; xlii. 9; xlvii. 23—as xlii. 24; Ḫyâh for Egypt, ii. 9—as xxx. 7; Ḫyâh, xlvii. 24—as xli. 1; Ḫyâh, tribula, xlii. 15, and xxvii. 27; Ḫyâh Ḫyâh, xlvii. 3, and xxx. 25; Ḫyâh Ḫyâh, only iv. 13, and viii. 19; Ḫyâh, xlvii. 8; xlvii. 11; xlii. 2. 5—xiii. 17; the conjunction Ḫyâh Ḫyâh, li. 15—as xii. 13; vi. 1; Ḫyâh Ḫyâh of the drying up of the water, xlii. 17, and xii. 5; Ḫyâh Ḫyâh—as v. 5; vi. 13; Ḫyâh, xlvii. 2—as xii. 10, &c. Cp. Klein, iii. 229—279.


4. It is difficult to account for such passages as the following (xlii. 1—7. 21—24; xliii. 1—19; xlv. 20, 21; xlvii. 10—13), of impudent, and indeed suicidal meandery, if they were not written before Cyrus appeared on the political scene. (Frob. Inexstable, in Dr. W. Smith’s Bibl. Dict. l. 880.)

4. xlvii. 3.

5. xlvii. 4.
Besides, if Isaiah, who was a divinely-inspired Prophet, could not be enabled to foretell clearly the restoration of the Jews by Cyrus, which took place about a century and a half after Isaiah’s death, how came it to pass that he was enabled to foretell with even greater distinctness (and with the clearness of an Evangelist) the restoration of the human race by Jesus Christ, more than 700 years after Isaiah’s time?

And yet some of those who allege that this Second Portion was not written by Isaiah, are constrained to allow that “these six-and-twenty” (seven-and-twenty) “chapters are the most deeply inspired, the most truly evangelical portion of the prophetic writings.” Was the author of the “most deeply inspired and evangelical of all prophecies” not enabled to foretell clearly what would happen within two centuries after his own death?

It is also alleged that this Second Portion, containing these twenty-seven chapters, could not have been written by Isaiah, but was written by some Hebrew author in the time of the Chaldean Captivity, “because the standing-point of the writer is Babylon.”

But it may be replied, that this would prove a great deal too much; for in some of these twenty-seven chapters the “standing-point of the writer” is not Babylon in the age of Cyrus, but it is Palestine in the age of Christ. The Prophet has no fixed stand-point. He is not riveted to one place; “modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athens;” he is translated from his own age across an interval of seven centuries, and stands on the banks of the Jordan and hears the words of John the Baptist. He is present at Calvary, and beholds Christ on the cross; and he sees the “glory that should follow” the sufferings of Christ; the extension of the Church militant, and the felicity of the Church triumphant.

Some of the critics, who deny the genuineness of this Portion, and are pressed with this argument, resort to the bold expedient of denying that the writer of this Portion has any notion of a personal, suffering Messiah, even in the fifty-third chapter; and they refuse to see Christ in it, and in the other prophecies concerning “the servant of the Lord” giving His back to the smitors and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; and they apply them to an ideal Israel, although the Holy Spirit in the New Testament expressly affirms that fifty-third chapter to have been fulfilled in Christ on the cross. Thus, in order to be consistent in denying the genuineness of these twenty-seven chapters, they plunge from one depth of scepticism into another.

Isaiah himself, in the first words of his prophecy, characterizes his prophecies as the vision which he saw. The words which are rendered vision and saw, are applied in the Hebrew Scriptures to objects at the greatest possible distance from the seer, even the last things of all; and therefore, even at the beginning of his Book, he prepares us for the revelation of future events far more distant than the return from Babylon.

The fact, that various parts of these last twenty-seven chapters must have been composed at a time before the Captivity, is candidly admitted by some, who assert that the residue was not written by Isaiah; and they therefore reject those parts as interpolations. Nor is this all. It has been shown that the captivity of Judah at Babylon, and the destruction of Babylon, and the deliverance of Judah, are distinctly foretold, not only in the Second Portion of Isaiah, but in sundry chapters and sections of the First Portion also. How is this to be accounted for? Was Isaiah not the author of the First Portion? To which question the objectors reply, We will not say this; but those “chapters and sections in the First Portion are also spurious interpolations.”

To such shifts are men reduced, when they reject the testimony of the ancient Hebrew Church, and of Christ Himself, authenticating the Hebrew Canon of the Holy Scriptures, and delivering them to us as genuine and inspired. Truly, Scepticism is cruel to its votaries; and they who serve it, serve a hard task-master. They who believe Christ and His Church, believe One “Whose service is perfect freedom;” but they who rely on themselves, or bow to the arbitrary dogmatism of some few Critics, who, in the eighteenth or nineteenth century, rise up in opposition to Christ and His Church, are the slaves of a merciless tyranny, which exacts from them an unlimited amount of credulity and vassalage.

1 Stanley, Ibid. p. 577.  
2 xl. viii.  
3 iii. 3—11.  
4 Ch. l. 5. 6.  
6 Pet. ii. 21.  
7 Heb. chodzah.  
ix. 21;  
9 Such as lvi. 9—lvi. 11; lxi. 1—lxiii. 6; lxiii. 7—lxvi.  
10 So Ewald, and after him, partly, Stanley, p. 533, who says that lvi. 9—lvi. 11 has all the appearance of an earlier fragment incorporated.  
11 See chaps. xili. 4xxi. xxxix. 3—7.
The Second Portion of Isaiah is found in the many hundred extant Manuscripts of the original Hebrew Copies and Ancient Versions of Isaiah in various languages.

If these twenty-seven chapters had been forged in the name of Isaiah more than a century and a half after Isaiah's age, and after the destruction of Jerusalem, it is absolutely impossible that they should have found their way into all the copies of Isaiah in the hands of the Ten Tribes of Israel, and of the Two tribes of Judah, then separated from one another, and scattered in innumerable places over the vast empire of the East, and have been received by them all as the genuine production of Isaiah, and as the inspired Word of God.

The Holy Spirit cites this Second Portion by name as the work of Isaiah the prophet. It is expressly ascribed to Isaiah by Him, speaking by the Apostles and Evangelists in the Christian Scriptures. The Book which was given to our Blessed Lord in the Synagogue at Nazareth, and which contained this Second Portion, is called "the Book of Esaias the Prophet." And what was named the Book of Isaiah by the whole ancient Hebrew Church, and what is declared to be the Book of Isaiah by the Holy Ghost in the New Testament, and what was received as the Book of Isaiah by Jesus Christ Himself, and by His holy Apostles and Evangelists, and by the Ancient Universal Church of Christ, and was never ascribed to any one else but Isaiah for sixteen centuries after Christ, will surely be received as the genuine work of Isaiah by all who revere the divine authority of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, and who, in their journey through this transitory life, love to be like the faithful Ethiopian, who had the care of all the treasure of Queen Candace, and felt, to his inexpressible joy, that he held in his hands a far greater treasure than all, when he sat in his chariot and was reading one of these twenty-seven chapters,—namely, the fifty-third, a chapter quoted five times in the New Testament,—and when St. Philip the Evangelist joined himself to his chariot, and preached to him Jesus from that chapter, and baptized him in the Name of Christ; and of whom it is said by the sacred historian, that in reading that fifty-third chapter he was "reading Esaias the Prophet."

The most important Commentaries on Isaiah are—

1. By ancient Christian Expositors, those of S. Jerome, S. Cyril of Alexandria, and Theodoret; the two former are of great value. The Exposition of S. Chrysostom extends only to the first eight chapters; and that of S. Basil to chapters i.—xvi. The writings of S. Justin Martyr, especially his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, abound with expository remarks on Isaiah.


3. Of more recent Commentators may be mentioned, Bp. Louth; Rosenmüller, 1829; Gesenius, 1821-29; Hitzig, 1833; Hendewerk, 1836-44; Henderson, 1840; Umbreit, 1841; Knobel, 1843; Drenckster (chapters i.—xxvii.), 1845-49, completed by Delitzsch; Alexander, 1848; Schegg, 1850; Meier (the first half), 1850; Caspari, the first five chapters; Stier, 1850, the last twenty-seven chapters; and especially Delitzsch (Leipz., 1866), whose excellent Commentary has been translated into English by the Rev. James Martin, and published in Clark's Foreign Theological Library. 2 vols, Edinburgh, 1867.

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THE PROPHETS.

Some of the Prophets, e.g. Hosea and Isaiah, prophesied during a much longer time than others; and therefore some of their prophecies may be later in date than some of the prophecies of Prophets who began to prophesy after them. Their dates for the most part cannot be precisely determined. It is probable that the books of most of the Prophets contain the substance and pith of prophecies delivered by them at intervals on several occasions. In the following Table, some modifications have been adopted of that order which is exhibited in the Table prefixed to Isaiah.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prophet</th>
<th>Date and Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hosea</td>
<td>In the days of Jeroboam II., King of Israel, and Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah</td>
<td>Probably in the days of Uzziah, King of Judah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joel</td>
<td>Probably in the days of Uzziah, King of Judah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amos</td>
<td>In the days of Jeroboam II., King of Israel, and Uzziah, King of Judah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obadiah</td>
<td>Probably in the days of Uzziah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonah</td>
<td>Probably in the days of Uzziah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micah</td>
<td>In the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah. Cf. Jer. xxvi. 18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nahum</td>
<td>Probably in the reign of Hezekiah, King of Judah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habakkuk</td>
<td>Probably in the reign of Manasseh or Josiah, Kings of Judah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zephaniah</td>
<td>In the days of Josiah, King of Judah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremiah</td>
<td>From the thirteenth year of Josiah, and in the reigns of Jehoahaz (Shallum), Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin (Jeconiah, or Coniah), and Zedekiah, Kings of Judah, and after the destruction of Jerusalem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezekiel</td>
<td>From the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, and in the reign of Zedekiah, and after the destruction of Jerusalem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>In the days of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haggai</td>
<td>In the second year of Darius Hystaspes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zechariah</td>
<td>Associated with Haggai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malachi</td>
<td>“The Seal of the Prophets”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These Prophets prophesied in the time between B.C. 810—710. 710—625. 629—580. 595—573. 603—534. 519—487. 430—400.

For a synoptical view of the historical events of the above period, the reader is requested to refer to the Chronological Table prefixed to the Books of Kings, pp. xx—xxii, and the Introduction to Ezra, p. 295.
I. THE *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.

II. ISAIAH AND DEUTERONOMY.

CH. I.] This chapter to v. 27 was appointed by the ancient Hebrew Church to be read in the synagogues as the Haftarah or prophetical proper lesson, together with the beginning of Deuteronomy (see Deut. xxxi. 1—31); also all the Haftarot Proper Prophetical Proper Lessons appointed to be read together with Deuteronomy, to the end of the thirtieth chapter of that Book, are taken from Isaiah.

1. The vision. It declared the sense of the ancient Hebrew Church, that Isaiah stands in an intimate relation to Deuteronomy. Indeed, the opening words of Isaiah's prophecies, "Hear, O heavens, and let every one hear, O earth," are an echo of those of Moses in his prophetical song, in Deuteronomy xxxiii. 1; cp. xxvi. 9, 29). Isaiah was told "which the Spirit which animated Moses, and, like him, he appeals to the heavens and the earth, which were created by Jehovah, the God of Israel, and which faithfully observed the laws imposed upon them by their Creator, and which were witnesses of the giving of the Law at Sinai, and which had seen the unthankfulness and apostasy of Israel, and which would be witnesses also of the fulfilment of his prophecies in future ages and at the Great Day. This connection of Isaiah with Deuteronomy in spirit and language, which produced the juxtaposition of the one with the other in the ancient Hebrew Calendar, supplies a strong argument for the genuineness of Deuteronomy, and affords a refutation of the strange theory of some in modern times assigning its composition to Jeremiah. See above, Intro. to Deuteronomy, pp. 195—208; cp. Delitzsch here on v. 2.

These first five chapters of Isaiah form an introductory and compendious prophecy concerning Jerusalem and the Church, from the days of Isaiah to those of Christ, and even to His Second Coming.

These first five chapters are like a prophetical prologue to the whole book; and they are like a prophetical summary of it. They foretell the taking of Jerusalem by the Chaldean armies, and the captivity of its people for their sins (v. 13—30), and the latter destruction of the City by the Romans, and the merciful alleviation of that judgment, by the blessings consequent on Christ's first coming; the going forth of the Gospel from Zion to all the world (ii. 5), and the extensions of the Church, which had its origin in Jerusalem, unto all Nations of the World, and the Second Coming of Christ. See ii. 12—22.

Therefore with great propriety has the Church of England appointed these first two chapters of Isaiah to be read as Proper Lessons on ADVENT SUNDAY, and the fifth chapter to be read on the Second Sunday in Advent.

1. The vision—which he saw] These words give the clue to the right interpretation of what follows. The description which we are about to read of the moral and religious state of Judah and Jerusalem is a very unfavourable one; and yet it was written during the time of Uzziah (see below, vi. 1), who was one of the best of the kings of Judah (see 2 Kings xv. 1—9), at least as long as he listened to Zachariah, "who had understanding in the visions of God" (2 Chron. xxvi. 5). But Isaiah was enabled to see the moral corruption which was lurking beneath the fair surface of external forms and splendid shows of reli-

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET
ISAIAH.

Before CHRIST about 709.

A Num. 12. 6.

gion; and he was also enabled to foresee the results of it in the future outbreaks of open rebellion against God, and in the pouring out of His wrath and indignation on the people in the Babylonish captivity, and even (as S. Cyril and S. Jerome observe) in the Roman siege and destruction of Jerusalem, and in the scattering of its inhabitants over the face of the earth; and also to forecast the gracious visitations which awaited the faithful in Christ. See vi. 26, 27, "I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning. Afterward thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness." This could only be said of the Zion of Christ, and of the Apostles. See below, ii. 2, 3.

The Expositors, who have neglected this clue, have placed the composition of this chapter in the days of Ahaz, in the time of the invasion of the Syrians and Israelites (Genesis, Rosenmuller, Maurer, Movers, Kloster, Haverbeck); and others have brought it down to the time of the Assyrian Invasion in the reign of Hezekiah (Hitzig, Umbreit, Drechsel; see Delitzsch on v. 31); and much confusion has thus been introduced into the order of Isaiah's prophecies.

The word vision solves the difficulties which these Expositors have found in the language of this chapter. The whole Book is well called a vision, Hebr. chazah, connected with the words chazah and chazah, to see (cp. Amos i. 1. Mic. i. 1. Hab. i. 1), and with the word chozeh, a seer; see 2 Sam. xxiv. 11. 2 Kings xvii. 13; and rendered prophet below, xxx. 10. It reveals the far-off future as present to the sight.

The unfavourable picture drawn by Isaiah in this and other parts of his prophecies have found in the whole book. The whole Book is well called a vision, Hebr. chazah, connected with the words chazah and chazah, to see (cp. Amos i. 1. Mic. i. 1. Hab. i. 1), and with the word chozeh, a seer; see 2 Sam. xxiv. 11. 2 Kings xvii. 13; and rendered prophet below, xxx. 10. It reveals the far-off future as present to the sight.

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2. **Hear, O heavens!** An appeal derived from Moses in Deut. iv. 26; xxxi. 10; xxxii. 28; xxxii. See above, Prelim. Note. — *I have nourished and brought up children* Israel is God's son (Exod. iv. 22, 23), His most favoured child (Jer. xxxi. 9). 3. **The ox—and the ass** The prophet had appealed to the heavens, which obey the law of their being (cp. Hooker's eloquent words, E. P. I.; iii. 2), and now he descends to the lower animals of creation. They also are witnesses against the unthankfulness and apostasy of Israel, and condemn it; as Jeremiah says, "The stock in the heavens knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but My people know not the judgment of the Lord" (Jer. viii. 7). 4. **Ah!** Heb. hōlā', rendered *ah*! also v. 24. In six places in ch. v., it is rendered *oe*, and in eleven other places in this book, and in four places in Jeremiah, and always in Ezekiel, Amos, Micah, Nahum, and Zephaniah, in one place in Isaiah it is rendered by O (x. 5), and in one by hōl! (v. 1), the only place where it does not seem to imply pain and sorrow. — **sinful nation** Instead of being "a holy nation, a kingdom of priests" (Exod. xix. 6), — they have provoked—to anger! Probably by blasphemy (Vulg.); cp. 2 Sam. xii. 14. Ps. lxiv. 10. 18, where the same verb (nāass) is used, and below, li. 5; cp. xxxvii. 3, where the cognate substantive occurs. 5. **Ah sinful nation!** A very solemn appellation occurring in three places of the Psalms, all of them emphatic; Ps. lxxii. 3; lixvi. 41; lxix. 18, and only once in the historical Books; and there it is uttered by Isaiah himself, 2 Kings xix. 22. It occurs twenty-five times in Isaiah; twice only in Jeremiah, l. 29; li. 5; once only in Ezekiel, xxxix. 7, and is never used by any other prophet. The occurrence of this appellation in both portions of the prophecies of Isaiah equally, is a strong argument for the genuineness of the latter portion (chap. xli. to the end). 6. **ye will revolt** Rather, interrogatively, will ye revolt more and more? 7. **Your country is desolate, Your cities are burned with fire!** Your land, strangers devour it in your presence, And it is desolate, † as overthrown by strangers. 8. **And the daughter of Zion is left,† as a cottage in a vineyard, As a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, As a besieged city.** 9. Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, We should have been as 9 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 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 he goats.

12 When ye come thither to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands?
To tread my courts? 

13 Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me;
The new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with;
It is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth:
They are a trouble unto me; I am weary to hear them.

15 And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you:
 a Yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear:
Your hands are full of blood.

16 Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes;

17 Cease to do evil; 17 learn to do well;
Seek judgment, || relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord:
Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

19 If ye be willing and obedient,
Ye shall eat the good of the land:

20 But if ye refuse and rebel,
Ye shall be devoured with the sword:

p For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

10. ye rulers of Sodom] A noble apostrophe; ye will be desolate as Sodom; yes, because ye "declare your sin as Sodom" (Ill. 9). Sion is another Sodom in sin and punishment. Cp. Deut. xxxii. 32, "Their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Go or mah;" and Ezek. xvi. 46, and Rev. x. 8; and Isaiah is a second Lot, a preacher of righteousness, and of judgment to come. The sun may shine brightly, the landscape may look beautiful; but the Prophet hears the distant rumbling of the coming storm of desolating, and sees the Lord rising from His throne, to rain down the fire of His wrath on the guilty city.

11. To what purpose] The people of Jerusalem pleaded their displays of religions zeal and devotion in the services and sacrifices of the Temple, and in their festal observances, as a bar to the Prophet's severe verdict upon them. But he rejects the plea, and exclaims, "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices?" They are mere empty shows; hypocritical masks and disguises; leaves of the fig-tree without the fruit. Therefore the tree will be withered by the breath of God (Matt. xxii. 15; and see Rev. xi. 2, where there is a description of the more formal religion combined with much internal corruption.

13. vain oblations] Literally, with great emphasis, burying meat-offerings; your very incense is abomination to me.

— It is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. The words "it is" are not in the original, and would be better omitted; the sentence runs on in a continuous rapid stream. I cannot away with— iniquity, even the solemn meeting. The combination of iniquity and the pompous religious ceremonial—the solemn meeting in My courts—is execrable to Me. "Who shall make you clean," if you desire to be accepted. Ye spread forth your hands in prayer, but those "hands are full of blood" (cp. Amos v. 21).

18. Come now, and let us reason together] The mention of judicial processes in the foregoing verse suggests the thought that there is another great judicial process to be gone through between the Lord and His people, in which they must plead guilty. But He graciously remits the sentence, and offers free pardon on the condition of their repentance. God speaks by the Prophet; He speaks in him with divine authority. The Prophet's personality is absorbed into the Divine Majesty of Him Whose messenger he is (cp. v. 11).

20. Ye shall be devoured] Lit. ye shall be eaten. The contrast here is marked by the repetition of the word. If ye obey, ye shall eat—if not, ye shall be eaten by the sword—the edge of which in Hebrew, as in Greek, is called its mouth.

— the mouth of the Lord both speaks it] This sentence is the Divine seal set on Isaiah's prophecies; see xxxi. 17; xxii. 25; xxxiv. 8; xl. 5; lvii. 14.
ISAIAH I. 21—31.

and of judgment to come.

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

22. Thy silver is become dross, Thy wine mixed with water:

23. Thy princes are rebellious, and thy companions of thieves:

Every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards:

They judge not the fatherless, Neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

24. Therefore saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will case me of mine adversaries, And avenge me of mine enemies:

And I will turn my hand upon thee, And utterly purge away thy dross, And take away all thy tin:

And I will restore thy judges as at the first, And thy counsellors as at the beginning:

Afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

27. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, And her converts with righteousness.

And the § destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, And they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed.

28. For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, And ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen.

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

30. And the strong shall be as tow, || And the maker of it as a spark, And they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them.

21. How is the faithful city become an harlot? The Hebrew Nation, espoused in mystical wedlock to Jehovah at Sinai, has become a harlot, by following strange gods. On this metaphor see above, Prelim. Note to Prov. vii., and the Intro. to the Song of Solomon, p. 124, and below, on Rev. xvii. 1, p. 252. — righteousuess lodged in it?] Compare the personification in Ps. cv. 9.

22. mixed with water] Literally, wounded, stabbed, with water; as the Latin Poet expresses it,

"Sculas est jugulare Tarentum"

(Martial, i. 19. 5).

24. The Lord, the Lord of hosts] The title which God assumes in the prophecies of Isaiah when He is about to announce His judicial visitations. See iii. 1; x. 16. 33; xix. 4.

25. purely] So Sept., Vulg., and Vitringa; or it may mean as some Hebrew Expositors say as with alkali (Genee, 138. 142; Eueret, 234, and Delitzsch here). — it is] Rather, lead, the alloy of silver mentioned in v. 22 (Genee, 163).

26. The purpose of all God's judicial visitations on Jerusalem, especially in the Babylonish Captivity and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, was a righteous and merciful one; namely, to refine and purge her people in the furnace of affliction, and to smell away the dross from the pure ore.

26. I will restore thy judges — thou shall be called — the faithful city! This was fulfilled in Christ and in His Apostles, and in those faithful multitudes who were brought into the temple of His Church by the Evangelical preaching after the taking of Jerusalem. See S. Cyril, and S. Jerome, who says, "Hoc perspicue de Ecclesia, qui in Dominum credidit est."

27. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness] The righteous and judicial visitations of the Lord have their merciful ends in redeeming from the bondage of Sin and Satan the converts of Zion, those who turn to Him with true repentance. "As many as I love, I chasten; and be zealous therefore and repent." (Rev. iii. 19.) The bright sun of God's love shines behind the dark thunder-clouds of His justice. Cp. iv. 4.

There is another interpretation of these words which is not to be neglected. The judgment of which the Prophet speaks, may be interpreted as signifying God's justice requiring a satisfaction and propitiation, which was made by Christ's sinless sacrifice of Himself; and the righteousness may designate the perfect righteousness of Christ, offering Himself as an atonement. See below, on Rom. iii. 24, and Vitringa here.

28. And || Or, But.

29. oaks (or, terebinth) — and gardens] Objects of idolatry, and resorts for false worship. Deut. xvi. 21. Ezek. vi. 13, below, iv. 5; lv. 3; lvii. 17.

30. an oak] Or, terebinth, usually green, but now withered. He takes up the words terebinth and garden from the former verse, and says, that they themselves who resort to the shade of terebintb and the secret haunts of gardens, to practise their idol-worship, shall be like a blightened terebinth, and a parched-up garden. This taking up and repetition of words from a previous sentence may be noted as characteristic of Isaiah's style; it is called palindromy (or running back) by some writers; we have examples of it in ev. 9, 10, and in 13, 14; 22, 25, in this chapter. Cp. ii. 9. 11. 17.

31. and the maker of it || Rather, and his work (Sept., Vulg., the Targum, Vitringa, Genee, Del.) I. e. his idol. The strong man shall be weak as tow, and his idol — the wooden image which he worships — shall be like a spark to set him on fire. Sin is the match which ignites the sinner with the fire of the punishment that will consume him.
The Church spreading forth

ISAIAH II. 1—4. from Zion to enfold the world.

II. 1 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

2 And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths:

4 For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

5 And he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people:

6 And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks:

The Future Exaltation of Zion, as the Mother Church of all Christendom.

Ch. II.] From a denominational judgment, with which the former prophecy closes, Isaiah returns to the announcement of grace, and the New Testament (which was recorded in some of its bright gleams in i. 25—27), and displays them in fuller splendour, in a prediction of the exaltation of Zion as the Mother Church of Christendom.

1. The word that Isaiah saw—The scene, being in a prophetic ecstasy, becomes, as it were, all eye, and sees, with the optical organ of his spirit, the word which God speaks. This mode of speech proceeds from the fact that the eye has more sensibility than the ear:

"Segnus irritans animos demissa per aurem, Quam quae sunt oculis subjecta siluae." (Horat., A. P. 180).

2. And it shall come to pass—This prophecy of grace is linked on to the foregoing one of judgment by the initial eau (and), as is the case in Micah iv. 1—4, where the same words occur. The declaration prefixed to this prophecy, that it is the word which Isaiah saw, seems to intimate that it was given first to Isaiah, and afterwards repeated by God to Micah. But the question of priority is of minor importance. The words are the words of the Holy Ghost; and it matters little by whose mouth He first uttered them.

"In the last days! Or, in the end of the days, that is, in the time of the Messiah. It is a phrase taken up from the prophecy of Jacob on his death-bed (Gen. xlix. 1), and of Balaam (Num. xxiv. 14), speaking of the Messiah, and continued in the New Testament. See Acts ii. 17. Heb. i. 2. 1 Pet. i. 5. 20. 2 Pet. iii. 3.

3. the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains—Though despised by the world, in comparison with the lofty mountains of Bashan, and other huge emblems of earthly power (see above, on the Pentecostal Psalm, Ps. lixvi. 15, 16), the lowly hill of Zion, on which God’s Church is built, will be exalted above them all.

This has been fulfilled already in part (as is noted by S. Cyril, Epitome, and S. Athanasius) in the spiritual elevation of Zion into an Evangelical Sion (if we may so speak), to which God’s presence was vouchsafed in Christ, teaching in the Temple, and dying and rising again, and ascending into heaven, and in His sending forth of the Apostles from Sion to preach the Gospel, and to baptize all Nations into the Name of the Blessed Trinity; and in the coming down of the Holy Spirit upon them in Sion, in order to enable them to evangelize the World; and it will be completely accomplished, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of the Lord, and of His Christ (Rov. xi. 15).

4. all nations shall flow unto it? It shall be more glorious than the Hebrew Temple, to which devout Jews flocked from all parts of the world at the great yearly festivals. 

Before CHRIST about 70.

a. Micah 4: 1, 6c.


c. Ps. 68: 15, 16.

| Or. prepared.

d. Ps. 72: 8.

| ch. 27, 12.

| e. Jer. 31: 6, &

| 50: 5.

| Zech. 8: 21, 23.


g. Ps. 46: 9.

| Hos. 2: 18.

| Zech. 9: 10.

| § Or, scepters,

1. out of Zion shall go forth the law—As it did at Pentecost. See Luke xxvii: 47—49. Acts i. 4; ii. 1—8. 39—41. There is a comparison between Sinai and Zion. The Law was given to Moses at Sinai, and that Law was written on tables of stone; but the Gospel, the fulfillment of the Law, is given to all the world at Zion, and is written on the heart by the Holy Ghost. Thus all the glory of Sinai is transferred to Zion, and is absorbed into it. Sinai melts away into Zion. See above, on the Pentecostal Psalm, lixvi. 17.

The Church which was first founded at Jerusalem, was the seminary or seed-plot of all Churches of Christendom. And well might the prophet say, that the Law shall go forth from Zion; for the Gospel streamed forth with its living waters from that fountain and well-spring, and irrigated the world (S. Jerome)

See below, on ix. 20; and chaps. ix. xiv. xxii. lv. 10; lv. 10.

4. many people—they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks? A prophecy of the diffusion of the Holy Spirit of peace, which is the characteristic of the Gospel of Christ, Who is "the Prince of Peace," at Whose birth the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace!" (Luke ii. 14).

The contrast to this is in the words of the Latin poet, describing the warlike temper of his time:

"Squalent abductis arma colonis, Et curvae rigidi facies contumaciter in ensem." (Virg. Georg. i. 507.)

Although this prophecy has not been yet fully accomplished in fact, yet great is the change that has been already wrought in the world by Christianity, wherever its principles have been received and acted on; whence the early Fathers do not hesitate to apply this prophecy to their own times (see Justin Martyr, Apol. i. 39, p. 216; Tertullian, c. Marcion, iii. 21; and so Arnobius, Contra Gentes, i. 5; Victorinus, p. 74); and if men would comply with God’s commands, and profit duly by His grace, it would be fully verified. And this seems to be the sense of this and other prophecies, such as
Ps. lxxii. 7: "In His days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth." Cp. Jer. xxiii. 6. Zecl. ix. 10. They declare God's desire and design; they affirm that He has done all that could be expected of Him for their fulfilment; but He does not force any act concerning the nation. They refer to the covenant on one side, and a solemn warning on the other. On this subject, see more below, xi. 6—9.

6. they be replenished from the east] With oriental luxuries and idolatries. The word rendered replenished, suggests, as Vitringa observes, reference to the pythons, and other diviners, who were filled with an afflatus, from an evil spirit (an ob: see Lev. xix. 31; xx. 6. Deut. xviii. 11. 1 Sam. xxvii. 3—7. Cp. below, vii. 9; xii. 3; xxix. 4, where that word occurs). Instead of lifted, filled with grace from God's good Spirit, they seek for inspiration from familiar spirits.

— soothsayers like the Philistines] Sorcerers practising hidden arts (see Lev. xix. 26. Deut. xviii. 10. 14. 1 Kings xxi. 6. Gesen. 641), like the Philistines of Ekron, where was the altar and oracle of Baal-zebub (2 Kings i. 2—16).

7. silver—horses] Contrary to the Divine command (Deut. xvii. 14—17), they rely on an arm of flesh rather than on God.

9. the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself] This seems to be the true interpretation, and is supported by Sept., Vulg., and Syrino. Most modern interpreters (since Vitringa, p. 81) render it, the mean man shall be bowed down, and the great man shall be humbled; but then there would be a superfluous repetition in v. 11, where the words here used are taken up; and the prophet declares, that they who bow themselves down to idols, shall be bowed down; and they who humble themselves before false gods, will be humbled by the true God. The verbs shakah and shaphel may well bear the sense given to them in our version. See Job xi. 13. Ps. xxxv. 4. Hab. iii. 6; below, xxiv. 4; xxix. 19. Ps. cxiv. 5. Jer. xiii. 18.

10. Enter into the rock] As a routed army, fleeing before a conqueror, for refuge. See Josh. x. 17, where the five kings flee to the cave at Makkedah, after their defeat at Bethhoron; and compare on Rev. vi. 15; and below, vi. 19 and 21.

— hide thee in the dust] As travellers endeavouring to escape the sweeping simoom in the desert.

13. odes of Lebanon—oaks of Bashan] The proud princes and potentates of Israel. See x. 33. Ezek. xvi. 3.
The Day of the Lord. ISAIAH II. 16—22. III. 1—4. The Confusion of His enemies.

16. And upon all the ships of Tarshish, And upon all pleasant pictures.

17. 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 in that day.

18. And the idols he shall utterly abolish.

19. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, And into the caves of the earth, For fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, When he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

20. In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, Which they made each one for himself to worship, To the moles and to the bats;

21. To go into the clefts of the rocks, And into the tops of the ragged rocks, For fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, When he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

22. Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: For wherein is he to be accounted of?

3. For, behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, Doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah The stay and the staff, The whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water, The mighty man, and the man of war, The judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, The captain of fifty, and the honourable man, And the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator. And I will give children to be their princes, And babes shall rule over them.

16. ships of Tarshish.] All the noble vessels and instruments of commercial prosperity. Cp. Ps. xlvi. 6.

— all pleasant pictures.] All beautiful speculations of curiosity, desire, and delight. Cp. Job xliii. 22, Rev. vi. 13. Observe the paronomasia in the Hebrew learaot haaretz, which may be reproduced in Latin,—at terrae terram (Delitius).

22. Cease ye from man] Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of men, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish (Ps. cxlii. 3, 4).

There is an ancient interpretation of these words,—sanctioned by Origen, Vulgate (which renders homunculi, viz. in what? by excelso), Jerome, Lyra, Targum. A Lappide, Menochius, Luther, Calovius, and others,—which is not to be neglected, according to which these words are understood to mean, "Hold off your hand from man, in whose nostrils is the breath of life; for how great is He to be esteemed!" Cp. Ps. lii. 2. And in this sense there is a warning here against incurring the wrath of the Divine Son, as in Ps. lii. 12.

But the other interpretation seems more easy and natural, and is confirmed by what follows, as it is by Targum, Syriac, and Arabic here in the Oxford MS. The Sept. does not translate the words at all.

Ch. III.] This chapter is a natural sequel to the former,—"Cease ye from man;" for, adds the prophet, "The Lord, the Lord of hosts," will sweep mighty and shrewd men away, and there is no help in them.

1. The stay of bread] Isaiah adopts here also the language of the Pentateuch (see Lev. xxvi. 26); "When I have broken the staff of your bread," as a punishment for your sin. Cp. Ezek. iv. 16; v. 16; xiv. 13. This prophecy, like that of Moses, in Deut. xxviii. 56, 57, reaches onward through the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans (see Lxx. iii. 20), to its capture and destruction by the Romans. See note above, on Deut. xxviii. 56.

2. the prudent] The divine (Vulg., Syriac, and Arabic).

3. the honourable man] Literally, whose person or communion is accepted, welcomed with honour by kings and people.

— cunning artificer] Skilled in mechanical arts, especially in making engines of war and erecting fortifications, for which King Uzziah was famous. See 2 Chron. xxvi. 9—15; and cp. 2 Kings xxiv. 14, 15, where it is recorded that artificers were carried away captive by the Chaldeans.

— eloquent orator] Rather, the man skilled in oration, literally, in worshipping, or whispering (Heb. laarots) of incantations. See Excl. x. 11. Jer. viii. 17, where the same word is used; and Ps. xivii. 5, where the verb is used; and cp. Gen. 437. The Vulgate has rightly prudens eloqui mystici.

4. children to be their princes] Wise to thee, O land, when thy king is a child! See Excl. x. 16.

— Spoliated children. The Hebrew word here used (teleolunia) is from teleo, to be silly and petulant (Geness. 563, 570. Cp. lxvi. 4, where the word is rendered delusions). Jehoiachin, who was eight years old when he began to reign (2 Chron. xxxvi. 9), was a specimen of these princesly infants.
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, bear thou our ruler,  
And let this ruin be under thy hand:

7 In that day shall he swear, saying,  
I will not be an ✠ healer;  
For in my house is neither bread nor clothing:  
Make me not a ruler of the people.

8 Moreover Cp. "The up.  
Ps. 13, 13, &  
19, 20, 21, & 19, 5.

9 For "Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen:  
Because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord,  
To provoke the eyes of his glory.

10 The shew of their countenance doth witness against them;  
And they declare their sin as ✠ Sodom, they hide it not.  
Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.

11 Say ye to the righteous, ✠ that it shall be well with him:  
For they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

12 Woe unto the wicked! ✠ it shall be ill with him:  
For the reward of his hands shall be ✠ given.

13 As for my people, ✠ children are their oppressors,  
And women rule over them.

14 O my people, ✠ they which lead thee cause thee to err,  
And ✠ destroy the way of thy paths.

15 The Lord standeth up to plead,  
And standeth to judge the people.

16 The Lord will enter into judgment  
With the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof:  
For ye have || eaten up ✠ the vineyard;  
The spoil of the poor is in your houses.

17 What mean ye that ye ✠ beat my people to pieces,  
And grind the faces of the poor?  
Saith the Lord God of hosts.

18 Moreover the Lord saith,  
Because the daughters of Zion are haughty,
And walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes,
Walking and mincing as they go,
And making a tinkling with their feet:

17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab
The crown of the head of the daughters of Zion,
And the Lord will discover their secret parts.

18 In that day the Lord will take away
The bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet,
And their caul, and their round tires like the moon,
The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers.

20 The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands,
And the tablets, and the earrings,
The rings, and nose jewels,
The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles,
And the wimples, and the crisping pins,
The glasses, and the fine linen,
And the hoods, and the vails.

23 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, baldness;
And instead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth;
And burning instead of beauty.

27 Thy men shall fall by the sword,
And thy mighty in the war.

26 And her gates shall lament and mourn;
And she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.

IV. And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying,


It is observable, that in the Hebrew original the nominal affix to feet (their feet) is in the masculine gender; as if to denote the masculine boldness of the women of Zion, in contrast with the effeminate imbecility of the men.

17. the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head.
The eye of the Prophet pierces through all the flimsy and dazzling disguise of female fascinations, in attire and personal charms, and sees the moral corruption lurking within; and he reveals the abject misery and foul shame which it will entail upon these fair sirens of Israel.

— will you] When you are carried captive. Cp. xx. 4; xxxii. 1; xlvii. 13; and below, v. 24.

— caul[ts] Head-bands.
— mufflers] Fluttering veils (Gesen. 774).

20. bounts] Tiaras (Gesen. 665).
— ornaments of the legs] Stepping-chains; chains fastened to the ankle-bands, so that they who wore them could only take short and mincing steps (Gesen. 714). Cp. S. Cyprian, De Habitut Virginitum, near the end; a tract well worthy of being read by women together with this chapter. "Maneat in vobis facies incorrupta, cervix pura, forma sincera—sint a compelludibus pedes liberi" (and Clem. Alexan., Paedag. ii. 12; and Tertull. De Coelo Feminamur, lib. ii., on the subject generally.
— tablets] Literally, houses of breath, holders of scent, smelting-bottles.
— earring] Rather, annulets, charms (Gesen. 437).

— nose jewels] Nose-rings. See Gen. xxiv. 22.

VOL. V. PART I.—9
We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel:
Only let us be called by thy name, 
|| To take away our reproach.

2 In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, 
And the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely 
|| For them that are escaped of Israel.

And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, 
And he that remaineth in Jerusalem, 
\n\n#### Shall be called holy,

Even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem:

The visitations of God's severest wrath on Jerusalem were always tempered with love. So it was in the Chaldaean Captivity, when God healed them of the sin of lewdity, and brought them nearer to Himself by suffering; and when He woe them from material objects to a more spiritual religion, and raised up to them a Daniel and other Prophets, and gave them the evidences of Christ's Coming; and revealed to them the glorious fabric of the Universal Church of Christ rose on its ruins. The Apostles of Christ, all of whom were Jews, went forth from Zion, the spiritual metropolis of Christendom, to plant Christian colonies in all Nations, and to every corner of the world. See on ii. 2, 3, below, on iv. 1.

— seven women shall take hold of one man] Observe the connexion here. He had said before that "a man would take hold of his brother" and implore him to be a ruler, saying, "The dress thou shalt wear, he would decline, saying, "I will not be a healer, for in my house is neither bread nor clothing. Make me not a ruler of the people" (iii. 7). And now the Prophet says, that in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.

What is the meaning of this appeal? 

These words have a twofold sense, literal and spiritual:

(1) The destruction of men will be so general, "when men shall fall by the sword, and the mighty in the war" (iii. 25); that women shall be as seven to one (cp. Ps. lxxviii. 63), and there will be seven candidates for one husband. And they will adopt the same custom of chusing a husband and settling on him, and lay aside their maiden modesty, and would be content if they could only be called by his name, as his wife, so that their reproach among men might be taken away. Cp. Luke i. 25, where Elizabeth adopts the Prophet's words. Or, the literal interpretation cannot satisfy the devout reader. It does not exhaust the prophecy. Indeed, the idea which the literal meaning gives, is itself of a repulsive kind, and, taken abstractedly, not worthy of inspiration; and its unsatisfactory character serves the purpose of constrained us to look beyond it for a spiritual meaning.

All the ancient Expositors, looking at the general tenour of this prophecy, which undoubtedly reaches to the days of the Messiah (see vv. 2–6), have recognized here an Evangelical prophecy; and many of them have seen here a joyful announcement of the eagerness with which Churches of Christ would spring up in all lands. Seven Women will take hold of One Man, namely, of Christ the Incarnate God. Seven is a symbol of prosperity, see Rev. i. 12, where the seven candlesticks represent the Universal Church; and note on Rev. xi. 19, p. 230; They will embrace the Gospel preached by Him, and will cling to Christ, as very members of His mystical Body, by faith and obedience. (2) But this literal interpretation cannot satisfy the devout reader. It does not exhaust the prophecy. Indeed, the idea which the literal meaning gives, is itself of a repulsive kind, and, taken abstractedly, not worthy of inspiration; and its unsatisfactory character serves the purpose of constrained us to look beyond it for a spiritual meaning.

The fruit of the earth! Or, of the land; the fruit grows forth from the Sprot—the Nazarene (see below, on Matt. ii. 23; and Hengst, Christology, ii. 12–15). This fruit of the land shall be for beauty and for glory. The fruit shall be plentiful. The fruit shall be food and drink; because, when He shall come, He will have no lack of food and drink; because Christ shall be the Son of the Most High God. Cp. below on Zech. vii. 23.

The virgin sons, which cleave to Christ, the One Bridegroom, with pure and holy love, are contrasted with the rain and innumerable "daughters of Zion" described in the foregoing chapter. And whereas the former enjoy the benefits which return from Him, such as food and rainment; rather, they gladly suffer the loss of all things for His sake, provided they can be called by His Name, and the reproach of their sin and misery can be taken away. Cp. below on Zech. vii. 23.

This interpretation is confirmed by the two phrases, take hold of; and be called by thy name. To take hold of is best illustrated by the act and words of Ruth at the threshing-floor of Bethlehem, saying to Boaz, "Spread thy skirt over thine handmaid" (see above, on Ruth iii. 9), and by the words of the prophet Zechariah (viii. 23), "Men of all languages shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you;" and by our Lord's words to Mary Magdalene, "Take not hold of Me now; for I am not yet ascending into heaven. See below, on John xx. 17.

— let us be called by thy name] Or, literally, let thy name be called upon us, which is adopted by the Apostles in the New Testament to describe the reverential affection of devout souls for Christ (see Acts xv. 17. James ii. 7, and S. Cyril here).

When men rely on themselves or other men, their supports fall in time of trial. They then take hold of their stays, which sink under them. No one thing can be a "healer," none can raise up "the ruin;" none can give "bread or clothing;" none can be a "ruler" (see iii. 6, 7). But let the devout soul, in every land and in every age, take hold of the One Man, Christ Jesus; and they will find Him to be a "Healer" and a "ruler." Who will take care of all, to slumber and sorrow, and supply all their needs. Cp. Ps. xxxii. 1.

2. In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious] Rather, In that day the sprot of the Lord shall be for beauty and for glory. He repeats the phrase, in that day, of the former verse, to show that he is speaking of the same time. Here is another proof that the announcement of that verse is Evangelical; for here he speaks of the Branch, or rather the Sprot (Hebr. tameach), which can be neither other than Christ; see Jer. xxii. 5; xxxii. 5; and Zech. iii. 8 (my servant the Branch); vi. 12 (the Man whose name is the Branch), where the same word is used; and where the word "Branch," described as God's servant and as a Man, further explains the meaning here, where it is said that seven women shall take hold of one Man; for, though there be many Churches throughout the world, there is but one Man—one Husband to them all—Christ. The wedlock is mystical, such as has been celebrated in the Cananites, or Sons of Solomon, which is the best commentary on such passages as these; and see 2 Cor. xi. 2, "I have espoused you (plural) to One Husband, that I may present you as a Chaste Virgin to Christ;" and the Introd. to Cananites, p. 123. Christ is the Branch, or Sprot, of the Lord, because He was raised up by God from the stem and root of Jesse (see on xi. 1) in a marvellous manner; and because from Him proceed all the beauty and glory of the Tree of the Church Universal, which bears fruit in all the world, and receives all nations under its shade.
The glory of the true Zion.

ISAIAH IV. 4—6. V. I.
The Lord’s Vineyard.

4 When 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,

6 A cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: For upon all the glory shall be a defence.

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

V. 1 Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard.

The spiritual Jerusalem, “the Mother of us all” (Gal. iv. 26), the Christian Church; see Rev. iii. 12; xxi. 10; the true Zion, Heb. xii. 12. Rev. xiv. 1. Cp. above, on Ps. lixxvi. 5, 6, “And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man” (i.e. this and that believer in Christ) “was born there. The Lord shall count when He writeth up the people, that this man was born there.” Cp. on Cant. i. 5; and above, on ii. 3; and below, on liv. 1.

4. When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion (v. 16), and of the burning by which they would be punished (v. 24); and he declares that God’s wrath would be like a burning fire, which would purge away the children of silver (i. 25, 26); and that their flesh (v. 24) would be washed away. This is done by the “fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness,” as Zechariah declares (viii. 1), by the blood of Him Whom He describes as the Branch; as the Apostle says, “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin” (I John i. 7).

The spirit of burning] In the burning fire of God’s judgment there is the Spirit of love, which, while it scourishes, purifies. This was exemplified in the fire which consumed Jerusalem in the Chaldean and Roman invasions. See on v. 1.

5. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place—a cloud and fire. There was One pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night for all Israel in the wilderness (Num. xiv. 15, 16); and so Israel was sheltered from the scorching glare and heat of the sun by day, and was illumined in the gloom of night. But in the Christian Church, which is expanded into all lands from the beginning of the Church Universal. All now may find shelter, light, and guidance in Christ. The grace and glory of God is extended throughout the world to every church, and to every household in it; and thus the Church Universal has become a Holy of Holies (S. Jerome, S. Cyril, S. Basil, Theodoret). See S. Cyril here, p. 77.

A canopv—Shaded recess, especially a bridal canopy over a nuptial bed (see Ps. xiv. 9. Cant. i. 16; iii. 7—11. Joel ii. 18. Gen. 295). A remarkable word, signifying the spousal union of Christ with His Church, and with every faithful soul in it. This bridal canopy will be like a bright halo, a beautiful coronal upon all the glory; surmounting the whole, and overarching it, like the rainbow over the throne of God. Rev. iv. 3; x. 5.

6. there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow] In consequence of the Incarnation of the Son of God, Who has taken our nature, and Who tabernacles in us (John i. 14), the Presence of God, Who dwelt with Israel in a Tent in the wilderness (2 Sam. vii. 12), overshadowed all Nations in the One Church, and all true Israelites will be gathered together under that shadow for ever in heaven, when the voice will be heard saying, “Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men; and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God.” See below, Rev. xxi. 2—4; vii. 17; and above, on the typical meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles, in the notes on Levit. xxiii. 34—42. Deut. xvi. 13. 1 Kings viii. 65. Ezra iii. 4. Neh. viii. 16.

The rejection of unbelieving Israel.

Ch. V.] In the foregoing chapter the prophet Isaiah has foretold the extension of the kingdom of God from one central point, the literal Sion, the city of Christ’s Teaching, Death, and Resurrection—the city where the upper-room was, in which He instituted the Holy Eucharist, and breathed on His disciples after His Resurrection—will give them a commission to go forth and evangelize the world—the city in which the Holy Ghost came upon them at Pentecost. He has foretold the diffusion of the knowledge of God from Sion into every place, by the preaching of the Gospel, and the gathering together of all nations into the Church Universal, illuminated and sanctified by His presence and Spirit.

This announcement would naturally awaken in the heart of the Jews a feeling of surprise; and they might be expected to inquire, whether the love of God to the Hebrew Nation had changed, and whether He had not, after all, His peculiar blessing reserved for them, and had transferred them to the Gentile world.

The prophet meets this inquiry by declaring that it would not be by any reason of God’s change towards them, but on account of their rebellion against Him, that He would “take the vineyard from them, and give it to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” See Matt. xxi. 43.

This had been already declared by Solomon in the Canticles; a book which in many places anticipates and illustrates the imagery of Isaiah; and the Apocalypse more fully develops it. See above, on Cant. i. 6: “My mother’s children were angry with me; they made me keeper of the vineyards.”

Thus the present chapter of Isaiah forms a connecting link between what goes before and what follows. The rejection of Christ by the Jews led to the preaching of the Gospel to all Nations, and to the revelation to them of the Ever-blessed Trinity, into Whose Name they are all to be baptized; which is unfolded in the following chapter. See on ch. vi. 3—8; and cp. Matt. xxviii. 19.

At the same time, the prophet is careful to guard that gracious announcement of the universal extension of God’s favour to all Nations, against all vain murmurings and jealous cavils of the Jews. He reminds them that they are not excluded from the Church of God, because the Gentiles are admitted into it; nor, rather they ought to rejoice with the Gentiles in their union with themselves; and the Jews ought to be thankful for the high privilege granted to them by God that their City was made the fountain and well-spring from which God’s blessings in Christ flow to all nations. The Law was to go forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (ii. 3); and the root was to be a root of Jesse, and He should reign over the Gentiles, and in Him should the Gentiles trust (X. 1. 10). Cp. Rom. xi. 11. This was generously provided for by our Blessed Lord Himself, Who commanded that the Gospel should be preached to all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem (Luke xxiv. 47. 49); and those truths are emphatically proclaimed by St. Paul (Rom. xi. 25—33), who was an example of them in his own person, being by birth a Hebrew of the Hebrews (Phil. iii. 5), and by training a Pharisee, brought up at Jerusalem (Acts xxii. 6), and the chosen Apostle of Christ to the Gentile world (Rom. xi. 13).

1. I will sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard] Although, says the prophet, I foresee that the Lord will cast off many in Israel, and lay waste the house of Judah, which is His Vineyard, on account of their sins, which will be brought to their height in the rejection of

C 2
My well-beloved hath a vineyard in † a very fruitful hill:

2 And he || fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof,
And planted it with the choicest vine,
And built a tower in the midst of it,
And also † made a winepress therein:

b And he looked that it should bring forth grapes,
And it brought forth wild grapes.

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,
Brought it forth wild grapes?

5 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard:
I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up;

And break down the wall thereof, and it shall be † trodden down:

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

7 For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel,
And the men of Judah † his pleasant plant:
And he looked for judgment, but behold † oppression;
For righteousness, but behold a cry.

8 Woe unto them that join * house to house,
That lay field to field, till there be no place,
That † they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!

† II. 5:12. Heb. for a treading.

† Heb, plant of his pleasures.
† Heb. a scbl.

† Heb. ge. 2.
† Heb. ge.

† Heb. of mine ears, with the LORD, &c.

ch. 22, 14. Or, This is in mine ears, with the LORD, &c.

1. Ps. 1xxx. 8, 9.
2. Heb. fenced it—therein! Our Blessed Lord Himself has been pleased to explain these words, as spoken of the Jewish Nation. See in Matt. xxii. 33, where His words coincide almost exactly with those of the Septuagint here, which are ὑπεράνεα περιφέρεια καὶ ἐφοσονετὰ τῷ ἄμπελῳ, καὶ ἐκμολυσμὸς πόρῳγον, καὶ προ- λήμαν ἄρρητα. The words of our Lord are, ἐφοσονετὰ ἄμπελῳ, καὶ φρονὴν αὐτῷ περιφέρεις, καὶ ἄμπελον ἐν αὐτῷ λήμνος, καὶ φιλοθεμοὺς πόρων.

29. After His application of the prophet's words, it would be superfluous to say more.
— choicest vine] Literally, vine of srekh, a vine with dark red grapes (Genesis 796), now called srekh, or serko.
— winepress] Or rather, a wine-vat or trough, in addition to the wine-press (see Prov. iii. 10); it is the leucos under the torcular.
— wild grapes] Labruscas (Vulg.).

5. I will take away the hedge thereof] The spoiling of the Vineyard was due to the sins of those who were appointed to guard and to dress it. Here is the answer to the question suggested above (see prelim, note to this chapter).

4. he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry] Observe the play upon the words in the original, "he looked for righteousness (misphat), and behold oppression (mispaas); for righteousness (itaqakah), and behold a cry (itaqakah) of the oppressed for help.

8. Woe] Here follow six woes, which are also taken up by Christ, Who pronounces eight woes on the husbandmen of the vineyard, who neglected to keep and dress it, and slew the Son of the Lord of the Vineyard (see Matt. xxiii. 13—29); and there is a parallelism between our Lord's woes and those of the prophet. See what follows; and compare below xxviii. 1.

— Woe unto them that join house to house] "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees! for ye devour widows' houses (Matt. xxiii. 14).

— that they may be placed alone] Rather, "that ye may be placed alone." The address is direct, as in our Lord's denunciations of woe.
intemperance, and impurity.

† Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant.

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

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

12 And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: But they regard not the work of the Lord, Neither consider the operation of his hands.

13 Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge:

And their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

14 Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

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

16 But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and the Lord that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.

17 Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the 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:

19 That say, Let him make speed, and hasten his work,
That we may see it:
And let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come,
That we may know it!

Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble,
And the flame consumeth the chaff;
So 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.

And he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them:
And the hills did tremble, and their carcases were torn in the midst of the streets.

For all this his anger is not turned away,
But his hand is stretched out still.

And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far,
And will b hiss unto them from the end of the earth:
And, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly:
None shall be weary or stumble among them;
None shall slumber nor sleep;
Neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed;
Nor the latchet of their shoes be broken:
Whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent;
Their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint,

as a fanatic by the sceptical scoffers of his age, who even turned God's long-suffering into an occasion of sneering and blasphemy against Him, and defied Him to come to execute His judgments upon them. Cp. Jer. xvii. 15. Amos v. 18. 2 Pet. iii. 3—9. The name of one of Isaiah's sons (Maher-shalal-hash-baz), was a protest against such impiety as this (viii. 3).

Prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem.

Isaiah follows up his prophecies concerning distant events by prophecies concerning near events. Thus he challenges inquiry concerning his own predictive mission; and the fulfilment of the prophecy concerning the near event draws attention to prophecies concerning distant events, and is a pledge and earnest of their fulfilment. See on vii. 16; xvi. 14; xx. 3. His prophecies concerning distant events, such as Christ's coming, and the extension of the Church from Sion, and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and Christ's Second Advent, are followed here by a prophecy concerning a nearer event,—the Babylonish Captivity. See v. 26.

24. as the fire] Literally, the tongue of fire shall consume them who sin with their tongues, in swiftness, and in idle words against God. Compare the punishment of Dives, in our Lord's parable: "Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip

of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." (Luke xvi. 24).

— the flame consumeth the chaff] Rather, as the dry grass of the flame (of the furnace) is consumed. Compare Matt. vi. 30: "The grass which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven" as fuel; and see Matt. iii. 12, the metaphor of the Baptist, speaking of judgment to come, as Isaiah is here.

25. their carcases were torn] And their carcases are as sweepings (refuse, or dung) in the midst of the streets (Gesen. 550; and Delitzscher here).

— his hand is stretched out still] To smite.

26. as ensign] Or banner, to summon His armies to battle. The hosts of Chaldea are regarded as the armies of God. He musters them against Jerusalem. Cp. Jer. v. 15—17. From far] From Babylon, described as "a far country" (below, xxxiv. 3; cp. Jer. v. 15, 16; and Hab. i. 8—10).— he will hiss unto them] The mighty hosts of those great nations are but as a swarm of bees in God's sight, and HeHisses (croup[ě]) to them, as a keeper of bees does to draw them to their hive. Cp. v. 18. Treg. Georg. iv. 54.

27. their loins—their shoes] Rather, his loins, his shoes. See on ix. 5. The prophetic view reaches even to each individual warrior; so clear is the vision of the coming army.

The same correction of the plural into the singular is to be made in the three next verses.
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.

And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea:

And if one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow; || And the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.

VI. 1 In the year that *king Uzziah died, I b* saw also the Lord sitting upon a

PRELIMINARY NOTE TO CHAPTER VI.

VISION OF THE LORD OF HOSTS — THE EVER-BLESSED TRINITY—IN THE TEMPLE: MISSION OF ISAIAH.

It has been supposed by many modern Expositors, that in the present chapter Isaiah is describing his first call to the prophetic office, and that the foregoing chapters are subsequent in order of time to the present.

But this opinion seems erroneous.

(1) It disturbs the arrangement of the Book.

(2) Isaiah says that he delivered prophecies in the days of Uzziah (i. 1); and if the foregoing prophecies are not to be assigned to the reign of that King, it is not easy to point to any in the Book which can be assigned to it.

(3) The present vision presupposes previous prophecies. It opens with a copula, which connects it with something before: "Isaiah the son of Amoz, in the days of Uzziah..."

(4) We should have no indication of the person to whom the pronoun I in that sentence refers, unless we supposed him to be known to us as Isaiah from foregoing prophecies.

(5) The five foregoing chapters are, as has been already observed, the most elaborate digression in the whole Book, and general summary of the whole Book, and extend even to the Second Advent of Christ.

(6) It has been alleged that Isaiah could not have prophesied before, if he had been of nervous lips, as he states in v. 5, and that he would not have prophesied without a commission, which he receives here (re. 8, 9).

But he does not allege his unworthiness as a reason for not prophesying, but as a ground for fear, because he, being of unsteady, and dwelling among people of unsteady lips, had seen the Lord of Hosts. He remembered the words of the Pentateuch giving utterance to a similar sentiment. See on Gen. xvi. 13. Cp. Exod. xxiv. 11; xxxiii. 20. Dent, v. 24. Judges vii. 20.

That Isaiah had no previous call, is not to be presumed from the fact that it is not expressly mentioned. He himself tells us that he had prophetic visions in the days of Uzziah (i. 1). And therefore we may be sure that he had a call to the prophetic office in the days of Uzziah.

The call which he receives in the present chapter is altogether a new one. We may compare it to the ordination of St. Paul at Antioch to be the Apostle of the Gentile world, about ten years after he had been called by Christ from heaven, on his way to Damascus. See below, on Acts xiii. 2.

The foregoing prophecies of Isaiah prepare us for this extension of his prophetic ministry. See above, Prelim. Note to chap. v. In the present chapter he has a vision of the EVER-BLESSED TRINITY, and he is commissioned to declare the future punishment of the Jews for their obduracy (re. 9—11), and the evangelization of all Nations by Jesus Christ. His Birth, Person, Office, Actions, Sufferings, Death, and Victories, and His Exposon of a Church Universal in all the Nations of the World, and His Second Coming, and the General Resurrection, and Universal Judgment, henceforth begin to be revealed to us in a glorious series of prophetic visions.

1. In the year that king Uzziah died What is the connection between the vision of the Lord of Hosts, adored by the Seraphim in the Temple? And why is this chronological date mentioned?

(1) This chronological date places us in the first year of the interval reign. It is a type of a sin. Uzziah, the son and successor, Ahaz.

(2) Uzziah had profaned the Temple, and was punished for his sin by leprosy, even to the day of his death (2 Chron. xxvi. 23). Hence it seems too probable that he did not repent of his sin. He was succeeded by Jotham, who "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and prepared his ways before the Lord his God" (2 Chron. xxvii. 2, 5). Jotham is the only king of Judah whose character is represented in Holy Scripture without any censure.

Nothing could be more fitting, than that, when the leprous king of Judah had departed, the true King should be introduced; that when the king was removed, who had dedicated the Temple, and a king succeeded in his place, who in evil days struggled against the waywardness of his people, which "did corruptly" (2 Chron. xxvii. 2), and who walked steadfastly in the right way before the Lord, the Lord should manifest His glory on His kingly throne, visible in that Temple, which had been desecrated by the earthly king, and should reveal Himself as adored by Seraphim there, and should encourage the pious sovereign who clave to Him, by assurance of His favor. See above, on the people who did despise to the Divine Majesty, and did not profit by the religious example of their king.

(3) This sequence of events had its glorious Antitype in the Gospel. Leper of a type of sin. Uzziah. The whole of the first chapter of this prophetic vision is vouchsafed to Isaiah at the beginning of Jotham's reign, this prophecy in the next chapter belongs to the time of Jotham's son and successor, Ahaz. Aramaic.

*The year that Uzziah died* is a type of a sin. Uzziah, the son and successor, Ahaz.

Before Christ about 700.

*Note:*

See above, the note on Lev. xiii. and xiv. When the whole Jewish polity was smitten with leprosy and died, then Christ appeared, the true King of Israel, the Lord of Hosts. When the Jewish Nation perished as a Nation, by its rejection of Christ, then the Church of Christ received a prophetic commission to evangelize the world, and to baptize all Nations in the Name of the Trinity.

Ancient Expositors suggest another still larger sense. As long as the leprous Uzziah of spiritual pride rules in the Jerusalem of our moral being, we cannot hope to have a vision of the glory and beauty of the Ever-BLESSED TRINITY: "Regnum in nobis leprouso regne, non possimus Dominum in sub majestate regnanti videre, nec Soteris Trinitatis nos visitari." (S. Jerome, from Origen's spiritual Homilies on Isaiah, Hom. 1, Hom. 4, Hom. 5.) "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God" (Matt. v. 8). "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. xii. 14). Uzziah was guilty of pride, presumption, and sacrilege. We must mortify our
these sins within us, if we desire to have a vision of God (S. Gregory). When the leprous Uzziah dies in us, and when the holy Jotham reigns in us, then we shall see God.

— the Lord] Heb. Adonai, the Ruler of all. He is revealed sitting upon a throne girt by Seraphim; and thus His divine supremacy over Judah, and all nations, is manifested.

This chapter is the prophetic Proper Lesson appointed to be read in the Synagogues with Exodus xviii. —xx.; and thus the revelation of God in Sinai to Isaiah is connected by the Hebrew Church with the manifestation of God on Sinai.

— his breast] The skirts of His glory. The word is used for the hem of a garment (Exod. xxviii. 33, 34).

The Temple] Heb. beqezel. Cp. 2 Sam. 1. 9; iii. 3. 2 Sam. xiii. 7. 1 Kings vi. 8. Ps. v. 7; and below, xlv. 6. It is translated palace (below, xlii. 22; xxi. 7); and here the Temple is regarded as the Palace of the King of Kings. See v. 5; and Vitr. p. 146.

The Vision of the Lord of Hosts (the TRINILE GOD, see v. 3) is in the Temple at Sion. Sion is the Mother of Christendom.

The Preachers of the Gospel, who were sent to teach all Nations, and to baptize them in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, went forth from Sion (see ii. 3). Thus the connection is marked between the Temple at Jerusalem and the Christian Church. Both are from God. The former is universalized, spiritualized, and immortalized in the latter.

2. Above it] Rather, above Him. The Seraphim formed, as it were, a living canopy over His head, as the rainbow over-arches the Throne in the Apocalypse (Rev. iv. 3; x. 1).

— stood the seraphim] The word seraphim is from the Hebrew saraph, to burn; and being applied to holy angels, it seems to be the Hebrew Expositors testify, to signify their qualities of light, and fervent zeal, and love; like the tongues of fire at Pentecost (Acts ii. 3). One of the Seraphim is here represented as touching Isaiah's lips with fire (v. 7), to consume that word which was written in them like live coals purged by fire, and to purify and refine them. This illustrates the meaning of the word as here used. Others (as Gesen. 796; and Fu) derive it from saraph, to be exalted; but the former sense is the professional theologians. Cp. Vitr. pp. 147, 150; and Ps. xlv. 4. Heb. l 7.

— each had six wings] Two to cover the face, in awful reverence of the Divine Glory, which dazzled their eyes; and two to cover the feet, in humble consciousness of their own unworthiness in His holy presence; and the other two to fly with joyful alacrity to execute His commands.

3. Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts] That a plurality of Persons in the One Godhead is here declared, may be inferred from the words in v. 8; "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Also it is expressly affirmed by St. John, that Isaiah saw here the glory of God the Son. See above, on John xii. 40. Further, St. Paul testifies that he had heard the words of the Holy Ghost. See Acts xxviii. 26.

Hence we may conclude that Isaiah here had a vision of the EVER-BLESSED TRINITY; and this is further confirmed by the repetition of the word Holy three times, and by the iteration of this angelic Triangulum, in the worship of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, revealed in the Apocalypse to St. John. See on Rev. iv. 8; and the note above, on Gen. ii. 4; and on Exod. vi. 3; and on Num. vi. 24—27; and Pfeiffer, Dubia, 359.; and Vitr. p. 152.

This vision of the angelic adoration of the Ever-Blessed Trinity was an appropriate introduction to the extension of Isaiah's prophetic commission to foretell the preaching of the Gospel to all Nations. It was like a prelude to the commission given by Christ to the Apostles to go forth from Sion, and teach all Nations, and to baptize them into the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (Matt. xxviii. 19).

4. the posts of the door] Rather, the foundations of the threshold (Genes. 592). The lowest foundations of the Temple were studded with reverential awe. Cp. Ps. xlviii. 6, 7, 8. "He shall bear me out of His holy Temple." "The earth trembled and quaked: the very foundations of the hills shook, and were removed." "There went a smoke out of His presence.

— filled with smoke] As Mount Sina, at the delivery of the Law (Exod. xix. 18), and as the Tabernacle and Temple, at their dedication (Exod. xxi. 34. 1 Kings viii. 10); and as the heavenly Temple, in the Apocalypse, where these words are repeated (Rev. xv. 8).

5. Who is it?—for mine eyes] See above, Prelim. Note. Isaiah imitates the seraphim in reverent awe (see v. 2); both are examples to us in reverence, and in alacrity. See n. 8.

6. a live coal—from off the altar] Either the altar of burnt-offering (Vultur), or the golden altar of incense before the veil (Dobitzsch). The purifying effects of fire, especially of holy fire, taken from the altar of God, and brought by the hand of the Seraphim, have been already noticed in v. 2; and this consecration of Isaiah's lips with holy fire, may be compared to the ordination of the Apostles, for the evangelization of the world, by the Holy Ghost descending upon them at Pentecost in tongues of fire, and consecrating them thereby (Acts i. 3; and Matt. iii. 11). "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

In a Christian sense, this may be applied to the Holy Communion. We must receive a live coal from the altar, if our sins is to be purged, and if we are to have grace to say, Send me; (this hath touched thy lips) The prophet Jeremiah was consecrated to his office by the Lord putting forth His hand and touching his mouth (Jer. i. 9).


9. Go, and tell this people] "The people did corruptly" in the days of Jotham, the good king, when this vision was vouchsafed to Isaiah. See 2 Chron. xxvii. 2; and above, Prelim. Note; and this message was to be extended to their posterity. See what follows.
"And the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten:
As a teel tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves:
So the holy seed shall be the substance thereafter.

VII. 1 And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the

9. 10. Hear ye—but understand not: and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat! Spiritual blindness is the punishment of the Jews for refusing to see; obduracy is their chastisement for hardening their hearts. This sin and its penalty are like that of Pharaoh: see above, the note on Exod. iv. 21; vii. 14; ix. 12. The judicial power of the Divine Word (like that of the Incarnate Word, punishing those who despise it: see Matt. xxvi. 44. Luke i. 34) is indicated by the imperatice, “Make the heart of this people fat,” etc.

The climax of this sin and punishment was reached by the Jews in our Lord’s age, and in that of the Apostles after His Ascension. Our Lord, and the Apostles, and Evangelists quote these words (Matt. xiii. 13, 15—who are the words of the Sept. here are adopted—Mark iv. 12. Luke viii. 10. John xii. 39. 40. Acts x. 39—25—27), and interpret them as assigning their consummation at that time; and therefore what follows here, “Then said I, Lord, how long?” is to be extended beyond the Babylonish Captivity, even to the times of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies.

—and convert! And turn, repent.

be healed. Literally, and he heal, impersonally (Genes. § 137. 3).

11. Until the cities be wasted. Those afflictions themselves, the Chaldæan and Roman Captivities, were designed by God to exercise a salutary discipline on His people; and many were healed thereby. See above, on ii. 25—27. 13. and shall be eaten. Rather, and for extermination, or consumption (Sept., Jerome, Arabic) for burning (Dutchens, Syriac); that is, as the event showed, although the Jewish Nation returned after the Chaldæan Captivity, yet it would be for consumption by fire (Heb. ched): cp. Num. xxiv. 22; and see ch. xii. 13. And they would be again an item-captive by the Romans. But still the stump of the tree would not be destroyed, but it would spring up in Christ, and bear fruit for ever in Him. See x. 1; xi. 10; lii. 2, where the prophecy is repeated and amplified.

11. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem. See i. 90.

whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves. Rather, whose trunk remains when they are cut down.

the holy seed shall be the substance thereof. The holy seed, Christ, the holy Seed of the Women, the Seed of Abraham, the Seed of David, is the essence of vitality in the tree of the Hebrew Nation; and though it was felled once and again, yet the stump remained, and it sprouted up in Him, and covers the earth, and receives all Nations under its shade. Cp. xxvi. 6.

thus we see a preparation made in this chapter for the still clearer prophecy which follows in the next chapter, concerning the Birth of Christ, Immanuel, God with us, from the Virgin of the House of David (vii. 13, 14).

Preliminary Note.

Prophecy of the Birth of Immanuel from the Virgin of the House of David.

Ch. VII.] The date of the following prophecy may probably be fixed at the critical time which followed the defeat of Ahaz, king of Judah, by the forces of Syria and Israel, who had begun to threaten Judah even in the days of the father of Ahaz (2 Kings xv. 37), and under whose bands he was brought into subjection by God for his sins; as described in 2 Chron. xxviii. 35. Alarmed by the menace of Syria and Israel, Ahaz appealed for succour to the king of Assyria, Tiglath-Pileser (2 Chron. xxviii. 16—20), instead of resorting to God, by faith and repentance, for protection; as was afterwards done with signal success by his son Hezekiah (see below, xxi. 3), who stands in striking contrast, in the pages of Holy Scripture, to his father Ahaz.

Syria and Israel, being confederate against Judah, appear to have been elected by the victory over Judah which has been just mentioned, and to have proceeded with their combined forces toward the walls of Jerusalem, and to have besieged the capital itself (see v. 1, and 2 Kings xvi. 5), and had already fixed upon a person, "the son of Tabeal," whom they intended to place on the throne of David (v. 6).

It was in that time of alarm—a time which is to be compared with that of the later Assyrian invasion in the days of Hezekiah, to whom Isaiah the prophet was sent, as he now is to Ahaz—that the following prophecy was delivered.

In both cases, the ground for hope and assurance of continuance and indestructibility to the house of David, is one and the same, namely, the pledge of God to David that the Messiah should be born from his seed.

In the present chapter, the immutable faithfulness of God’s promise to David is made more illustrious, because this prophecy of the Birth of Immanuel from the Virgin of David’s house, is addressed to one of the worst princes of David’s race.

In the Arabic Version it is noticed that this chapter is the Proper Lesson for the Festival of Christ’s Nativity; and the Church of England has followed the uniform consent of all Christian antiquity by appointing it to be read in her churches on Christmas Day. It is also appointed by her as the Epistle for the Festival of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

1. Rezin—Pekah—went up toward Jerusalem—but could not
son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it. 2 And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.

3 Then said the Lord unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shear-jashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field; 4 and say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; Fear not, neither be faint-hearted  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 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, 8 That it shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.

For the head of Syria is Damascus, And the head of Damascus is Rezin;

not prevail against it! It is stated in 2 Kings xvi. 5, that they "came up to Jerusalem to war and besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome; where the verb is the same as that used here, the niphal of lacham, which is of very common occurrence, and almost always rendered to fight (see xxvii. 9); cp. Genesis. 436). The sense is, they were not permitted by God to come to a pitched battle with Ahaz before Jerusalem. Perhaps they were dispersed by some divine intervention.

2. the house of David. To which God had assured His unfailing protection (see above, 2 Sam. vii. Prelim. Note); and yet his heart is now moved, and the hearts of his people, "as the trees of the wood with the wind."

— Syria is confederate with Ephraim. Literally, Syria rests upon Ephraim; see v. 12; vi. 2; xvi. 7, where the same verb is used, and is translated by rests. The word is applied to describe an object which settles down on another thing after motion; as the Ark of Noah, after its wandering voyage (Gen. viii. 4), and cattle after labour (Exod. xxvii. 12), and the Ark of the Covenant after various movements (see Josh. iii. 13). The use of the word here is to be explained by the fact, that the king of Syria had gone southward in a military campaign to Elath on the Red Sea (2 Kings xvi. 6); and, having recovered Elath to Syria, from which it had been taken by Uziah (2 Kings xiv. 22; cp. 2 Kings xv. 16), had now returned after his excursion, and settled upon Israel, by joining his forces to those of the king of Israel which were marshalled against Ahaz.

— his heart was moved. The trepidation of Ahaz and his people is contrasted with the confident assurance of Syria, which had settled down on Israel, who allowed itself to be made a basis by the heathen Syria, for organizing a solid and compact force against Jerusalem.

3. Then said the Lord unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou and Shear-jashub thy son. Shear-jashub,—which signifies a remnant shall return.

Isaiah's sons were signs (see viii. 8). Shear-jashub was a sign, that, however Judah might be punished for its sins (like a tree felled to the ground), yet a remnant should be preserved and return; see the words at the close of the foregoing chapter, which explains this name: "In it shall be a tenth, and it shall return (v. 13); and cp. x. 21, "The remnant shall return" to the Lord God. This had been already fulfilled in part, in the restoration of the captives of Judah in the days of Ahaz (see 2 Chron. xxviii. 5), and was further verified in the return after the Chaldean Captivity, and still more in the turning of the remnant to God in the persons of the Apostles and first disciples of Christ, all of whom were Jews; and in the conversion of 3000 Jews from all parts of the world to Christ on the day of Pentecost; and in the gathering in of Jews into the Church by the ministry of the Apostles and their successors in all parts of the world; and it awaits its full consummation in the latter days, when the Jews shall return to God in Christ (Rom. ix. 27; xi. 25, 20).

— at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field. On the west side of the city. The two pools of Gilon have been described above, in the notes on 1 Kings i. 33, and on 2 Kings xviii. 17. The water of Gilon, on the west, was formerly connected by some subterranean channels with that of Siloam on the east. See above, on Nch. iii. 15.

Perhaps Ahaz was occupied at this time in considering how the water in the upper pool could be cut off from the besiegers, and secured to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. See below, on xxii. 9.

It is a remarkable coincidence, and serves to bring out more clearly the contrast between the unbelief of Ahaz and the faithfulness of his son Hezekiah, that this same spot was afterward the scene of the proud menaces and defiance of the Assyrian captains and their host against Hezekiah (see 2 Kings xviii. 17, 18). Did not Hezekiah then call to mind the prophecy of Isaiah to Ahaz his father at that place, and was he not cheered thereby? Hezekiah must have been at least twelve years of age at the time when Isaiah met his father Ahaz at that spot. cp. 2 Kings xvi. 2; xviii. 2.

4. tails of these smoking firebrands. Compare Zech. iii. 2. Amos iv. 11, where the same word is used, and Fuerst, 35. Those two bells burning themselves by their fury, and destroying themselves, are contrasted with the stump of Judah, which, though cut down, is preserved for ever by God (vi. 13).

— son of Remaliah. Observe this phrase often repeated here, ver. 1, 4, 5, 9. It is emphatic. What can the son of Remaliah, a murderer, an usurper (2 Kings xv. 32), do against the son of David? And see what follows.

6. vex it! Terify it.

9. Damascus. — Samaria. Two heads setting themselves up as rivals and enemies to Jerusalem, the chosen seat of the Lord of Hosts, and aspiring to occupy His kingdom; they shall not exceed the bounds of their own land; whereas Zion, the city of David, shall send forth her spiritual colonies
A Virgin shall bear a Son, 
ISAIAH VII. 9-14. and call his name IMMANUEL.

And within three score and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people.

And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, And the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son.

If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

† Moreover the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying,

Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; || Ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.

But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord.

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?

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign;

 Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, And shall call his name Immanuel.

Matt. xii. 59, where our Lord gives them a sign from beneath—

the sign of Jonas.

The confident persuasion that Isaiah felt of his own divine commission and inspiration is evident from this challenge to Ahaz's reasons and arguments.

12. Ahaz said, I will not ask! Ahaz had already made up his mind to resort to Assyria for help; indeed, it is most probable that he had already despatched messengers to Tiglath-Pilser (2 Kings vi. 7. 2 Chron. xxviii. 16); and he could not be dissuaded from his purpose by any promise of help from the Lord, in whom he had no faith; and he hypocritically pretends that he is deterred from asking a sign by a religious fear of tempting the Lord. S. Jerome, S. Cyril, S. Basil.

13. Ye house of David! Ye house of David, to whom the Lord has pledged eternal continuance and dominion in his seed (2 Sam. vii. 16). Will ye also not believe?

The words "house of David," used above, v. 2, are emphatic; and are taken up in the Gospel History of the Incarnation to mark the fulfilment of the prophecy. See Luke i. 27. 69; ii. 4; cp. Rom. i. 3.

—to weary men] Such as Isaiah, and other faithful servants of God. Isaiah means to say, that Ahaz, in despising the prophets, was also despising the God Whose prophets they were. Cp. 1 Sam. viii. 7. Luke x. 6. S. Jerome. 

— will ye weary my God also?] By despising His gracious offers, and rejecting all His efforts to save you. Isaiah had before spoken gently to Ahaz, and had endeavoured to bring him to a sense of his duty by using the words "the Lord thy God;" but now he changes his tone, and says, "my God,"—no longer thine.

The Sign.

14. the Lord[ Heb. Adonai, the supreme Ruler of all. 
— shall give you a sign] A marvellous thing; and it will be both from the height and depth at once; from the height of the Godhead, stooping to the lowest depths of humility in the Incarnation of the Son of God. S. Cyril.

— Beold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel Literally, Behold the Virgin (is) conceiving and bearing a Son; and calls his name Immanuel. On the rendering "calls" see Genesis, § 75. The Prophet utters these words with the vision of the Virgin present to his eyes, and calls Ahaz to behold what he himself distinctly sees.

The word rendered Virgin (Heb. Almah) occurs seven times in the Old Testament: Gen. xxiv. 43. Exod. ii. 8. Ps. cxlvii. 5. Prov. xxx. 19. Cant. i. 3; vi. 4, and in no case does it signify a married woman. Cp. Pfeiffer, 358; Hengst., Christol. 15.

The passage Prov. xxx. 19 is remarkable, and has already been compared with the present; see the note there. The Septuagint, therefore, is perfectly correct in rendering it by μαθήτρια (Virgin) and the Holy Spirit, by St. Matthew, confirms this rendering.

That the present prophecy reached its full and final accomplishment in the conception and birth of Jesus Christ from
the Blessed Virgin Mary, is certain from the testimony of the Holy Spirit speaking by the Evangelist St. Matthew, who quotes these words as they stand in the Septuagint Version, and affirms that they were spoken to Joseph, and also from the angel Gabriel, who referred to them in his message to the Blessed Virgin. See Luke i. 31—55.

The objection that our Blessed Lord was not actually called Immanuel by name would be answered by the Name being called Immanuel is, that this would be His real name and office; so, in John xxi. 16 (cp. xxiii. 16), it is said that this is the Name by which He should be called, "the Lord our Righteousness," because He would be to us what that Name imports. Cp. the similar passage below, ix. 6, and Pfeiffer, Dubia, 538, and Tertullian, e. Jud. 9.

That the house of David was indestructible, and that, although Israel had never suffered any injury to which the people and people from any confederacy of his enemies, such as Israel and Syria, was clear to Isaiah, from the fact that the Virgin (the divinely-appointed Virgin, whom we know to have been of that house of David, who was then revealed as present to the prophet) was to be born in the land, that the Virgin whom, it was born would be born of Her weight. (Matt. i. 23; and see Hengst, Christol., pp. 59—63, where the erroneous interpretations are refuted which apply this prophecy to another or other person than Christ.

Whether the Prophet did not receive a subordinate fulfilment in the reign of Ahaz himself, will be considered below, in the note e. ver. 16.

15. Butter and honey shall he eat. Although He is Immanuel, God with us, yet He shall be nourished, like other children, with butter, or curds (see Gen. xviii. 8. Deut. xxxii. 14. Judg. v. 25. 2 Sam. xvii. 29. Job xx. 17. Prov. xxx. 33; below, e. ver. 22), and honey. He shall have a true human nature, being born of the seed of David according to the Bosh (S. Jerome, S. Jerome, S. Cyril, S. Chrys., S. Basil; Pfeiffer, Dubia, p. 559). Some suppose that the eating of butter and honey by the child, was a sign that the land would be wasted at the time of His birth (see e. ver. 22); but this is very doubtful. But he might know. That is not the purpose of the land of man's estate, and exercise the faculties of the human will; as the Evangelist says, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Luke ii. 52.

16. For before the child should know to refuse evil. Before he shall arrive at years of discretion. It has been supposed by some (e. g. Vlissing) that the Prophet, beholding the future child Immanuel present to his prophetic eye, makes the time at which this growth from infancy to childhood be a measure of time here; but this is doubtful: see below, note d. e. ver. 16.

The land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings. Or, as some interpret it, the land will be desolate, of whose two kings thou art afraid; or, on account of whose kingdom thou art distressed,—a point which is worry and doth his life (cp. Gen. xxvii. 46. Num. xxi. 5; xiiii. 3. Genesis 729). But it does not seem necessary to abandon the Authorised Version, which follows the order of the words in the original. The Hebrew word for land is a general one (adham), signifying ground, or land; and the sense is, the very soil which thou lokest, as sending forth enemies to invade and occupy thy land, and to besiege thee, shall be forsaken of both its kings, who now occupy the territory of Judah and of Israel. The fulfilment of this prophecy was seen in the assassination of Pekah by Hoshea (2 Kings xv. 30), and in the destruction of Rezin and in the captivity of his people by the king of Assyria. 2 Kings xvi. 9.

Retrospect of the Prophecy. No one can read the foregoing prophecy without putting this question—Did it not receive a subordinate fulfilment in the time of Ahaz himself? How otherwise could it be a sign to him? (v. 11).

The passages usually quoted in reply to this question (Exod. iii. 12. 1 Sam. ii. 34. Isa. xxxvii. 20) are no sufficient answer to it. And it is not necessarily held to be the case that the destruction of the kings of Israel and Syria took place before the child, whose birth is foretold here, had arrived at years of discretion (v. 16).

An answer to this question may be prefaced by the words of Josephus: "Divine prophecies partake of the nature of their Author, with Whom a thousand years are but as one day; and, therefore, are not fulfilled punctually at once, but have springing and germinating accomplishment throughout many ages, though the height or fulness of them may refer to some one age." (Adv. of Learning, p. 161); and they are to be interpreted accordingly.

There is scarcely one of the prophecies which St. Matthew applied to the prophecies of the New Testament which had not a subordinate and preparatory tendency towards fulfilment in the ages long before Christ. The weeping of Rachel for her children; the call of the Son of God from Egypt; and other prophecies, which the Evangelist applies to Christ in the New Testament, are examples of this. Besides, the Hebrew-baz history. And when the Evangelist declares that they were fulfilled in Christ, he means that they reached their full and final consummation in Him; and that no other fulfilment of them was to be looked for. As Joachim and Zephaniah, to which see below, note on the Jewish perversion of this passage; and note below, on Matt. i. 23; and see Hengst, Christol., pp. 59—63, where the erroneous interpretations are refuted which apply this prophecy to another person than Christ.

The question, therefore, may be reverently asked—Whether some glimpses and glimmers of the future glorious and perfect accomplishment of Isaiah's prophecy in Christ were not given in the days of King Ahaz to be a present sign and encouragement, and a pledge and earnest of that future accomplishment which exhausted all its significance?

It seems that Isaiah himself has answered this question. At the beginning of the next chapter he declares a consecutive message of Jehovah, which reflects much light on this prophecy: "Moreover, the Lord said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz (i. e. speed spelt—preg hastens). And I took unto me two fruitful women witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the Lord to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz. For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria." (viii. 1—4).

The immediate juxtaposition of these words, repeating those of the present chapter: "The Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel;—before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings" (namely, the two kings of Damascus and Samaria mentioned in vii. 4), shows that the prophecy in this chapter is to be illustrated by the following chapter:

Besides, the twofold element in Maher-shalal-hash-baz, with a similar sense (speed spelt—preg hastens), was designed to indicate the taking by Assyria of the spoil from the two kings, who had come to despise Jerusalem.

I do not say that the prophecy was fulfilled in the birth of the two kings, who was probably a virgin when the present prophecy was uttered, for she would otherwise have been called his wife; and the existence of another son of Isaiah, Shearjashub, is no evidence to the contrary, for Shearjashub was now old enough to be his father's companion, and his mother may have been dead. It is not to be supposed that the birth of Shear-jashub was the accomplishment of the prophecy, "Behold, the virgin shall conceive." By no means. The prophecy of the birth of one who was to be called God with us, could not, it is obvious, be supposed to be fulfilled in all its depth and height by any mere child of man. But the birth of the child of the prophet and the prophetess, and the routing of the two foes of
Judgments of God

ISAIAH VII. 17—24.

17. "The Lord shall bring upon thee,
And upon thy people, and upon thy father's house,
Days that have not come,
From the day that Ephraim departed from Judah;
Even the king of Assyria.

18. And it shall come to pass in that day,
That the Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt,
And for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.

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

20. In the same day shall the Lord shew with a rasor that is hired,
Namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria,
The head, and the hair of the foot:
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;

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 † in the land.

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,
It shall even be for briers and thorns.

24. With arrows and with bows shall men come thither;

Abaz soon after that birth, was a pledge and an earnest of the future fulfilment and accomplishment in the Birth of Immanuel.

If Abaz had been willing to believe, the birth of the prophet's child would have been a sign to him that the glorious prophecy concerning Immanuel would be fulfilled in all its divine plenitude, in course of time; and the execution of vengeance on Ephraim and Syria, the enemies of Jerusalem, by the king of Assyria, before the child of the prophetess (who became a mother very soon after this prophecy was delivered) had arrived at years of discretion (viii. 4), would be an immediate sign to him of the much greater mercies in store for Judah by its deliverance "from its enemies and from the hands of all that hated it." (Luke 1:71—74), by the almighty power of Immanuel, the Virgin-born, of Whose victories there was a pledge in the name of the child of the prophetess, and of Whom both the sons of the prophet Isaiah were signs and types. See viii. 18; and compare the excellent remarks of Denis Jackson on the Creed, book vii. chap. xxxiv.; and see below, notes on viii. 1—4.

Isaiah now turns to Abaz, who had no faith in the announcement either of the immediate sign, or of that great future glorious event which was pre-signified by it; and the prophet denounces God's judgments on him and for his incredulity.

17. The Lord shall bring upon thee—the king of Assyria] In whom thou trustest rather than in the Lord; see on r. 12. For the fulfilment see 2 Kings xvi. 7. 2 Chron. xxviii. 19, 20; in the ravages of Semachah, king of Assyria, who took "all the fortified cities of Judah." (2 Kings xviii. 13); and see the prophetic description of the alarm and devastation produced by that invasion of Judah. "He is come to Alath, he is passed to Migron," &c. (x. 28—32).

The prophecy extends doubtless to the ravages and desolation of Jerusalem by kings of Babylon (such as Nebuchadnezzar), who are reckoned among the kings of Assyria, and are designated as such, as being their successors and representatives. See above, on Ezra vi. 22, and Neh. ix. 32.

Here is an evidence of the inspiration of Isaiah foreseeing the absorption of Assyria into the Chaldaean monarchy.

18. the Lord shall hiss for the fly—Egypt See above, v. 28; and 2 Kings xxviii. 29, 34, 35, for the history of the Egyptian conquests in Judah. The armies of Egypt are compared to swarms of flies, which abounded in the marshy lands of the Nile; the Assyrians are likened to bees, on account of the order, discipline, and energy of their forces under one king; and also on account of their obedience to God, "hissing to them" to do His will.

19. desolate valleys Or, of the sheeps. See Gesen. 149.

20. a rasor that is hired Assyria had been hired by Abaz, who distrusted the Lord, to defend him; and Assyria would be the Lord's hireling, to execute His vengeance on Abaz and Judah. Cp. 2 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21; below, x. 5, 6, "O Assyrian, the rod of Mine anger!" and x. 12.

The prophecy here (as before, r. 19) passes from the times of the Assyrian to those of the Chaldaean supremacy; and sees them both as one continuous sovereignty, and embraces in its range the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. 2 Kings xxiv. 1. 10—12; xxv. 1, 2.

21. a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep] The land shall cease to be a land of corn, olives, and vines; and shall become a desolate wilderness, in which a few solitary inhabitants will be scattered here and there, with a poor miserable homestead of one or two animals only, instead of rich flocks and herds. Cp. Jer. xxvii. 10, where it is related that Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the Chaldaean forces, "left of the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah." 22. abundance of milk] Not from the multitude of cattle, but from the plenty of inhabitants.

22. at a thousand silverlings] At a thousand shekels for rent. Cp. Song of Solomon viii. 11.

23. With arrows and with bows] As huntsmen; and for self-defence. Compare the description of desolation and insecurity in Judg. v. 6. 11.
Because all the land shall become briers and thorns;
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.

VIII. 1. Moreover the Lord said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man’s pen concerning † Maher-shalal-hash-baz. 2 And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, b Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jehberechiah. 3 And † went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the Lord to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz. 4 For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother; 5 the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.

5 The Lord spake also unto me again, saying,
6 Forasmuch as these people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly,
ISAIAH VIII. 7-12.

And rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son;

7 Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them The waters of the river, strong and many, Even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: And he shall come up over all his channels, And go over all his banks:

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

k Associate yourselves, O ye people, 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.

9 "Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; Speak the word, and it shall not stand: For God is with us.

For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, And instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying,

11 Say ye not, A confederacy, To all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; Neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.

See what has been said above, on this interesting subject, in the note on Nah. iii. 15.

The mention of Siloam is very appropriate here, where the prophecy extends to the rejection of the living waters of Christ Himself, the Divine Siloam, by this people, the Jews, on account of His mean and humble birth, and their confidence in worldly powers: "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke xix. 14). "If we let this man thus alone, the Romans shall come and take away our place and nation" (John xii. 48). — rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son. Rather, and there is joy with Rezin and Remaliah's son, instead of trust in God. This applies specially to Israel; and the punishment overtook Israel first (2 Kings xvii. 5, 6)l and thence it passed over to Judah, as the prophet here foretold.

8. his wings] As of an army flying on its course, like some terrible bird of prey. Because Jerusalem refused to trust for protection and shelter to the wings of the Lord, Who was enthroned at Jerusalem on the wings of the Cherubim, and Who promised to keep His people safe under His wings (Ps. lxxx. 1; xexi. 1; xvii. 8; xxxvi. 7; lvi. 1; kc. 4; xcii. 8; xcii. 4), therefore their land would be overshadowed by the wings of the Assyrian army. Cp. Dan. ix. 27; and note below on the word migve in xvii. 3; and on our Lord's prophecy concerning Jerusalem, in Matt. xxiv. 15, — a prophecy which receives much light from the present, and also illustrates it.

— thy land, O Immanuel] Here is another point of contact with the prophecy in the foregoing chapter: "The Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (vii. 14); and here is a proof that the person there pre-announced was a Divine Person, already existing, even from Eternity. The land of Judah, the land of Jehovah, is called "the land of Immanuel." Here is another plain proof, before the birth of Maker-sholal-hash-baz, that Alaz and Judah were not to suppose that the prophecy would be exhausted in his birth, but that they must look beyond to another more glorious birth pre-signified by it.

9. Associate yourselves, O ye people] Or rather, Raze ye nations, and be dashed in pieces. Since the throne of Judah is the throne of Immanuel, therefore all earthly powers, Assyria, Babylon, Rome, that rage against it, will be shattered, like spray and foam upon a rock. See v. 14. Cp. Dan. ii. 34, 35. Matt. xvi. 18: "The World will be wrecked on the Rock of Immanuel." Here is an expansion of the promise connected with the birth of Maker-sholal-hash-baz. See above, viii. 1-4.

10. For God is with us] He repeats here the name Immanuel, as the pledge of indestructibility to the throne of David and the Church of God. Its unfailing safeguard is in the promise of the Incarnation of Him, Who is God with us (vii. 14).

11. For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand] Rather, The Lord spake to me then, In the strength of the hand, — the hand of the Lord God Incarnate, — do thou put thy trust. See the note above, on Jehovah-Nissi (Exod. xvii. 15, 16). "Because the hand is on the throne of the Lord," which is the best exposition of this passage. Trust then in the strength of that hand.

12. Say ye not, A confederacy] Rather, Call ye not treason (or rebellion), what they call treason or rebellion. So Syriac, Targum, and Dellazech. The word rendered confederacy is kesher, which occurs in thirteen places in the Old Testament; and in all these, except the present, it is rightly rendered in our Version by conspiracy or treason.

The Jews, in the time of the prophets, and in Christ's days, denounced all honest opposition to the affliction of Rulers and People, revolting from God, and resorting to human power and worldly expediency for help in times of difficulty, as treason against the Rulers and the Nation. Cp. 1 Kings xviii. 17. Jer. xxxvii. 14. Amos vii. 10. Luke xxii. 2. Acts xvii. 7. In every age, genuine loyalty and honest patriotism are often traduced as disflection to the ruling powers.

— Neither fear ye their fear] Do not adopt their language, censuring loyalty to Jehovah as treason against the State; nor fear ye what they fear, namely, the confederacy of such evil powers, as Israel leagued with Syria against Jerusalem and against God. Compare 1 Pet. iii. 13-15, upon a comparison of which text (as read in the best MSS.), with the words before us, it will appear that St. Peter declares Christ to be Jehovah. So the Holy Spirit does here. He proceeds to speak of Him as a Rock in v. 14, 15, and in other expressions, which are applied to Christ crucified by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, and by Christ Himself (1 Pet. ii. 6, 8. Cp. Luke xx. 18. Rom. ix. 22, 33; xi. 11. 1 Cor. i. 23). The word Rock is the Name of God. See on Matt. xvi. 18.
13a Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; 
And let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

And he shall be for a sanctuary; 
But for 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.

And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, 
And be snared, and be taken.

16 Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.

And I will wait upon the Lord, 
That he may hideth his face from the house of Jacob, 
And I will look for him.

18 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.

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

20 To the law and to the testimony:
If they speak not according to this word, 
It is because there is no light in them;

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 curse their king and their God, 
And look upward.

— For the living to the dead! What madness to practise necromancy, and to consult the dead, either spirits of dead men, as the witch of Endor did (1 Sam. xxviii. 11—14), or dead idols (Ps. cxv. 29), in order to know what concerns living men, and much more, what belongs to the living God!

20. To the law and to the testimony! Do not resort to the dead, do not go to idols and necromancers, but to the written Word of the Living God. To this the prophets appeal; and to this we are sent by Christ and His Apostles (Luke x. 26; xvi. 29. Rom. iv. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. 2 Pet. i. 19—21). — If they speak not according to this word! If they do not hold this maxim and rule, namely, that an appeal is to be made to the Law and the Testimony, the Written Word of the Living God, the reason of this is, that there is no light in them, or rather, that there is no dawn to them;—they have not as yet been visited by the first orient streaks and gleams of a spiritual day-spring, but are in the darkness of night.

Here is a clear assertion, that the fundamental principle on which all Churches are to be built up, is this,—that the Written Word of God is the Rule of Faith and Practice, and that all must appeal to it. This is the foundation on which the Church of England builds (see her sixth Article), as contrasted with the Church of Rome, in the fourth Session of the Council of Trent, where she places her own unwritten traditions on a level with the Written Word of God; and in practice she makes that Word to be of none effect by her traditions.

The prophet says, that all are in darkness who do not appeal to the Written Word of God as their Rule and Standard of faith and practice. And how great, therefore, is the guilt of those who withhold the Scriptures from the people! 21, 22. And they shall pass! Rather, And it (the people who do not believe, and who do not resort to the Written Word for light) goes about in it (in their land of darkness) hardly
Galilee, the land of darkness, ISAIAH VIII. 22. IX. 1—4. shall be the land of Light.

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

IX. 1 Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphthali,

And afterward did more grievously afflict her

By the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

2 d The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:

That they dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy:

They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, And as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

4 || For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, And the staff of his shoulder, The rod of his oppressor, As in the day of Midian.

pressed and famishing (with spiritual hunger, Amos viii. 11); and it comes to pass that when it is famishing it first looks, and curseth its king, and its king by the word vi. 21), lifts its face upward, and looks to the earth, and behold tribulation, distress, and darkness of anguish, and it (the people) is thrust into thick gloom. Such was the condition of the people without the light of the Written Word of God. The Holy Scriptures are their misery to their ignorance of the Holy Scriptures.

But, thanks be to God, a light now dawns upon the world, and is announced in the following chapter, which foretells the beaming forth of that light in the Gospel; and which ought not to be separated from the present.

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men, with the trumpets which they blew, and the earthen pitchers which they broke, from which the light of the torches flashed upon their enemies,—a noble image of the acts of the Evangelical soldiers of Christ; see above, the notes at the end of the fifth and last chapters of Judges (on the acts of Gideon, a signal type of Christ).

5. For every battle—fire! Rather, For every equipment of the warrior who equips himself in the battle, and garments (the military garments, blood, shall be for burning and fire for food: see v. 18, and Ps. xxxvi. 9—11, “He burneth the chariot with fire.” As to the word rendered equipment, see *Ephes.*, 6:10, under the word *secundus*, which he renders equipment, or armament; others translate it by *greaves*, or military boot (*Brecherus*, Del. *Gen.*, 575, *Heudel.*, 84; cp. above, v. 27). The armament of the enemy will be like the spoil of Jericho, to be burned with fire (see Josh. v. 20). This is the fate of the enemies of Christ (the divine Muham-shah-hil-bash), and of His Gospel. See Rev. xii. 16; xix. 11.

6. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given! These words seem to have been in the mind of the Angel at Bethlehem: “Behold, I bring unto you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord!” (Luke x. 10, 11).

The Prophet rejoices, with all the people of God, in the sight of the fulfilment of the prophecy which he had delivered to the house of David,—“Behold, the Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel” (vii. 14).

Both these prophecies are read on Christmas Day.

On this text see *Bp. Andrews’ Sermons*, i. 18.

—And his name shall be upon his shoulder! He will break the staff of the oppressor, by which the shoulders of His people are smitten (v. 4), and shall bear the government of His own shoulder,—a government received in consequence of His obedience in bearing the Cross (Phil. ii. 8, 9), and not receiving the due of the world upon it (below, ii. 4, 5. 1 Pet. ii. 24).

In xii. 22 He is described as bearing the key of the house of David on his shoulder (cp. Rev. iii. 7). On Him is laid all the weight, and to Him belongs all the glory, of sovereignty and peace which He is invested as with a royal mantle thrown over His shoulder.

—And his name shall be called! Or, one shall call His Name, Wonderful; see above, on Judg. xiii. 18, where the Angel of the Lord says that His name is Wonderful, *peli-,* the same word in substance as that (*peli-*) which is used here. See *Gen.*, 674, and note above, on Judg. xiii. 19; and cp. on *Prov.*, xxx. 4, and Rev. xix. 12, where He is described as having a name which no one understands but He Himself.

—The mighty God! Heb. El Gibbor, a name applied to God Himself in the next chapter, v. 21 (cp. Deut. x. 17. Ps. xxiv. 8. Jer. xxxii. 18. Neh. iv. 23), and showing the Godhead of the child here. He who is El Gibbor, is also Immanu-El—God with us.

On this prophecy see *Hengst.*, *Christol.*, 85—88; *Pusey, Lectures on Daniel*, pp. 482, 483.

4. What now? There occurs that wonderful prophecy of One Who should be born a Child, yet of Whose personal rule there should be no end; Whose reign should not pass away, like that of mortal kings, who succeed others, to be succeeded by others, but would be establish’d from the beginning of the world (below, ix. 7). The line of David had lasted, from father to son, nearly three centuries, when Isaiah so prophesied. God had promised to David (2 Sam. vii. 16), “Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee.” Three centuries had verified the promise. Isaiah opens another mode of its fulfilment. It was no longer to be from father to son, but was to abide in one individual, Who should be born of His seed. Of Him he gives that wonderful prophecy of bowingness and Divinity united in the Incarnation. Is. ix. 6, “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.” El, the name of God, is nowhere used absolutely of any but God. The word has been, relatively, in its first apportionable esse, Ezek. xxx. 11, the mighty of the nations, in regard to Nebuchadnezzar. It occurs absolutely in Hebrew 223 times, and in every place is used of God. It has been observed how, in Hebrew too, it is specially used in union with some attribute of God: “God most High,” “God Almighty,” “a jealous God,” “the Living God,” “God compassionate and gracious,” “God, the great and terrible,” and the like; as, here, “Mighty God.” This way of rendering the words in pairs agrees also with the immediate context, in which the title of the Saviour, Who was to be given, is, in the three other cases, expressed in pairs of Decisive, however, is the occurrence of the same phrase in the next chapter. There no one could render otherwise than x. 21, “A remnant shall return unto the mighty God!” No one can doubt that such is the natural meaning of the words El Gibbor. Any one acquainted with Hebrew, if asked irresolutely of any context, “What is the meaning of the words El Gibbor!” would answer quite “Mighty God!” just as one acquainted with Latin would answer, that “Deus Omnypotens” means “God Almighty.” There is no more real doubt about the one than about the other. Had any Hebrew writer wished to express might only, he could have been at no loss to do so, without taking words belonging to God alone. It would then have been simply misleading to have used those words at all, unless the Prophet had used them in their simple meaning; and this not in a matter of slight moment, but in one touching the centre of the faith. The Jewish people was a witness to the Unity of God the Creator. The doctrine of the Trinity enforces the doctrine of the Unity, by revealing fully that of which indications only were given in the Old Testament, the mode of the existence of the One God. The doctrine of the Trinity being true, it is in accordance with all God’s other ways of teaching the Jews, that He should have gradually prepared men’s minds for the full revelation of the doctrine” (*Pusey, Lectures on Daniel*, 482).

The everlasting Father! Literally, the Father of Eternity. See xiv. 17, margin; and xvi. 15. Though He is a Son, yet He is also a Father, without beginning of days or end of life. Christ is the Father of a faithful seed, which will partake of the divine nature (Heb. ii. 17; cp. John x. 29. Rom. vii. 25. 2 Cor. i. 22.)

—He who is El Gibbor, is also Immanu-El—God with us.

On this prophecy see *Hengst.*, *Christol.*, 85—88; *Pusey, Lectures on Daniel*, pp. 482, 483.

7. Of the increase of his government and peace 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 zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

The Lord sent a word into Jacob, And it hath lighted upon Israel; And all the people shall know, Even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, That say in the pride and stoutness of heart,

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

Therefore the Lord shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, And join his enemies together; The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; And they shall devour Israel with open mouth.

For all this his anger is not turned away, But his hand is stretched out still.

For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, Neither do they seek the Lord of hosts.

Therefore the Lord will cut off from Israel head and tail, Branch and rush, in one day. 

The ancient and honourable, he is the head; And the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail.

For the leaders of this people cause them to err; And they that are led of them are destroyed.

Therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, Neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows: For every one is an hypocrite and an evildoer, And every mouth speaketh folly.

For all this his anger is not turned away, But his hand is stretched out still.

For wickedness burneth as the fire: It shall devour the briars and thorns, And shall kindle in the thickets of the forest,

pared with cedars, see above, 1 Kings x. 27. 2 Chron. i. 15; ix. 27.

11. The Lord shall set up] The Lord shall raise aloft the enemies of Rezin (namely, the Assyrians, 2 Kings xvi. 6) against him, against the people of Israel, who had allied itself with Rezin; and against Judah, which had feared Rezin more than God.

12. The Syrians before] The Syrians from one end of Palestine, and the Philistines from the other (cp. 2 Chron. xxviii. 16—19), will be brought against Israel and Judah respectively, which trusted in earthly alliances and worldly confederacies, rather than on God.

For all this his anger—his hand is stretched out still] This is a common formula, which connects this series of prophecies together. See ver. 17. 21; and x. 4.

14. branch and rush] The palm-bran<box>h of the higher ground, and the rush of the low marsh-land—high and low (Genesis, 410).

17. hypocrite] Rather, an impious man. See x. 6.

18. wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour] It is the wickedness of Israel itself which kindles God’s wrath against them; as the Prophet says, “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself” (Hos. xiii. 9). Cp. above, i. 31.

And they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke.

19. Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire:

20. And he shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied:

21. Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: And they together shall be against Judah.

For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

X. 1. Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed;

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

3. And what will ye do in 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?

4. Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain.

5. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

19. the land is darkened] Rather, the land is scorched up (Sept., Targum).

the people shall be as the fuel of the fire] A prophecy which was fulfilled in the conquest of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and afterwards by the Romans, and which will receive its final accomplishment in the fire that will burn up the world (2 Pet. iii. 10—13).

No man shall spare his brother] No; nor even women and their children. See Lev. xxvi. 29. Deut. xxviii. 54. Jer. xix. 9.

20. shall snatch] Or, shall hack and hew (Gesen. 106).

Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh] Not only will Ephraim (or Israel) vex Judah (cp. xi. 13), but it will devour even also its own fraternal tribe, Manasseh. These prophecies of intestine and internecine bloodshed in Palestine were fulfilled in such struggles of Israel and Judah as are described in 2 Chron. xxviii. 6—9, and in the civil disorders and confusion of the last days of the kings of Israel, most of whom perished by assassination (see above, on 2 Kings xv. 9), and much more in the dreadful feuds and civil carnage in the last days of Jerusalem (see below, on Matt. xxiv. 15); and it is much to be feared, that they may have a further fulfilment in Christendom, in the latter days.

It is to be regretted that the present chapter is made to break off here, instead of being continued to the end of v. 4 of the following chapter, which is part of a series of prophetic warnings, connected by the link of a common formula. See on v. 12 of the foregoing chapter.

Ct. X. 1. Woe unto them] This is a continuation of what has gone before. See the preceding note. And that write grievousness] Rather, and to writers who write grievousness, i.e. who execute written documents, which exact what is unjust (Sept., Vulg., and Syr.).

3. the desolation] The storm, coming with a crash, and bringing desolation with it. See Prov. i. 27. Ezek. xxxviii. 9. Gesen. 807.

— To whom will ye flee for help?] They resorted to Egypt, but in vain. Cp. Hos. viii. 11.

— Where will ye leave your glory?] In whose hands will ye deposit your glory as a treasure for safe keeping? Your glory will flee away like a bird (Hos. ix. 11). Cp. below, xvii. 4.

4. Without me] This translation is confirmed by other passages; as Hos. xiii. 4. Cp. 1 Sam. ii. 2; and Gesen. 121. It may also be rendered by except: What is there left for you, except to bow down? So Sept. and Delitzsch. Cp. Num. xi. 18. Amos iii. 6: bow down As in the stocks, in which the head, feet, and hands were cramped together.

Woe to Assyria] The great worldly power, proudly opposing itself to God.

5. O Assyrian] Rather, Woe to Assyria. The same interjection is used here as in v. 1, where it is rendered woe.

In the previous prophecy (ix. 18—21; x. 1—4), God had denounced woe against His own people Israel and Judah; for judgment begins at the house of God (1 Pet. iv. 17). This work would be inflict upon them by God, using great Powers of the world,—Assyria, Babylon, and Rome,—as instruments in His hands for executing His judgments.

But lest it should be imagined (as these worldly Powers would be prone to imagine, see vv. 7—11) that they had wrought this work of destruction by the independent might of their own arm, and had conquered the Lord God of Israel and Judah, because they had vanquished His people, therefore the Lord here foretells that they also will be destroyed; and He reveals the cause of their destruction, viz. their pride and presumption in arrogating the glory of their conquests to themselves.

He also recalls that the mission of the greatest Powers of this World is to prepare the way for the future triumphs of His own Kingdom in Christ.

— The rod of mine anger] The Greatest Empire of the world is but a wand in God's hand, which He moves as easily as a
ISAIAH X. 6–13.

And the staff in their hand is mine indignation.
6 I will send him against an hypocritical nation,
And against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge
To take the spoil, and to take the prey,
And to tread them down like the mire of the streets.
7 Howbeit he meaneth not so,
Neither doth his heart think so;
But it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few.
8 For he saith,
Are not my princes altogether kings?
9 Is not Calno as Carchemish?
Is not Hamath as Arpad?
Is not Samaria as Damascus?
10 As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols,
And whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria;
11 Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols,
So do to Jerusalem and her idols?
12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, that
When the Lord hath performed his whole work
Upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem,
I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria,
And the glory of his high looks.
13 For he saith,
By the strength of my hand I have done it,
Is not Samaria as Damascus?
Have I not taken Samaria, the capital of Israel, as easily as I have taken Damascus, the capital of Syria? See 2 Kings xvii. 6.

On these and other Assyrian conquests, see the Assyrian Inscriptions, published by Oppert, pp. 8, 21, where Calno is mentioned (see v. 9); p. 22, where the conquest of Samaria by Sargon, King of Assyria, father of Sennacherib, is described (see above, on 2 Kings xviii. 9); p. 23, where Sargon says ["He scoured Hamath"] was not the lawful sovereign, and had usurped the throne thereof, and excited the cities of Arpad, and Senjura, and Damascus, and Samaria to fight against me, and made himself ready. I mustered the troops of the god Assur, and besieged him in the city of Karkar, which I reduced to ashes; I took him prisoner, and stripped him of his skin, and slew the chief rebels in each of those towns, and made them a desolation; and I levied 200 chariots, and 300 horsemen from the inhabitants of the region of Hamath, and added them to the dignity of my majesty. In p. 34, he describes himself as having established his "viceroy at Car-

chensh." Again, in p. 37, he says of himself, "Without mercy, and not brooking any violation of my orders, I tore up the root of the country of Hamath, and the King hecubid, and I tortured and arrayed him as the trunk of a tree, and I did not spare Carchemish." 11. Jerusalem and her idol(s)] Such was the language with which the idolatrous kings of Assyria spoke of Jerusalem and Jehovah! It was a fitting punishment for such blasphemy, that Sennacherib, to whom this prophecy specially refers, was slain by the hands of his sons, when he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch, his god. See on 2 Kings xix. 37.

12. When the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion] When the Lord has chastened Judah by the wholesome discipline of terror, and by allowing all its felled cities to fall into the hand of Sennacherib (see below, ver. 28–32; and xxxvi. 1), and by reducing Jerusalem for a period of nearly three years (xxxvi. 30) to the very brink of destruction, and by bringing down its sovereignty to the verge of the grave (xxxvii. 1), and by thus making them feel their own utter impotency, and by making them resort to the Lord for help in distress, then God will execute His vengeance on the pride and cruelty of the Assyrians, who have been used as His instru-

ments in chastising, but not destroying, His people.
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 || like a valiant man:
And | 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.

Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith?
Or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it?

Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts,
Send among his | fat ones leanness;
And under his glory he shall kindle a burning
Like the burning of a fire.

And the light of Israel shall be for a fire,
And his Holy One for a flame:
| And it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day;
And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field,
† Both soul and body:
And they shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth.

And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be | few,
That a child may write them.

And it shall come to pass in that day,
That the remnant of Israel,
And such as are escaped of the house of Jacob,
| Shall no more again stay upon him that smote them;
But shall stay upon the Lord,
The Holy One of Israel, in truth.

The remnant shall return, | even the remnant of Jacob,
Unto the mighty God.

22. * For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, a Yet a remnant of them shall return:
 b The consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness;
 c For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.

21. 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, And shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of e Egypt.

24. For yet a very little while, e and the indignation shall cease, And mine anger in their destruction.

25. And the Lord of hosts shall stir up h a scourge for him According to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb:
 And as his rod was upon the sea, So shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.

26. And it shall come to pass in that day, That his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, And his yoke from off thy neck, And the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.

31. He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron;
Migron, who was favourable to Sennacherib, is stated to have been delivered up by some of his subjects to Hezekiah, from whom Sennacherib freed him, and reinstated him on the throne.

From Migron, Sennacherib is described as passing to Michmash, about eight miles north of Jerusalem (see on 1 Sam. xil. 2—16 xiv. 5), where he lays up his carriages, i.e. deposits his baggage, in expectation of a speedy victory over Jerusalem (Kimchi); thence they went across the passage or ravine of Wady Susseiait, and so approached Geba, Ramah, and Gibeah (see 1 Sam. xil. 2, 3. Josh. xviii. 21—28), and thence by Gallim and Laish (see Judg. xviii. 29. 1 Sam. xxv. 44) to Anathoth (now Anoua), a priestly city, about four miles N.W. of Jerusalem (1 Kings ii. 26. Jer. i. 1), and thence by Madmenah, which is removed, or flies away in fear; and Gebim, whose people hastily betake themselves and their way to a place of safety; and finally, he halts at Nob, where he had a view of Jerusalem, and thence he shook his hand against the monarch of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem, to terrify it. On the site of Nob, see on 1 Sam. xxii. 1. Neh. xi. 32, and S. Jerome here; and Robinson, ii. 189, who supposes it to have been on the ridge of the Mount of Olives, north-east of Jerusalem. Cp. Hackett, B. D. ii. 576.

Observe the contrast to this phrase in the words of the Lord by Isaiah to Hezekiah (xxxvii. 22, 23): "The Virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. 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."

The preceding portion of this prophecy was fulfilled, when "Sennacherib, King of Assyria, came up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them." 2 Kings xviii. 13; below, xxvi. 1. In a record still extant, written by himself, Sennacherib affirms, that "he took forty-six cities of Judah, and numerous smaller towns, and shut up Hezekiah in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage." See the document quoted above, in the note on 2 Chron. xxxi. 1.

It may be asked, Why Sennacherib did not then assault Jerusalem itself? The reasons probably were:—

1. Because he was eager to proceed southward toward Egypt, which was the special aim of his campaign.

2. Because Hezekiah had fortified Jerusalem (2 Chron. xxxii. 2—8); and Sennacherib, hastening toward other parts, would not spend his time in endeavouring to take it.

Because Hezekiah submitted to him, and gave him a large sum of money to propitiate him. See above, 2 Kings xviii. 14—16; and Sennacherib's own assertion to the same effect, quoted above, on 2 Chron. xxxii. 1.

The following portion of this prophecy (vv. 33, 34) was fulfilled about four years afterward, when Sennacherib had returned in triumph from his expedition against Philistia, Egypt, and Ethiopia; and his vast host was consumed near Jerusalem by the wrath of God, whom he had blasphemed. See below, xxxvii. 36; and above, on 2 Kings xix. 32—35.

33. 34. Behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, shall lay the bough with terror:
And the high ones of stature shall be hewn down,
And the haughty shall be humbled.
And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron,
And Lebanon shall fall, || by a mighty one.

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse,
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

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;

And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord:

All he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes,
Neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

But with righteousness shall he judge the poor,
And reprove with equity for the meek of the earth:
And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth,
And with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins,
And faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little child shall lead them.

And the cow and the bear shall feed;
Their young ones shall lie down together:
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp,
And the weaned child shall put his hand on the 'cockatrice' den.

pre-announced in vii. 14, was a poor maiden in a village of despised Galilee, then by God's miraculous agency the Branch sprouted up from the hewn-down stump ('"as a root out of the dry ground,"' iii. 2), and grew up into a mighty Tree, and brought forth much fruit, and received the world under its shade.

Such, in brief, is the prophetic view of the power of Christ on the one side, and of that of Antichrist on the other. When the latter seems to be dominant, then it will be destroyed; when the former seems to be destroyed, then its dominion will be established for ever.

The Unction and Office of Christ; The Fruits of His Mission.

2. the spirit of the Lord.] The Spirit of the Lord, by whose operation Christ was conceived at Nazareth (Luke i. 35), and by whom He was anointed at His Baptism in Jordan (Matt. iii. 16, John i. 26, Acts v. 35), shall rest on Him as in a loved abode, as in a nest for the Divine Dove; cp. 1 Pet. iv. 14, where the Spirit is said to rest on Christ's members. See especially below, 1st. i. 1, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because the Lord hath anointed Me,"—the prophecy appropriated by our Lord Himself at Nazareth, where He, the promised Netser, or Branch, from the root of David, grew up (see Luke iv. 16—21, and on Matt. ii. 23). The gifts of the Spirit were the dew and rain which watered the branch, and made Him spring up, and bear fruit.

The sevenfold gifts of the Spirit are grounded on the fear of the Lord, which is like the base and shaft of the Golden Candlestick; and from it the three branches on each side shot forth and gave light. Compare Zech. iv. 2. Rev. i. 4; iv. 5; v. 6 (Delitzsch).

3. And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.] Rather, and his delight is in the fear of the Lord. Literally, His sense of smelling what is sweet, is there. God is said to have "smelt a sweet savour," or fragrance, in the acceptable sacrifice of the patriarch Noah after the Flood (see above, on Gen. viii. 21, contrasted with Amos v. 21; in both which places the same verb n sees is used as nkipi, as here; and cp. Exod. xxxv. 36. Lev. xxvi. 31; Genesis, 700, and the similar figure in Job's war-horse, who rejoices in the scent of the battle (Job xxxix. 25; and Vitrigius, p. 314; and Hengst., Christol. 110). So God is said, in the New Testament, to perceive a sweet perfume in the perfect obedience of Christ (see Ephes. v. 2). And Christ Himself is here said by a beautiful figure, to find the sweetest perfume, and what is most pleasant to His own spiritual sense, in the fear of the Lord, that is, in obedience to His heavenly Father. His meat and drink was to do His will (John iv. 32. 34); His eye was directed to His glory; His ear was attentive to His least command (see Ps. xi. 6—8); His scent rejoiced in the perception of God's will, as in the aroma of the sweetest perfume; and wherever He perceived holy obedience, there He found delight.

Here is a perfect pattern for the Christian.

— he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes.] Even He Who knew all men (John ii. 24) is here said to judge not according to external sense, but according to inward perception, as God Himself is said not to be content with observing Sodom from heaven, but to go down and know (see Gen. xviii. 21; cp. 1 Sam. xvi. 7, and John vii. 24). Christ, the Judge of all, will have no respect of persons in judging; He will not look to external qualities of worldly wealth, honour, glory, fame, station—as men are too prone to do—but He will examine the heart and pronounce His judicial sentence accordingly. Cp. Heb. iv. 12. 13; and Bp. Saunders, p. 279.

4. And he shall smite the earth.] Christ is represented as invested with awful Majesty and Might, as a King and Judge, executing vengeance on the earth; that is, on all earthly powers opposed to the kingdom of heaven (see on Matt. xxiv. 30. Rev. i. 7); who will be shivered by Him like earthen vessels by a rod of iron. See Ps. ii. 9. Rev. i. 16.

— And with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.] Such is His Majesty and Might, that a single breath of His lips is enough to slay the wicked one. This prophecy is applied by St. Paul to the destruction of the man of sin, the lawless one, described in 2 Thess. ii. 3—12. See there, v. 8.

The Preaching of the Gospel.

6.9.] After the description of Christ's judicial majesty and punitive power, a beautiful prophetic picture now succeeds of the peace and joy of His kingdom set up in the hearts of all who believe and obey Him.

— The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb—cockatrice' den.] The last words are rendered by the Targum "the pupil of the eye of the basilisk," but the translation in the text has most authority (Sept., Vulg., Syr., Arabic, Genesis, 441. 710).

It has been made a question, whether the old and other similar prophecies (see ii. 4; xxxv. 9; lx. 18; lxv. 17. 25) have been
The root of Jesse is a banner.

ISAIAH XI. 9—12. The return of the remnant.

Before CHRIST about 713.
1. Job 5, 23.
2. 2, 4, & 55, 9.
3. Hab. 2, 14.
5. ver. 1.
6. Rom. 15, 12.
7. Rom. 15, 10.
8. Heb. 4, 1, 8, & cp. v. 12.
9. ch. 2, 11.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain:
For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,
As the waters cover the sea.

And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse,
Which shall stand for an ensign of the people;
To it shall the Gentiles seek:
And his rest shall be glorious.

And it shall come to pass in that day,
That the Lord shall set his hand again the second time
To recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left,
From 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.

And he shall set up an ensign for the nations,
And shall assemble the outcasts of Israel,
And gather together the dispersed of Judah
From the four corners of the earth.

The Conversion of the Gentiles, v. 10, and of God's People, the Jews; the Return of the Remnant.

10. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse.
Rather, And it shall come to pass in that day, the root of Jesse shall be with a banner which will stand as a banner. The root sprouts up in Christ (see iii. 2), and it becomes like a lofty banner, a Jehovah-Nissi (see Exod. xvii. 15), to which the nations will flock, as armies to the standard of their General and King. As our Lord says, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself" (John xii. 32). The Cross was the banner lifted up, to which all Nations were to come, as armies to a muster (see v. 12): and his rest shall be glorious; or rather, His resting-place (wherever the banner—the banner of the Cross—is fixed, to which all Nations resort) shall be glory; the whole Church will be like a Holy of Holies, in which the Shechinah of the Godhead is enthroned.

Observe the phrase, "in that day," repeated in v. 11; xii. 1, 4. The times of the Gospel are regarded as one day.

The Apostles, St. Paul, Rom. x. 18. Heb. vii. 9—11 appear to regard that time as a great measure fulfilling the wonderful moral and spiritual change wrought by the preaching of the Gospel, and the power of the Holy Ghost,—the Spirit of love and peace, even in their own days. And such was the uniform opinion of ancient Expositors (as Origen, Eusebius, S. Chrysostom, S. Jerome, S. Cyril, Theodoret, and others; see above, on ii. 4, and Cornelius A Lapide, and Vitringa here). They declared their judgment that these predictions have been verified by the moral and spiritual change wrought in savage nations, which formerly were like lions, tigers, bears, and wolves; and by the bringing together of hostile tribes to dwell together in peace in the Church of Christ; as the savage and tame creatures, the unclean and clean animals, dwell together in the Ark of Noah, the type of the Church; see above, Prelem. Nota. to Gen. vi. p. 37.

Christ explained the prophecy, "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb" (v. 6), when He said to His Apostles, "I send you forth as lambs among wolves" (Luke x. 3).

The metaphor of the aosp and the cockatrice is adopted by our Lord Himself, where He says to His disciples, who were despaired as children by the wise of this world (Matt. xx. 25; xvii. 26), that He would give them power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and on all the power of the enemy (Luke x. 19; cp. Mark xvii. 17, 18).

It must also be borne in mind, that our Blessed Lord and His Apostles describe the condition of the last days of the world as characterized by great moral corruption, and by malignity, violence, and carnage, very unlike what is depicted here. They represent the last days as very like the last days of the old World before the Flood (Matt. xxiv. 37, 38. Luke xvii. 28), and like the last days of Solomon and Gomorrha (Luke xvii. 28–32); and like the last days of Jerusalem (see below, on Matt. xxiv. 1–34, and cp. on Rev. xx. 1–7). The mountain of the Lord's House, the Church, whose origin was at Zion; see ii. 2. Micah iv. 2. Wherever Christianity is truly professed and practised, there hatred and violence shall cease; but this does not involve a promise that they shall not prevail elsewhere. Christ has done His part by dying for all, and by commanding that the Gospel should be preached to all men. But men fail. See further below, on lv. 17–25; lv. 7–9.

— the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord
This prophecy is explained by our Lord's words, "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the End come." He does not say that the Gospel will be universally believed; but that it will be preached as a witness, to testify against those who reject it; see below, on Matt. xvi. 14. The Prophet says that the Earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord (cp. Hab. ii. 14); but he does not say that all who know will obey Him.

— As the waters cover the sea
The bottom of the sea.
The envy also of Ephraim shall depart,
And the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off:
Ephraim shall not envy Judah,
And Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west;
They shall spoil them of the east together:
‡ They shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab;
† And the children of Ammon shall obey them.

And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea;
And with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river,
And shall smite it in the seven streams,
And make men go over dryshod.

And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people,
Which shall be left, from Assyria;
Like as it was to Israel
In the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

XII. 1 And in that day thou shalt say,
O Lord, I will praise thee:
Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away,
And thou comfortedst me.

2 Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid:
For the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song;

13. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart] This was one of the marks by which the loss of the Assyrian and Chaldean Captivity was felt by the Jews. The enemies of Judah were now overthrown, and their land became their own. The same change is signified in the book of Joel (cp. Joel, vii. 10). — J.

14. They shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines] Their purpose was to carry off the spoil of the Philistines. See Josh. xiv. 19.

15. The Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea] Here is a bold metaphor derived from the panting sounder of the Red Sea to make a way for Israel from Egypt. The Lord shall not only part the waters once, but will altogether destroy: literally, will devote to utter destruction the tongue (cp. Josh. xiv. 2 with Numm. xxxiv. 3 of the Egyptian sea, the Red Sea; He will and sublimate every thing that restrains His people as captives; and with His mighty wind, or rather, with the might of His Spirit, He will shake (not the rod of Moses, but) His own Almighty Hand over the river (the Egyptians; see the Targums, and cp. v. 20; viii. 7. Gen. xv. 18; xxxi. 21. Hengst., Del.), and shall smite it into seven (seven) streams) i.e. shall do more than Cyrus did (Jer. li. 30, who drew it off to make it a dry bed for his soldiers to enter into Babylon), and make men walk in it in shoes.—i.e. with their "feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace" (Eph. vi. 15).

Here is a prophecy of the victory which will be achieved by the Gospel over all the opposing powers of this world. This triumph is symbolized by the drying up of the sea and river of the two great earthly Empires of Isaiah's days, Egypt and Assyria (cp. viii. 7; xii. 4. Jer. li. 36). Compare the figurative language of the Apocalypse on the drying up of the seven Empires, "that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared" (Rev. xvi. 12; see the note there, and Rev. vii. p. 367). That passage is the best commentary on the present; and the result of this universal subjection is pre-announced also by the Apocalypse,—"The kingdom of this world will become the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ" (Rev. xi. 15). 16. there shall be an highway] As it was in the Exodus from Egypt, when the Red Sea was divided; and as it was on the return of Judah from Babylon after the waters of the Egyptians had been dried up, so it will be in the days of Christ and the Gospel. All the Red Seas of spiritual Egypt (cp. Rev. xi. 8), all the rivers of spiritual Assyrias, will own His power, and be made subservient to the manifestation of His glory and of His truth and the good of His Church. And then, as Moses and Miriam sang songs of victorious victory after the overthrow of the Egyptians and their own deliverance, as the returning exiles sang "songs of Sion" (see above, cp. exx. after the fall of Babylon for their own restoration, so the Church of the Redeemed will sing a Song of Victory and Praise, which now follows.

The Church's Song of Praise for Her Redemption by Christ.

Ch. XII. 2. Behold, God is my salvation—my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation
The joy of the faithful.  

Before CHRIST entered
3 He also is become my salvation.  
4 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

And in that day shall ye say,  
5 Praise the Lord, || call upon his name,  
6 Declare his doings among the people,  
7 Make mention that his name is exalted.

Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things:  
This is known in all the earth.

Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion:  
For great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

And the voice of the song of Moses at the Exodus: "The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation" (Exod. xv. 2), and that Song of Moses is taken up in Ps. cxviii. 14, sung by the exiles who had returned from the gates of the Tabernacles. See Prelim. Note to Ps. cxviii.

Thus the three deliverances of God's people,—that from Egypt, from Babylon, and from their spiritual captivity, by Christ in the Gospel, are united together here. The 118th Psalm was applied by Christ to Himself at His triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm-Sunday. See the notes there.

— the Lord JEHOVAH! JEHOVAH JAH; on the solemn character of this union of Names, see below, xxvi. 4.

The universal Feast of Tabernacles.

3. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation] At the Feast of Tabernacles, the Son of God tabernacles in our flesh (see John i. 14, and notes on 1 Kings viii. 65; and Ezra iii. 4. Neh. viii. 16). Water was drawn from the Pool of Siloam, also a type of Christ (see John ix. 7; and above, viii. 6), and was poured on the great altar in the Temple (see below, on John vi. 27, on which burnt-offerings (the figures of Christ's perfect sacrifice of Himself) were offered. In like manner, now that Christ is come in our flesh, Who sums up all these types in Himself, we draw water with joy out of the wells of salvation.

At the Feast of Tabernacles, the 118th Psalm was sung; this has just been referred to, as having been applied by Christ to Himself when He was riding into Jerusalem, and the hosannas of the Feast of Tabernacles were repeated to Him by the people. Then He rode to Jerusalem on the foal of an ass, the type of the Gentile world subseed to the Gospel and brought to the city of God; and the foal was followed by its mother, the figure of the Jewish Nation. See below, notes on Matt. xx. 1—16.

5. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things] another echo of the Song of Moses (Exod. xv. 1—21).

6. Cry out and shout] "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foil of an ass" (Zech. ix. 9). The scene of the Exodus from Egypt, and of the Return of Israel from Babylon, and of the Return from the Captivity of Christ into Jerusalem, and of the union of Gentile and Jew in serving Him in His Church, is blended in this song; and it prepares us for the song of the Church of the redeemed and glorified saints in heaven, where they will sing the "Song of Moses and of the Lamb" (Rev. xv. 3), and where "He that sitteth upon the throne shall tabernacle upon them; and the Lamb shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters" (Rev. vii. 15—17; cp. xxi. 6; xxii. 17); and the Feast of Tabernacles, "Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle on them, and they shall be His people" (Rev. xxi. 3).

The Prophet Zechariah says, that the joy of the Feast of Tabernacles will be the same as at Christ's Church in the Church's Zechar. xiv. 16—19. This is what is pre-announced here, and is fully revealed in the Apocalypse.

Prophecies on the Destinies of the Kingdoms of this World.

Ch. XIII.] Here begins the Third Part of the first Portion of Isaiah's prophecies; it extends to the end of chapter xxviii.

In the foregoing part, the voice of prophecy had revealed the Judgments of God on His own People Israel and Judah for their sins. But it had comforted them also with the assurance that His judicial visitations would be tempered with mercy, and would be made ministerial to the clearer manifestation of His glory to the Lord God of Israel, and to the final overthrow of His enemies, and to the spiritual edification of all who turn to Him with faith and repentance.

It had revealed a glorious vision of the future. In Christ, "the Mighty God, "Immanuel" David's promised Seed (Who would appear in the world when the house of David was reduced to the lowest condition, like that of a tree hewn down to the roots), the throne of David would be exalted over all earthly sovereignties; His sway would be extended over all the earth, and all the faithful of Israel would be united with all the faithful of all Nations in one common home, the Church Militant, and would rejoice and sing praises to God for ever in the Church glorified hereafter.

The other side of the picture is now displayed.

Isaiah the prophet, and his two sons, were signs of the future (1) to Israel, and (2) to the World. See above, viii. 18. There was a Shear-jashub ("a remnant shall return") to Israel in Christ.

But to the World, as opposed to Him, whether within the Church or without it, there was a Maha-shelah-hash-baz ("speed, spoil; hasten, prey") in Him.

This is what is now revealed.

By the special providence of God, the Hebrew people were placed geographically in a central country, an ὥμοιος γῆς, which was contiguous to almost all the great Empires of the Heathen World. Palestine was a theatre in which God's judgments on His own people and on all other Nations were displayed as a spectacle to the eyes of all mankind in successive acts of a great historical drama.

On the north-east was Assyria, and, after it, Babylon; on the north were Syria and Tyre; on the east and south-east were Ammon, Moab, and Edom; on the south-west was Phœnicia; and further still, on the south-west was Egypt.

The Hebrew Nation was brought into contact with all these, with Assyria especially, in Isaiah's own age, and afterwards with Babylon and Egypt.

The prophet looked forth upon all these Empires and Kingdoms from the sublime altitude of his own spiritual watch-tower in Sion, and was enabled, by the Holy Ghost, to unfold their future history in a grand prophetic panorama, and thus to manifest the Divine Prescience and Supremacy of the Lord God of Israel, Whose prophet he was, and Who had His dwelling in Jerusalem.

The inspired Seer, whose eye was illuminated with light from above, predicted the overthrow of some of these mighty empires, with marvellous circumstantial accuracy, many years before their catastrophe; and proclaimed that, although the great Empires of the Earth may proudly imagine, as Semachchir did (the great Assyrian Empire), that they will be his successor (i.e., the Assyrion, "the Lord's Anti-Christian Power"), that they are achieving victories over God Himself for their own aggrandisement, and are triumphing over the Truth, yet they are instruments in His hands for working out His purposes, and for chastening His people, for their moral purification by the discipline of affliction, and for manifesting His glory, and for showing to the World that all earthly powers which resist Christ will be broken in pieces, like potters' vessels, by a vessel of clay (Ps. ii. 9).

The prophecies which concern the Heathen Nations of the World are grouped together here, as also in Jer. xvi.—xxii.; and in Ezek. xxv.—xxxiii.
Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain, 
Exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand,

ISAIAH XIII. 2. Burden of Babylon.

Before CHRIST about
ch. 5. 26 &
16. 3. Jer. 50. 2. c Jer. 51. 23. d ch. 10. 32.

The oracles in which these "burdens" or prophecies, concerning the nations of the world, appeared, are arranged, deserve careful consideration. They are placed according to a principle of inner connexion, which is very interesting and important to be observed.

The siege and capture of Babylon by the Medes and Persians is the most distant object in the prophet's picture, as far as it concerns the history of the heathen nations which are here mentioned. But it is presented first to the eye. And why? Even because it was the most distant, and in order that the world might see to what an extent the range of the prophetic vision was enabled by the Holy Spirit to reach, and in order that, by the fulfilment of such prophecies as these, men might learn to believe, that the prophecies of Isaiah concerning the still more distant events relating to Christ (Who is the sun and substance of all prophecy), and to the final consummation of all things, would in due time be fulfilled also.

Besides, the fall of Babylon, as the prophet foresaw and has foretold, would lead to a joyful issue—the return of Judah to its own land (xiv. 1), and to all the glorious results of that Restoration, which was the type and earnest of the Evangelical Redeemer's career, both Gentile and Jew, to God in Christ, and His Church.

It therefore had a strong claim to be placed in the forefront of the prophetic announcements.

Let there be another enemy of God's Church, namely, Philistia (xiv. 29—32).

It is the custom of Isaiah to give a guarantee of the fulfilment of his prophecies concerning distant events, by coupling those prophecies with a prediction concerning some event that is near.

So it is here. He pledges his word for the fulfilment of the prophecy concerning the fall of Babylon, which was remote, following it up with a prophecy concerning the impending visitation of the Lord upon Moab, the border of which was toward the north, and the Ammonites, the king of whom was to be taken immediately, and doubtless was established by historical facts; otherwise the prophetic mission of Isaiah would have been at an end.

And as the fall of Babylon was to be succeeded, according to the prophecy, by a merciful visitation of Judah, so the chastisement of Philistia was designed to lead Philistia itself to adore the Lord God of Judah, and to manifest His power, glory, and love.

All the other prophecies are followed by a series of predictions concerning Nations which were to be humbled by the conquering armies of Assyria; the first is Moab (chaps. xv., xvi.). Moab, the descendant of Lot (Gen. xix. 37), was allied by blood with the posterity of Abraham; but Moab had always been hostile to God's people. And the prophet declares that God would punish Moab by means of Israel's most powerful enemy, Assyria.

Isaiah boldly hazards an assertion, that within three years from the appearance of his prophecy, an afflicted judgment would fall upon the proud and powerful Moab (xvi. 14). He describes the judgment minutely.

Here was an immediate test by which his prophetic mission would be tried. And he also deduces a moral that flows from that cause of God's power, that the self-confidence, and from its idols, to the Lord God of Judah in Zion, and acknowledge His supremacy—a supremacy shown by the judgment He executed in Isaiah's time, and with the instrumentality of Isaiah, against the Egyptian army of Ramses, under Sennacherib, which had humbled Moab.

This prophecy is followed by a pre-announcement of judgments on Syria, and its capital Damascus (xvii. 1), and on Ethiopia, which had been leagues with Syria against Judah. See above, vii. 1.

The prophet declares that there was a merciful design in these visitations, namely, that these conquered Nations should turn from their idols, which could not help them, to their Maker and God, "the Holy One of Israel" (xvii. 7).

Thus the prophet Isaiah becomes a great moral and religious Teacher of men and nations. He suggests to his auditory reader how the history of the World is to be studied and interpreted.

Last it should be imagined that Assyria had been enabled by its own strength to execute these judgments, Isaiah adds a prophecy, foretelling the future destruction of Assyria itself, on account of its hostility to Judah and its blasphemy against God (xvii. 12—14).

Next follow two prophecies concerning two of the strongest and most warlike nations of the South, Ethiopia, and Egypt (xvii. xx.).

Isaiah declares that within three years after a certain time, when the prophecy was delivered, these two great nations would be humbled, and that their proud warriors would walk barefoot and in chains, being led captive by the invading army of Assyria (xx. 3—6).

This event was more wonderful, because the prophet had just declared that the self-same power, the Assyrian, which would subjugate these two mighty powers, Egypt and Ethiopia, would fall prostrate, as (xiv. 25). He first describes the alarm of Jerusalem, when Egypt and Ethiopia, to whom it looked for help against the Assyrian army of Sennacherib, fell before his victorious armies (xx. 4—6. Cp. x. 29—32). But the prophet himself stands calm and composed.

He foresees the deliverance of Judah from the hands of Sennacherib, and the destruction of his terrible host, which had trampled Egypt and Ethiopia under foot. He saw the glory that would redound immediately, and also in the clearer future, to the Lord God of Israel, by the overthrow of the idols of Egypt, and by the confusion of his wise counsellors and soothsayers, who proved to be of no help to her in her distress, and whose sway over her was thus broken, and also by the destruction of the army of Sennacherib, the conquest of Egypt and Ethiopia, when he marched against Jerusalem. He sees Egypt, and Ethiopia bringing presents to Hezekiah, and to God; and his prophetetic view extends to the days of the preaching of Christ, and to the Day of Pentecost, when the nations, Egypt and Assyria, Egypt, and Ethiopia, the threshing-floor on which the sheaves of the Jewish Nation were laid to be threshed by affliction in its Captivity; but this, he reveals, was to be a merciful dispensation, in order that the good grain might be winnowed from the chaff, and be gathered into His barn (xxi. 10. Cp. xiv. 1).

Isaiah, according to his custom, follows up this prophecy concerning distant events, by predictions relating to his own age.

The burden of Deuma (a symbolic name for Edom, see note on xxi. 11), and the burden upon Arabia, refer to the conquests of Assyria in those lands, in the near future (see xxi. 10); and the prophet foretells that these triumphs of Assyria over them, like her conquests in Egypt and Ethiopia (xvii. xx.), would redound to the glory of the Lord God of Israel, Who used Assyria, as He afterwards employed Babylon, for the manifestation of His power, and of His mercy and love to His faithful People (xxi. 11. 16). His People might not presume on God's favour, as if it would be lavish on them without any correlative working of faith and holiness on their part, he interposes a solemn warning to Jerusalem in the garden of the valley of hinnom (xxi. 1).

Her privileges would only increase her condemnation, if she lived in worldly self-indulgence and carnal security, and did not place her trust in God in times of trial, as Hezekiah did. See on xxix. 31. Indeed, it would far worse for Jerusalem than with Moab and Edom, Egypt and Ethiopis, Nineveh and Babylonia, if she did not repent and obey God. As a specimen of the sins of pride and vain-glory which the prophet denounced in Judah, the character of Sheba, the King, is boldly selected by the prophet for stern rebuke and unflinching condemnation.
That they may go into the gates of the nobles.

I have commanded my sanctified ones,
I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger,
Even them that rejoice in my highness.

The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people;

for His people, instruct the Church of every age, where her true strength lies, and assure her that there is One Who will never forsake her in the hour of peril, if she resorts to Him for help, and reposes her trust in Him.

The genuineness of this series of prophecies, which has been controverted by some recent critics, has been ably vindicated by Hittorff, Einl. ii. 2, pp. 78—142; Keil, Einl. pp. 218—235.

The Burden of Babylon.

1. The burden] Literally, that which is taken up and borne. The prophet Isaiah may be compared to a noble ship, laden with a rich cargo, and borne along by the wind of the Holy Spirit, to adopt St. Peter's comparison (2 Pet. i. 21), and he carries the freight of his oracular messages to the shores of different nations of the world. On this meaning of the word (massa), rendered burden (from massa, to bear), see notes above Ps. cxlvii. 1, and xxxi. 1, in both which places the word is rendered prophecy. In the Septuagint Version here the word which we translate burden (a rendering derived from the Vulgate) is rightly translated vision in some cases, and sometimes word, or prophecy. It is translated revelation and prophecy in the Arabic Version.

Babylon] Babylon was of little importance in comparison with Assyria, in the time of Isaiah; but he was imbued, by the Holy Spirit, to foresee its future greatness, and its hostility to the people of God. See above, on 2 Kings xx. 25, where Isaiah prophesies to Hezekiah the future carrying away of his posterity to Babylon.

Here he rises still higher, and foretells the future destruction of Babylon, which accompanies the accomplishment of these prophecies, combined with the fulfillment of his prophecies concerning the Incarnation of the Son of God, His Preaching, Miracles, and Sufferings, and the planting of His Church in all nations, and affords the strongest evidence that Isaiah's other prophecies concerning the final triumph of the Gospel, and concerning the future General Resurrection, Universal Judgment, and Eternity of Rewards and Punishments, will be fulfilled also (cp. below Prol. Note to chap. xi.).

2. [Drift of the campaign upon the high mountains] Literally, upon the bare hill (Gen. xvi. 44), where it may be seen far and wide by those whom God summons to the battle against Babylon. This and the other prophecies in Isaiah, and Jeremiah (chap. i. 11, and li.) concerning the destruction of Babylon, and the consequent liberation of the people of God, have also a special and mysterious interest for these latter days, in consequence of their relation to the Mystical Babylon of the Apocalypse, in which the language of Isaiah and Jeremiah is adopted by St. John, and applied to it (Rev. xiv. 8; xvi. 19; xvii. 5; xviii. 2), and as therefore awaiting another secondary fulfillment in the destruction of the Mystical Babylon, and in the spiritual blessings which will accrue from that event to the Church of God. See Vitringa, pp. 444—446, and the notes below on chaps. xxi., xlvii., and xlviii.

On the genuineness of this prophecy concerning Babylon (which has been disputed by some recent critics), see the remarks of Keil, Einl., i. 2, pp. 78—107; Keil, Einl., pp. 217—222; and Delitzsch, Commentary, p. 183.

3. my sanctified ones] Those who are consecrated to Me for My service, to execute My pleasure on Babylon, especially Cyrus, whom God's Spirit foretold variously as "the latter Anointed" (xvi. 1. Cp. Jer. vi. 4; xxii. 7; ii. 27), and who speaks as specially commissioned by God, in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23, Ezra 1. 2, and was a type of Christ. See the note there.

Observe, the campaign against Babylon is here represented as the work of God.
The LORD musters His armies ISAIAH XIII. 5—14.

A tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together:
The LORD of hosts musteth the host of the battle.

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.

Howl ye; * for the day of the LORD is at hand;
It shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.
Therefore shall all hands be faint,
And every man's heart shall melt:
And they shall be afraid:
Pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them;
They shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth:
Their faces shall be as flames.
Behold, * the day of the LORD cometh,
Cruel both with wrath and fierce anger,
To lay the land desolate:
And he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.
For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light:
The sun shall be darkened in his going forth,
And the moon shall not cause her light to shine.
And I will punish the world for their evil,
And the wicked for their iniquity;
And I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease,
And will lay the haughtiness of the terrible.
I will make a man more precious than fine gold;
Even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.
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 the day of his fierce anger.
And it shall be as the chased roe,
And as a sheep that no man taketh up:
They shall every man turn to his own people,
And flee every one into his own land.

5. from a far country] From Media and Persia to the
lowlands of Babylon. See v. 17; and Jer. li. 11.
Hoor for her (Jer. xli. 8).
8. They shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth] As
Belshazzar was, on the night of her fall, according to Daniel's
description, "when the joints of his loins were loosed, and his
knees smote one against another" (Dan. v. 6).
They shall be amazed] Compare the description in
Jeremiah (1: 43; and li. 30), and in Daniel (v. 6), concerning
the amazement and confusion in the city and palace of Babylon,
when the army of Cyrus rushed in upon them.
On the circumstances of the siege and capture, see Dan. v.:
Herodotus, i. 190, 191; and Xenophon, Cyropedia, vii. 5. 15;
and Vitringa, pp. 440—444; Bp. Newton on the Prophecies,
ch. x.; Davison on Prophecy, Disc. vi., Pt. iv.; and Pusey,
Lectures on Daniel, pp. 447—449; Rawlinson, Anet. Monarchies,
li. 516—519, and see below on xxxi. 1—9 and chaps. xlvii.
and xlviii.
10. the constellations] Literally, the Orions. Compare on
Job ix. 9; xxxviii. 31. Amos v. 8.

— shall not give their light] Such descriptions as these
betoken a state of national confusion and panic, like that
which would be caused by the darkening of the heavenly
bodics, to the contemplation of which the Babylonians were
addicted for purposes of divination. See xlvii. 13; and Daniel's
description of the perplexity of the astrologers in the last
night of Belshazzar's rule at Babylon (Dan. v. 7, 8).
On the meaning of such figurative language as this, see
2 Sam. xxii. 8; and below, xxiv. 19; and Joel ii. 31, interpreted
12. I will make a man more precious] The city, once so
populous, will (says the prophet) become so desolate, that
a man will be more scarce and precious in it than gold. Cp.
x. 19; xxiv. 6. Besides, the Medes and Persians will not
regard gold, and will not receive it as a ransom for their
enemies and captives. See v. 17. Babylon was celebrated for
her wealth in gold, but all her riches did not help her to redeem
one of her princes.
14. shall every man turn to his own people] The nations
which formerly resorted to Babylon, as the general emporium
and mart of the World, shall turn away from her in amazement.
Babylon shall be... as the overthrow of Sodom.

Every one that is found shall be thrust through;
And every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword.
Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes;
Their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished.

Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them,
Which shall not regard silver;
And as for gold, they shall not delight in it.

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.

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,
The beauty of the Chaldees' excellency,
Shall be as when God overthrew "Sodom and Gomorrah."

Compare the description in the Apocalypse of the state of the mystical Babylon after its destruction (Rev. xvii, 16-18).

15. Every one that is found] That is found; literally, every one that is caught, as in a net (according to the words of Herodotus, i. 191), by the invading army of the Medes and Persians. In the night of the capture of Babylon there was a terrible massacre. Cp. Jer. i. 30; li. 4 (Xenophon, Cyrop. vii. 5. 26—31). Bursting into the palace, a band of Persians rushed into the presence of the monarch, and slew him in the scene of his opulent revelry. Other bands carried fire and sword through the town. When morning came, Cyrus found himself undisputed master of the city, which, humanly speaking, might with ease have baffled his efforts, if it had not presumptuously despised them, relying on its own strength (Babylon, ii. 17).

17. the Medes] Headed by Cyrus—"Darius the Mede," of Dan. v. 31. As Jeremiah speaks (li. 11. 28), "The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for His device is against Babylon, to destroy it. Prepare against her the nations with the kings of the Medes."

In Isaiah's day Persia (Elam) was of no account in the world's history. The words Parasi (Persia), and Parasyah, and Persi (Persian), do not occur in Isaiah, or Jeremiah, or any of the prophets before Ezekiel and Daniel, and in none of the historical books but those written after the Captivity, e. g. 2 Chron., Ezra, Esther, and Nehemiah.

But though Persia was in obscurity in Isaiah's time, still he perceives its material power, and the Medes, which will eventually place it before Media, in xxi. 2: "A grievous vision is declared unto me. Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media."

It is remarkable that the Medes, the very people whom Babylon had invited to unite with her to destroy Nineveh, were used by God as instruments in the destruction of Babylon.

So in the Apocalypse it is revealed, that some of the kings who were once the vassals of the mystical Babylon, will be instruments, in God's hands, for chastising her. See on Rev. xxi. 16.

18. Their bowels] For which they were famous. Cp. Jer. i. 14. 20; li. 8. 11.
19. as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrhah] So suddenly did the destruction of Babylon be. Such it was (see on 15.), and eventually so complete, that Babylon became a desolate desert, as Strabo describes it (xvi. 15), where he says, "The great city is a great wilderness." Cp. Ps. cviii. 33; and see Jer. i. 40, where the same comparison is used.

Although the walls of Babylon were of enormous thickness and height, yet at the present time (as the British officers testify, who were recently employed in the survey of the site) "no vestige of them has been discovered." Rawlinson. Ancient Mon. iii. pp. 338, 339, is where a plan of the site of Babylon. See also there, p. 359. Mr. Rawlinson thus writes:—

Babylon, according to the descriptions of the ancients, was a great city, built on a very regular plan, surrounded by populous suburbs, interspersed among fields and gardens, the whole being included within a large, square, strongly-fortified enceinte. When we turn from this picture of the past to the present condition of the localities, we are at first struck with astonishment at the small traces which remain of so vast and wonderful a metropolis. 'The broad walls of Babylon' are 'utterly broken down,' and her 'high gates hewn with the knife.' (Jer. ii. 68.) "The great city hath ceased" (Isa. iv. 4). God has 'swept it with the besom of destruction' (ibid. ver. 23). 'The glory of the kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, is become as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrhah,' (Isa. xlii. 19). The traveller who passes through the land is at first inclined to say that there are no ruins, no remains of the mighty city which once lorded it over the earth. By and by, however, he begins to see that though ruins, in the common acceptance of the word, scarce exist, though there are no arches, no pillars, but one or two appearances of masonry, even; yet the whole country is covered with traces of exactly that kind which it was prophesied Babylon should leave (Jer. ii. 37)—'And Babylon shall become heaps.' Compare L. 26. Vast 'heaps' or mounds, shapeless and unsightly, are scattered at intervals over the entire region where it is certain that Babylon anciently stood; and between the 'heaps' the soil is in many places composed of fragments of pottery and bricks, and deeply impregnated with nitre, infallible indications of its having once been covered with buildings. As the traveller descends southward from Bagdad, he finds these indications increase, until, on nearing the Euphrates, a few miles beyond Mohawil, he notes that they have become continuous, and finds himself in a region of mounds, some of which are of enormous size.

"These mounds begin about five miles above Hillah, and extend for a distance of about three miles from north to south along the Euphrates, and a few miles to the west, on the further side of the river, lying principally on its left or eastern bank. The ruins on this side consist chiefly of three great masses of building. The most northern, to which the Arabs at the present day apply the name of Babil,—the true native appellation of the ancient city,—is a vast pile of brickwork of an irregular quadrilateral shape, with precipitous sides, furrowed by ravines, and with a flat top.

"Below the Babil mound, which stands isolated from the rest of the ruins, are two principal masses, the more northern known to the Arabs as El Ksar, 'the Palace,' and the more southern as 'the mound of Amran,' from the tomb of a reputed prophet, Amran-ibn-Ali, which crowns its summit.

"South of the Ksar mound, at the distance of about 800 yards is the remaining great mass of ruins, the mound of Junjuina, or of Amran. The general shape of this mound is triangular; but it is very irregular, and ill-defined, so as scarcely to admit of accurate description. Its three sides face respectively a little east of north, a little south of east, and a little south of west.

"A low line of mounds is traceable between the western face of the Amran and Ksar hills, and the present eastern bank of the river, bounding a sort of narrow valley, in which either the main line of the road of the Euphrates, or at any rate a branch from it, seems anciently to have flowed.

"There are also, besides these ramparts and the great masses of ruins above described, a vast number of scattered and unimportant masses of canine heaps or hillocks on both sides of the river, chiefly, however, upon the eastern bank. Of these one only seems to deserve distinct mention. This is the mound called El Homereia, 'the Red,' which lies due east of the Ksar, distant from it about 800 yards,—a mound said to be 300 yards long by 100 wide, and to attain an elevation of 60 or 70 feet. It is
Desolation of Babylon. ISAIAH XIII. 20—22. XIV. 1. Deliverance of Israel.

It 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.

But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; And their houses shall be full of doleful creatures And owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, And dragons in their pleasant palaces:

And her time is near to come, And her days shall not be prolonged.

XIV. 1 For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, And will yet choose Israel, And set them in their own land: And the strangers shall be joined with them, And they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.

We are here reminded again of the description in the Apocalypse of the future condition of the mystical Babylon after its fall. See Rev. xviii. 2.

The Liberation of God’s People from Babylon. XIV. 1. For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land.] Here is comfort for Israel. Isaiah foretold their captivity at Babylon (see on xiii. 1); but he was enabled to see beyond that captivity, and to foretell the fall of Babylon, and the restoration of Israel, consequent on that destruction. (See Preilh. Note to chap. xi.) These prophecies of Isaiah, and those of Jeremiah which complete them, appear to have been shown to Cyrus, and thus to have been instrumental, in God’s hands, for executing His purpose of love in that restoration. See above, on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21—23; and Ezra i. 1, 2.

The prophecies in Isaiah and Jeremiah concerning the destruction of the literal Babylon have their Evangelical echo in the Apocalypse, in the prophecies concerning the destruction of the mystical Babylon (Rev. xvii. and xviii.). And the liberation and return of captive and exiled Judah, in consequence of that destruction, and the restoration of the Temple and walls of Jerusalem, and the other spiritual blessings which accompanied those events, have also their counterpart in the Apocalypse, in the future triumphs of Christ and the Gospel. See on Rev. xiv. 1—21. There is good reason for believing that as the fall of the literal Babylon was the occasion of the renewal and return of God’s ancient people to Jerusalem, so the future destruction of the mystical Babylon will be fraught with special blessings to them, and to the whole Church of Christ. See notes below, on Rev. xvi. 12. Therefore these prophecies have a special interest for the latter days. Compare below, on xxii. 1—8; and on chaps. xvi. xlvii.

— the strangers shall be joined with them] The restoration of Israel was effected by a stranger, the great Persian king and conqueror, Cyrus (a.c. 539), and was promoted by a stranger, the Persian king Artaxerxes Longimanus (a.c. 468). See Introd. to Ezra, p. 296; and Ezra i. 6; vii. 1—24; and many strangers were converted to the religion of the Jews in their dispersions, in the days of Esther (Esth. viii. 17), and in later days in Egypt, in the time of the Punicus; so that at the day of Pentecost there were strangers of Rome at Jerusalem, and innumerable others from all lands (Acts i. 9—12); and there were synagogues in all parts of the civilized world, where the Old Testament was read weekly on the Hebrew Sabbath, and to which religious proselytes of all nations resorted. See Introd. to the Acts, pp. 8—10. Cp. Tacit., Hist. v. 5; Joseph., Ant. xvi. 17.

This prophecy is to be extended to later days, and demands in an Evangelical interpretation: we see its fulfillment in the clearing of heathen Nations to Christ, the promised Seed of Abraham, and of David, in the spiritual Sion of His Church. See below, ix. 5. 10. Zech. viii. 22, 23. Acts xv. 14—17. Eph. ii. 14, 15; G

Composed of baked brick, of a bright red colour, and must have been a building of a very considerable height, resting upon a somewhat conformed base. Its bricks are inscribed along their edges, not (as is the usual practice) on their lower face.

"Such, then, are the ruins of Babylon, the whole that can now with certainty be assigned to the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency" (Isa. xiii. 19), the Great Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iv. 30). Within a space little more than three miles long, and three quarters broad, are contained all the undoubted remains of the greatest city of the old world (Rawlinson, Ancient Monarchies, iii. 350—361).

It shall never be inhabited] Although Alexander the Great, the conqueror of Egypt and Asia, designed to make Babylon the capital of his empire {Armen, de Exp. Alex. vii. 17; Josephus, c. Apion. i. § 22; Strabo, xvi. p. 1073; Q. Curtius, v. 1}, and employed 20,000 workmen for two months in clearing away the rubbish of the foundations of the Temple of Belus, in preparation for the execution of that purpose, yet he was baffled in his design, and all his efforts were abortive, and the great conqueror of the East was cut off in the height of his glory by death at Babylon.

Alexander's intention to restore Babylon may be compared with the Emperor Julian's attempt to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem. Both warred against God's will, as declared in prophecy—the former unconsciously, the latter deliberately. Both were frustrated in their design; and the truth of God's Word, and the might of God's power, were made more manifest and illustrious by their opposition to them.

Doleful creatures] Literally, howlings; howling creatures, perhaps screech owls (Gesen. 23).

— owls] Rather, outstriker; so called from their wailing. See Job xxv. 29; xxix. 13—18. — satyres] Heb. seirmim, rendered satyres here, and at xxxiv. 14. Properly, hairy creatures, like goats; rendered in our Version by deëlos (as here by Vulg.), in two places—Lev. xvii. 7, where see note, and 2 Chron. xvi. 15. In some passages it is translated hairy, as Gen. xxvi. 11; and it is rendered goat, Lev. iv. 24, and in numerous other places.

In Dan. vii. 21, it describes "the rough he-goat, the King of Greece," Alexander the Great, who kept his court at Babylon. Cp. xiv. 9; and see note there.

22. The wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses] Rather, and howlers (dogs, wolves, jackals; see Gesen. 26) shall cry to one another in its desolate houses. Howlers bears in the Vulgate (when sometimes signifies islands) is here to be rendered as above. It is derived from avah, to howl (Gesen. 19. 36). Cp. below, xxxiv. 14. Jer. l. 99, where the same correction is to be made in our Version.

The prophecy against Tyre (Gesen. 988; Forrer, 1841). See above, on Job xviii. 22; and compare Jer. l. 13. 39; and the words of S. Jerome (on chap. xiii.), who says that he heard from a traveller in his day, who had visited the ruins of Babylon, that it had become a royal hunting-park, and that all kinds of wild animals abounded there.
And the people shall take them, 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, and whose captives they were;
And they shall rule over their oppressors.
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,
That thou shalt take up this [proverb against the king of Babylon, and say,
How hath the oppressor ceased!
The [golden city] shall the staff of the wicked, And the sceptre of the rulers.
He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, He that ruled the nations in anger, Is persecuted, and none hindereth.
The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: They break forth into singing;
Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, The cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.
All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?
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.

2. And the people shall take them] Rather, And nations shall take them (Sept., Vulg., Syr., and Targum), i.e. heathen nations shall escort them to Jerusalem. See the foregoing note. Cp. Ps. cxv. 8. Where it is stated that the miraculous restoration of Israel attracted the excited wonder of the Heathen.
— shall possess them—for servants and handmaids: and they shall rule over their oppressors] This prophecy also is to be extended to later days, when the true religion of the Israel of God was received into royal courts and palaces, in the Gospel of Christ, and when the Cross of Christ was set on the diadems of kings (cp. xlix. 23; Is. 9—14; and Is. 5. Ohad. 17—21. Rev. xx. 24, 25; and Fritzsche here); and it will have its full accomplishment in the "Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us all" (Gal. iv. 20).

4. this proverb] Literally, this parable, or similitude (Vulg. Heb. mashal). See above, on Prov. i. 1; and Introd. to Proverbs, p. xi. The sense is, that what here follows, is not only applicable to Babylon, but it is to be applied, by way of comparison, to all great, proud, dominant, idolatrous Powers, of which Babylon was a specimen and a type. See xx. 26. 27. The mashal or parable has therefore its spiritual significance for the last days; and it has its echo in the Apocalypse (chap. xviii.).

5. The golden city] Or, gold-maker, i.e. an exactress of gold (Gesen. 450). The Hebrew word here used, mashalh, is supposed by some to be from halal, the Chaldees for zakah, gold. Some ancient Versions (Sept., Syr., Aquila, and Targum) seem to have read zahab, oppression, which is preferred by Everett, 772. 1283.

6. Is persecuted] Rather, with smiling, and none hindereth, i.e. without intermission. He who smote others, and did never cease, and spared not, is now punished for his cruelty.

8. at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon] Nebuchadnezzar himself, in words quoted below, on v. 14, speaks of his having hewn down cedars of Lebanon and cypresses for the construction of his own buildings at Babylon. Similarly Sennacherib's son, Esarhaddon, King of Assyria, speaks of the timber trees of cedar and cypress, which were sent by his tributaries from the mountains of Siraw and Lebanon for the building of his edifices at Nineveh. (Inscription of Esarhaddon, published by Oppert, p. 58.) And Sennacherib is said by Rashi (2 Kings xix. 23).

9. The world is to be read here, rather, the cedars of Lebanon. It is a name for the Earth, as compared with the cedars of Lebanon. The Earth is at rest, is quiet, because thou art gone; but Hades stirs up its inhabitants to meet thee—a sublime contrast.

— the chief ones of the earth] Literally, the he-goats of the earth. Cp. Zech. x. 3; and above, on c. 21.

How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

For thou hast said in thine heart,

"I will ascend into heaven,
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:
I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation,
In the sides of the north:
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will be like the most High.

Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell,
To the sides of the pit.

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;
That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof;
That opened not the house of his prisoners?"

All the kings of the nations, Even all of them, lie in glory,
Every one in his own house.

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 carcasse trodden under feet.

The spiritual counterpart of this arrogant vanishing of the King of Babylon is seen in St. Paul's prophecy concerning "the Man of sin, the Son of Perdition, who sitteth in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God." See below, on 2 Thess. ii. 2-4.

14. I will be like the most High] These words are illustrated by the language of Nebuchadnezzar himself, in an inscription found at Babylon, and interpreted by Oppert, in a paper read before the Académie Impériale de Reims, Aug. 3, 1865:—

"I, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, the mighty Lord, the elect of Merodach, the Supreme Ruler, the adorer of Nabo, the Vicar-King, who judges without injustice, the Minister of the Gods, the eldest son of Nabopolassar. He has created me, the God who begat me; He hath entrusted to me the dominion over the legions of men. I have changed inaccessible heights into roads for chariots. I have amassed in my city of Babylon silver, and gold, and precious stones, and timber of all kinds, the minerals of the hills, and the jewels of the seas, an infinite treasure, and I have brought thither the greatest trees from the summits of Lebanon." See v. 8. "I have covered with pure gold the beams of high eypresses for the carpenter's work of the sanctuary of the temples,"—the lower part of these beams of eypress were plated with gold and silver, and other metals, and stone,—"and I constructed the tower of Borsippa with gold, silver, and other metals, and stones, and glazed bricks, and lute, and cedar."

In p. 26, he speaks of his other works in cedar and eypress at Babylon.

19. Thou art cast out of thy grave] Or, Thou art cast out far from thy grave; as Belshazzar probably was. Cp. the narrative in Xenophon (Cyr. vii. 5. 30), who calls him "the impious king." (and see Vitr. p. 411). Perhaps the conspirators, Gohryas and Gadatas, wreaked their vengeance on the unhappy king, by casting his corpse unburied among the heaps of dead, and it did not come into the sepulture of his ancestors.

— the raiment of those that are slain] Instead of the corpse being clothed with funeral coverings, and conveyed to a noble grave, it will itself be a covering or garment to other corpses who lie beneath it. Belshazzar is described by Xenophon (Cyr. vii. 5. 30) as falling in the fray with many near him. Cp. Sept. here, and Pulp.
His name shall be cut off.

ISAIAH XIV. 20—28. I will break the Assyrian.

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

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

22 For I will rise up against them, Saith the Lord of hosts, And cut off from Babylon the name, and "remnant, And son, and nephew, saith the Lord.

23 y I 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:

25 That I will break the Assyrian in my land, And upon my mountains tread him under foot: Then shall *his yoke depart from off them, And his burden depart from off their shoulders.

26 This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: And this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.

For the Lord of hosts hath *purposed, and who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

28 In the year that *king Ahaz died was this burden.

The Assyrian to be broken in Judah.

24.] The foregoing prophecy concerning Babylon is followed by a denunciation of judgment on ASSYRIA. As S. Jerome well says, "The prophet returns to what is near at hand, namely, to Semacherib, the King of Assyria, who took the fenced cities of Judah except Jerusalem, and whose army was destroyed there. Isaiah couples what is near with what is distant." This is his usual practice. The fulfilment of the nearer prophecy concerning Semacherib and Assyria, and the deliverance of Jerusalem, would be a present pledge that the prophecy concerning Babylon, and the restoration of the Jews, would be fulfilled also. God says, by Jeremiah (I. 18), "Behold, I will punish the King of Babylon, and his land, as I have punished the King of Assyria." The one destruction was a pledge of the other; and both these destructions are pledges to the Church of God in the latter days that all the enemies of God,—whether characterized by infidel and impious blasphemy, like Assyria, or by idolatry, as Babylon,—will be destroyed; and that the Truth will triumph over all opposition, and achieve a full and final victory in Christ. See v. 26.

25. I will break the Assyrian in my land] Here is a strong argument in favour of the opinion that Semacherib's army was not destroyed at Pelusium in Egypt, as some suppose, but in the land of Judah, and on the mountains of God, near Jerusalem. See below, on xxxvii. 36.

Woe to Philistia.

22. nephews Heb. need, which signifies progeny (Vulg., Gesen.). The English word nephew is used also in this larger sense, in our Translation, in I Tim. v. 4.

23. bittern] The word here used is rendered porcupine or hedgehog by Sept. and Vulg.; and so Gesen. 736; Euseb., 1247. It occurs again, xxiv. 11; and Zeph. ii. 14. All that appears certain concerning it is, that it means an animal dwelling in swamps and marshes.
Philistia is directed to Zion. ISAIAH XIV. 29—32. XV. 1. Burden of Moab.

29. Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, But the rod of him that smote thee is broken: For out of the serpent’s root shall come forth a cockatrice, And his fruit shall be a fiery swimming.

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.

31. How! O gate; cry, O city: Thou, whole Palestina, art dissolved: For there shall come from the north a smoke, And none shall be alone in his appointed times.

32. What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? That the Lord hath founded Zion, And the poor of his people shall trust in it.

XV. 1 The burden of Moab.

their own country by the successor of Ahaz. So it came to pass in the days of Ahab that the Philistines invaded Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen, to the fenced city." See 2 Kings xviii. 8.

Observe the contrast here. In the foregoing prophecy concerning Babylon, it is foretold that the King of Babylon would perish, and his city fall; and that Israel would rejoice in its return to its own land (xii. xiv.). Now Ahaz dies, and Philistia, Israel’s enemy, rejoices; but the prophet foretells that its joy would be short, and that it would be destroyed by victories, which would be gained over it by Judah. So all things work together for good to them that love God.

Remark also the connexion. After uttering a prophecy concerning the more distant fall of Babylon, and consequent liberation of Israel from captivity, Isaiah had returned to deliver a prophecy concerning the nearer destruction of the army of Assyria in the land of Judah, and the deliverance of Jerusalem, under Hezekiah; and now he comes back to a still nearer point, even to the first year of Hezekiah, and delivers a prophecy concerning his victory over Philistia. Thus one prophecy is built on the substraction of other prophecies, and is confirmed by them. They all culminate in Christ.

29. thon, whole Palestina; All thou, Philistia (Favor., Sept., and Gesen. 960). Cp. Jer. xviii. 51. The Prophet sees all Philistia bursting forth in an universal shout of joy at the prospect of conquests over Judah; and he foretells that the whole country will soon join in one general bowl of woe (v. 31).

— the rod of him that smote thee (Rob). The rod of David, which smote thee in the days of David himself, and Solomon, and Uzziah, will again smite thee by the hand of Hezekiah. See S. Jerome here.

— Messiah. The Targum adds, "The Messiah, Who will come forth from the sons of Jesse." And, doubtless, this prophecy is to be extended in a spiritual sense to the conquests to be achieved by Christ,—the Divine Son of David, and King of Judah,—over His enemies, symbolized by the Philistines; conquests achieved by the overthrow of the Philistine champion Goliath, by David, at Shobach. See above, on 1 Sam. xvii. 4—55. He, Who was raised up on the Cross, like the Serpent lifted up by Moses in the wilderness (John iii. 14), defeated the ancient Serpent by his Death. See Heb. ii. 14.

This spiritual interpretation is confirmed by what follows.

30. the firstborn of the poor; Those on whom the burden falls of providing for the rest of the family. In a spiritual sense, this may be applied to the humblest of Christ’s children, — they will be satisfied (Matt. v. 6).

31. thon, whole Palestina; All thou, Philistia. See v. 29. — in his appointed times; All the military forces of the invaders (primarily, Hezekiah: see v. 28) shall come to the master against thee at their appointed times. None shall fail.

32. What shall one then answer; Or, And what answer shall messengers (taken collectively) of a Nation bring? (see Sept., Arabic, and Targum; and cp. Delitzsch). What will the one who represents the messengers of Nations carry home to their own land, when they hear of the defeat of the enemies of Jerusalem, such as those specified in the foregoing prophecies—Babylon, Assyria, and Philistia? The answer will be, That Jehovah hath established Zion; and the poor,— the meek and humble,—of His people shall trust in it.

This is the merciful purpose of all God’s judgments on the Nations of the Earth. His design in all these visitations is— that all men should magnify His Name, and fear His Majesty, and acknowledge His power, and His justice. This is not to be done by a religious knowledge, with one heart and voice, that ‘the Lord hath founded Zion,’ and should be united together in it, and should dwell there in meekness and love as brethren in Christ. Cp. Ps. lxxvii. 1. 5; cxxii. 12—15. Matt. xi. 28. Heb. xii. 22.

The Burden of Moab.

Ch. XV.] Moab had been subdued by Israel under Saul (1 Sam. xiv. 47) and David (2 Sam. viii. 2), and had paid tribute to the kings of Israel in the days of Ahaz, after whose death it revolted (2 Kings i. 1; iii. 4, 5).

Moab, joined with Ammon and other tribes, invaded Judah in the days of Jehoshaphat, who gained a signal victory over them, and returned to Jerusalem with praise and thanksgiving from the Valley of Bethzelah. See 2 Chron. xx. 1—30.

In 2 Kings iii. 4—27, we have another record of victories gained over Moab by Jehoshaphat in conjunction with Jehoram, son of Ahaz, in the country of Moab itself.

In the reign of Jehu, the domination of Israel over Moab was weakened by the incursions of the Syrians, who occupied a large part of that country (2 Kings x. 32, 33); but it seems to have recovered to Israel by Jeroboam II. (2 Kings xiv. 25).

The deportation of the eastern tribes of Israel by Pul in B.C. 770, and by Tiglath-pileser in B.C. 740, gave an opportunity to Moab to attempt to assert its former dominion.

It may be conjectured, that the humiliation of Moab, which is predicted to take place in three years (xvi. 14), was effected in part by Tiglath-pileser about B.C. 740, who carried away the tribes on the east of Jordan, the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh (1 Chron. ii. 20), and who appears to have passed on to the south, and to have reduced the Arab tribes who inhabited the Sinaitic desert as far as the borders of Egypt, and to have set up an Assyrian governor over them. And he received tribute, as he informs us in an inscription still extant, not only from Ahaz, King of Judah (cp. 2 Kings xvi. 10), but also from the Moabites, Ammonites, and Idumaeans (see Roslinson, Ancient Monarchies, ii. 399).

In an inscription of Semachib (p. 44, Oppert), a king of Moab is mentioned as having done homage to him. It seems, therefore, that the subjection of Moab to Assyria lasted till the time of the destruction of Semachib’s army, in the seventeenth year of the reign of Hezekiah and that Isaiah
Because in the night † Ar of Moab is laid waste,
And || brought to silence;
Because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste,
And brought to silence;

2 e He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep:
Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba:
On all their heads shall be baldness, and every head cut off.

3 In their streets they shall gird themselves with sackcloth:
On the tops of their houses, and in their streets,
Every one shall howl, † weeping abundantly.

4 And Heshbon shall cry, † 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 e My heart shall cry out for Moab;
|| His fugitives shall flee unto Zoor,
An h heifer of three years old,
For † 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 † destruction.
For the waters † of Nimrim shall be † desolate:
For the hay is withered away,
The grass faileth, there is no green thing.
Therefore the abundance they have gotten,
And that which they have laid up,
ISAIAH XV. 8, 9. XVI. 1—4. to fear the God of Zion.

Shall they carry away to the || 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 † more upon Dimon,
Lions upon him that escapeth of Moab,
And upon the remnant of the land.

XVI. 1 Send ye the lamb to the ruler of the land
b From || Sela to the wilderness,
Unto the mount of the daughter of Zion.
2 For it shall be,
That, as a wandering bird || cast out of the nest,
So the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of ‡ Arnon.
3 † 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 coeur to them from the face of the spoiler:

7. brook of the willows] Perhaps Wadi-suuf, which has that sense, the northern branch of Wadi-Sel-el-Kerek. See on v. 1. The Moabites, panic-struck, crossed the brook of the willows, in their flight from the invaders who came from the north; and they passed to the fastnesses of Edom on the south.
8. Eglaim] Eight miles south-west of Ar (S. Jerome), and south-east of the Dead Sea (Ezek. xlvii. 10).
— Beer-elim] Well of princes, probably that mentioned in Num. xxi. 16, 18, on the northern verge of the wilderness.
9. Dimon—blood] There is a parenthetical here, or play on the words, between Dibon, called Dimon, from dam (blood).

MOAB IS EXHORTED TO TURN TO GOD.

Ch. XVI. 1. Send ye the lamb to the ruler of the land from Sela send ye a lamb of the ruler of the land—that is, his tribute of lambs—from Sela (Petra, near Mount Hor, in Wady Messa, through which the Moabites fled to the exiles from the Assyrian invaders, desertwards, to the mount of the daughter of Zion.
The Prophet exhorts the Moabites to turn for help to the God of Israel at Jerusalem, Who is the Ruler of the land; and to send a tribute to Him.
The tribute is to be in lambs, the produce of their land; from which, in earlier days, Moab, in the days of Mesha their king, had sent a tribute of 100,000 lambs to the king of Israel (2 Kings iii. 4, 5).
The Moabites in their alarm had submitted to Assyria, and had paid tribute to it (see chap. xv. Prelim. Note). The Prophet invites them in their affliction to turn to God, and to pay tribute to Hezekiah, the king of God’s people at Zion, and the ancestor and type of Christ (see Pfeiffer, 367, and Prelim. Note to chap. xxv. It is noted in the Sacred History, that Hezekiah abounded in riches and honour, and treasures of gold, and silver, and jewels, and also in “possessions of flocks and herds; for God gave him substance very much.” (see 2 Chron. xxxii. 27—29. Probably some of these were a tribute from Moab.
In a spiritual sense, this is an exhortation to earthly Powers, especially such as are symbolized by the Moabites (see Prelim. Note to chap. xlix.) to be humbled and warned by affliction, and to resort to God for comfort and help. We may compare the promise to Moab in Jer. xlviii. 47. Here is another proof of God’s merciful design in national judgments. They are intended to wean the Nations of the world from pride and sensuality, and to bring them to Him by national repentance.
The Targum (in v. 1 and v. 5, see note there) interprets these words as a prophecy of the submission of all Nations to the Messiah; and there is good reason for such an application of them. As S. Jerome says, “Nec est ualla dubitation quin capitulum hoc de Christo vaticiniatur. In omni terræ Moab, Ecclesiæmum triumpha sanguinis Christi testantur imperium.”
3. Take counsel, execute judgment] All this is ironical, and is to be explained from the character of Moab as drawn by the Prophet in v. 6; proud and deceitful,—promising much to Israel in prosperity, but treacherous in the time of trial. Zion, being delivered from danger, thus spake: “Now, O Moab, thou mayest be a covert to thy brethren of Judah from the face of the spoiler (Sennacherib)—for the spoiler has ceased.” This seems at first a paradox; but there is a deep meaning in it. “Thou mayest boast now, O Moab, to thy heart’s content; for we have no further need to put thy friendship to the proof. Thou, who wast once so courageous in words, art now spoiled; but we, to whom thou gavest nothing but empty promises, are saved; Therefore resort to us—seek thou for help from the throne of David, and from the God of Judah. For the extortioneer is at an end.” He foresees and foretells the destruction of the Assyrian power under Sennacherib, and the prosperous times of Hezekiah, to whom, after that great deliverance, many “brought gifts to the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah, so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations” (2 Chron. xxxii. 22, 23). Doubtless Moab was among the number, and was received into the protection of Judah.
Beyond all, the prophet beholds the peaceable reign of Christ; and he sees the nations of the heathen World turning to Him, and bringing their tribute to Him in His spiritual Zion. The subjection of Moab to Christ, and of other countries mentioned in these “burdens” had been already foretold by the Psalmist: “Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, be thou glad of me. Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?” See above, on Ps. lx. 8, 9; civit. 9. The Targum here anticipates that joyful time by the following words on this passage: “Then a throne will be prepared for the Christ of Israel, and He will sit upon it, in truth, in the city of David.”
ISAIAH XVI. 5—13.

For the † extortioner is at an end, The spoiler ceaseth,
† The oppressors are consumed out of the land;
And in mercy d shall the throne be established:
And he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David,
Judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.

We have heard of the ‡ pride of Moab; he is very proud:
Even of his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath:
But his lies shall not be so.

Therefore shall Moab † howl for Moab, 
Every one shall howl:
For the foundations of Kir-hareseth shall ye ° mourn; 
Surely they are stricken.
For k the fields of Heshbon languish, 
And l the 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 ° stretched out, they are gone over the sea.

Therefore ° I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: 
I will water thee with my tears, ° O Heshbon, and Elealeh: 
For ° the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen.
And ° gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; 
And in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: 
The treaders shall tread out no wine in their presses; 
I have made their vintage shouting to cease.

Wherefore ° my bowels shall sound like an harp for Moab, 
And mine inward parts for Kir-haresh.
And it shall come to pass, 
When it is seen that Moab is weary on ° the high place, 
That he shall come to his sanctuary to pray; 
But he shall not prevail.

This is the word that the Lord hath spoken concerning Moab since that time.

6. We have heard of the pride of Moab} The Prophet returns to justify God’s wrath in afflicting Moab. The sins of Moab, here set down, were the cause of the judgment upon it. Cp. Jeremiah (xlvi. 30), adopting the words of Isaiah.

— But his lies shall not be so} Rather, his big words, not so; that is, not according to fact; his boastful, lying, treacherous, random talk, which had no reality in it. See Vulg., Gesen. 103, and Delitzsch; and cp. Jer. xlviii. 29, for a further description of Moab’s national vices.

7. For the foundations} For the ruins (Gesen. 85). For the grape cakes (Hengst., Delitzsch).

— Kir-hareseth} One of the principal fortresses of Moab; probably the same as Kir in xv. 1. See 2 Kings iii. 25.


— The lords of the heathen} The lords of the nations; a title claimed by the kings of Assyria. Thus Sargon says of himself, “The gods Assur, Nebo, and Mardoch, have given me the lordship of the nations” (scatter. of Khorsabad, p. 20); and so Sennacherib (on his prism, p. 41) says, “Assur, the great Lord, has conferred on me the lordship of the nations; he has extended my dominion over all who dwell on the earth.”— They are come even unto Jazer} Rather, they (the branches of the vine of Sibmah) reached unto Jazer (a lake between Ramoth and Heshbon. Jer. xlvii. 32), they wandered or trailed through the wilderness— over the sea, i.e. the large lake of Jazer (Jer. xlviii. 32); such was the luxuriance and excellence of the vines of Sibmah. Jeremiah interprets Isaiah. Compare the metaphor in Ps. lxxx. 8—11.

9. For the shouting— is fallen} Rather, for a shouting (Heb. hayyad, which signifies a shouting of grape-treaders in the wine-presses, and also a shouting of warriors who tread down their enemies in the battle-field, compared to a wine-press. See Jer. xxv. 30; xlviii. 32; li. 14; and the metaphor below, lii. 3, “I have trodden the winepress alone”; and Lam. i. 15; and in the Apocalypse xiv. 19, 20; xix. 15; and Gesen. 221 a shouting (or war-cry) hath fallen on thy harvest of fruits and on thy vintage; see the next verse, where the same word occurs at the close.


— he shall not prevail} Moab shall not gain any thing by his prayer to his false god. Therefore let him turn to the Lord, and to His house at Zion (v. 1).

13. since that time} Some time ago (cp. xlviii. 8; xlvii. 21; xlviii. 3, 5, 7), whether the time be short or long. All that the phrase means here is, that what has just been said is not now first spoken, when the judgment on Moab is imminent (lest it should be imagined that the prophecy was only a lucky conjecture derived from the present aspect of affairs); but that it
Woes of Damascus and Israel ISAIAH XVI. 14. XVII. 1—8. will bring them to God.

11 But now the Lord hath spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of an hirling, And the glory of Moab shall be contemned, With all that great multitude; And the remnant shall be very small and || feeble.

XVII. 1 The burden of Damascus.
Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, And it shall be a ruinous heap.

2 The cities of Aror are forsaken: They shall be for flocks, which shall lie down, And none shall make them afraid.

3 The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim, And the kingdom from Damascus, And the remnant of Syria; They shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, Saith the Lord of hosts.

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

5 And it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the corn, And reapeth the ears with his arm; And it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim.

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.

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

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.

was revealed some time before, perhaps in the prophecy of Amos (i. 1—2) and now he adds a special and exact indication of the time within which the judgment would be executed.

14. But now—within three years, as the years of an hirling] In which the employer remits nothing, and to which the labourer adds nothing.—three years, neither more nor less. Cp. xxi. 16, where the same phrase occurs, and Job vii. 1; whence it may be inferred that the years of a hirling signify also years of severe labour and pain. As to the time of the delivery of the prophecy, see chap. xv. Prelim. Note.

Burdern of Damascus.

1. The burden of Damascus] The great Syrian capital. This prophecy was fulfilled in the destruction of the Syrian kingdom, and the slaughter of Hazael, its king, by the King of Assyria, Tiglath-pileser, B.C. 746. See 2 Kings xvi. 19; and above, vii. 9 (Rawlinson, Ancient Monarchies, ii. pp 397—399).

2. cities of Aror] On the coast of Jordan. There were two Arors: one now called Arvins, on the river Marsh, the ancient Arnon (cp. Deut. ii. 36); as to the other, see Josh. xiii. 25. Both these and the region around them, belonging to the kingdom of Israel, were laid waste by Tiglath-pileser, who carried away captive the trans-jordanic tribes, a short time before his conquest of Damascus (2 Kings xv. 29. 1 Chron. v. 26. Rawlinson, ii. 390).

3. Ephraim—Damascenus] Which had conspired against Jerusalem, and were united in a common destruction, as was prophesied by Isaiah (above, vii. 16). The people of both were carried captive into Assyria: see Amos i. 5; cp. 2 Kings xvi. 9. Vol. V. Part I. 49

5. And it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the corn] Gathereth corn, or graspeth ears with his arm, and them cuts them off. Israel was ripe for God’s judgment. Cp. Joel iii. 13: “Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe;” and Rev. xiv. 15: “Thrust in thy sickle, and reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” —in the valley of Rephaim] In the fruitful plain on the south-west of Jerusalem, sloping downward toward Bethlehem (Josephus, Ant. vii. 12. 4. Josh. xv. 8. 2 Sam. v. 18; xxiii. 13. 1 Chron. xi. 15). On account of the rich harvests which were reaped in this wide plain in the sight of Jerusalem, the plain of Rephaim is here used as a metaphor for the scene of God’s judgments. Cp. the words of Joel (iii. 12—14), concerning the valley of Jehoshaphat.

6. Yet gleaning grapes] Literally, gleanings shall be left (Gen. 633). A remnant of Israel shall return. Cp. i. 9; x. 21; xi. 11. Rom. xi. 5. —in the outmost fruitful branches] In the branches of its first (Vulg.).

7. At that day shall a man look to his Maker] Here is the final cause and the moral effect of the Divine judgments on Israel and other Nations,—conversion to God. See above, xiv. 32; xvi. 1.

8. shall not look to the altars] Such as the idolatrous altar which Ahaz copied from that of Damascus (xvi. 12). —the groves, or the images] Rather, the Astartes (her images and pillars), and the sun-gods (Heb. ogdoad and chamannim). Cp. on Exod. xxxiv. 13. Lev. xxvii. 30. Dant. vii. 5; xvi. 21. Judg. iii. 7; vi. 25. 2 Chron. xiv. 5; below, xviii. 8; and Vitrinas, p. 506. II
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:

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.

12 Woe to the multitude of many people, Which make a noise like the noise of the seas; And to the rushing of nations, That make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters!

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

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.

XVIII. | Woe to the land shadowing with wings,

9. as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch.] Rather, as the desolation of a thick wood (or coppice), and of a mountain top (see Gez. 58. 310), which the Canaanites foresaw when they were extirpated by Joshua and Israel. The Israelites, who were employed by God to root out the nations of Canaan for their idolatry, shall be rooted out also for their sins. Cp. above, on Gen. xv. 16. Num. xxxii. 2; and Introd. to Joshua, p. xvii.

10. Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength.] The prophet takes up the words of Moses in Deut. xiv. 4. 15. 18. 30. 31: | "Of the Rock that begat thee, thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee," in order to remind them that they have been forewarned of the consequences of their sin.

--- *strong slips*] Strange gods; another reference to Deut. xxxii. 16.

--- *the word to plant, refers to the setting up idolatrous pillars and images, and statues, compared to trees.* See Deut. xvi. 21: | "Thou shalt not plant a grove" (or ashé; see the note there, where the same word (u’dó) is used in the original, for to plant).

--- *Thou shalt make thy plant to grow.] So Kinch, Aben Ezra, and others. Gesenius (785) and Delitzsch suppose the word to signify thou shalt fence about it.

--- *a heap*] Not of corn, but of ruins.

**Woe to Assyria.**

12. Woe to the multitude of many people.] The prophet turns from contemplating the effects of God's judgments, executed on Syria and Israel by Tiglath-pileser, King of Assyria, to a denunciation of God's anger on Assyria itself, under Sennacherib (who came to spoil Judah, v. 14), for proudly arrogating to itself the glory of its conquests.

The mighty power of Assyria, which had been used by the God of Israel as His instrument for punishing the strong kingdoms of Syria and Israel for their sins, was broken by God Himself, when it blasphemed Him, and assaulted Jerusalem, and menaced her king, Hezekiah, who trusted in God. Thus the supremacy of the Lord God of Judah was displayed.

--- *the rushing of mighty waters.] To which the invading hosts of Assyria have been already compared in vii. 7: | "The Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the King of Assyria, and all his glory; and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: and he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck."

Thus he prepares the way for the following prophecies concerning the conquests of Assyria, in Ethiopia, and Egypt, and for the prophecy of the destruction of Assyria itself, when its waves dashed against the Rock of Israel in the days of Hezekiah; which is briefly anticipated here.

--- *behold at eveningtide trouble.] Hezekiah said, "This is a day of trouble." (2 Kings xix. 3). | Before the morning he is not.] Here is a prophecy of the sudden destruction of the army of Sennacherib, described in xxvii. 36; and cp. 2 Kings xix. 35: | "When they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." | This is the portion of them that spoil us.] These words may be supposed to be uttered by the inhabitants of Jerusalem, when they looked forth in the morning from the city, and saw the ground strewn by the dead corpses of the Assyrians. Cp. below, xxxiii. 1, | "Woe to thee that spoilest!" v. 4, | "Your spoil shall be gathered." Cp. on xxviii. 36.

The Assyrians had taken the fenced cities of Judah, and had spoiled Jerusalem; see 2 Kings xvii. 13. 16. But, at last, the spoiler himself was spoiled. See below, on xxxix. 2.

**Woe to Ethiopia.**

Ch. XVIII.] The three following chapters form a prophetical trilogy; they relate to ETHIOPIA AND EGYPT.

The present chapter, which contains a prophetical message to Ethiopia, may be explained from recently-discovered Assyrian monuments, illustrating the narrative of Holy Scripture concerning the campaigns of Sennacherib (2 Kings xviii. xix.); see there, v. 9); and the statement of Isaiah himself in xx. 4, 5:
Which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia:

2 That sendeth ambassadors by the sea,

"The king of Assyria shall lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt. And they shall be ashamed and utterly confounded, both they and all they that were with them, of Assyria their glory, and of Egypt their glory. And the inhabitant of this isle" (Jerusalem) "shall say in that day, Behold, such is our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the Assyrian; and we turn again to the Lord, and put our trust in his holy name."

These words are the best commentary on the present and following chapters concerning Ethiopia and Egypt. Sennacherib came with a great army against Judah, and took all its fortified cities; but by the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, who induced him, by large presents, to the siege. See above, on x. 28—34; and on 2 Kings xviii. 13.

Sennacherib, being thus induced to spare Jerusalem, passed southward toward Lachish and Libnah (2 Kings xviii. 17; xix. 8), and thence still farther south toward Egypt, which was the principal object of his campaign,—and toward Ethiopia (2 Kings xix. 9).

At this time Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem cherish a hope that Egypt and Ethiopia would overthrow the Assyrians, and would save Judah from their grasp. See 2 Kings xviii. 21. But both were conquered by Assyria.

In the Arabian Version of this chapter, this prophecy is well entitled "a prediction of Isaiah concerning the king of Ethiopia, which had been implied by Israel, and who came forth to assist them." In these prophecies Isaiah foretells the overthrow of Egypt and Ethiopia, and warns the king and people of Judah, that they should look for help elsewhere,—namely, to the Lord God of Hosts.

Further, the Prophet comforts them with the assurance, that if they trusted in the Lord, then the great Assyrian power, which would vanquish the strong armies of Egypt and Ethiopia, would be throned in the land of Shinar, where his son Esarhaddon is the king, and Judah and Jerusalem would be delivered from his hand (see v. 4—7); and that thus the might of the Lord God of Hosts would be magnified in the sight of Egypt, and Ethiopia, and of all the earth; and that the nations would turn to Him as the King of kings, and as the Saviour of His people. See xviii. 7; xix. 8—25.

This was fulfilled in part by the merciful and marvellous intervention of the Lord God of Israel, hearkening to the fervent prayers of the good king Hezekiah, resorting publicly to His Temple, and humbly commending his people and himself to the protection of Jehovah; and by the sudden destruction of the victorious army of Sennacherib, which had subdued the mighty power of Ethiopia and Egypt, and seemed to be on the point of swallowing up Jerusalem as an easy prey (xxxvi. 36).

In consequence of this wonderful interposition on behalf of Jerusalem, many kings "brought gifts unto the Lord to Jeru-
salem, and presents to Hezekiah, king of Judah; so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth." This is stated by the Sacred Historian as the result of the mar-
vellous intervention in his behalf when "the Lord saved He-
zekiah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sen-

nacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side" (2 Chron. xxxii. 22, 23).

This prophecy awaits a still further accomplishment—a full and final one—in the turning of heathen Nations to Christ, the King of kings and Saviour of His People, in the Spiritual Zion of His Church.

The above explanation of these prophecies is confirmed by Assyrian records recently discovered.

In the cuneiform Inscriptions, Sargon, king of Assyria, whom we have already mentioned as the conqueror of Sennacherib (his viceroy and leader of the expedition to Palestine, as we have reason to believe, see note above on 2 Kings xviii. 13, and Isratod. To Kings and Chronicles, p. xxx, note), was called Maruttana, or Medana, by the Assyrians, provoked by the revolt of Azziar, king of Ashdod (Oppert, Inschr. Assy. p. 26. See below, Prelim. Note to chap. xx.).

Sargon there says, "Jama," the king of Ashdod, "heard of the approach of my expedition, and fled beyond Egypt, on the sea shore of Ethiopia; in order to subdue Sennacherib (his viceroy and leader of the expedition to Palestine, as we have reason to believe, see note above on 2 Kings xviii. 13, and Isratod. To Kings and Chronicles, p. xxx, note), provoked by the revolt of Azziar, king of Ashdod (Oppert, Inschr. Assy. p. 26)."

From the most ancient times his fathers had not sent envoys to the kings my ancestors, to ask for peace and friendship, and to recognize the power of Merodach (god of Nineveh and Babylon).—From the most ancient times his fathers had not sent envoys to the kings my ancestors, to ask for peace and friendship, and to recognize the power of Merodach (god of Nineveh and Babylon).

51
God's Omnipotence shown

ISAIAH XVIII. 3, 4, by Ethiopia's overthrow.

Even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters, saying,
Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled,
To a people terrible from their beginning hitherto;
A nation made out and trodden down,
Whose land the rivers have spoiled!

3 All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth,
See ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains;
And when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.

For so the Lord said unto me,
I will take my rest,
And I will consider in my dwelling place
with Matt. xxiv. 15. See the notes below on the latter passage, where it is shown that Jerusalem was eventually overshadowed by a desolating |wing, because she would not rest for protection under the wings of the Cherubim, and under |His wings Who dwelt upon them. Christ would have sheltered her "as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings," but she would not "therefore her house was left to her desolate (Matt. xxvii. 27).

2. by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes |Hab. g011, the papyras, of which boats were made. See note above, on Ezek. ii. 3. Job vili. 11; ep. below, xix. 6.

Ethiopia, the most promising of help to Judah when Judah was menaced by Assyria. But Isaiah has now a message of |woe to Ethiopia; and he has also an exhortation for her; to turn to the God of Judah for help for herself.

— the waves of Ethiopia as a kind whale |doveh in the air, with the whirring sound of a great |flapping of wings, but not able to save its own |young from the destroying eagle—Assyria. 

Nay, Ethiopia herself would be a prey to Sennacherib. 

This sense is illustrated by St. Paul's expression (1 Cor. xiii. 1), a tinkling, or rather a clanging |cymbal—something that makes a great noise, but has no substance in it. The word rendered whirling is |(as has been already noticed) sometimes translated cymbal. 

Ethiopia was only a clanging cymbal—it |make a great din in the ears of Judah, but was of no use.

This does not exhaust the sense of this poetical expression. The prophet means to convey by it a severe rebuke to Judah, for looking to Ethiopia for help, instead of trusting to the Lord of Hosts—the God of Israel. There is a noble contrast between Ethiopia, rushing northward with the flapping and whirring of the wings of her multitudinous armies, and the Lord of Hosts, enthroned on the wings of the Cherubim in the Holy of Holies, in the Temple of Jerusalem, where He is a shadow to His people. 

See xxv. 4, where the contrast is displayed.

This contrast is brought out by the two Hebrew words tselal and cymbal, whirling and tinkling.

What folly was it in Jerusalem to look for succour to Ethiopia, which only made a whirling with its wings, but could not afford any shelter, and was itself to be destroyed by the |flaming sword? Instead of resorting for succour and protection to the Lord of Hosts, Who had chosen Jerusalem for His own abode, and Who sat there on the Mercy-seat between the wings of the Cherubim: and of Whom the Psalmist had said (as St. Jerome here well observes), "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust" (Ps. xcv. 1, 4).

Is he himself substitute for this assurance when he says, "Woe to the rebellious children, that take counsel, but not of Me; that trust in the shadow of Egypt;" "The trust in the shadow of Egypt shall be your confusion" (xxx. 1, 3); and the same might be said of Ethiopia. And he suggests also the contrast of "the whirling flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem" (xxx. 5).

And the good king of Judah, Hezekiah (who before had bought off Sennacherib by bribes), had learnt this lesson of trust in God's Lord, when, being afterwards menaced by Sennacherib, he fled for succour to the Temple (which he had formerly stripped of its gold for a gift to the Invader), and prayed, "O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the Cherubim, Who sittest on the Cherubim," "Thou art the God, even Thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth, Lord, bow down Thine ear, and hear: open, Lord, Thine ears, and see" (2 Kings xix. 15, 16).

One of the best commentaries on this contrast of earthly and heavenly wings, is afforded by Dan. ix. 27, compared

b c v. 7. 
Or, a nation and polished.
Or, a nation that woeeth out, and trodden down.
Ma the nation of lines, fine, and drawing under fume.
Or, whose land thou shalt despise. e ch. 5. 28.
Or, record my set dwelling.
Ethiopia will turn to God.

**ISAIAH XVIII. 5—7. XIX. I.**

The burden of Egypt.

Like a clear heat upon herbs,
And like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.

5 For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, And the sour grape is ripening in the flower, He shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, And take away and cut down the branches.

6 They shall be left together unto the fowls of the earth, And to the beasts of the earth: And the fowls shall summer upon them, And all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.

7 In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of hosts Of a people scattered and peeled, And from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto: A nation meted out and trodden under foot, Whose land the rivers have spoiled, To the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the mount Zion.

**XIX. 1** The burden of Egypt.

Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt:

**Know ye not this?** Hath it been a thing of nought that I brought them up out of the lands, and gathered them from the people? Hath not Egypt a son in Zion? Hath not庄严:9a

**Like a clear heat upon herbs:** See Ps. 65. 31. & 72. 10, Ezek. 29. & 30. Ps. 15. 10. & Or, enlightened and polished: See ver. 2.

**The burden of Egypt:**

Ch. XIX. 1. Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift (literally, high) cloud, and shall come into Egypt! The Lord is described as riding upon clouds, when He comes to declare His will and power, and to execute judgment; see Ps. xviii. 10; civ. 3, and especially the description of Christ's Second Advent, in Matt. xxvi. 64. Rev. i. 7.

This prophecy has been applied by ancient Christian Expositors (as Origen, Cyril, and Theodore) to the Coming of Christ in person into Egypt (Matt. ii. 20), and to the effects of His Divine presence there, to which Milton refers in his Ode on the Nativity:

"Poor and Baslum Forsake their temples dim, With that twice-latter'd God of Palestine; And moonash Ashlaroth, Heaven's Queen and Mother both, Now sits not girt with tapeys' holy shine: The Lilie Hammon shrinks his horn; In vain the Tyrian maims his wounded Thammuz morn."

"And ashen Moloch, sleek Hath left in shadows dread His burning idol all of blackest hue; In vain with cymbals' ring They call the grisly king, In dismal dances about the furnace blue; The brutish gods of Nile as fast, LIs, and Orion, and the dog Anubis, haste."

"Nor is Osiris seen In Memphis grove or green, Trampling the unsho'red grass with lowings loud; Nor can he be at rest Within his sacred chest; Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud; In vain with timbrel'd anthems dark The sable stol'd sorcerers bear his worship ark."
Before CHRIST about 700 B.C.

a Exod. 12. 12.
Jer. 41. 22.
Deut. 8. 11.
d Josh. 18. 29.
2 Chron. 20. 23.

1 Heb. shall be emptied.
2 Heb. swallow up.
3 Heb. shall be emptied.
4 Heb. swallow up.
5 Or, shall up.
6 Or, shall up.
7 Heb. shall be emptied.
8 Heb. swallow up.
9 Or, shall up.
10 Heb. swallow up.
11 Heb. shall be emptied.
12 Heb. swallow up.
13 Heb. shall be emptied.
14 Heb. swallow up.

And the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.

And I will 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.

And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; And I will destroy the counsel thereof:
And they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards.

And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; And a fierce king shall rule over them, Saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts.
And the waters shall fail from the sea, And the river shall be wasted and dried up.
And they shall turn the rivers far away;
The reeds and flags shall wither.

The paper reeds by the mouth of the brooks,

It is much more probable that Isaiah here passcs on to predict the invasion of Egypt by the son of Cyrus, Cambyses, whose actions in Egypt, as described by Herodotus (iii. 1–36), correspond to that title, and who was called by the Persians Psammetichus, or lord, as contrasted with his father Cyrus, whom they called father (Herod. iii. 89). Cambyses is described by Asutamun (xiv. 3), as "alien capax, et immanissim," and he showed his rage in a remarkable manner, not only against the people of Egypt, but also against their idols (Herod. iii. 26–29). Cp. 37, 38. The Sept., Vulg., Syriac, and Arabic Versions have here cruel lords, in the plural; and they probably applied this prophecy to the oppression of Egypt, not only by Cambyses, but by many of his successors—Xerxes, Artaxerxes Longimanus, Artaxerxes Mmnon, and especially Ochus, whose treatment of the Egyptians was so tyrannical, that it excited a conspiracy against him, in which he perished (Diod. Sic. xvii. 5; Albian, Var. Hist., vi. 8; Vitr. Vign., p. 557. This interpretation is the more probable, because the Persian invasions of Egypt, and the subsequent conquests of Alexander the Great in that country, and the settlement of the Macedonian dynasty, under the Ptolemies, were links in a chain of God's mysterious and merciful dispensations to Egypt, whereby He overthrew Idolatry, and opened the way for the establishment of True Religion there. See ex. 19–21. Cp. Ezekiel's prophecies (xxix.—xxxii.) on the effects of Nebuchadnezzar's conquests in Egypt.

5. from the sea Heb. yah; that is, the river Nile. Cp. Nahum iii. 8. The Euphrates is called a sea, xxv. 1. Cp. Gen. xlii. 19. Exod. xxxvii. 2. Zech. x. 11; and Genesis, 350. The failure of the inundation of the Nile is mentioned as being the cause of dearth and famine to the country. The Nile, being the source of her plenty, was worshipped by the Egyptians; and the divine judgment on the Nile was like a smiting of her god. See above, on Exod. vii. 15. 17.

6. And they shall turn the rivers far away Or, the rivers shall send forth a stench, from the stagnant slime into which they will subside (Gen. xlviii. 20). Or, they shall flow away and fail (according to Sept., Vulg.—Syriac, Arabic, and Pers. 399); and this seems the best rendering.

— of defence Heb. matisor; perhaps used here to signify Egypt, properly Lower Egypt. Compare 2 Kings xix. 21. Micah vii. 12. Bochart, Vitr. Vign., Fuerst, 655; and Gesen. 501, who suppose that this word is here a poetical form for the dual Mitraim, which signifies Egypt, as divided into two portions, Upper and Lower Egypt.

6. flags asp. xxviii. 6. 3.
7. The paper reeds Rather, the meadows of flags, &c., and other aquatic plants. Reed-grass in the meadows is called acha in Gen. xii. 2 (see note there), and is here called 'the green achi' by Sept. "And Job viii. 11, where it is rendered flag.
Egypt, being afflicted, Isaiah XIX. 8—17. will turn to God.

And every thing sown by the brooks,
Shall wither, be driven away, and be no more.

3 The fishes also shall mourn,
And all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament,
And they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish.

Moreover they that work in fine flax,
And they that weave networks, shall be confounded.

And they shall be broken in the purposes thereof,
All that make sluices and ponds for fish.

11 Surely the princes of 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 Where are they? where are thy wise men?
And let them tell thee now,
And let them know what the Lord of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt.

13 The princes of Zoan are become fools;
They have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay of the tribes thereof.

14 The Lord hath mingled 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 the head or tail, branch or rush, may do.

16 In that day shall Egypt be like unto women:
And it shall be afraid and fear
Because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts,
Which he shaketh over it.

17 And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt,
9. they that weave networks] Rather, they that weave linen stuffs (Gesen. 267). The foregoing verses describe the failure of the corn crops of Egypt, by reason of the drought of the Nile; and the failure of its fisheries, on which its population depended in great measure for support (Num. xi. 5); and now the prophet speaks of the failure of its lines and cotton manufactures. Cp. 1 Kings x. 28. Prov. vii. 16. Ezek. xxvii. 7.
10. they shall be broken in the purposes thereof—fish] Rather, the pillars (Heb. shevôt) of the realm—the princes and mighty men (cp. Ps. xi. 9; Gesen. 852; Foster, 1451; and see Gen. ii. 9. 1 Tim. iii. 13. Rev. iii. 12) shall be broken; and all they that work for hire shall be beat down (Heb. agow, an adjective signifying bent like a reed, agowm. Gesen. 11; Foster, 19) in soul. See also Sept. here.

— The counsel—brutish] Rather, even the wise counsellors of Pharaoh—their counsel is iniquitous. The Egyptians were taught by their counselors that their boasted wisdom could not profit them; they learnt to distrust their counselors and diviners, and were thus prepared to receive a better wisdom and a purer faith.

13. Zoaph] Memphis, which is a Grecian form of Memph (Moph, in Hos. ix. 6); perhaps the seat of the Pharaohs in the days of Joseph (cp. on Exod. v. 1), and raised by Ptolemaicus into the capital of the kingdom.

— the stay of the tribes] The supports and pillars (see v. 10) of its castes, particularly its military and priestly castes. The word rendered stay, is pinannah, an angular stone, or mural tower, at the corner of a fortress. Cp. Zech. x. 4 (Gesen. 682).

14. The Lord hath mingled] A spirit of dizziness; as a strong drink. Cp. Ps. lxvii. 8. Jer. xvii. 19. 17. branch or rush] Namely, high or low. Cp. ix. 14. 15. In that day] Observe this phrase, in that day, repeated six times (ver. 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24). These verses are like six ascending steps, which mount upward to Christ. They rise, as it were, from a Gethsemanic outburst suffering to an Olivet of glorious Ascension, and to the Sion of the Church triumphant in heaven. The times of the Messiah are often spoken of by the prophets as one day, as "that day." Cp. iv. 1. 2; xi. 10; xxvi. 1.

Evangelization of Egypt.

16. 17. Because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts—the land of Judah shall be a terror] Egypt shall see God’s outstretched arm; and therefore the Land of Judah,—the land where Jehovah dwells,—shall be an object of awe to it. Egypt must begin with fear; but she will rise up to love. The fulfilment of the prophecies of Isaiah (cp. below, xxxi.), and Jeremiah (xlvi.), and of Ezekiel (xxix.—xxxiii.), concerning Egypt,—prophecies made known to it by means of the Jews settled at Alexandria, and by the Septuagint Version of the Hebrew Scriptures (Joseph., Ant. xii. 2; c. Apion, § 4) had the effect of making many in Egypt see that the God of the Hebrews had been working great and terrible wonders in their land ever since the days of Moses. This intelligence was diffused by the visit number of Jews and Jewish proselytes in Egypt in the days of Alexander (Josephus, B. J. ii. 18. 7; c. Apion. ii. 4), and of the Prolemic, and of the Apostles (Acts ii. 10). In the days of Philo, the Jews in Egypt were.
ISAIAH XIX. 18—22.

a Church of God.

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 be in the land of Egypt
Speak  to the language of Canaan,
And swear to the Lord of hosts;
One shall be called, The city || of destruction.

19 In that day 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.

And  it 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;

21 And the Lord shall be known to Egypt,
And the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day,
And  shall do sacrifice and oblation;
Yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it.

22 And the Lord shall smite Egypt,
He shall smite and heal it:
And they shall return even to the Lord,
And he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.
Tartan
Formerly, "and but as whom road the to is of suffering the of Egypt. Ch. 24, Ch. 25.
and Assyria, and Assyria, and Assyria shall serve with the Assyrians.
In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, Even a blessing in the midst of the land:
Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, And Assyria the work of my hands, And Israel mine inheritance.

XX. In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon a 2 Kings 18. 17, the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it;

23. In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian shall come into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.
24, 25. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance! How great and how much a blessing! Formerly, as history shows, and as we have just seen (see on ch. xviii., Prelin. Note,) Assyria was the formidable rival and bitter foe of Egypt, and the one was ever passing in campaign of bloodshed to the other, on a military road, and that road lay through the heart of Judah, which was continually suffering from the ambition and cruelty of the one or the other.

But now the prophet foretells that Egypt and Assyria will be united, and that there will be a spiritual highway from the one to the other, by which they will be joined in loving communion one with another; and that Judah will be a link of holy union between them.

Observe the gracious consummation. "The Lord of hosts says, Blessed be Egypt my people!" Even the land of Ham,—the land of the Pharaohs,—becomes God's people; under the Gospel; and He says, Blessed be Assyria; the land of Nimrod, and of Toghtas-pliese, and of Sennacherib, and, Blessed be Israel, mine inheritance.

Israel will no longer be dashed in pieces between Egypt and Assyria; but now converted to Christ, it will be united to both; for "out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (il. 3). Rahab (Egypt) and Babylon are united in Zion; see Ps. lxxxv. 4. As our Lord Himself declares, "Salvation is from the Jews." (John iv. 22), i.e., from the descendants of Abraham. Formerly, Israel, Egypt, and Assyria were enemies; but when the Gospel of Christ has been revealed, they will all be united as brethren in one faith (Brentius). This is an Evangelical promise. Israel will be joined to the Gentiles, and the Gentiles will be on a par with Israel, in Christ (Luther).

This prophecy was fulfilled in part on the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came down from heaven at Jerusalem, and the "devout men, Porthis, and Medes, and Elamites, and people of Persia, that had come up to Jerusalem," and the Gentiles, and those "of Egypt, and the parts of Libya towards Cyrene," and were united together in Jerusalem. See below, on Acts ii. 9, 10. It was further fulfilled in the missionary journey of St. Peter from Jerusalem to Babylon, and in that of his "son in the faith," St. Mark, to Alexandria. See below, Introduction to the First Epistle of St. Peter, p. 30.

It is ever being fulfilled in the Catholic Church of Christ. "The Greek East of Greece, high and its origin in Sin— is always the third—the point of union—for the Assyrians and Egyptians of Heathenism. They are all joined together in the Church of Christ, Who is the promised Seed of Abraham, and of David, the Divine King of Israel (Eph. ii. 14—17. Cp. Justin Martyr, c. Tryph. § 129.)

SARGON and TARTAN.

CH. XX. 1. In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it! This is the only passage of Holy Scripture where we meet with the name of Sargon, who appears from recently-discovered Assyrian inscriptions to have been King of Assyria for eighteen years—from B.C. 721 to 706. See the Fascicule de Sargon d'Assyrie, traduit et publié par MM. J. Oppert et J. Mesnat. Paris, Imprimerie Impériale, 1863, folio. See above, Introduction to Kings, p. xxxi, on 2 Kings 18. 13, a great deal of evidence.

It is observable, that in this only passage where Sargon's name is given in the Bible, he is not represented as coming in person into Palestine, but as sending another person, Tartan, his general, by whom a passage was taken.

In the Assyrian Inscriptions, the capture of Ashdod is thus described by Sargon: "Azuri, king of Ashdod, refused to pay his tribute, and sent to the kings who were his neighbours" (probably to Hezekiah among them) "messages hostile to Assyria. Therefore I resolved to make use of the army through Assyria, and placed another king in his stead, his brother Akhunit. But the people of Syria, eager for revolt, rejected his rule and set up Jannan on the throne. In the anger of my heart, I did not divide my army, but marched against Ashdod with my warriors, who did not separate themselves from the footsteps of my sandals. Jannan heard of the approach of my expedition, and took refuge beyond Egypt on the side of Meroë (Ethiopia), and no more was seen of him. I besieged, I took Ashdod and the city of Gush Ashdudim, and took away captive his gods, his wife, his sons, his daughters, his possessions, the contents of his palace, with the inhabitants of his land, and placed there men whom my arm had conquered in the country of the rising sun." (Fascicule de Sargon, plates 5 and 6. Inser. des Sargonides, pp. 76, 77.)

Another passage which follows in the same document, and which has been already cited (Prelin. Note to chap. xviii.), suggests the inference that Sargon was not actually present in person in this expedition, but was at Nineveh at the time; and that when he says that his "warriors did not separate themselves from the footsteps of his sandals," he uses an Oriental phrase expressive of their loyalty to him, and intimates that what they did was done in his name, and that he himself was the doer of it.

This inference is confirmed by the mention of the name of Tartan here.

That name occurs also in 2 Kings xviii. 17. After Sennacherib had taken the fenced cities of Judah and threatened Jerusalem in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, and had received a large present from Hezekiah, namely, 300 talents of silver and 30 of gold (see 2 Kings xvii. 14, and above on x. 28), he went southward toward Philistia, where he besieged Lachish, about twelve miles to the south-east of Ashdod.

From Lachish he sent a great host to menace Jerusalem. At the head of that army was Tartan (2 Kings xviii. 17). It is probable that he was the same person as is mentioned here; and that he was chosen by Sennacherib to lead the Assyrian forces to Jerusalem, because he had distinguished himself during the siege and capture of Ashdod, which is here mentioned by Isaiah.

Reasons have already been stated (in the Prelin. Note to chap. xviii., and in the note to 2 Kings xviii. 13) for supposing that Sennacherib himself, who is known from the Assyrian Inscriptions to have been the successor of Sargon, king of Assyria, was employed by his father as his Vice-regent and Generalissimo in the expedition against Judah, Philistia, Egypt, Ethiopia and Jerusalem, and is therefore called "King of Assyria" in the Scriptural narrative of those events.

Thus the record of Scripture may be harmonized with the Assyrian documents; and the bold expedition is avoided (to which some have resorted) of altering two passages in the sacred
Isaiah typifies the captivity. 

ISAIAH XX. 2.—6. XXI. 1. of Egypt and Ethiopia.

XXI.

Or, and By the power of Egypt.

Before Christ 714.

1. Hezekiah gave the hand of Isaiah.

2. At the same time spake the Lord by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

3. And the Lord said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and wonder upon Egypt, and upon Ethiopia; So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, to the + shame of Egypt.

4. And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia, their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.

5. And the inhabitant of this island 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?

The burden of the desert of the sea.

Text, viz. 2 Kings xviii. 18, Isaiah xxxvii. 1, where it has been proposed by some to read the twenty-seventh year of Hezekiah, instead of the twenty-fifth.

From these considerations also we are enabled to recognize the propriety of the act of Isaiah, and the importance of his prophecy in the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod and fought against it and took it.

Isaiah is commanded to typify the Assyrian conquest of Egypt and Ethiopia.

2. At the same time spake the Lord by Isaiah. The Lord commandeth Isaiah to loose the sackcloth,—the prophetic dark hairy mantle, like that of Elijah (2 Kings i. 8. Cp. Zech. xii. 4. Heb. xi. 57) and of John the Baptist (Matt. iii. 4. Cp. Rev. vi. 12.), which was worn over the robe; he was commanded to take off this and to walk barefoot, and thus to represent two captive nations—viz., Egypt and Ethiopia—by his dress and gait.

Ver. 3. What he did was only at variance with custom (in order to call attention to the sign), but not at all inconsistent with decency. Cp. Micah i. 8 (Vitringa, Waterland, Dillichtz).

3. three years. It is doubtful whether the words of the original mean that Isaiah walked barefoot (when he appeared in public) for three years, or whether these words are not to be rendered "a sign and wonder for three years" so the Masoretes punctuation, and Vulg. Syriac, and Arabic.

Cp. Waterland, "Scripture Vindicet" on this passage, vi. 223—232. Isaiah was commanded to do this as a visible sign and pledge to Judah of the imminent conquest and captivity of these nations, Egypt and Ethiopia—on which the people of Judah then relied for aid (see on vv. 5 and 6) against the army of Assyria, which had recently threatened and spoiled the fenced cities of Judah (2 Kings xix. 35). And when he was exiled from Jerusalem, and had extorted tribute from Hezekiah, which he would soon return to Jerusalem after its conquest of Egypt. See on Nahum iii. 10.

This sign of three years, within which these two great Nations (to which Judah looked for help against Assyria, instead of trusting in God), would be humbled and led captive by Assyria, stands in striking contrast to the three years within which, as the same prophet declared, after Hezekiah's wise abandonment of all hope of earthly help, and after his penitential self-abase ment, and the Lord, and his humble and earnest prayer to him, Jerusalem would be delivered from Assyria; and all the pride and power of Assyria, the conqueror of the two most warlike Nations of the south,—Egypt and Ethiopia,—would be utterly blasted in a single night by the power of God of Israel. A great and mighty power (for that in time to come would be perceived from the fear of Assyria). "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 shields, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake." After the expiration of that time, during which Sennacherib had conquered Egypt and Ethiopia, and when, elated with his successes, he had advanced in person to Jerusalem, which he had before threatened by his messengers (who had blasphemed the Lord God of Israel), and which he expected to take with as much ease as one takes a bird's nest (see x. 14), the Angel of the Lord smote 185,000 in camp, and caused him to repent of his shame to Nahum. See 2 Kings xix. 35; below, xxxvi. 36.

5. And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia, their expectation, and of Egypt their glory. And the inhabitant of this island 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?

XXI.

The burden of the desert of the sea.


But Isaiah foretells that Ethiopia and Egypt will be broken by the King of Assyria. And so it came to pass, as Sennacherib himself relates in his inscriptions (see Oppert, Inscription Assyri. p. 43, and Prein. Note above to chap. xiii.), and (see below, Nahum iii. 8—10). And in that day the inhabitant of this city (that is, of Jerusalem, a mere speck of land compared with Assyria, and bereft of all its earthly succours, and, as it were, isolated and beaten by tempests of hostile powers roaring around it), will say, Behold, such is our expectation to which we looked, and to which we fled for deliverance from the king of Assyria! And now that these two mighty Nations (Ethiopia and Egypt) have fallen before his victorious arms, how shall we (who are feeble and desolate) escape from his hand?

This was the cry of despair at Jerusalem. But in such despair was her only hope. The destruction of Egypt and Ethiopia by the arms of Sennacherib weaned her from looking any longer to earthly powers for help, and raised her eyes to heaven. And she knew that Assyria would be broken in Jerusalem, and that the tenth year of Hezekiah would finish and blot out the empire of the north. But a little while before, he had bribed Sennacherib to retire from Jerusalem by giving him the treasures of his Palace and of the Temple, and even by stripping the gold from the doors and pillars of the Temple. But Hezekiah, in the next part of the prophecy, says that he was so elated and heightened with pride, he was so exalted from his heights, he was so elated from his exaltation, he was so elated from his pride, that he would not acknowledge that he had been humbled, and that the providence of the Lord had exalted him. He was elated from his feet, he was elated from his very head, he was elated from his very feet, and he was elated from his very hands. And so in that foolishness and despondency by the failure of all his hopes of earthly succour, he was stung to the quick by the impious and insolent words of the messengers of Sennacherib, and he was stirred by the outrageous language of the prophet Isaiah; and he went up to the Temple of the Lord publicly in the presence of his people, with rent clothes and sackcloth on his loins, and he prayed for help to the Lord of hosts (2 Kings xix. 1—8; 16—20), and his prayers were heard and granted; and his history stands forth in Holy Scripture as a record of the vanity of earthly hopes, and as a lesson to Kings and Princes, and a monument of the victory of Faith, triumphing by the help of God over all the Powers of this World.

BURDEN OF THE DESERT OF THE SEA, i.e. BABYLON.

Cp. XXI. 7—9. The foregoing prophecies concerning the deliverance of Judah from the invading army of Sennacherib, are here followed by a prophecy of the destruction of Babylon, which succeeded Assyria in cruelty to God's people, and which was permitted to destroy Jerusalem and to carry Judah captive. The reason of this combination is obvious. It might seem that by the same prophecy in delivering Judah from Assyria was frustrated, if Judah was to be carried into exile by Babylon. The Prophet here provides an answer to these objections; and shows that Judah's captivity was designed by God in mercy to bring it to repentance, and that Babylon would fall, and that its destruction would be followed by Judah's restoration. All this is more fully developed below, in chaps. xiii.—xlviii. On the genuineness of these prophecies and of those above in chaps. xiii. and xiv. on the fall of Babylon, see Pusey on Daniel, pp. 208, 9.
Prophetic Vision

ISAIAH XXI. 2—6.

of the fall of Babylon.

As whirlwinds in the south pass through; so it cometh from the desert, from a terrible land.

2 A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth.

3 Therefore are my loins filled with pain: my hands are grevied, my heart is melted within me.

4 The night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me.

5 Prepare the table, Watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: Arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield.

6 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman,

1. The burden (or prophecy, see xiii. 1.) of (or concerning) the desert of the south, viz. the desert between the Negeb (Abraham's land) and that at the close of the foregoing chapter, “this isle.” Jerusalem was “this isle;” being isolated, as far as all human support was concerned, and being beaten by the winds and waves of storms dashing upon it; but the deep waters of God’s love and power got it round as with an impenetrable wall, and defended it against all its enemies (see 2 Kings xix. 34), as long as its king and people put their trust in Him, and not in the Egyptians of this world. See the note descriptive, xxxiii. 21—24.

But Babylon, the greatest city of the world, was the Desert of the Sea, a wilderness in a waste of Waters; her river, Euphrates, was called a sea, as the Nile is (xix. 5). She relied on it for protection; but it became under God’s overruling power the cause of her desolation (cp. xlv. 27. Jer. I. 38; II. 36. Herod. i. 191. Xenophon. Cyrop. vii. 5. 15). The Euphrates is said by Herodotus (I. 184) to overflow like a sea, παραχαρίσσων; and Babylon, being intersected by the Euphrates, as well as by marshes and lakes, might be compared to a wilderness in a sea (cp. Jer. li. 14); and its site was indeed called a sea (Λίβυς in Eusebius, Porph. Euseb. iv. 41; see Vitringa), much more might it be so called after its fall, which is for told by the prophet in this chapter. Cp. Jer. ii. 13. 26. 29. 37. 42. 43; Diod. Sic. i. 53; Strabo, vii. 5. 390; Arrian. Exp. Alex. vii. 21. It is remarkable that in the Apocalypsis of St. John the Mystical Babylon is also described as a wilderness, and as sitting on many waters (Rev. xvii. 3. 15).

Babylon is called here, the desert of the sea. All the four following prophecies have symbolical titles, viz. “the desert of the sea,” “the burden of Dumah” (v. 11), the burden upon Arabia (see on v. 13), “the valley of vision” (xiii. 1).—whirlwinds in the south) To which the invading army of Cyrus was compared (cp. E. 1. 13. 14. 2).

2. treacherous dealer Or, the spoiler. Cp. xxxi. I. (Genen.102).


4. All the sighting) Caused by the tyrannical oppression of Babylon, has been heard by God, and He stirs up her enemies against her, see Jerem. li. 11. Compare Rev. xv. 10 concerning the mystical Babylon.

5. the hearing—at the seeing) Or rather, so that I cannot hear, nor see (Sept. Vitr. Del.).

4. The night of my pleasure) A prophecy that the capture of Babylon takes place at night. But no, it is sudden, so as it came to pass. See on v. 5. The prophet has a vision of a night, a season of revelry, suddenly turned into sorrow.

5. Prepare the table—eat, drink) This rendering is authorized by most of the ancient Versions, and seems to be preferable to that which has been adopted by many recent Expositors, who translate these words in the indicative mood. The change of persons is rapid, as often in prophecy. The prophet first hears the voice of the King of Babylon commanding the great annual feast to be prepared in honour of his god. Prepare the table—eat, drink. All is safe, give yourselves up to mirth and feasting. This is also predicted by Jeremiah (lii. 57), and is described by Daniel (v. 1—4), and by Herodotus (i. 191), and Xenophon. Cyrop. vii. 5. 15. Watch in the watch-tower) In order that the city may be safe, while it is given up to rejoicing. Such was Belshazzar’s order; for the Medes and Persians were besieging the city; but he took no precautions against their incursion into the city by the beds of the river Euphrates; indeed he regarded that river as his defence; and the numerous brazen gates, which led from the river into the streets of the city, were left open on that night, because it was a religious festival.

In Xenophon’s narrative of the capture of Babylon (Cyrop. vii. 5), it is related that the Babylonians had store of provision in the city for twenty years, and laughcd to scorn the designs of Cyrus and the Persians were besieging it. “After the tranches had been dug by the army of Cyrus” (for the reception of the river Euphrates, which flowed through the city and was to be drawn into them out of its channel), “Cyrus, having received intelligence that a festival was to be celebrated, in which all the Babylonians spend all the night in drinking and revelry, took a large body of his men and opened the mouths of the trenches which led into the river; and the water flowed in the night into the trenches, and thus a way, practicable for his men, was opened through the city. . . . He then summoned the chief captains of his infantry and cavalry, and said to them, ‘My friends, the river has retired, and has granted us its own road into the city; let us enter the road with good cheer, remembering that they against whom we are going are the men whom we conquered when they were assisted by others, and when they were armed, and when they were in array. But now many of them are asleep; many of them are drunken; all of them are in disorder. Come, therefore, take your arms, and I, with the gods, will be your leader: do ye, O Gudatas and Gobryas, show us the way, for ye know it; and when we are within the city, guide us as soon as ye can to the palace.’ ‘Yes,’ replied Gobryas; ‘and it would be no wonder if the gates of the palace were open, for all the city seems to be in a revel on this night. However, we shall find a watch before the gates of the palace, for a watch is always set there.” (Xenophon.)

— Arise, ye princes) Here is a sudden change of person, which is highly poetical. Cyrus now speaks (see the following note) ; or—perhaps with reverence be it said—the Lord Himself utters these words: cp. Jer. li. 11, “Make bright the arrows; gather the shields; the Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes; for His device is against Babylon to destroy it.”

— anoint the shield) Anoint the leather shield, that it may be better defended against the weather, and against the missiles of the enemy (Vitringa, ch. x. 27, and 2 Sam. i. 21).
Babylon is fallen! is fallen!  
ISAIAH XXI. 7—11.  
The burden of Dumah.

Let him declare what he soeth. 9 And he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen,  
A chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels;  
And he heartened diligently with much heed: 10 And he cried,  
A lion:  
My lord, I stand continually upon the 1 watchtower in the daytime,  
And I am set in my ward 2 whole nights:  
And beheld, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen.  
And he answered and said,  
Babylon is fallen, is fallen;  
And all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.  
O my threshing, and the 1 corn of my floor:  
That which I have heard of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.  

The burden of Dumah.

7. And he saw a charriot] Rather, and he (the watchman) saw cavalry, or a troop (Heb. rebec, see Nah. ii. 4, Tiferiq, 610; Gesen, 768; Eversion, 1298), and it consisted of what follows, viz.  
— a couple of horsemen] A pair of riders at the head of the troop (cp. Gesen, 653). These riders represent the two Leaders of the forces of Elam and of Media, mentioned in v. 2, to whom the kingdom of Babylon was given by God, as Daniel declared, "Thy Kingdom was divided, and given to the Medes and Persians" (Dan. v. 28). The pair of riders are Cyrus the Persian, and Darius the Mede.  
— A chariot of asses—a chariot of camels] Rather, a troop (rebec, see the former note) of asses—a troop of camels, bearing the language of the Medo-Persian army. Cyrus had a great number of camels in his army (cp. Herod. i. 80, and his successor Darius Hystaspis is said to have gained a great victory over the Scythians by means of the number of asses in his service (Herod. iv. 129).  
— with much heed Literally, with greatness of listening, or attention. The watchman on the watch-tower of Babylon sees the military march, and listens attentively; but for many days and nights he hears nothing; at last he cries with a loud voice, and announces the fall of Babylon. The suddenness of that event is thus marked by the Word of Prophecy—delivered more than 150 years before it took place.  
Such will be the fall of the Mystical Babylon. See v. 9.  

BABYLON IS FALLEN.  
8. he cried, A lion] Rather, he cried as a lion, with a lion's voice; cp. Hos. xi. 10. Rev. x. 3. The watchman is endowed with supernatural power by God Himself (Whose voice is compared to that of a lion), and becomes a prophet of coming doom.  
9. behold, here cometh a charriot] Rather, Behold, here cometh a troop of men, a pair of horsemen; and it (i.e. the pair of horsemen) answered and said, Fallen, fallen, is Babylon!  
Before, he had seen a troop of camels and asses led by a pair of horsemen (v. 7), now he sees a troop of men led by the same pair (viz. by Cyrus and Darius), and he answers and says, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon!"

Observe the order of the words, which is the same as in the Apocalypse, where we have the angel cried "nightly with a loud voice": "Fallen, fallen is Babylon," Rev. xviii. 2. Cp. note on Rev. xiv. 8, where it is observed that the literal translation is, "Fall, fell, Babylon," which marks the suddenness of the fall by a single shock—as here. In the Apocalypse the fall is represented by the plunging of a stone, like a great mill-stone let fall with violence into the sea (Rev. xviii. 21).  
— all the graven images of her gods he hath broken] The Lord Himself has taken his lilies in pieces. The Name of the Door of this great work is not mentioned: there is something inexpressibly grand and sublime in this silence. Every one feels that it is the hand, not of man, but of God. Cyrus himself felt and owned it (see 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23, Ezra i. 2). At the very time of her fall, Babylon was engaged in celebrating a religious festival in honour of one of her false gods; and her king and her princes were drinking wine out of the sacred vessels taken from the Temple of the Lord God of Israel, and were praising her gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone (Dan. v. 2—4).

APPLICATION TO THE MYSTICAL BABYLON OF THE APOCALYPSE.

Such probably will be the condition of the Mystical Babylon of the Apocalypse when she shall be in her pride. She will be most confident when most in danger. She will exult with joy, and be flushed with victory, and elated with pride, when the judgment of God is ready to fall upon her. Perhaps, like the literal Babylon, she will be engaged in celebrating some great religious festival, with a large concourse of her princes, and be praising the creatures which she has made for herself to worship, and be provoking God by sacrilegious profanations. Then the fingers of the man's hand may come forth on the wall of her palace, and write her doom; and the Enmities of her power, which has flowed on for so many centuries, and in which she has trusted as her defence, may be made the cause of her destruction. Cp. below, on Rev. xvi. 12.  

10. O my threshing, and the corn (or son) of my floor] The Prophet now turns to the remnant of the Jewish captives (as the Septuagint well paraphrases the words, "Hearken ye who are left, and hear ye who are in trouble"), whom he sees delivered from their bondage, and restored by Cyrus, after the fall of Babylon, to their own land. See Eza i. 5.  

Babylon was God's Threshing-floor, on which Judah was laid, like sheaves of corn, to be threshed by affliction (cp. xxvii. 27; xli. 15, Mich. iv. 12, 13, Jer. ii. 23, Matt. iii. 12); but this was done by God in mercy, in order that the good grain, the children of His floor, might be separated from the chaff, and be gathered into His garner. As he says by the Prophet Amos (ix. 9), using another figure, "I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth."  

It can hardly be doubted that this prophecy looks forward for another fulfillment in Christian times. The language of Isaiah is adapted in the Apocalypse by the beloved Apostle and Evangelist St. John, who, being taught by Christ Himself, reveals a great catastrophe, similar in its circumstances to the fall of Babylon.  
This has been enlarged upon in another place (see below, on Rev. xvii. xviii., and on Rev. xvii). In the present verse the Prophet suggests the cheering reflection, that as the fall of the literal Babylon was succeeded by a great national blessing to the faithful Jews who were in captivity there, so the fall of the mystical Babylon of the Apocalypse will be succeeded by some great and merciful dispensation to the Jewish people, and also to all Christendom, the true Israel of God. Cp. below, on Rev. xvi. 12, and xix. 1—9.

THE BURDEN OF DUMAH, OR EDOM.  
11. The burden of Dumah] The Sept. renders it "The vision of Idman" or Edom, and so the Arabic Version; and this appears to be correct. Edom is symbolically called Dumah, i. e. silence, devastation (cp. Ps. cvv. 17, where the word is ap-
Woe to Edom.

ISAIAH XXI. 12—16.

Woe to Arabia.

He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?

12 The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night:

If ye will inquire, inquire ye: Return, come.

13 The burden upon Arabia.

In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim.

14 The inhabitants of the land of Tema || Brought water to him that was thirsty, They prevented with their bread him that fled.

For they fled || † from the swords, From the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, And from the grievousness of war.

16 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, † according to the years of an hireling,
And all the glory of Kedar shall fail:
And the residue of the number of archers, 
The mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished:
For the Lord God of Israel hath spoken it.

XXII. 1. The burden of the valley of vision.
What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the house tops?
2 Thou that art full of stirs,
A tumultuous city, a joyous city:
Thy slain men are not slain with the sword, Nor dead in battle.
3 All thy rulers are fled together, They are bound with the archers: All that are found in thee are bound together, Which have fled from far.
4 Therefore said I, Look away from me; ¶ I will weep bitterly, Labour not to comfort me, Because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people.
5 ¶ For it is a day of trouble, and of treading down, and of perplexity
By the Lord God of hosts in the valley of vision,
Breaking down the walls, And of crying to the mountains.

The fulfilment of this prophecy within that time would induce the Ishmaelites to acknowledge the divine truth of the Lord God of Israel—by Whose inspiration the Prophet was enabled to make this revelation—and to turn to Him; and would be a present pledge to others that Isaiah’s prophecies concerning more distant events would be fulfilled also.

The Burden of the Valley of Vision: Or Prophecy on Jerusalem.

Ch. XXII. 1. The burden of the valley of vision] Jerusalem (so Sept. and Arabic) is called a valley, as being low in comparison with the lofty mountains of the Kingdoms of this World; such as Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt (cp. on Ps. lxviii. 15. Jer. li. 35. Rev. vili. 8) ; and is called the valley of Vision, for there God manifested Himself in visions to the Patriarch (see the history of Abraham at Moriah, and the name Jehovah-jireh, Gen. xxii. 2. 14, and notes), and to David, and to Solomon; and also in visions to Isaiah, and to the prophets (see 1. 17. vi. 4), to whom He revealed the destinies of the Nations of the Earth.

Jerusalem is also here described as a valley, because she is to be laid low by afflictions consequent on her sins (see vv. 3—5, and Jer. xxi. 15) ; and so this prophecy is contained in those other predictions where she is displayed as glorified in Christ, by whom the mountain of the Lord’s house will be established on the top of the mountains. See above on ii. 2.

The present prophecy refers primarily to the captivity of Manasseh, king of Judah, by Esar-chadhen (see 2 Chron. xxxii. 11); but its range extends to the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians (v. 6), and even beyond that, to its siege and destruction by the Romans (S. Jerome; A. Lapide). The prophet denounces the self-confidence and worldliness which characterized her in both those times of peril.

Jerusalem and Gehazi.

It is remarkable that Jerusalem is here addressed by the name which had been borne by the servant of the Prophet Elisha—Gehazi (which means Valley of Vision). It has been already observed (on 2 Kings v. 27; vii. 4) that Gehazi was a remarkable type of the Jewish Nation in sin and punishment. Gehazi enjoyed great spiritual privileges, as Jerusalem did; but Gehazi sinned, as the Jewish Nation did; and the Leprosy of the Hebrew world, symbolized by Nahman the Syrian, cleansed through faith and obedience, was transferred to the Jews.

But it has also been shown that there is good reason to believe that Gehazi repented; and thus his history suggests a hope of the future repentance of the Jews, and of their conversion to Christ (see the notes above on 2 Kings v. 27, and on 2 Kings viii. 4). And this hope is confirmed by another remarkable coincidence, viz. that the future spiritual resurrection of the Jewish Nation is symbolized in the prophecy of Ezekiel concerning the Valley of Vision (Ezek. xxxvii. 1—14), where the dead bones of the Nation rise up and live in Christ.

—thou art wholly gone up to the housetops] To gaze and enjoy thyself, instead of going, as Hezekiah did, to the Temple to pray, when Jerusalem was in danger. The careless self-confidence of Jerusalem in the critical time of her imminent danger is thus described. Cp. Amos vi. 1—6.

This was fulfilled in the Chaldean siege (S. Jerome, S. Cyril), and in the Roman (Eusebius). At both times their hopes were buoyed up by the deceitful assurances of false prophets such as Hananiah (Jer. xxiii. 1—27. Cp. Matt. xxiv. 11. 23), Ahab, and Zedekiah (Jer. xxix. 20—24); and they despised the warnings of true prophets such as Jeremiah (Jer. xiii. 1—27; xix. 1—15; xxii. 1—4; xxxvi. 20; xxxvii. 1—4; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 11), and, in later days, of the Lord of all the Prophets (see Matt. xxviii. 37. Luke xiii. 34)—Christ Himself. Cp. James v. 1—6.

3. bound by the archers] Made captive by the bow—not by the sword in a close fight. Fittinga. See v. 6.

—All that are bound are bound together] As captives; the king and his warriors who fled with him were overtaken by the Chaldeans in the plains of Jericho (2 Kings xxv. 3—5. 10), and his sons were slain at Riblah. Cp. Jer. xxxix. 6. The rest of the people in the city were carried away captive (2 Kings xxv. 11.) Cp. Jer. xxxix. 9.

5 of crying to the mountains] Of the crying of those who flee from the city and hope to escape to the mountains, but in vain.

This phrase is taken up by our Blessed Lord in the Gospel, where He exhorts His disciples to flee betimes from Jerusalem (Matt. xxiv. 16. Luke xx. 21); but they who despised His warn-
6 And Elam bare the quiver With chariots of men and horsemen, And 'Khir uncovered the shield.

7 And it shall come to pass, That thy choicest valleys shall be full of chariots, And the horsemen shall set themselves in array || at the gate.

8 And he discovered the covering of Judah.

And thou didst look in that day to the armour of the house of the forest.

9 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;

10 And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, And the houses have been broken down to fortify the wall;

11 Ye made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool:

But ye have not looked unto the Maker thereof, Neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.

12 And in that day did the Lord God of hosts 'call to weeping, And to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth:

13 And behold joy and gladness, Slaying oxen, and killing sheep, Eating flesh, and drinking wine:

"Let us eat and drink; For to morrow we shall die.

14 And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, Saith the Lord God of hosts.
Thus saith the Lord God of hosts,  
Go, get thee unto this treasurer,  
Even unto Shebna, 'which is over the house, and say,  
What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here,  
That thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here,  
|| As he || that Heweth out a sepulchre on high,  
And that giveth an habitation for himself in a rock?  
Behold, || the Lord will carry thee away with a mighty captivity,  
And will surely cover thee.  
He will surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball  
Into a || large country:  
There shalt thou die,  
And there the chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord's house.  
And I will drive thee from thy station,  
And from thy state shall he pull thee down.  
And it shall come to pass in that day,  
That I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah:  
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;  
And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder;  
So he shall || open, and none shall shut;  

16. thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre [It has been conjectured (by Blenk, Coincid. p. 230), that Shebna was a "novus homo," or a foreigner, from the fact that whereas the paternal names of Eliakim and Joah with whom he is associated, are mentioned in 2 Kings xviii. 18, the name of Shebna's father is not specified; he had no family burial-place, and desired to make a magnificent mausoleum.  
17, 18. with a mighty captivity] With the hurling of a strong man—like Lichas, hurled from the rock by Hercules. — And will surely cover thee [Or, wrapping will wrap thee up; He will take thee up and He will wrap thee up (cp. Lev. xvi. 4), as a mantle folded up into a ball (cp. the act of Elijah folding up Elijah's mantle into a ball, 2 Kings ii. 8, 14, and Gesen. 620. 714); and He will bind thee, easily as a ball, into a far country, even to Babylon. Compare "Di nos quis pilas habent" (Plautus). Thus will He deal with thee and all the pomp of thy pride and glory; and there shall thou die, and thicker (shall be) the chariots of thy glory,—the shame of the house of thy lord (so the words ought to be rendered); thou that art now over the king's house, wilt be its shame!  
This prophecy was probably fulfilled in the days of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah; Hezekiah's faith had delivered Jerusalem from the arms of the Assyrians; but the idolatrous Manasseh his son was taken captive to Babylon by Esarhaddon, the son of Semacherib. See the note above, on 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11, where it is shown from Assyrian inscriptions that many captives were taken by him from Syria, at the same time as Manasseh; and it is likely that some of the chief ministers of the king, probably Shebna among them, would be taken away together with the king.  
Isaiah foretold this deportation to Babylon in his prophecy to Hezekiah, the father of Manasseh (see below, xxxix. 6, 7); and it is observable that this deportation was foretold at a time when Hezekiah displayed his treasures, in a vain-glorious temper, which was imitated by the ambitious Shebna, who did not profit by the courageous rebuke given by Isaiah to Hezekiah.  
20. Eliakim the son of Hilkiah] Hezekiah's minister; probably superseded by Shebna in the evil days of Manasseh (v. 15).  
21—25 And I will clothe—speaks it] Eliakim, contrasted with Shebna, represents the faithful remnant of Judah, contrasted with the unbelieving Jews who are rejected by God.
XXXIII. 1. The burden of Tyre. 
Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; 
For it is laid waste, 
So that there is no house, no entering in: 
From the land of Chittim it is revealed to them. 

2. Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle; 
Thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished. 

And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the harvest of the river, is her revenue; 

ELIAKIM AND CHRIST. 

But this prophecy has a still higher meaning. 

Eliákim,—a name which signifies "Whom God sets up!" and whose father's name means "Portion of the Lord,"—is here used by God as specially called by Him; and is invested with Shebna's robe of office, and girded with his girdle, by God Himself; and the government, which once belonged to Shebna as over the house, is committed to him; and he is a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; and the key of the house of Judah is laid upon his shoulder. 

Such words as these (as S. Cyril and Theodoret observe) point out Eliákim as a signal type of Christ. Who as a Son is over the house of His Father (Heb. iii. 6), and of Whom it is said that the government is on His shoulder; and that His government upon the throne of David is established for ever (ix. 7).

This view receives additional illustration from the words "he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open:" words adopted by Christ, and applied to Him by Himself, in Rev. iii. 7. 

Of Eliákim also it is said by God, "I will fasten him as a nail," or peg (Heb. goeth.), by which the pastoral Tent was kept in its place, so as not to be moved by the winds or injured by the rains of the storm beating upon it. Such is Christ to His Church. 

See on Judg. iv. 21, 22. 

Of Eliákim also it is said, "He shall be for a glorious throne to his fathers house;" Such also is Christ (Luke i. 33—39. Rev. iii. 21: v. 11, 12). 

Of Eliákim it is also said, that "they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house;" he is a nail, or pin, for support, and a peg on which all honour is hung (cp. Ezek. xv. 3). Such is Christ. 

All the glory of the Tent of the Church on earth and in heaven (which is His Father's house) hangs on Him. 

On the analogies between the Christian Church and a pastoral Tent, see the notes above, on Judges iv. 21, 22. Ezra ix. 8, and on Ezek. xii. 11; and below, xxxiii. 20; liv. 2. 

25. In that day—be cut off! Here is a transition from the type to the Antitype. In Shebna we may see an emblem of the Jewish Law and Priesthood, to be superseded by the Gospel and the Priesthood of Christ, as Shebna was to give way to Eliákim (S. Jerome, Comm.). 

The nail of the Jewish Priesthood was once fastened in a sure place (for it was instituted by Almighty God Himself); but it has been cut down and fallen for its sins, and all the burden of the Levitical Law that was upon it (and that was a heavy burden as St Peter affirms, see Acts xv. 10, 28) has been cut off from it; for "the Priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change of the Law" (Heb. vii. 19); and all the power and glory has been transferred to the Divine Eliákim, Jesus Christ, Who "abideth a Priest continually; and hath an unchangeable priesthood" (Heb. vii. 24)—for the Lord hath spoken it.

Burdens of Tyre. 

Cic. xxiii. 1. The burden of Tyre] The connexion of this prophecy with the foregoing concerning Jerusalem, and its capture by the Chaldees, will appear from the language of other prophets concerning Tyre. Tyre exulted in the misfortunes of Judah (see Amos i. 9). It is an excellent observation of S. Jerome, "As we have read God's threats against other nations, such as Babylon, Philistia, Moab, Egypt, Edom, and Ishmael, for exulting over the afflictions of His people, so now we have a prophecy contra Tyrum, inimicam et insultatricem subversionis Jerusalem, quod etiam ipsa cedere hote (Chaldeo) sit denuodura." Tyre had rejoiced when Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem. On this account she was to be punished by the same Monarch. See Ezek. xxvi. 2—21, "Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will bring upon Tyran Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings, from the north. . . . With the hoes 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. 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 thy pleasant houses, and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water." Cp. Ezek. xxix. 18—20, and Jer. xxvii. 3—7, where Tyran is mentioned as given unto Nebuchadnezzar. Josephus, c. Apon. i. 20, asserts that Nebuchadnezzar conquered all Phenicia and Syria. See Hengstenberg, De Rebus Tyrriorum, p. 31; Havernick on Ezek. 427; and Drechselner herc, and Delitzsch, and Passow on Daniel, p. 287. 

Howl, ye ships of Tarshish] Tartessus in Spain, which had commerce with Tyre (Ezek. xxvii. 12, 25). Cp. I Kings x. 22; xxii. 48. 2 Chron. ix. 21. 


— it is revealed] The fall of Tyre. 

2. Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle] Be dumb with terror, ye dwellers in the isle; the insolent Tyre, opposite to that on the mainland (cp. v. 6), at about a distance of a mile. 

Zidon] Zidon was the older city, from which Tyre was colonized; see v. 12. Sidon was the eldest son of Canaan; and Zidon is mentioned by Jacob (Gen. xlix. 13), and is called "great Zidon" in Josh. xi. 8; xix. 28. 

And 'she is a mart of nations.

4 Be thou ashamed, O Zidon: for the sea hath spoken, even the strength of the sea, saying,

I travail not, nor bring forth children,

Neither do I nourish up young men, nor bring up virgins.

5 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.

7 Is this your <joyous city,

Whose antiquity is of ancient days?

Her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn.

8 Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre,

'The crowning city,

Whose merchants are princes,

Whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth?

9 The Lord of hosts hath purposed it,

† To stain the pride of all glory,

And to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.

10 Pass through thy land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish:

There is no more † strength.

11 He stretched out his hand over the sea,

He shook the kingdoms:

The Lord hath given a commandment || against † the merchant city,

To destroy the || strong holds thereof.

12 And he said, † Thou shalt no more rejoice,

O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon:

Arise, † pass over to Chittim;

There also shalt thou have no rest.

13 Behold the land of the Chaldeans;
This people was not, till the Assyrian founded it
For them that dwell in the wilderness:
They set up the towers thereof,
They raised up the palaces thereof;
And he brought it to ruin.

Howl, ye ships of Tarshish:
For your strength is laid waste.

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 shall Tyre sing as an harlot.

Take an harp, go about the city,
Thou harlot that hast been forgotten;
Make sweet melody, sing many songs,
That thou mayest be remembered.

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 shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world
Upon the face of the earth.

And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord:

ISAIAH XXIII. 14—18.

Tyre will turn to God.

for seventy years.

Before CHRIST
about
716.
1 Ps. 72, 9.

k Heb. It shall be unto Tyre as the song of an harlot.

1 Rev. 17, 2.

m Zech. 14, 20, 21.

15. Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king] "Behold" (and the Lord by Jeremiah, xxv. 9—11), "I will send and take all the families of the north, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years." See also Jer. xxvii. 2—7; "Thus saith the Lord to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck, and send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, Tyre, and Zidon. I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, ... And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son; ... and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them." The phrase "one king" is equivalent to one dynasty. Cp. on Rev. xvii. 10, and Ps. 45 on Daniel, 262.

These seventy years of the desolation of Tyre appear to coincide with the seventy years of the desolation of Jerusalem, and they synchronize with the rule of the family of Nebuchadrezzar. Cp. Vitrage, Hugenot, Delitzsch.

— as an harlot] Flinging love of others for the sake of servile gain to herself (see v. 17), the "shall turn to her hire." Harlotry does not here designate Commerce as such, but Commerce carried on in a selfish spirit, for the sake of personal advantage, without any regard to the glory of God, from Whom all riches come, and to Whom they ought to be dedicated.

16. Take an harp] A prophecy of what will be done; not an exhortation to do it (cp. John ii. 19). On the recovery of Tyre, see Arrian, xvi. 521; Vitrage, 703.

18. And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord] Tyre shall repeat of her harlotry, and her commerce and wealth shall be consecrated to the service of the Lord. This prophecy (which is continued in Ezek. xxviii. 21—20) began to be verified when the Tyrians assisted in the rebuilding of the Temple (Ezra iii. 7). But the fulfilment of the prophecy was reserved for Christian times. A prelude to it may be seen in the Syrophoenician woman (Mark vii. 20), and in the great multitudes

others); Babylon, the city of the Chaldees, was set up to be the fall of many,—of Nineveh (the capital of Assyria), of Tyre, of Egypt, and others (Ezek. xxix. 18—20. Jer. xxvii. 3—9), and even of Jerusalem itself; and eventually to be an instrument with God to bring her pride and impurity. See the prophecy in Jer. xxxv. 8—13.

The humiliation of Tyre in its destruction by the Chaldees was aggravated by the circumstance that, in comparison with Tyre (whose "antiquity was of ancient days," v. 7), the Chaldees were but of yesterday, and were founded by Asshur, whose destruction by the Lord God of Israel has been already foretold by the prophet, x. 33, 34.

As to the origin of the Chaldees, or (as they are called in Hebrew) Chasdim, we find no mention of them in Scripture in the records of the earliest descendants of Noah; and they cannot compete in antiquity with Canaan, the son of Ham and the father of Sidon (see Gen. x. 15—19). Asshur was the son of Shem, whence his descendants are set down in Gen. x. 21—32; xi. 10—28, where is the first mention of the Chaldees (or Chasdim) in connexion with Abraham, who was called by God from "Ur of the Chaldees," on account of their idolatry. The name Chossed, in the singular, occurs first in Gen. xxii. 22, among the nephews of Abraham.

The present statement of Isaiah is to be taken together with other passages in this book, where Babylon is called the daughter of the Chaldees (xlv. 1, 5), and the beauty of the Chaldee" erecrescent (gill. 10). In the present passage, the settlement of the Chaldees in the position they occupied in Isaiah's time at Babylon is attributed to Assur. Some have supposed that this colonization was only a resettlement after temporary depression. See Rawlinson, Ancient Monarchies, i. 70—74, who has examined and refuted the opinion of Gesenius and others that the Chaldeans had not settled existence till Isaiah's time. Cp. Niebuhr, Geschichte Babyls, pp. 152, 153; Winer, R. W. B., i. 218.

The present passage has been thought (by Vitrage, p. 687) to be a testimony to the foundation, or at least to the fortification of Babylon by Assyrians; an assertion confirmed by heathen historians, who ascribed it to Ninus and Semiramis, about 740 (Herod. i. 134, and Diodorus, i. 61, p. 84). Babylon appears under the dominion of Assyria in the days of Sargon and Sasebarrib (in the Assyrian Inscriptions), and of Eshurhadun, 2 Chron. xxxviii. 11; and of Shalmaneser, 2 Kings xvii. 22—30.

But it is probable that Isaiah is here referring to a time of a more remote antiquity than any of these sovereigns. Babylon seems to have been under a dynasty of Arabs from about B.C. 1518 to B.C. 1273, and this was succeeded by a dynasty of Assyrians about B.C. 1270. Probably it is to this occupation that Isaiah refers. With some few intervals of Babylonish independence, Assyria maintained her supremacy at Babylon (ill. B.C. 825. See the evidence in Rawlinson's Ancient Monarchies, i. 420—481. Nabonassar, from whom the Babylonish era is dated, B.C. 747, would not have desired to destroy the acts of the kings before him, as he did, if they had reflected glory on the Babylonians, and not on their enemies. Berosus, Frag. 11; Rawlinson, ii. 474.

15. Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king] "Behold" (and the Lord by Jeremiah, xxv. 9—11), "I will send and take all the families of the north, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years." See also Jer. xxvii. 2—7; "Thus saith the Lord to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck, and send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, Tyre, and Zidon. I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, ... And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son; ... and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them." The phrase "one king" is equivalent to one dynasty. Cp. on Rev. xvii. 10, and Ps. 45 on Daniel, 262.

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K 2
It shall not be treasured nor laid up;
For her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord,
To eat sufficiently, and for † durable clothing.

XXIV. 1 Behold, the Lord maketh the Earth empty,
And maketh it waste, and † turneth it upside down,
And scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.

And it shall be,
As with the people, so with the † priest;
As with the servant, so with his master;
As with the maid, so with her mistress;
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.

The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled:
For the Lord hath spoken this word.

The earth mourneth and fadeth away,
The world languisheth and fadeth away,
† The haughty people of the earth do languish.

The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof;
Because they have transgressed the laws,
Changed the ordinance,
Broken the everlasting covenant.

Therefore hath † the curse devoured the earth,
And they that dwell therein are desolate:
Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned,
And few men left.

The new wine mourneth,
The vine languisheth,
All the merry-hearted do sigh.

The mirth of tabrets ceaseth,
The noise of them that rejoice endeth,
The joy of the harp ceaseth.

They shall not drink wine with a song;

that came from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon to hear our Blessed Lord (Luke vi. 17). See also Acts xxi. 3, 4; and notes on Ps. xlv. 12; ixii. 10; lxxvii. 4; and Ezech., H. E. x. 4, who says, in commenting on this passage of Isaiah, "This prophecy is fulfilled in our times. For now that the Church of God is established in Tyre, as in other Nations, a large portion of her merchandise is consecrated to the Lord and to His Church, and for the use of the ministers of His altar, or of the Gospel, according to the precept of the Lord, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 14). And so S. Jerome: "Contemplate the churches built at Tyre to Christ; contemplate the wealth of her people, not now treasured nor laid up, but given to those who dwell before the Lord." Compare the earlier prophecies of this blessed consummation: "The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift." (see above, on Ps. xlv. 12); and "Behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there" (see on Ps. lxxvii. 4). Thus Isaiah takes up the harp of the Psalmist, and continues and enlarges its sweet spiritual strains, prophetic of the graces and glories of Christ. Till a.d. 1280, when Tyre was taken by the Saracens, it was a Christian city (A Lapide).

Judgment upon the Earth.

Our Blessed Lord, in the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, passes, by a rapid transition, from a pre-annunciation of the national judgment on Jerusalem to a prophetic description of the future universal Judgment of the World.

So it is here. Isaiah, having contemplated from his prophetic watch-tower of Jerusalem the destinies of the great Nations of the Earth, proceeds now to speak of the future Judgment of the World itself; and he invites all to join in a Hallelujah of praise to God for the manifestation of His glory in all His visitations, and for His watchful love over His faithful people in all national revolutions.

The Church of England has fifty appointed this and the following chapters, and also the thirtieth and thirty-second, to be read in the season of Advent.

1. The Earth] The Earth, in its earthly character, as opposed to the kingdom of heaven. Cp. Matt. xxiv. 30. Luke xxi. 23. 25. 31. Rev. i. 7, where the word earth is used in a similar sense, as contrasted with heaven and heavenly things.

3. The Earth] The earth, the same word as is used in v. 1, is repeated here; and this word, the earth, is repeated five times in the three next verses; and thus the contrast to the kingdom of heaven, i.e. to the true Church of God, is more strongly marked. See also ex. 11. 13. The word, the earth, occurs no less than sixteen times in this chapter. In v. 19, it is repeated three.
10. The city of confusion] The Earth of the last days is represented as a city of confusion. It will be in the same condition, socially and politically, as it was physically before its creation in its present form, viz. as a city of confusion, Heb. tobe, a remarkable word; see on Gen. i. 2, where that word is rendered without form, and where it represents the Earth in its ruined condition, before its reproduction in its present state.

The analogy is this. The Earth will be reduced to a ruinous and chaotic state, morally and socially, before the future creation of the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Pet. iii. 13). See below, Lvii. 17; Lxxvi. 22. Rom. viii. 19; Rev. xxi. 1, 27.

There is another analogy also in the fact, which our Lord Himself foretells in Matt. xxiv. (see here Prelim. Note), that the condition of the Earth in the latter days will be like that of the city of Jerusalem on the eve of its fall. But as the Universal song of thanksgiving is built upon the ruins of the material Temple of Jerusalem, and spread forth from Zion to enfold the World, so at the great catastrophe, the spiritual Zion of the Church Militant on earth will arise from its trials and sorrows to the glory of the new Jerusalem—the Church triumphant in heaven.

—every house is shut up, that no man may come in] On account of the ruins that block up the door.

11. a crying for wine] That is, for the failure of it (Joel i. 5).

—the land] The Earth. See v. 3.

12. In the city—left desolation] This is all which remains—desolation. Cf. Jer. xxxv. 11.

—the gate is smitten] The scenery of the destruction of Jerusalem is here blended with that of God's judgment on the Earth; as in our Lord's prophecy (Matt. xxiv.).

13. in the midst of the land] In all the earth; in the midst of the people—rather, of the peoples; there shall be a faithful remnant of God's elect, as the shaking of an olive-tree (see i. 9; xvii. 6). Rom. xi. 5) among all Nations; and they shall praise God, and be gathered into the Church glorified, by the holy angels, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Cf. Matt. xxiv. 31. Rev. vii. 1—4. 14.

14. They shall lift up their voice] As the remnant of the faithful song of thanksgiving to God when they returned to Jerusalem from their exile in Babylon (see Ps. cxvi. 1), so the redeemed of the Lord will sing praises to Him for all His wonderful works of judgment and mercy, when they ascend from their exile in this their earthly captivity to the heavenly Jerusalem of the Church glorified. See xxxv. 10, Rev. xiv. 1—4.

— the sea] The West (Gesen. 350), the land of the Gentiles. See v. 15.

15. the fires] The lights, i.e. the East (Gesen. 23; Drechsler, Delschat).

16. Behold I said] In the midst of the songs of joy and thanksgiving for the salvation and glory of the redeemed, the Prophet beholds a mournful contrast; see what follows.—

— I said, My leanness, my leanness] Or rather, Consumption to me! consumption to me! The word here used is razi, from razaq, to make lean, and signifies pining, wasting away, emaciation, destruction. See x. 16; xvii. 4. Gen. 76; 1291. Cps. Ps. xvi. 24. The prophet complains of the great failing away and consequent rejection of his own people, the Jews, and adds, "Woe to me." He weeps for the fall of his brethren, as for the emaciation of his own flesh and blood, as St. Paul does (Rom. ix. 2—5); but he does not impute their misery to God, but to their sins.

The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously: Rather, the transgressors have transgressed; yet, by transgression, the transgressors have transgressed. As to the Hebrew word bagad, here used, see 1 Sam. xiv. 33, where it is translated by transgress; and so Ps. xxv. 3; v. 5; xxix. 18; Prov. ii. 22; xi. 3, 6; xiii. 2, 15; xvi. 18; xxii. 28. Hab. ii. 5. The meaning is, in a primary sense, those many Jews, who have been rejected by God, have brought their rejection on themselves by their own transgressions. So the wicked, who will be punished at the Great Day of Doom, will have incurred their punishment by their sins. See v. 20.

17. snare—upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth] These words are adopted by our Blessed Lord, when speaking of the Day of Doom: "As a snare it shall come upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth" (see Luke xxi. 38). He refers to these words, and describes the sin and punishment of "the kings of the earth," i.e. all who are of the earth,
Before CHRIST

ISAIAH XXIV. 18—23. XXV. 1.

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 10 the foundations of the earth do shake;
19 The earth is utterly broken down, 
The earth is clean dissolved, 
The earth is moved exceedingly; 
The earth shall * 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.

And it shall come to pass in that day,
That the Lord shall 1 punish the host of the high ones that are on high, 
And the kings of the earth upon the earth;
22 And they shall be gathered together, 
* As prisoners are gathered in the || pit, 
And shall be shut up in the prison, 
And after many days shall they be || visited.
23 Then the * moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, 
When the Lord of hosts shall 1 reign 
In * mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, 
And || before his ancients gloriously.

XXV. 1 O Lord, thou art my God;

earthly, and who are not loyal citizens of "the Kingdom of heavens." See Rev. vi. 15—17; xix. 19—21. Thus our Lord Himself helps us to understand this prophecy.

18. the pit || Lacum || (Vulg.), || "the lake of fire" of the Apocalypse (xix. 19—21).

22. And after many days shall they be visited || This is in opposition with what has gone before, v. 21. It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish, or rather, shall visit.

It is carefully to be observed, that, as purposely to prevent confusion, and to obviate the erroneous opinions that have been deduced by some from this passage, the prophet has used the same Hebrew word (lashub) there as here. Cp. x. 12; xi. 11; xxii. 17; xxvi. 21; and particularly below, xxvii. 1; and xxix. 6 (where the wiphat is used, as here): "Thou shalt be visited" (i.e. punished) "of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire."

The sense is (as Vitringa observes, p. 52), that although the "kings of the earth" (that is, those persons who do not belong to advance the kingdom of heavens) may exult for many days, in their worldly pride, and in their proud opposition to God, and to His Truth; and though, in fact hope of fancied security, they may ask with the scoffers, in the language of scorn and defiance, "Where is the promise of His coming?" (2 Pet. iii. 10. See above, v. 10; and cp. Jer. xxvii. 15); and especially Ezek. xii. 27; yet, after a time of long and merciful forbearance on His part, the Lord will come and punish all His adversaries. After many days they will be visited; and how long they may continue with him, and escape, the Day of Dooms will certainly come, and He will punish the host of the high ones, and thrust them down into the pit of destruction.

23. the moon—|| the sun || The moon (Heb. lebahah, so called from its whiteness) shall blush red with shame; and the sun (Heb. chaannah, so called from its glori out fire) shall turn pale. On these words, see note on Josh. x. 13, where two different words for sun and moon are used. The great luminaries of the Earth will be confounded at the Coming of the Lord at the Great Day. Cp. Joel ii. 31; iii. 15. Matt. xxiv. 29, Luke xxi. 23.

—the elders of the Apocalypse; that is, all those who hold the true faith, which God revealed by Moses and the Prophets to the Ancient People of God; see Hengst. here, and notes, below, on Rev. iv. 4—6, where St. John uses the same word as is employed here in the Septuagint Version, and is rendered ancients in our version.

— gloriously || Rather, glorify, the Lord will reign in the presence of His ancients. He will be glory,—all glory; and His Saints will shine by His glory, as Moses and Elias at the Transfiguration, shine, in and by the glory of Christ, when St. Peter saw "the excellent glory" (2 Pet. i. 17).

SONG OF PRAISE FOR DELIVERANCE AND REDEMPTION; FORESHADOWED IN THE DELIVERANCE OF JERUSALEM IN THE DAYS OF HEZEKIAH, THE TYPE OF CHRIST.

On. XXV., XXVI.] It is well said in the Arabic Version here, and in the title also to the twenty-sixth chapter, that what follows is a Thanksgiving of King Hezekiah to the Lord for his victory and deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrian army of Sennacherib.

But this is not all.

This chapter concerns the Universal Church of God. It has been already shown, in the notes on the history of Hezekiah (whose name means "Jehovah strengtheneth"), that Hezekiah was a type of Christ. See on 2 Kings xix. 30; xx. 5, 6, and 11. In his name, in his faith and obedience, in his tears and strong crying to God (2 Kings xx. 5), and in his wonderful deliverance, and in that of Jerusalem his city, by means of his faith and prayers; and in the sudden and complete overthrow of his enemies, the proud foes and blasphemers of God; and also in his personal resurrection, as it were, from the dead, on the third day (see above, on 2 Kings xx. 5. 6. 11)—a resurrection attended by a miracle (the going back of the shadow of the sun ten degrees in the dial of Ahaz); and in the wonderful extension of his life, at a time when as yet he had no son; and in the springing forth from him and from his wife Hephzi-bah (i.e. my delight is in her), a type of Christ's spouse the Church (see 2 Kings xxi. 1; and below, lxxi. 4), of a soul, from which Christ came; and in his thankfulness and joy (see below, Hezekiah's song of praise, xxxviii. 9—29), he prefaced Christ, Who came from his loins according to the flesh, and Who is the King of the spiritual Jerusalem; and Who by His
Praise for Deliverance, ISAIAH XXV. 2—6., and Redemption in Christ.

I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; For thou hast done wonderful things; Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.

2 For thou hast made of a city an heap; Of a defended city a ruin: A palace of strangers to be no city; It shall never be built.

3 Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, The city of the terrible nations shall fear thee; For thou hast been a strength to the poor, A strength to the needy in his distress, 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 this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people A feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, Of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

faith and obedience, and prayers and tears, has delivered the Israel of God from Satan, its ghastly Sennacherib, the haughty rival and impious blasphemer of God; and Who died and rose from there is a reference in these words (according to his own comparison) was, before His death, like a "corn of wheat," which "abideth alone, except it fall into the ground and die; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John xii. 24); for His Resurrection was the Resurrection of His Body, the Church, as the Apostle says, "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 20, 22) and after His Death and Resurrection from the dead, He exponed to His sheep, His Hephzi-bah, the Universal Church, His Bride, Whom He had purchased with His own blood (Acts xx. 28). See below, liv. Prelin. Note.

The present and following chapters are therefore a song of victory over the Heavies, Hezekiah, Isaiah, and Judah, but of Christ and of the whole Church of the Redeemed, for His triumph, and for her Redemption through Him.

2. thou hast made of a city on heap—a defended city a ruin Thou, O Lord, hast done this; Thou hast employed the Assyrian to execute Thy judgments. Sennacherib proudly imagined that he had destroyed the cities by his own power; but God said by Isaiah, "I have brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps. See 2 Kings xix. 25, where the words in the original are the same as here.

3. Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee This was the result of God's dealings with Assyria under Sennacherib, and of the utter overthrow of her mighty power, which had conquered Egypt and Ethiopia, and their strong people and terrible; but she was destroyed when she blasphemed God and threatened to destroy Jerusalem. As the Sacred History relates, "The Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria—and many brought gifts unto the Lord at Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah King of Judah, so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations" (2 Chron. xxix. 22, 23). Cp. above, on xvii. 7. — the city of the terrible nations Even Assyria herself shall glorify thee; see above, xix. 23—25.

4. thou hast been a strength to the poor—in His distress The Lord was a strength to Hezekiah in his distress, public and private; and God strengthened Christ the Divine Hezekiah, and He strengthens all believers in Him. There is a reference to these words in the etymology of Hezekiah's name, which means "Whom the Lord strengthens." Cp. xxv. 3, 4; and on Ezek. iii. 8, where are similar allusions to the meaning of the name Ezekiel, or Hezekiel, which is the same name as Hezekiah, except in the adoption of El (God) for Jah.

— When the blast of the terrible ones is (or rather was) as a storm against the wall! Such was the storm of the Assyrian, compared to the rising of mighty waters against Jerusalem (xviii. 12, 13). And such was the storm against Christ on the Cross (Ps. lix. 15); and such is the storm against His Church. But Zion was built on the rock of God's love and power. Christ is the Rock; and the Church is built on that Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matt. xvii. 18).

5. As the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud! As the glaring heat in the dry place, i.e. the parched desert, through which Thy people travelled, was brought down, or subdued by the shadow of the pillar of cloud (Ex. xiii. 22; Num. xiv. 14; Neh. ix. 10), so the foe's scorching heat was subdued by the shadow of the cloud of Thy protection.

Observe the word shadow (Hebrew teel) repeated in these two verses. Formerly Judah had looked for a scourge against Sennacherib to Ethiopia; but Ethiopia was a mere tselatada, a noisy flapping, and transitory whirring, of wings, but it was no quiet and abiding teel, or shadow. And when Ethiopia itself became a prey to Assyria, then Judah learnt to flee for shelter to the shadow of God's wings. See above, on xviii. 1. — The branch of the terrible ones! Rather, the triumphal song of the terrible ones (especially the Assyrians, xx. 3, 4) shall be brought low. (Geesen, 217.)

6. And in this mountain! God's wonderful deliverance of Hezekiah and Judah, and the sudden overthrow of the Assyrians (who had conquered mighty people, but were destroyed when encamping before Jerusalem), brought Nations to glorify God in Zion, and to receive spiritual refreshment from Him. See on e. 5. Much more, the Victory achieved by God in Christ, dying and rising from the dead, and conquering Sin and Satan, and redeeming His people, will bring all nations to adore Him in the spiritual Zion of His universal Church, "the mountain of the Lord's House, established upon the top of the mountains" (Is. ii. 23; Micah iv. 2); and they will be refreshed there by Christ at a feast of fat things, the spiritual banquet of His Word and Sacraments. Cp. below, iv. 1, 2. Ps. lix. 3. Prov. ix. 2. Cant. ii. 3, 4. Matt. xxii. 2—4. "Omnia mysteria Legis et Templi transferenda sunt ad Ecclesias natuuman." S. Jerome; and so Ezek., and S. Cyril.

Observe the repetition of the words "in this mountain" three times (xx. 6, 7, 10). This mountain—mount Zion—is the pedestal of all God's glorious victories and gracious mercies. Jerusalem is the mother of Christendom (see ii. 3; and on liv. 1). Wherever the Church is, there is Zion—there is Jerusalem. She has expanded herself from that central point, where God vouchsafed His presence to Abraham, David, and Solomon, and where He appeared in Christ; and she aims to enfold the World.

— wines on the lees! and therefore strong, but well refined;
Christ's universal Victory

ISAIAH XXV. 7—10. over Sin, Darkness, and Death.

Before CHRIST 712.

1 Heb. swallow.

7 And he will destroy in this mountain
The face of the covering ➔ cast over all people,
And the vail that is spread over all nations;

8 He will swallow up death in victory;
And the Lord GOD will 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,
The Holy One of Israel, in whom is salvation.

10 We have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation;
And in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest.
And Moab shall be trodden down under him,

Literally, percolated or strained—an emblem of sound doctrine; strong and pure.

7. He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering—nations] Primarily, by the sudden destruction of the Assyrians who were encamping before Jerusalem. God opened the eyes of the heathen Nations to see His power and glory.

Secondarily, these words have a spiritual and much wider sense, and refer to the Victory of Christ and the diffusion of the light of the Gospel. In the mountain of the Zion of His Church (v. 9) God will not only feed all, but refresh all at a spiritual banquet (see v. 6), but He will destroy—literally, will swallow up (it is the same Heb. word, bala, in the original, as in the following verse) the face of the covering (Heb. id'dl, from id'dl, to cover by wrapping up, see Gesen. 493) cast over all the Regions. These words are best explained by reference to Num. iv. 20, and to Exod. xxxiv. 34, and to 2 Cor. iii. 15—18.

In the first of these passages the same word (bala, to swallow up), is used as here, and is applied to the covering which wrapped up the holy things. Under the Levitical Law the mysteries of God were wrapped up (literally, were swallowed up) by a covering or veil. But the Prophet here announces that, under the Gospel, the covering itself, cast over all people, and the veil spread over all Nations, will be swallowed up. See the note above, on Num. iv. 20.

In Exod. xxxiv. 19—34, Moses is described as putting a covering or veil over his face, after he had been conversing with God on Mount Sinai (contrasted here with Mount Sion), because his face shone; and the people, who had been guilty of a great sin, could not bear to look on his countenance, which shone with a reflection of God's glory, and dazzled them with its splendour. The same picture is given us to see there a figure of the veil which is on the hearts of the unbelieving Jews, in reading the Books of Moses and the Prophets; and he foretells that this veil or covering will be taken away in the Gospel, when they turn to the Lord Christ. See notes above, on Exod. xxxiv. 33; and below, on 2 Cor. iii. 7—18.

Isaiah here foretells that this swallowing up of the covering, and this taking away of the veil, will be effected for all Nations under the Gospel in "this mountain"—the mountain of the Lord's house,—the Universal Church of God.

The figure is a highly poetical one. As on a mountain in the early morning, the Sun, rising on the eastern hills, swallows up the mists and clouds, and reveals all the beauties of the landscape to the eye of the bemightened traveller, so in the mountain of the Lord's house, the Sun of Righteousness, which is Christ, "rising with healing on His wings;" "the Day-Spring from on high," swallowed up the clouds of Darkness and Error, in which the Nations of the World were sitting (see ix. 2), and unfolds all the glorious Landscape of Truth and Love, revealed in the Word of God.

8. He will swallow up death in victory. He repeats the word (bala) used in the foregoing verse, and declares that the Lord will not only swallow up the covering of the veil on the face of all nations,—not only will the Lord swallow up that covering which swallowed up all nations in a cloud of darkness and error,—but He will also swallow up Death in victory; or rather, swallow up Death into Victory, as St. Paul expounds the words, when he applies them to Christ, rising from the dead, in 1 Cor. xv. 54.

The Hebrew word, here rendered victory, is natsach, which is so translated in 1 Chron. xxxiii. 11 (cp. 1 Sam. xv. 29. Lam. iii. 18); and which properly signifies what is pre-eminent and overcomes; and especially it means Eternity, as overcoming Time, which is absorbed into Eternity. See Vittoria, 46; and Genesis. 562.

Through the sin of Adam, Death swallowed up his posterity; but Christ, by His Death and Resurrection, has swallowed up Death into Immortality. He, by dying, has made Death itself to be the gateway to everlasting Life. (Hos. xiii. 14. Heb. ii. 14.)

As Pharaoh and his host were swallowed up into the waves of the Red Sea, by which the people of Israel were delivered, and went forth free on their march to Canaan, so Death has been swallowed up into the waves of the Red Sea of Christ's Passion, by which the whole Human Race has been redeemed, and marches on with joy to its heavenly inheritance.

On the use of the verb bala, to swallow up, see Num. xvi. 30. Ps. lxxiv. 15; evl. 17. Jonah i. 17.


—will wipe away tears from off all faces] By the deliverance of Hezekiah from a dangerous sickness, and from the hand of Assyria, God wiped away his tears (see xxxviii. 3, Hezekiah's word sore), and the tears of his people. Cp. below, xxx. 19. But these words also are to be understood in a far larger sense. Not only will He swallow up the covering, or veil, of ignorance and error, from the face of all nations, but He will also wipe away every tear of pain and sorrow from their faces. This prophecy is expressly declared in the Apocalypse to have its fulfilment in Christ, and in His Church glorified through Him. See Rev. vii. 17; xii. 4.

Thus the song of victory for the deliverance of Jerusalem under Hezekiah from the army of Sennacherib, glides, as it were, in a beautiful stream, and flows into the glorious sea of an universal Epiphany for the deliverance of the spiritual Jerusalem under Christ from the power of Sin, and Satan, and the Grave. And now it may be said by all nations, joining in the prophetical chorus of praise, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, and we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

Compare the words of the Patriarch Jacob, prophesying of Christ: "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord" (Gen. xlix. 18); and of Simon rejoicing in it: "Lord, now dost Thou lettest Thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation" (Luke ii. 29, 30); and of St. Paul: "We groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body" (Rom. viii. 23); and S. Irenæus (iv. 22), expounding these words of Isaiah, and applying them to Christ.

10. in this mountain] In the Zion of the Universal Church, which has spread forth from Jerusalem (see v. 6, and v. 7).

—Moab shall be trodden down under him] Moab, whose humiliation has been already predicted (chaps. xv. and xvi.), represents another form of enmity to God and His Church.

Asyria, under Smenacherib, was the great heathen power of the world opposed to Jerusalem and to God. Moab, descended from the Patriarch Lot (Gen. xxi. 37), the nephew of
2. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation—may enter in] Hezekiah and his people had feared that they must be forced to open the gates of Jerusalem, that the unrighteous nation of Assyria, which would have spoiled them, might enter in. But God mercifully ordered it otherwise. And mark the glorious change. The gates of Zion are to be opened to all in Christ. Looking to Him, the prophet says, “Open ye the gates”—open the gates of grace in the Church militant, and the gates of glory in the Church triumphant. We are here also reminded of the language of two Psalms, the Psalm prophetic of the triumphant entry of Christ into Jerusalem (Ps. cxlviii. 19, 20): “Open to me the gates of righteousness: this gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter:” and the Psalm of Christ’s Ascension into the heavenly Jerusalem, “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in” (Ps. xxi. 7, 9), to prepare a place for His people, “the righteous nation” (John xiv. 2, 3. Rev. xxi. 24–27).

3. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace—on thee] Literally, The mind (Heb. yôter, see Gen. 36:2) that is stayed, Thou wilt keep, peace, peace. The mind of the believer is not only in peace, but it is “peace, peace.” Compare the Psalmist’s expressions, “My soul (is) silence upon God” (see on Ps. liv. 1); also, “I am prayer” (see Ps. cxiv. 4). The word peace in repeated here for the sake of emphasis, as it is in lvii. 19, “Peace, peace, to him that is afar off, and to him that is nigh.” It is observable, that our blessed Lord repeated this word peace in the same solemn manner, both before and after His Resurrection, in order to assure His disciples, that if their minds were stayed on Him they would have peace, and be peace. See John xiv. 27; xx. 19, 21, 26.

4. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is an everlasting Rock] A very remarkable sentence. “Trust ye in Jehovah for ever: for in Jehovah JAH is an everlasting Rock.” This passage, and that in xii. 2 (“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for Jehovah JAH is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation”), the conclusion of the song of praise for the victory, which, as the prophet there foretells, will be achieved by Christ, are the only ones in Scripture where this conjunction of the adjectival names Jehovah JAH is found. “This union is the proper Name of the Redeemer in the most emphatic form;” and it calls attention, in the most solemn manner, to the wonderful power and love wrought by God in Christ—the Rock (Matt. xvi. 18).
7. dost weigh the path] Rather, dost make level his path: thou makest his path straight before his face. Cp. Ps. v. 8; xxxviii. 50 (Gen. 677).

9. when thy judgments are in the earth—righteousness As was proved in the history of Hezekiah's deliverance, to which the primary reference is here. See above, on xxv. 3.

10. Let favour be shewed to the wicked—majesty of the Lord] As was exemplified in the history of Hezekiah's predecessor, king Ahaz. See on viii. 10—13. 17. 21. 23. 31.

11. they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them] Rather, They shall see and be ashamed: (thy) zeal for the people, yea, the fire, shall devour thine enemies.

The zeal for the people was what Isaiah himself described when he said to Hezekiah, whom he assured of God's protection and of the destruction of the Assyrians, "The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this" (see 2 Kings xix. 31). This zeal, which burns (the Hebrew word for zeal, like the Greek and Latin, implies heat), is a fire which will devour the enemies.

There is reason for believing that the Assyrian army, to which the primary reference is here, was scorched by a hot pestilential wind in the valley of Hinnom, on the south of Jerusalem; and that thus the fire of God devoured the enemies, below, on xxx. 33; xxxiii. 14; xxxvii. 36; lvii. 24.

12. thou also hast wrought all our works in us] Or, for us. All our victory over the Assyrians, all the victory of the Church over her ghostly enemy, is achieved by Thee, O Lord. Cp. Exod. xiv. 13. Deut. xxxii. 4. Ps. lxvii. 12. 1 Cor. xv. 10. Phil. ii. 13. Tit. ii. 11; iii. 4, 5.

13. O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name] In the days of Ahaz—Hezekiah's father and predecessor—Judah looked to Tidath-placer, king of Assyria, for help against their enemies (2 Kings xvi. 6—9. 2 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21), and turned from the Lord to serve the gods of Damascus which smote them (2 Chron. xxvii. 22), and in every city they burned incense unto other gods (2 Chron. xxvii. 23, 25).

But Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, delivered Judah from the yoke of Assyria, and "removed the high places, and brake the images," and "trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. For he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following Him" (2 Kings xviii. 4—6). And "in every work, that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did with all his heart, and prospered" (2 Chron. xxxii. 21).

These words of the Prophet are to be extended in all their fulness to Hezekiah's Great Descendant and Antitype, the King and Deliverer of the Israel of God, the Destroyer of all idolatry, and the Purifier of His Church and people—Jesus Christ.

14. They are dead—not rise] The italic words in the text would be better omitted: Dead, they shall not live; deceased, they shall not rise.

In a secondary sense this prophecy is to be extended to all the enemies of Christ and of His People.

This death of God's enemies is contrasted with the resurrection of Hezekiah (see on 2 Kings xx. 5, 6, 11), and with the resurrection of Christ; and with the glorious consequences of these two resurrections. See above, Prefis. Note to chap. xxv., and below, on v. 19.

—Therefore] Or, so. Cp. Ex. i. 7. Jer. ii. 33; v. 2. (Delitzsch.)

15. Thou hast increased the nation—thou hast removed—ends of the earth] Rather, Thou hast increased the nation (see ix. 3, for the Christian significance of these words); Thou hast
Thou hast removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.

16. Lord, "in trouble have they visited thee, They poured out a † prayer when thy chastening was upon them.

17. Like as 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.

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 the inhabitants of the world fallen.

19. Thy dead men shall live, Together with my dead body shall they arise; † Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: For thy dew is as the dew of herbs,

extended all the borders of the land; that is, in a spiritual sense, Thou, O Lord, hast extended them so as to embrace all nations. This is a prophecy of the universality of the Church expanding itself from Zion into all lands.

4. [footnote: The verb used (choked), see Ps. ciii. 12. Joel ii. 19. £]

5. [footnote: See 2 Kings xx. 1—6.]

6. [footnote: Like as a woman with child—we have been with child! This also was exactly true with regard to Hezekiah, who had heard the blaspheous message sent by Sennacherib, sent a message to Isaiah, saying, "This is a day of trouble, of rechab, and blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring forth" (2 Kings xix. 3).]

7. [footnote: Neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen! Rather, neither have inhabitants of earth been abortions. The reference to parturition is continued: We, Thy people, have miscarried; but the wicked—the inhabitants of the earth (oppressed to heaven, and blaspheming Thee)—have not been abortions.]

8. [footnote: The misery of Judah and Hezekiah is contrasted with the prosperity of Assyria and Sennacherib. The verb nephal, to fall, is applied to the "unfruitful fruit of a woman" in Hebrew, as the parallel words πίτωμα and κόρδη in Greek and Latin; and nephal signifies an abortion. See Jer. iii. 16. Ps. lviii. 8. Eccles. v. 3. Gesen. 557; Forsert, 911.]

9. [footnote: We may compare Job's lamentation on this seeming difference between the condition of the wicked and the righteous, "Their bull gendereth, and falleth not; their cow caweth, and casteth not her calf. They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance" (Job xx. 10, 11); and the Psalmist, "My children have children of their desire: and leave the rest of their substance to their babes" (Ps. xvi. 14).]

10. [footnote: Thy dead men shall live! A magnificent transition. Hezekiah and Judah had been lamenting by the mouth of the prophet, that they were like women who gave birth to nothing but abortions, while their enemies flourished and were fruitful. But now mark the difference. Hezekiah himself had received a sentence of death from Isaiah (see on v. 16, and above, on 2 Kings xx. 1—7); and this sentence of death was emblazoned by the reflection that he had no child, and therefore not only his own life seemed about to be cut off, but also the royal race of David (to which God's gracious promises in Christ were annexed), would be cut off in extinction. In addition to this, the Holy City and the Holy Place were in peril of destruction from the Assyrian army, which had just conquered the mighty nations of Egypt and Ethiopia, to which Hezekiah had looked for succour: and how should Jerusalem be able to stand!]
And the earth shall cast out the dead.

Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers,
And shut thy doors about thee:
Hide thyself as it were 'for a little moment,
Until the indignation be overpast.

For, behold, the Lord "cometh out of his place
To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity:
The earth also shall disclose her † blood,
And shall no more cover her slain.

Shall punish leviathan the || piercing serpent,
Even leviathan that crooked serpent;
And he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword
Shall punish leviathan the || piercing serpent,
Even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.
The Lord shall visit and punish in the Great Day, Satan and all his agents, the proud and mighty. Powers of this world, represented by his symbols and theirs, Leviathan, the piercing serpent, or flying (or apostate) serpent; words used in this spiritual sense in Job xxvii. 13 (where see the note with the commentary there given on the present passage); even Leviathan, that crooked serpent, with all his tortuous devices (cp. Ps. cxxv. 5, and Hab. 1. 5, where the cognate verb is used, and see Gen. 6:19), and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea: cp. below. II. 9, where the same imagery is used to describe the great and godless powers of this world, especially such as those of Egypt (called the "River Dragon" by Milton, P. L. xii.) Assyria, Babylon, and Rome, agents of Satan,—"the Old Serpent," and "Dragon,"—the foe of the city of God; as is suggested here by the Targum, and is shown in the notes on Job iii. 8; xxvi. 13; xlii. 1. 10. Ps. lxviii. 1, to which the reader is invited to refer. See also S. Justin Martyr, c. Tryphon, § 31 and § 112, who regards the "Leviathan and piercing serpent" as a name of Satan himself, and the sword, with which he is slain, as an emblem of Christ. Cp. S. Jerome and S. Cyril here, and Vitiroga, pp. 80—83, and Delitzsch here, and Posey on Daniel, p. 507.

The destruction of Semacharib's army at Jerusalem has led the Prophet by an easy transition to describe this great and universal catastrophe. The sight of the dead corpses of the Assyrians lying, scorched by the fire of a pestilential wind, beneath Jerusalem in the valley of Hinnom (see xxvii. 29), might well suggest a vision of Gehenna itself, and of the burnings of the Lake of fire. See on xxvii. 14, and lxvi. 21.

The fuller development of this prophecy in all the awful grandeur of its terrible details may be seen in the Apocalypse (Rev. x. 10—21; xx. 6—14).

God's Vineyard, Jerusalem—Its destruction (cp. 10. 11), and its subsequent universal fruitification in the Gospel of Christ (e. 6).

2. In that day—a vineyard of red wine. Rather, In that day (there will be) a vineyard of strong (lit. fervent) wine. (The Latin has "Vinum mertii;") slay ye to it. The Vineyard of God's Church at Jerusalem described above in v. 1—7 is here called a vineyard of pure and potent wine, representing unadulterated prophecy (cp. i. 22), and the fervent zeal of those who prophesy it (Vitiroga). Gen. xix. 11, 12. Ps. lxxx. 8. 14. Jer. vii. 21. Cant. viii. 11.

4. Fury is not in me. God does not punish willingly (Lam. iii. 33). He wills all men to be saved (1 Tim. ii. 4. 2 Pet.
Who shall set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them; I would burn them together.

5 Or let him take hold of my strength, That he may make peace with me; And he shall make peace with me.

6 He shall cause them that come of Jacob 1 to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, And fill the face of the world with fruit.

7 Hath he smitten him, 1 as he smote those that smote him? Or is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him?

8 In measure, 1 when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: 1 for he 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 images shall not stand up.

10 Yet the defenced city shall be desolate, And the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness:

11 There shall stand the calf feed, And there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof.

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1. Or, 'the thorn of thorns.' Though fury is not in God, yet if men will be like evil soil, bringing forth thorns and briars, "which are nigh unto cursing" (Heb. vi. 8), then they must expect to be consumed. Cp. above, ix. 18, and 2 Sam. xxiii. 6.

2. In battle! I would go through them! Rather, I would go against them in battle. The interoration ought to be after the word me, and not after battle, which belongs to what follows, as in Sept.

3. Or let him—with me] This may be rendered, Or rather (see Gesenius, 17) let him (take hold of) My strength (let him stay himself on Me as his support), let him make peace with Me (yea I say), peace with Me. The word peace is repeated here, as it is in the foregoing chapter (xxvi. 3), to show in an emphatic manner God's merciful desire that all men should repent, and be at peace with Him in Christ. Cp. iviii. 19, "Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord:"—words adopted by the Apostle and applied to Christ, "Who is our Peace" (Eph. ii. 14—17).

4. He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit! Though the Vineyard of Jerusalem has been made desolate for her sins, yet Christ and His Apostles have sprung forth from it, and have filled the world with fruit (S. Ireneaus, iv. 9). Cp. xxxvii. 31; iv. 3.

5. This section (xxvii. 6—xxviii. 13) was appointed by the Hebrew Church to be read in the Synagogue, as a Prophetical Proper Lesson, together with Exod. i.—vi. 1, which describes the discipline of Israel in Egypt. Cp. xxxi. 22, 23.

6. Hath he smitten him? Hath God smitten Israel, as God smote Israel's enemies, the Assyrians and others? No; God hath not dealt with Israel as with the Nations of the heathen, but has left a remnant in all His chastisements. See i. 9; x. 21; xiv. 3. Jer. iv. 27; xxxi. 11.

7. In measure—thou wilt debate with it! In measure (lit. in a sea), the third part of an Ephah; the Greek and Latin eathan; Matt. xiii. 33. Luke xii. 21), that is, moderately (Gesenius, 575). Cp. John iii. 34, "Thou didst punish it (viz. Israel), when Thou didst send it away; that is, when Thou didst send away and scatter Israel, Thou didst send it away with a measure, always restoring a remnant of good grains, to be sown again in the land, and to bear fruit. See above, on xxi. 10, where Babylon is compared to God's threshing-floor, on which His people were threshed and winnowed.

8. He stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind.

9. By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged—shall not stand up! The fruit of God's chastisement of Israel will be, to purge away her sins, especially her sin of idolatry.

This was marvellously fulfilled, in the Captivity of Israel in Assyria, and of Judah at Babylon. However some individuals among the Jews may have lapsed into idolatry (see on lxv. 3, 4), the Hebrew Nation, which was once prone to idolatry of every kind, has, as a Nation, been free from it since its exile. See above, "Prophecy," p. 299.

The Prophet's words are to be interpreted thus: The iniquity of Israel will be purged by this (i.e. by affliction); and this is all the fruit of the taking away of his sin (see below, fix. 20, and Rom. xi. 20), namely, when he—that is, Israel—maketh all altar-stones (of his idolatrous altars) to be like chalkstones to be beaten asunder (into lime that is burnt in the kiln), the groves (or rather, the asherim, or images of Astarte and of the sun, see above, xvii. 8) shall not stand up, but be broken in pieces.

Compare the actions of the good King Josiah, in his Reformation, when he brake down the idolatrous images (2 Kings xxiii. 6, 7—14. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3—7).

10. Yet the defenced city shall be desolate—there shall be no calffeed! Yet for the sins of Jerusalem it shall be made desolate.

The Prophet, who has been speaking of God's Vineyard, the House of Israel (see v. 2), takes up here the words which he had used before, in his prophecy concerning its desolation. See above, chap. v. 1—7, compared with e. 17. "Then shall the bulls feed after their manner," in their pasture; and vii. 21—25: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow . . . the hebd shall become briers and thorns . . . It shall be for the seceding foot of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle." Cp. lixiv. 10, 11.

This was fulfilled primarily in the destruction of Jerusalem
Woe!

When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off:

The women come, and set them on fire:

For "it is a people of no understanding:

Therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them,

And "he that formed them will shew them no favour.

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.

And it shall come to pass in that day,

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.

Woe to a crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim,

Whose glorious beauty is a fading flower,

Which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are † overcome with wine!

2 Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one,

by the Chaldeans, and much more in the desolation by the armies of Rome.

11. a people of no understanding? Such is the description which Scripture gives of the misleading portion of Israel. See Deut. xxxii. 28, 29; above, i. 3; and Jer. iv. 22: "They have made themselves none understanding;" therefore they are rejected by God, Who made them.

12. And it shall come to pass? But though Jerusalem is trodden down, yet a remnant will be saved,—the Lord will beat off,—observe this word (Heb. chabet), applied to the beating of an olive-tree in Deut. xxiv. 20, and to the beating of wheat by threshing it with a stick, as was done by Ruth (see on Ruth ii. 17), and by Gideon (see on Judg. vi. 11); and compare below, xxviii. 27, in all which places this word is used; and see Genesis. 256.

This word shows the minute carelessness with which the Lord whences the remnant remnant from the husk and chaff: His threshing-floor would be a vast one, wherever Israel was scattered, from the Euphrates to the brook of Egypt (cp. Gen. xv. 18. 1 Kings viii. 65); and yet each grain would be gathered one by one, so that not a single one will be lost (Amos ix. 9. Cp. Jer. iii. 14).

This imagery presents a picture of the great work of our Future Judge at the Last Day. All the World is his threshing-floor; its nations will be like sheaves upon it; and he will thoroughly purge His floor. See Matt. iii. 12.

13. And it shall come to pass in that day? Here is another promise, which extends beyond Palestine, even to the two poles of the Hebrew world in the days of Isaiah—Assyria and Egypt. All the remnant of Israel shall be gathered from thence, as by the trumpet of the Jubilee (Lev. xxv. 9), and shall worship God at Jerusalem.

This was fulfilled in part in the Restoration of the Jews by the edict of Cyrus, after the taking of Babylon (see 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23. Psa. i. 3, 4). Much more was it fulfilled, in a higher and more spiritual sense, on the day of Pentecost, when Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven, were gathered into the true Sion of Christ's Church (see above, on xiv. 24, 25); and it is ever being fulfilled in that Zion, which is called by Isaiah the "Mountain of the Lord's house" (ii. 2), and "Zion, and Jerusalem, the holy city" (iii. 1. Cp. xxviii. 16), and by the Apostle, "the Mount Zion, the city of the living God" (Heb. xii. 22, 23); and which, as the Psalmist describes it, is extended into all lands, and enfolds even Egypt and Babylon, Philistia, Tyre, and Ethiopia. See on Ps. lxxxvii. 1—7; and cp. above, on ii. 2; xiv. 24, 25; below, on iv. 2; lxii. 1—9; and lxv. 18—23; lxvi. 10—12. Zechar. xiv. 6. S. Jerome here says that this prophecy speaks of the days of the Gospel; and men in all nations "venient ad fidem Christi, ut adventent Eum in Ecclesias"; and so S. Cyril, and Theodore.

Recapitulation and Expansion.—The Six Woes.

The following six chapters (xxviii.—xxxiii.) are a sequel to the foregoing denunciation of Judgment. They contain Six Woes, denounced on the ungodly:—first, of God's own People (for judgment begins with the "house of God," 1 Pet. iv. 17. Ezek. ix. 6); and then, of the World.

They commence with a denunciation on God's own people Israel at Samaria, for pride and sensuality. Next, they are directed against the ungodly rulers and people of Jerusalem, for their blindness, pride, obstinacy, and hypocrisy; for want of trust in God; for resorting to earthly helps, such as Egypt.

These Woes are tempered with promises of mercy and grace in the age to come, and with assurances of protection to the faithful, against all the enemies of God and His people.

They are followed by denunciation of woes on God's open enemies, the impious powers of this World (xxviii. 1), such as Assyria, and Babylon, and on those godless powers which are connected with God's people by some ties of kindred and affinity (such as Edom), but are treacherous and cruel to it.

These Woes extend to the latter Days, and pass into the Woes pronounced by Christ in Matt. xxiii. 13—29, and into the Woes of the Apocalypse (xx. 12; xi. 14), and into the final Woe of the Great Day of Doon.

Ch. XXVIII. Woe on Samaria and Israel.

The Prophet, having been brought down in his prophecy to the days of Israel's restoration in Christ (xxvii. 6. 12. 13), now returns to his own age, before Israel had been carried into captivity, and the kingdom of Israel destroyed (in B.C. 721); and he addresses a prophetic warning to Israel, and its capital Samaria.

The fulfilment of this prophecy, in part, in Isaiah's own time, served as a public pledge of the truth of his predictions, and as an evidence of his Divine mission, and gave greater authority to his other prophecies, which extend even in the present chapter to the coming of Christ (v. 16), and to the end of the world (vv. 19—23).

1. Woe to the crown of pride] The natural beauty of the situation of Samaria,—like a royal diadem of Israel,—has been described above in the note on 1 Kings xvi. 24. Cp. Amos iii. 9; iv. 1; vi. 1. — to the drunkards] Or, of the drunkards. The Prophet seems to anticipate the name Sychar, probably derived from drunkenness. Cp. Lightfoot, on John iv. 5.

2. a mighty and strong one] Shalmaneser, and his successor, Sargon. See on 2 Kings xvii. 5, 6; xviii. 10.
Woe to rebellious Israel.

ISAIAH XXVIII. 3—9. Promise, in Christ, to the meek.

1. Which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm,
And as a flood of mighty waters overflowing,
Shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

3. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim,
Shall be trodden under feet:
And the glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley,
Shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer;
Which when he that looketh up seeth,
While it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.

5. In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory,
And for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people,
And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment,
And for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.

7. But they also have erred through wine,
And through strong drink are out of the way;
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.

9. Whom shall he teach knowledge?
And whom shall he make to understand the doctrine?

4. The hasty fruit] The early fig.

5. In that day] The prophet looks forward from the day of Samuel to the end of Israel's history.

Christ is described in the Apocalypse as wearing a crown of victory on His head (Rev. vi. 2), and also as having on His head many crowns, royal diadems (Rev. xii. 1). His Church has a crown of twelve stars on her head (see Rev. xii. 1), and He will give to His people an unconquered crown of glory (1 Pet. v. 4). He Himself will be their crown (Rev. vii. 13).

The Lord Himself shall dignify and adorn His people by His presence in the purity of His ordinances and religion.

The other two benefits here mentioned concern their civil good, justice flourishing within, and wealth and opulence from without; so, doubtless, this glory and beauty is religion as the chiefest of the three, and the other two are its attendants. Purity of religion and worship is the crown and glory of a people. Let no man take this crown from you. You know how busy the emissaries of the Church of Rome have been to take this crown from us; or at least to pick the diamonds out of it, and to put in false counterfeit ones in their places. They stole away the power of religion, and filled up the room with shadows and fuepperies of their own devising.

It is the vanity of that Church to think that they adorn the world with a little child, and as a little child, be not enter therein;” and Matt. xxvi. 16: “Have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?” See Ps. vii. 2; and note on Ps. xxxii. 2: “I have quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of (or on) his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child,” where the word for weaned is the same as here (dazud).

A child weaned and drawn from the breast, repose passively in greater quietness on its mother's bosom than one who has not been weaned, and which makes eager efforts to draw nourishment from her breast. Such, as the Psalmist and the Prophet describe it, is the believer's humble trust and perfect repose on God.
Th them that are weaned from the milk,
And drawn from the breasts;
For precept || must be upon precept, precept upon precept,
Line upon line, line upon line,
Here a little, and there a little:
For with † stammering lips and another tongue
Will he speak to this people.
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.
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.
Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men,
That rule this people which is in Jerusalem;
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:
For we have made lies our refuge,
And under falsehood have we hid ourselves:
Therefore thus saith the Lord God,

13. But the word of the Lord was unto them precept—that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken] The Prophet declares the reason why the preaching of the Gospel by Christ and His Apostles would be thus plain and simple, namely, that it might be a moral test to men, and might prove whether they had the proper temper and dispositions of meekness and humility requisite for the kingdom of heaven. That preaching would be plain, in order that the simple might understand it; and that the proud, if they would, might despise it; and so, by their rejection of that which the simple gladly received (and by which, when they gladly received it, and kept it, they were saved), the “wise and prudent,” “the scornful men” (as Isaiah here calls them, ch. 14) of this world might pronounce their own condemnation on themselves. See on 2 Cor. ii. 15; 16; and cp. 1 Cor. i. 18; iv. 3; and what is said of Christ Himself as “set for the fall of some, and the rising of others” (Luke ii. 34), and what the Prophet himself says here in v. 10; and the notes below, on Rev. xi. 5.

14. ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem! The Holy Spirit illuminates Isaiah’s prophetic eye to see not only the scoffers of his own day, but to behold also the proud looks of the malignant Scribes and Pharisees, who envilled and carped at our blessed Lord, and endeavoured to entangle Him in His talk, and who despised His Apostles and their preaching (see below, xix. 20); and he denounces God’s judgments upon them. See S. Cyril, and S. Jerome here.

15. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death! This also was the vain-glorious spirit and language of self-assurance which characterized the Rulers of Jerusalem in its last days, before the Chaldean invasion (see above, ix. 15, 16; Jer. xxxvi. 24; xxxvii. 9, 10), and before its destruction by the Romans, when their hopes of security were buoyed up by false prophets. See below, on Matt. xiv. 11.

16. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion—a stone, a tried stone] Or rather, a stone of trial (hence the
Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation:

He that believeth shall not make haste.

17 Judgment also will I lay to the line, And righteousness to the plummet: And the hail shall sweep away 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 as trodden down by 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 to understand the report;

20 For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: And the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.

21 For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim, He shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, That he may do his work, his strange work;

And bring to pass his act, his strange act.

The certain foundation.

ISAIAH XXVIII. 17—21. The certainty of Judgment.

Before Christ about 725.


word "therefore" is explained: this stone is not only a trial stone, but it is a stone of trial ("lapis explorationis"; lapis Lydiaus, Firinga) for others, to prove what their moral dispositions are. See the margin above, on v. 13; and on the sense of the Hebrew verb bacheš, to try, whence this substantive is derived, see Job xxiii. 10. Jer. ix. 9. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 10.

Christ is not only a corner stone, but a touchstone.

Even the Chaldee Targum applies this passage to a "mighty King," and many Hebrew Doctors (as Jarchi) refer it to the Messiah; and that this passage refers to Him is certain from the adoption of it, together with viii. 14, by St. Paul, applying it to Him in Rom. ix. 33, where he expounds a stone of trial by "stone of stumbling;" and St. Peter also, referring to these two passages of Isaiah, specifies Christ's double character of testing as well as of supporting; so that some full by him, while others are built upon him; see 1 Pet. ii. 6—8; and our Lord's own words, Matt. xxv. 44. Cp. 1 Cor. iii. 10.

This foundation-stone is laid in Zion; for, however evil the rulers of Zion may be, God's promises to Zion, the city of David, do not fail. Zion is the Mother of Christendom. See above, on ii. 3; below, iv. 1; v. 1;

shall not make haste] Literally, will not flee for fear and in shame (Syrie, Green. 297, 298); hence the Sept. paraphrases it "will not be ashamed;" and so St. Paul and St. Peter, in the passages just cited.


And the hail shall sweep] Observe the double work of God,—brands in, and sweep away all falsehood as with a hailstorm and a terror. It signifies a thing unapproached on Christ, the Rock, and sweeping away all falsehood as with a hailstorm and a terror.

19. From the time—report] Rather, Whenever it (the Judgment of God) goeth forth, it will take you (it will seize and carry away the unbelievers); for it shall pass by on every morning, by day and by night, and it will be a terror to understand the report, of the fearful sermon of God's Judgment on the ungodly. The word rendered report is she'achâth (lit. hearing, or a thing heard), and it has a double sense;

(1) It signifies a thing unapproached and heard, as below, v. 29, where it is rendered doctrine. See also iii. 1, and the margin here.


In the present passage, the Prophet uses this word with a reference to this double sense. He says, that to the unbelieving

Before Christ about 725.


Or, when he shall make him known to understand doctrine.

n 2 Sam. 5. 20. 1 Chron. 14. 11. o Josh. 10. 10, 12. 2 Sam. 5. 23. p Lam. 3. 32.
Be not mockers.

ISAIAH XXVIII. 22—29.

God's moral husbandry.

Now therefore be ye not mockers,
Lest your bands be made strong:
For I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption,
Even determined upon the whole earth.

Give ye ear, and hear my voice;
Hearken, and hear my speech.

Doth the plowman plow all day to sow?
Doth he open and break the clods of his ground?

When he hath made plain the face thereof,
Doth he not cast abroad the fitches,
And scatter the cummin,
And cast in the principal wheat
And the appointed barley and the rie in their place?

For his God doth instruct him to discretion,
And doth teach him.

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.

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.

This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts,
Which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.

Ps. 39. 5.
Jer. 32. 19.

— a consumption, even determined] Words adopted by the Prophet Daniel, and applied by him (ix. 27) to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, which was an historical fore-shadowing (as our Lord has declared) of the future judgment on all unbelievers at the Great Day. See on Matt. xxiv. 29—34.

23—29. Give ye ear—working] The Prophet concludes his address by a mactual, or parable, which may be compared with those of Solomon and of our Blessed Lord Himself. See above, Introd., to Proverbs, p. ix. By his preamble, "Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech," he prepares the way for the preaching of Christ, Who said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt. xvi. 11).

By reference to human works of husbandry, which have been taught by God Himself (v. 29), he declares, that in all God's dealings with mankind, every thing is done with perfect discrimination and wisdom. The whole World is the field of the Divine Husbandman (cp. Matt. xiii. 38). He plants it with different kinds of crops, each of which is treated with a tillage and culture fitted to it. He does each of His works of moral and spiritual Agriculture in its proper season; and all the World will be His threshing-floor, in which each kind of grain will be dealt with in a manner suited to its character.

Thus the Prophet prepares the way for the language of the Gospel, "Ye are God's husbandry" (1 Cor. iii. 9); and "His fan is in His hand, and He will throughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matt. iii. 12).

24. Both the plowman plow all day] Both he do nothing but plough? No; he has other works also to perform beside ploughing. He has to open and to harrow the land.

God not only ploughs, but harrows also; He bestows all needful care on His field, the world. When He has ploughed, then He casts into it the fitches (or rather black fennel, "nigella," Genen. 758), and scatters the cummin; and sows the principal wheat (or rather, sows the wheat in rows, Vulg.), and barley in the appointed place, and spelt in the border (Vulg.); i.e. on the margin of the field, so as to be a fringe to it.

Every several kind of grain is disposed in its proper place. This is the case also with God's moral and spiritual husbandry.

Having spoken of ploughing, harrowing, and sowing, he next speaks of threshing, in which also each kind of grain is treated by a process adapted to its peculiar character, the tenderer grains being dealt with in a more gentle manner than those which are more hardy.

28. Bread corn is bruised] The more robust kind of grain is bruised by the feet of the oxen or horses on the threshing-floor, and by the sharp-toothed threshing-machine, which they draw round the circular area on the hill. But the feeble produce is dealt with more mildly. And the work of threshing is not perpetual; it is followed by other processes, as S. Jerome (who wrote in Palestine) well expresses it, "Isam agricolam erudit Deus naturaliter judicio suo, et docet quam sui sententi culturam adhibeit. Denique quam metendi temporis adveret, instructa semina non rotis plansterrum teruntur, quae in serrarum similitudine foras circumaguntur et trahuntur super demessas fruges, sed virga excutientur et baculo. Veruntamen non semper triticum rotis ferreis teritur. Scl Deus variis genuss dispensat humanum; unum arat, unum serit, unum maturas fruges metit, et demessas in artis terit, orbescunque semn gubernat ut voluerit. Ostendit in cunctis mirabilis consilium suum et justitiam veritatem, ut qui plus acceperint, plus exigatur ab illo."

—Because he will not ever] Rather, but he will not always be threshing it (Vulg., Targumus, Vitringa); and he will take care that it is not destroyed by the wheels of the sharp machine, or by the hoofs of his oxen and horses on the threshing-floor. So even the severest processes of divine threshing are guided by discretion and tempered with mercy. The Sept. paraphrases the words thus: "I will not be angry with you for ever, and the words of my bitterness shall not trouble you in the dust."

29. This also cometh—from the Lord of hosts] If God takes care to instruct the husbandman how to deal intelligently and discriminately with the several kinds of grain in his earthly agriculture, all which are designed for the food of man, how much more will God Himself deal wisely with Mankind, specially with His own people, which are His peculiar Husbandry.
XXIX. 1 || Woe to Ariel, to Ariel,
|| The city where David dwelt!
Add year to year;
Let them kill sacrifices.
2 Yet I will distress Ariel,
And there shall be heaviness and sorrow:
And it shall be unto me as Ariel.

Moreover the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust,
And the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away:
Yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly.

Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts
With thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise,
With storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire.

And 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 as a dream of a night vision;
It shall even be
As when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth;

Woe to Jerusalem.

Ch. XXIX. 1. Woe to Ariel] To Jerusalem, called Ariel: l. e. (1) the lion of God (the lion being the emblem of Judah, Gen. xlix. 9); and (2) the hearth of God (cp. Ezek. xlix. 15, 16, where the word is applied to the altar of burnt-offering), as being the appointed place where all sacrifices were to be offered. Cp. xxxi. 9. See Targum here. Genes. 70.

2. As a fire of God. See v. 1.
3. I will camp against thee] David, the man after God’s own heart, encamped in thee; but, on account of thy sins, I will encamp against thee. He repeats the word chassah, to encamp, from v. 1.

This prophecy was fulfilled when God sent the Chaldeans, who “built forts against Jerusalem round about” (2 Kings xxv. 1-9); and again, when He sent the Romans, who cast a trench about it, and compassed it round, and kept it in on every side, and laid it even with the ground. See on Luke xix. 43, 44 (S. Cyril, S. Jerome).

This prophecy cannot be applied (as it is by some expositors) to the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib; for Isaiah himself distinctly declared the Divine promise: “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 shield, nor cast a bank against it” (2 Kings xix. 32).

4. A familiar spirit See on viii. 19.

Woe to the Enemies of Zion.

5. Moreover (rather, But)—thy strangers] Thy foes from a strange land, who will punish thee for thy strange gods. See on xxviii. 21.

— shall be like small dust] Although they may camp against thee and humble thee; yet they shall soon be scattered, and confounded, and swept away (cp. xvii. 13). This was fulfilled in the sudden destruction of Babylon itself, after it had destroyed Jerusalem (Sanchez, A Lapide).

This prophetic warning is added, in order that the enemies of God should not presume, that because they had afflicted Jerusalem (as they were enabled by Him to do, Who used them as His own instruments) they had therefore conquered the Lord God of Israel; or that they would escape with impunity.

6. Thou shalt be visited] Rather, it shall be visited, or, there shall be a visitation of Zion’s enemies (Sept., Vulg., Arabic, Delitzsch). God visited Babylon suddenly for her sins, and destroyed her as in a moment, in the hour of her pride and revelry. See above, xiii. 6—19.

7. And the multitude of all the nations] In the Chaldean army. See above, on xii. 6.

— as a dream of a night vision] The glory of Babylon vanished in a moment; in the night of Belshazzar’s impious feast.

8. It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth] Such was the evanescence of Babylon’s glory. She fondly dreamt that she had destroyed Judah, and had swallowed up its power and religion in her voracious and impious maw, when she feasted in the night of that fatal banquet in which she drank wine sacrilegiously out of the holy vessels of Jehovah, and praised her gods of wood and stone. But all her revelry, blasphemy, and
But he awaketh, and his soul is empty:
Or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh;
But he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite:
So shall the multitude of all the nations be,
That fight against mount Zion.

9 Stay yourselves, and wonder;
|| Cry ye out, and cry:
'1 They are drunken, but not with wine;
They stagger, but not with strong drink.

10 For "the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep,
And hath closed your eyes:
The prophets and your rulers, the seers he hath covered;
And the vision of all is become unto you
As the words of a book that is sealed,
Which men deliver to one that is learned,
Saying, Read this, I pray thee:
'And he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed:
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,
Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth,
And with their lips do honour me,
But have removed their heart far from me,
And their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:
Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people,
bath-day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him" (Acts xiii. 27). "Their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same veil taken away in the reading of the Old Testament. When Moses is read, the veil is on their hearts" (2 Cor. iii. 14, 15). The Old Testament is a sealed Book, but Christ will unseal it to them (2 Cor. v. 14—18); and see S. Hippolytus on Daniel, p. 150 (ed. Lagarde), and S. Jerome here.

13. Forasmuch as this people ] Our Lord Himself has taught us to interpret this prophecy; see Matt. v. 7. Mark vii. 6, where He says to the Jews, especially to the Pharisees of His own age, "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you; saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth." Many of the words of the Septuagint here are adopted by both Evangelists; cp. S. Justin Martyr, who often refers to this text in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, and applies it to the Jews of his time. See S. Justin M., Dialog., §§ 90. 128. 276. 456.

And their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men] Rather, their fear of me is a commandment learned of men. Their religion is not a pure and holy system of heavenly truth, which I have prescribed in My Word, but it is something else which men have invented, and which supplants that Word. Our Blessed Lord has expounded Isaiah’s words in Matt. xv. 7, and see Bp. Sanderson’s Sermon on that text in vol. ii. pp. 141—168, where he thus applies it to the sins of the Church of Rome in later days; "That they are the children and successors of the Pharisees, no man that rightly understandeth the tenets of the Romish Church but will easily grant, if he shall consider what a mass of human traditions, both in point of belief and worship, are imposed upon the judgments and consciences of all that may be suffered to live in the visible communion of that Church" (p. 151).

There is no reason for an alteration in the Hebrew text (by reading tohu for toha) to make it coincide with the Sept., which is a paraphrase of it.


pride were only like a feverish dream, from which she awoke to be devoured by the Persian soldiery rushing into the royal palace, and slaughtering her nobles and her king.
The same Monarch, Cyrus, who took Babylon, restored Zion.
Such is the fate of those who “fight against Mount Zion.” As the Psalmist says, “Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion;” “Let them be as the grass upon the housetops” (Ps. cxix. 5, 9). Compare the prophecy in the Apocalypse on the sudden destruction of the enemies of God’s Church (Rev. xvii. 9).

So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord: but let them that love Him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might” (Judg. v. 31).

Woe to the unbelieving Jews.

9, 10. Stay yourselves] The Prophet now returns to the unbelieving Jews, and says, Halt and wonder; smear over your eyes and be blind. See Vitringa, 116; Vercel, 124; and Delitzsch here, as to this meaning of the verb shak, to plaster over.
We learn from St. Paul, that Isaiah is here describing the judicial blindness with which the Jews, especially their Rulers, were smitten, as a punishment for their hypocrisy, pride, and obstinacy, in the days of Christ and His Apostles. See Rom. xi. 7, 8 where St. Paul adopts the word καταφαθών from the Sept. here. Cp. Acts xxvii. 25—27.
11. All the vision of all is become] Rather, and the vision, or revelation, of all will be to you like words of the book that is sealed; that is, the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures, which ye Jews hold in your hands, and which ye hear with your ears, and which will be perfectly clear to the simple-minded, whom you suppose to be blind (see on v. 18), will be unintelligible to you, who imagine that you alone can see. Compare St. Paul’s words concerning the blindness of the Jews: “They that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sab-
Even a marvellous work and a wonder:
* For the wisdom of their wise men shall perish,
And the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

And they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?
Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay:
For shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not?
Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?
Is it not yet a very little while,
And Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field,
And the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?
And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book,
And the eyes of blindness shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.
The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord,
And the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.
For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorners are consumed,
And all that watch for iniquity are cut off:
That make a man an offender for a word,
And lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate,
And turn aside the just for a thing of nought.
Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob,
Jacob shall not now be ashamed,
Neither shall his face now wax pale;
But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him,
— wise—and prudent] The Sept. has σοφὸν καὶ σωτῆρα here; the words used by our Lord in Luke x. 21, when He is speaking of those among the Jews who boasted of their own wisdom and prudence, and who were punished with spiritual blindness for their pride and vainglory.
16. your turning of things upside down] Your preposterous perversion of things,—as if ye were wiser than God!

The call of the Gentiles, and Woe to Unbelieving Jews.
17. Lebanon—fruitful field] Lebanon is the figure of the Gentile world (see above, on Cant. iii. 9; iv. 8), and the fruitful field is the symbol of the Jewish nation. The prophet says that Gentile Lebanon shall become fruitful Carmels, and the Jewish Carmel shall become a Lebanon. Cp. below, xxiii. 15, and our Lord's words to the Jews, Matt. xxi. 43; S. Jerome here, S. Cyril, and Theodore.
18. the words of the book] They who before were deaf, the meek and teachable of the Gentiles shall listen to those words with joy. Cp. Acts xvii. 11; the joy with which the Gentiles welcomed the word of the Gospel, which the Jews put from them, is displayed in Acts xi. 18; xxviii. 28.
The words of the Book are the words of the Bible, the Holy Scriptures—not oral traditions, such as those by which the Pharisees made the Word of God to be of none effect. See on v. 13.
— the eyes of the blind shall see] Observe the contrast. The punishment of the Jews, as revealed in v. 10, is, that they are blinded for their pride; but the eyes of the meek are opened. As our Lord declared: "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not, might see, and that they which see, might be made blind" (John ix. 39); observe what follows here, "The meek shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." Cp. lxii. 1, the words applied by Christ to Himself, "The Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings (the Gospel) unto the meek"; and Matt. v. 3, 5, "Blessed are the meek," "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Cp. Matt. xi. 29.
20. For the terrible one] The Herods of this world, who persecute God's people, will be destroyed; the scorners who mocked the Lord of Life and His Apostles (Matt. xxvii. 26; Acts ii. 13), will be consumed. See above, xxviii. 14, from which verse the word secomer is repeated here. Such enemies of God as the Chief Priests who watched in the night-time in the hall of Caiaphas to perpetrate the iniquity of the morrow (Matt. xxvi. 3; xxvii. 1), will be cut off.
21. That make a man an offender for a word] For a word, not a deed; and for a word which they wret from its right meaning, such as the words of our Lord, "Destroy this temple," Matt. xxvi. 46; and such as the words of St. Stephen, Acts vi. 13, 14.
— lay a snare—gate] See Amos v. 10.
— turn aside the just for a thing of nought] Or, by vanity, Heb. tokh, lit. 4, by falsehood (Targum).
22. These verses were appointed to be read in the Hebrew Church as a Haphtarah to Exod. i.—vi. See on xxvii. 6.
23. when he seeth his children] When Jacob seeth his children, the faithful of all Nations, the work of Mine hands; the work of the hands of Him Who is able to raise up children unto Abraham from the stones of the wilderness of Heathenism (Matt. iii. 9. Luke iii. 8); they are His workmanship ( Eph. ii. 10)—then Jacob the father and his children will rejoice together. Cp. Acts xi. 18; x. 45, where it is related that the Jews themselves, who were with St. Peter, glorified God because He had granted repentance unto life to the Gentiles, on whom He poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost, Acts x. 44, 45. All the Apostles of Christ were Jews; and this prophecy was fulfilled in part when they were made the preachers of the
Gospel to the Gentile world (S. Jerome). Cp. Acts vi. 7, where it is related that "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith:" and Acts xxii. 20, "many thousands of Jews there who believe."  

**Conversion of the Jews.**  
**24. They also that erred in spirit.** The unbelieving Jews themselves shall turn to God "when the fulness of the Gentiles is come in" (Rom. xi. 26. See Hoses xiv. 1—9. Zechar. xii. 10). —**they that murmured** The Jews who murmured at the extension of God's favour to the Gentiles (see Matt. xx. 11. Luke v. 30, where the Evangelist uses the same word as the Sept. here), shall learn doctrine, the doctrine of Christ, the Seed of Abraham, in whom all nations are blessed; and they will embrace the Gentiles as their own brethren and fellow-members in Him (S. Cyril, Aquinas, Sanchez, A Lapidé).  

**Woe to those who trust in men, and not in God.**  
**Ch. **XXX.** The Prophet, as his custom is, has delivered a prophecy concerning the last days,—the times of the Messiah,—follows it up with a prophetical warning relative to his own days, in order that by the fulfilment of the prophecy concerning his own times, he may obtain belief for the prophecies which reach onward to the end of time.  

He here condemns the people of God for their lack of trust in Him, and for relying on earthly powers, making flesh their arm (Jer. xviii. 5), especially the power of Egypt, the ancient enemy of God's Church. He foretells the abrupt and ignominious result of such a resort to Egypt, and predicts also the fall of the power of Assyria, even though it would conquer Egypt; and declares that this destruction would be wrought by the power of the Lord God of Israel, whom they had forsaken for Egypt.  

This prophecy was delivered in the days of Hezekiah, and was partly fulfilled in his days in the kingdom of Israel, which appealed to Egypt for help in the reign of its last king, Hoshea the son of Elah (see 2 Kings xvii. 1); and also in the kingdom of Judah, as we have seen already (on chapters xviii. xxiv.,) and received an additional fulfilment in the latter days of Jerusalem, when it was besieged by the Chaldeans, and resolved for succour to Egypt. See Jer. xxxvi. 5—7.  

1. **That cover with a covering.** Rather, that water a covering (Heb. masseach); and it may also mean that make a league (literally, pour it out, leagues being made by libations; Gr. στήνετε σαγκάτον); and it is probably on account of this double meaning of the words that they are here used by Isaiah to designate the league which Judah made with Egypt, so as to be "woven into a veil or protection to them from their enemies. On this twofold meaning, see Vitringa, Sprenger.  

This double meaning was made more expressive by the fact that the word here used (massaach) signifies a molten image (e.g. the molten calf, Exod. xxxii. 4), and is used in that sense in the present chapter, v. 22. See also xlii. 17.  

Thus we recognize the striking contrast between the human help which Judah sought, and the Divine Protector, Whom it forsook. They left the shadow of the wings of the Living God at Jerusalem to seek for protection from an idol of their own making, which could not defend them, but would bring shame and confusion on its own worshippers. —**not of my spirit.** The veil (Heb. masseach) of the Tabernacle; and the covering (massach) of the Cloud which I provided for Israel in the wilderness, were "coverings of My Spirit," which is outraged, and is deserted for the help of idolatrous Egypt, from which I delivered them, and led them through the wilderness; and yet they now go back to trust in its shadow instead of in Mine!  

3. Therefore,—the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.** See above, on xx. 5; they shall be ashamed of Egypt, their glory; and compare what has been said on this subject on chap. xviii. 1, where there is a striking representation of the vanity of looking for help from the flapping wings of Ethiopia, which only made a noise, but could not afford any shelter or protection, instead of trusting in the shadow of the Wings of the Most High.  

4. His princes shall forsake Mo, and go down to Egypt to solicit her help. I see them at Zoon (Tunis), on the north-east frontier of Egypt (see on xix. 11, where I wrought wonders, and brought plagues on Egypt when I delivered My people (see 1s. lxvii. 12. 45); and I see them still farther south at Hanes, or, as sometimes called, Taphnes (Targum here), probably Hcracleota, the Anysis of Herodotus, (ii. 137), in central Egypt (Viterina, Michaelis, Rosen, Grene, Delitzsch), south of Noph (Memphis).  

6. The burden of the beasts of the south. That is, the prophetic oracle concerning Egypt, the great Southern Enemy of God, called here the beasts (Heb. bahamoth), for the same reason as the Enemy of God is named bahemoth in Job xii. 15, where see the note. The word here used, bahamoth, is the construct form of bahemoth, used there. Egypt, as God's enemy, is symbolized in Scripture by various figures indicating huge carnal bulk, and physical strength, such as the Hippo-
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.

7 For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose:
Therefore have I cried concerning this,
Their strength is to sit still.

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:
That this is a rebellious people, lying children,
Children that will not hear the law of the Lord:

9 Which say to the seers, See not;
And to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things,
Speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:
Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path,
Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

12 Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel,
Because ye despise this word,
And trust in oppression and perverseness,
And stay thereon:
Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall,
Swelling out in a high wall,
Whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.
And he shall break it as the breaking of 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,

potamus, and malignant violence, such as the Dragon and other aquatic animals, especially the Crocodile. See above, on xxviii. 2; and on Ps. lxviii. 30, where the power of Egypt is called "the beasts of the reed"; and below, on li. 9. Exx. xxix. 3, 4.

— Into the land—to a people that shall not profit! The ambassadors of Judah in their journey toward Egypt for help, are going into a land of trouble and anguish, viz. that selfsame wilderness, "that great and terrible wilderness wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions" (Deut. viii. 15), through which God led them out of Egypt into Canaan. They are forsaking the city of God Himself, and His Temple, and are deserting the land of promise into which God brought their fathers by Joshua, and are passing through that wilderness with riches and treasures (perhaps taken from God's own house, see 2 Kings xviii. 15, 16), in order to purchase the protection of Egypt (whence God brought them out by Moses).—a people that will not profit them, but be trodden under foot by Assyria, and afterwards by Babylon. Exx. xxx. to xxxii. 11.

On the overthrow of the power of Egypt by Assyria, see above, on xx. 2—6; and the Assyrian Inscriptions, pp. 23. 36. 44.

11 Therefore have I cried concerning this—still! Rather, therefore I have named this (i.e. Egypt) Their pride and boasting is more lasciness (Heb. shebeth, cessation from work; Exod. xxi. 19. Genex. 801). Their passionate impetuosity and boastful vehemence will end all in inaction. They talk loudly, and brag much, but they will do nothing. Cp. Sept., Syriac, Arab., De Dieu, Cocceius, Vitringa, and Delitzsch.
The word here rendered pride, is Rahab, which has a double meaning,—

(1) Pride (so Vulg. here), vainglorious boasting, hustle, and swaggering. See on Job ix. 13; xxxvi. 12.

(2) It is a name for Egypt, on account of its pride. See Ps. lxxxvii. 4. "Rahab and Babylon," the cities of Pride and Confusion. Cp. Ps. lx. xix. 9: "Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces;" and below, li. 9: "That hath cut Rahab."

We may apply here what has been said in the note on xviii. 1 concerning Ethiopia, to which, as well as to Egypt, Isaiah had looked for help, but in vain; see xx. 9—6. Ethiopia's armies are compared to a whirring of wings, which made a great noise, but afforded no shelter. So all Egypt's loud promises of help ended in emptiness. Such is the World's help to God's Church.

8 Non go, write it! Write with them (i.e. openly) the prophecy just delivered, and that which follows, on a table (a polished table of stone or metal, Exod. xxxi. 18. Deut. ix. 9. Genex. 457), so that it may be public and durable.

Here was a challenge from the prophet. If the prophecy was not fulfilled, Isaiah's mission would have been at an end, and he would have been put to death as a false prophet. See Deut. xviii. 19. 22. The fulfilment proved his truth.
The great blessedness

ISAIAH XXX. 15—20.

of trusting in God.

Before
CHRIST
about
715.

15
Or to take water withal out of the pit.

16. we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee. We
will hasten on horses. The Jews are represented as saying,
"We will not be content with our infantry, but we will haste
on cavalry to the battle, and to the spoil; and if we are
vanquished, we shall easily escape from them by our speed;"
"therefore," rejoins the prophet, "ye shall be made to haste." 
Cp. xxxi. 1; and Gesen. 5.10.

The contrast to this is in the language of penitent Israel,
in Hosea xiv. 3: "He shall not save us; we will not ride
upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our
hands, Ye are our gods; for in Thee the fatherless find
mercy." 1 

[We will ride upon the swift] Upon a racehorse (Gesen.

732).

17. One thousand—at the rebuke of one. So that the
Divine promise to you (Deut. xxxii. 30) will be reversed,
and be turned into a curse by your disobedience.

— as a beacon] Solitary, like a flag-staff; literally, a mast
(Sept., Vulg., Gesen.).

Gracious Promises to those Who do Not rely on men,
but trust in God.

18. And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be
gracious] The Prophet beholds the People turning to God with
penitential cries and tears, and he announces to them the blessed
consequence of their repentance. This was exemplified in a remarkable manner in the
person of Hezekiah, the King of Judah (and doubtless in the
persons of many of his nobles and people), who at first had
shown a great lack of trust in God (see 2 Kings xii. 14. 16),
and resorted to Egypt and Ethiopia for help (see above, on
chapters xvii.–xx.; and 2 Kings xviii. 21), but afterwards
turned to God, in his double distress, with prayers, and cries,
and hopes (2 Kings xix. 15–19; xx. 3–5; and above, xxv. 8; and
below, xxviii. 14–17).

The words (which are here spoken by the Prophet) were
fully verified in Hezekiah: "Thou shalt weep no more: the
Lord will be very gracious unto thee; at the voice of thy
cry, when He shall hear it, He will answer thee." The
speed of the answer to Hezekiah's prayers is noticed in 2
Kings xx. 4.

But this promise has a still larger fulfilment in the Church
of God. See xxv. 8; xxxiv. 10.

This expression, "and therefore," is full of pathos. It is
like the running of the Father, in our Lord's parable, to embrace
the returning prodigal on the first movement of his repentance,
even when he was a "long way off" (Luke xv. 20).

—will he be exalted? In the glorious manifestation of His
power, the sudden destruction of the Assyrian army (see 30. 31),
for your deliverance. Cp. Ps. xlvii. 10,—a Psalm written
probably on that occasion, where the same verb is used, and where
the sentiment is similar to the present. See also Ps. lxxvii.
1–12, another Psalm written at that time.

—Blessed are all they that wait for him.] If God waits, we
must wait for Him. Hezekiah's patient waiting was exercised
for more than two years (see xxxvii. 30) before the promise of
God was fulfilled, that the Assyrian army should be destroyed,
and he and his city be delivered. The Lord waits, that He
may be gracious. Blessed are all they that wait for Him! On
this text, see Alp. Leighton's Sermon. xxv. ii. 240. "We are
irregular in our affections and notions, and the only right
ordering them is by reducing them to conformity to the thoughts
of God. The way to rectify our thoughts is to set them by
His, as clocks and watches are ordered by the sun."

19. the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem.] Judah
shall not be uprooted by Assyria from Jerusalem, as Israel was
uprooted by that power from Samaria.

This promise is fulfilled in the Church. See lx. 20; lxv. 19.
—though he weep no more—answer thee] See on e. 18.

20. though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and
Blessings for penitent Zion, Isaiah XXX. 21—26. consummated in Christ.

Yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, But thine eyes shall see thy teachers:

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it,

When ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images, And the ornament of thy molten images of gold:

Thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth;

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 plentiful.

In that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

The oxen likewise and the young asses that eat the grass Shalt eat clean provender, Which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan:

And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, Rivers and streams of waters, In the day of the great slaughter, When the towers fall.

Moreover 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.

the water of affliction? As Isaiah prophesied to Hezekiah, that God would do at Babylon. See xxxix. 6; and cp. the words of Ezra, in Neh. ix. 32, 36, 37, where there seems to be a reference to this phrase of Isaiah.

— yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner] God gave to Judah prophets at Babylon, Daniel and Ezekiel, and, after their return, Haggai, Zachariah, and Malachi; and then the Canon of Scripture was sealed; and the Scriptures were read in their Synagogues till the Coming of Christ, the Lord of the prophets, who is ever speaking to the Jews, and to the World, in the Two Testaments, which are His Word.

22. the covering—the ornament] Instead of seeking any longer to "cover with a covering not of My spirit" (v. 1), ye will defile the covering or veil by which your idolatrous images were shrouded from the eye in their secret shrines (see Deut. xxviii. 15), and ye shall defile and cast away their ornament, or rather euphor; see Exod. xviii. 8; xxxix. 5, where the same word is used to describe the priestly ephod, or "superhuman robe," on which see Exod. xxv. 7; xxvii. 8, which two latter passages refer to an idol.

Good Expositors suppose that the Prophet is here speaking of metal plates of gold or silver with which the idols were covered; but as these two objects (the covering, and the ornament, or euphor) are compared to a cloth which is defiled and cast away, the interpretation given above seems preferable.

After the rejection of your idols, ye shall receive blessings from God, temporal and spiritual. See what follows.

23. he shall give the rain of thy seed] God shall give the rain needful for its growth; and He shall give thee rich harvests, and abundance of cattle in large pastures.

For the spiritual meaning of this and the following verses, see on v. 26.

24. clean provender] Rather, provender salted (chevlns: Gezer. 287), mashed together (Heb. belit; see on Job xxiv. 6), so as to be more nutritious and palatable. See Targum for the spiritual interpretation of this.

25. Rivers and streams of waters] Not in the valleys only, but on the hills. Here is a proof that this prophecy is not to be interpreted merely in a literal sense, but has also a spiritual meaning. Cp. above, on ii. 2.

— In the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall] Such as those of Babylon, by the fall of which Israel was delivered. But this prophecy has also an Evangelical meaning. See what follows. 29. As the light of seven days] Concentrated in one.

Retrospect of this Prophecy (vv. 20—26).

This prophecy began to be fulfilled on the return of Israel from Babylon, when they put away their idols (v. 22).

Its larger fulfilment was in the coming of Christ. Then the Lord had waited for many generations to be gracious; and blessed were all who waited for Him (v. 18). Blessed were they, who, like Simeon, and Anna, and many others, "waited for the consolation of Israel" (Luke ii. 25. Cp. above, xxv. 9). Then the people saw their Teacher, and He established a Visible Church, wherein His Word is preached, and His Sacraments are administered in the whole world.

Then the Word went forth, saying, "This is the way: walk ye in it." The Gospel is specially called "the Way" in Holy Scripture (see on Acts ix. 2; xix. 9; xxiv. 22); and the preaching of it led men to "defile the covering of their graven images, and to cast them away from them." See Theodore.

It extends to the times of the Messiah, and even to His Second Advent, and is so expounded by the ancient interpreters, as St. Jerome, St. Cyril, Hysagion, Procopius, and others; and the Church of England has therefore appointed it to be read in the season of Advent.

At the Day of Pentecost He poured out the living waters of His Spirit upon all flesh; see Joel ii. 28, as interpreted by St. Peter on the Day of Pentecost; and cp. Isaiah's words, prophetic of that outpouring, in xxiii. 15. 20; xxv. 6; xli. 18; xlii. 3, and our Blessed Lord's language, which confirms this exposition (John vii. 38, 39).

This effusion of the Spirit might well be called the rain of thy seed (v. 25. Cp. Zech. x. 1; xiv. 8)—the seed of the Word sown by thee, according to our Lord's similitude, in the parable
Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, And the burden thereof is heavy: His lips are full of indignation, And his tongue as a devouring fire: And his breath, as an overflowing stream, Shall reach to the midst of the neck, To sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: And there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err. Ye shall have a song, As in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; And gladness of heart, As when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, To the mighty One of Israel. o And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, And shall shew the lightning down of his arm, With the indignation of his anger, And with the flame of a devouring fire, With scattering, and tempest, and hailstones. For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, Which smote with a rod. And in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, Which the Lord shall lay upon him, of the Sower (Luke viii. 11. Op. above, xxviii. 24); and St. Paul himself has taught us to see in the oxen (v. 24) a symbol of the labourers in God’s husbandry. 1 Cor. ix. 9; 1 Tim. v. 18; see notes there; and on Deut. xxv. 4; and below, on xxxii. 20; and S. Jerome and S. Cyril here. The clean providence, or the salted fodder well winnowed, represents the sound, wholesome, and pure doctrine, “seasoned with salt” (Col. iv. 6. Cp. Mark ix. 50), purged from all adulterations of God’s Word, on which they feed, that they may have strength to labour in His husbandry. Cp. Vireings, p. 184. By the preaching of the Gospel, the towers fall (c. 25), the strongholds of Satan are cast down, and “every thing that exalthis itself against the knowledge of God” (see 2 Cor. x. 4, 5); as the walls of Jericho fell at the sound of the trumpets, blown by the Priests, marching before the Ark of God. See above, Prelim. Note to Joshua vi. And by the preaching of the Gospel, a glorious light is diffused throughout the world by Christ, “the Sun of Righteousness,—”a light far more glorious than has ever yet beenamed upon the earth (cp. 2 Cor. iv. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 9; r. 20); and this begins to be done in the day when Christ, as He Himself declares, binds up the breach of His people, and healesthrough the stroke of their wound. See Luke iv. 17, 18, compared with what Isaiah says concerning Him (c. 11). Doubtless the full accomplishment of this glorious prophecy concerning the “sevenfold light” of the sun “as the light of seven days” is reserved for the Church triumphant, as de served in the Apocalyptic, Rev. xi. 19, and below, lx. 19, 20: “The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.” But it is usual for the Evangelical prophet to pass from the grace of the first Advent to the glories of the second. The latter are the consummation of the former; and they are seen in one glance by the eye of prophecy. See below, lxv. 17–23. As all the woes of Babylon are concentrated by Him in one night,—the night of Belshazzar’s impious revelry,—because that was the crisis of her sin and misery, although she lingered on for some centuries after it, so the blessings of Sion are concentrated by Him in One Day,—the Day of Christ’s Coming,—because all her glories in Time and in Eternity flow from it.
It shall be with tabrets and harps: And in battles of ° shaking will be fight || with it.

33 For Tophet is ordained ° 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.

XXXI. 1 Woe to them ° that go down to Egypt for help; And ° by stand 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, ° Neither seek the Lord !

2 Yet he also ° is wise, And will bring evil, And ° will not ° call back his words: But will arise against the house of the evildoers, And against the help of them that work iniquity.

3 Now the Egyptians ° are ° men, and not God; And their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the Lord shall stretch out his hand,
The Lord shall deliver Zion, ISAIAH XXXI. 4—9. and punish her foes.

Before CHRIST about 715.

Both he that helpeth shall fall, And he that is holpen shall fall down, And they all shall fall together.

For thus hath the Lord spoken unto me, 'Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, When a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, He will not be afraid of their voice,' Nor abase himself for the | noise of them:

So shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, And for the hill thereof:

As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem;

Defending also he will deliver it; And passing over he will preserve it.

Turn ye unto him from whom the children of Israel have | deeply revolted.

For in that day every man shall | cast away his idols of silver, and | his idols of gold,

Which your own hands have made unto you for | a sin.

Then shall the Assyrian | fall with the sword,

Not of a mighty man;

And the sword, not of a mean man, shall devour him:

But he shall flee || from the sword,

And his young men shall be | | discomfited.

And he shall pass over to || his strong hold for fear,

And his princes shall be afraid of the ensign,

| he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen] See 2 Kings xxiv. 7, where the historian is speaking of the last days of Jerusalem; "The King of Egypt came not again any more out of his land, for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt." Cp. Jer. xxxvii. 5—7; xlvi. 1. 2.

4. For thus hath the Lord spoken unto me. The proof that the Lord is God, is this, that He will defend Jerusalem from that mighty power of Assyria before which the Egyptians have fallen (see on xx.ices, and will make Assyria itself to fall,” through fear of the Lord, Whose "fire is in Zion and His furnace in Jerusalem." See xxxix. 9.

| the lion] To which God is compared in xlii. 13. Anos 8; and Christ, Rev. v. 5; x. 3.

5. As birds flying] God will defend Jerusalem with the same ease and celerity as birds fly in the air. He will defend it with the shadow of His Wings (Ps. xcv. 4). And yet ye forsake the shadow of His Wings, Who dwelleth between the Cherubim in the Temple at Jerusalem, and ye go down into Egypt to trust in the shadow of Egypt? See xxxv. 2. 9.

This word pass over (Heb. pasach) is the same word as is used in the description of the Divine judgment on Pharaoh and Egypt by the destroying Angel; and of the passing over of the houses of the Israelites whose doors were sprinkled with the blood of the Paschal lamb (see Exod. xxi. 13. 23. 27, where that verb pasach occurs, and Exod. xxi. 11. 21. 27; 43. 48, where the substantive pasach is found). This word calls attention to that sudden destruction of the power of Egypt opposed to God, and to that merciful deliverance of His People Israel in the midst of the Exodus, when there was a great cry in Egypt.

This word, therefore, conveys a severe rebuke to Israel. "Ye forsake God for Egypt; ye forget the marvellous might and mercies of the Passover, who, He smote Egypt and delivered you." It also invites the reader to compare the sudden destruction of the power of Assyria at night time (see 2 Kings xix. 35), and the merciful and marvellous deliverance of Jerusalem from its grasp in the days of Hezekiah, with the divine acts at the Passover.

The word pasach signifies not only to pass over in the sense of sparing, but it implies also protection, as by a shadow which shelters what is passed over. Ov. Tristina, p. 203.

Thus also this word exposes the infatuation and ingratitude of trusting in the shadow of Egypt instead of God; and it invites the Christian reader to compare this latter destruction and deliverance also, as well as the former, with the destruction of the enemies of God’s Church, and with her merciful deliverance by Christ, Who is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. v. 5); and is also the Lord Jehovah that passes over and protects her, and Who is also the "Passover" who is slain for her (1 Cor. v. 7).

Observe, therefore, how easy and natural is the transition to Christ in the following chapter.

7. in that day every man shall cast away his idols of silver] The consequence of the wonderful manifestation of God’s power in the destruction of the Assyrian army, and in the deliverance of Jerusalem, was that His Name was glorified and many turned to Him. See above, on xix. 23—25, and 2 Chron. xxxii. 23.

How much more is this verified in Christ, and in the overthrow of Satan and Death by Hymn!}

8. Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword, not of a mighty man] Literally, Assur (Sennacherib’s army) shall fall by the sword of a not-man (Heb. lo-tah), gladto non-viri (no, but of the Angel of the Lord), and by the sword of a not-man (Heb. lo-adam, non hominis), of no human arm, but of God Himself.

| he shall flee from the sword] The sword yielded by an Invisible Hand.

| shall be discomfited] See x. 18; xiii. 7; xiv. 1, where the cognate verb occurs, and signifies to melt away; or it may mean, he shall be under tribute (see Gesen. 488). Sennacherib extorted tribute from Hezekiah, and he boasted of it in his inscriptions, still extant (see above, on 2 Chron. xxxii. 1, and 2 Kings xvii. 14—16); but God made him to be a vassal to Himself.

| and he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear] He shall pass by his rock (his fortress) through fear. He shall have no confidence in his strongholds, and will not halt in his flight till he has arrived at Nineveh (2 Kings xix. 35, 36).

| shall be afraid of the ensign] Heb. hes, the standard of God; cp. Jehovah-nissi, Exod. xvii. 15.

This is fulfilled in the flight of the powers of Darkness from the banner of the Cross.
Saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, And his furnace in Jerusalem.

XXXII. 1 Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, And princes shall rule in judgment;
2 And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, And a covert from the tempest;
As rivers of water in a dry place, As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.
3 And of them shall see shall not be dim, And the ears of them that hear shall hearken;
4 The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, And the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly;
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.

The glory of Christ's kingdom.

Ch. XXXII. 1. a king—princes Observe the contrast. The Prophet had just literally said that "Tophet was prepared for the king" (Sennacherib literally, and spiritually, Satan, see on xxv. 33), and that his princes would be afraid and flee from "the enigmatical, the Lord, whose fire is in Zion" (xxxii. 9). And now he passes on, by a sublime and glorious contrast, to speak of another King, namely Christ, and His princes, the Apostles and other luminaries of the Church. Cp. Ps. lxviii. 27.

Thus the two Kingdoms of Darkness and Light, and the two cities of Satan and of God are placed in immediate antagonism to each other, and the universal supremacy of Christ as "King of kings and Lord of lords" is displayed.

The first three chapters are intimately connected by the Church to be read in the season of Advent (4th Sunday). As S. Jerome says, "Nunc alterius vaticinationis exordium, de Adventu sciscit Christus et Apostolorum."

2. a man] Heb. idk, arhp (Syrn., vir (Tolgo), Christ (see on iv. 1.), "seven women shall take hold of one Man" (isb), xlv. 11; iii. 3). Christ's humanity is here asserted, because it was by suffering and perfect obedience in His human nature that He received the kingdom here described (see Phil. ii. 8, 9). He shall be a hiding-place from the storm of God's indignation and from the winds of affliction. See above, iv. 6; xxv. 4.


4. the sword of a great rock] See xxv. 4. Christ is the Rock on which the Church is built (Matt. xvi. 18), and from which, being smitten for them, the spiritual waters flow which wash all true Israelites in their weary pilgrimage through the wilderness toward this world to the Canaan of their rest. See on Exod. xvi. 25. Num. xx. 1. 1 Cor. x. 4. He is also the Rock which shelters them by its shadow from the heat and from the storm, in their earthly pilgrimage through that wilderness. Cp. above, xxv. 4; and below, I Tim. ii. 5. As S. Jerome beautifully expresses it, "Quaecumque sub Ejus umbrae fuerit, sic eum totus erit in tribulationibus et angustiis, et in mundi istius tempestate quomodo qui ventum et turbam fugiens se tuto abscondit loco, et qui purissimos fontes invenit in desertis, et qui in vehementi aequo, solis ardores cuncta, sub prontius sannimum requiescit." (in a weary land) See the words of the Psalmist, liii. 1; exiii. 6, where the same phrase is used, and is applied to God. Hence it may be inferred, that He Who is called a Man here is also a Divine Person.

3. that see] That are not blinded by pride like the false teachers in xxix. 10; contrasted with the meek who see and hear, xxix. 18, 19.

4. The heart also of the rash] Rather, the heart of the lusty, those who haste away through fear (cp. xxxv. 4, where the same word is translated fearful), shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers (those who would not profess clearly, openly, articulately, any faith in God) will hasten (he repeats the word of the former clause) to speak plainly.

This was fulfilled in a primary sense in Hosea himself, who at the first was in great trepidation, when Sennacherib came against Juda and Judah, and who, at that time, did not boldly declare his trust in God, but bribed Sennacherib with presents taken from the house of the Lord.

But this prophecy received a larger fulfilment under the Gospel. Those who were once timid and wavering, like Nicodemus, became courageous confessors of the truth. And it was eminently verified in the Apostles, who in the Garden of Gethsemane forsook their Master and fled through fear (Matt. xxvi. 50), and specially in St. Peter, who denied Him three times; but afterwards, when they had received the Holy Spirit, came forward boldly, and confessed Him in the presence of His murderers; and who, when they before had spoken with stammering lips (see above, xxvii. 11), preached the Gospel of Christ to the world. Cp. S. Jerome and S. Cyril.

5. the vile person—liberal There is a play on the words in the Hebrew. The nabal (see 1 Sam. xxiv. 3, 25) shall no more be called nabal—a prince. "Non vocabitur qui quis insipiens est, princeps" (Tolgo). The prophet is not speaking so much of social duties between man and man, as of religious obligations of man to God. The nabal is a profane, worldly-minded scoffer, who "utters error against the Lord" (xv, 6), and who thinks himself wise because he provides for earthly things like the rich fool (fopus) in the parable (Luke xii. 20), and who is often honoured by the world as a noble, on account of his worldly prosperity. Such a man was Shemua in Isaiah's days. See xxii. 15.

Nor the churl said to be bountiful] Rather, nor the crafty be called a gentleman, lit., a man of fortune, a wealthy man (see Gen. 5:30). The man who resists to subdue devices (see v. 7), and uses "evil instruments" to attain worldly ends is often courted and flattered by the world; but he is a pauper in God's sight. The purse-proud Dives of earth will be a wretched Lazarus in eternity.
The instruments also of the churl are evil:
He deviseth wicked devices
To destroy the poor with lying words,
Even when the needy speaketh right;
But the liberal deviseth liberal things;
And by liberal things shall he stand.

Rise up, ye women that are at ease;
Hear my voice, ye careless daughters;
Give ear unto my speech.

Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women:
For the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come.

Tremble, ye women that are at ease;
Be troubled, ye careless ones:
Strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins.

They shall lament for the teats,
For the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine;
Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers;
Yea, upon all the houses of joy is the joyous city:
Because the palaces shall be forsaken;
The multitude of the city shall be left;
The forts and towers shall be for dens for ever,
A joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks;

And the wilderness be a fruitful field,
And the fruitful field be counted for a forest.

Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness,
**Fruits of the Gospel. ISAIAH XXXII. 17—20. XXXIII. 1—3. Woe to the wicked.**

And righteousness remain in the fruitful field.

17 *And the work of righteousness shall be peace; And the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.*

18 *And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, And in sure dwellings, And in quiet resting places;*

19 *When it shall hail, coming down on the forest; 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 *"the ox and the ass."*

**XXXIII. 1 Woe to thee *that* spoilest,**

And thou wast not spoiled;

And dealst treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee!

2 *O Lord, be gracious unto us; 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;*
Before Christ about 713.

At the lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered.

And your spoil shall be gathered like the gathering of the caterpillar:
As the running to and fro of locusts shall be run upon them.

The Lord is exalted;
For he dwelleth on high:
He hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.

And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times,
And strength of salvation:
The fear of the Lord is his treasure.

Behold, their valiant ones shall cry without:
The ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.

The highways lie waste,
The wayfaring man ceaseth:
He hath broken the covenant,
He hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man.

The earth mourneth and languisheth:
Lebanon is ashamed and lieth down:
Sharon is like a wilderness;
And Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.

Now will I rise, saith the Lord;
Now will I be exalted;
Now will I lift up myself.

— his treasure] Christ's spiritual graces are His treasure; not earthly wealth, such as the silver and gold taken from Assyria. This is like a prophetic foresight of Hezekiah's weakness in displaying his treasures to the ambassadors of the King of Babylon (2 Kings xx. 13).

7. Behold, their valiant ones] The strong men of Judah. The prophet returns to describe the distress and alarm produced in Judah by the invasion of Sennacherib; which has already been presented to our view in that magnificent picture, "He is come to Anathoth, he is passed to Migron; at Michmas he hath laid up his carriages." See above, x. 28—32.

— The ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly] The ambassadors of Hezekiah proposed terms of peace to Sennacherib, who was appeased but for a time by large presents and tribute (2 Kings xviii. 14—16); but the Invader returned, after the conquest of Egypt and Ethiopia, and menaced Jerusalem—and then the ambassadors of peace wept in bitter disappointment and anguish for the failure of all their overtures.

8. He hath broken the covenant] Sennacherib has violated the terms of the treaty made with him by Hezekiah; he had asked for treasures and had received them; but now he threatens to destroy Jerusalem, and to carry away its people captive to Assyria (2 Kings xviii. 31, 32).

— He hath despised the cities] The cities of Judah and Jerusalem itself were treated with insult by Sennacherib. See above, on x. 28—32.

9. Lebanon is hewn down] The cedars of Lebanon were hewn down by Assyrian kings for the structure and ornament of their fabrics at Nineveh. See below, on xxvii. 24; and above, on xiv. 8; so the Assyrians threatened to make harrow of all the cedars and oaks—the emblems of glory and power—of all national forests.

— Sharon—Bashan and Carmel] Carmel and Sharon—the beautiful mountain and fruitful plain on the N.W. and S.W. of Palestine; and Bashan, the magnificent range of hills on the N.E.—were wasted by the arms of Assyria. Compare the Assyrian Inscriptions of Sennacherib, pp. 44, 45; and see 2 Kings xviii. 14; xix. 8, where his attacks of Lachish and Libnah, on the west of Judah, are mentioned. Op. above, xxvii. 14; xvi. 17; xiv. 13—17, where the Assyrian conquests on the N., and N.E., and S.E., and on the S. of Palestine are described.

10. Now will I rise] A noble transition. God beholds the pride and cruelty, and impiety of Assyria, and rises up to punish it.

Blessings of the faithful.

11. Ye shall conceive chaff; or rather, ye shall conceive hay (dry grass, see v. 24); ye shall bring forth stubble. Ye Assyrians, who pridefully imagine that ye will consume Jerusalem and My people as with fire, ye, by your presumption and blasphemy, have conceived and brought forth dry grass and stubble; and your own breath—the breath of your own nostrils—snorting as it were with rage against Me, is the fire which will kindle and devour you. Cp. above, on i. 31.

12. And the people shall be as the burnings of lime: As thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire. This is the burning of lime which was always used in lime-kilns near the spot where they grow (Dr. Thomson, "The Land and the Book," p. 59).

Here is another confirmation of the opinion already stated, that the Assyrian army was consumed by a hot pestilential wind from the Lord, in the valley of Hinnom, on the s. of Jerusalem. See on xxx. 38; xxxi. 8, 9; and below, v. 14; and xxxvii. 36.

The Destruction of the Assyrians a Warning to Jerusalem, and to the Church in every age, as well as to the Heathen.

13. Hear, ye; Hear, ye heathen that are afar off; and hear ye also, my people that are near, what I have done to Sennacherib and his army; and be ye warned thereby to abide and obey Me. This admonition extends to all Nations, and to the People of God in every age of the Church.

14. The sinners in Zion are afraid; The inhabitants of Jerusalem, when they arose early in the morning, and saw the ground with the city burn with the dead bodies of the Assyrians, were awe-struck at the sight, and the sinners in Zion trembled for dread of God's Majesty and Power; and "fearfulness surprised the hypocrites."

Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire—everlasting burnings? The ungodly sinners in Jerusalem saw a terrible warning to themselves in the sudden destruction of Sennacherib's army, when one hundred and eighty-five thousand were swept away in one night by the wrath of God; and they ask this question.

This Divine judgment was executed (we have reason to believe) by means of a hot, fiery, pestilential, scorching wind (cp. Jer. iv. 11; l. 1), and they perished, as it were, in a furnace kindled by the breath of the Lord, "like a stream of briars from the Valley of Tophet," on the south of Jerusalem (see above, on xxx. 33; xxxi. 9); and their scorched and blasted corpses lay visible there before the eyes of the sinners in Zion.

Well might so fearful a spectacle have inspired them with alarm, and have reminded them of the fires of Gehenna (so called from the Valley of Hinnom, or Tophet, where those bodies lay), and might have constrained them to ask themselves this question, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

The Chaldean Targum here has these remarkable words:—"Who among us shall dwell in Jerusalem, where the ungodly will be judged, and will be delivered into Gehenna, into everlasting fire? Cp. what is said below, xvi. 24, where there is a reference to the same sudden destruction of the Assyrians: "They" (the inhabitants of Zion) "shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against Me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched."

These words have a more awful significance, because they are thrice quoted by Christ Himself, the Future Judge of Righteous and Dead, to describe the torments of Hell (Mark ix. 43-48).

Thus the destruction of Sennacherib's army before Jerusalem is set forth to the eyes of the World in Holy Scripture as a warning and example, like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7. Cp. S. Jerome here, and Procesiosis).

15. He that walketh righteously, The prophet does not give a direct answer to the question of "the sinners in Zion," but exhorts them to repent; and he promises salvation to all who obey God; and he does this by adopting the words of King David, Hezekiah's great ancestor (Ps. xv. 1. 2; xxiv. 4).

The "sinners in Zion" had asked a question beginning with the same words as David's Psalm, "Who shall dwell" (Heb. Mi yagur: see Ps. xv. 1); and Isaiah replies, by referring to that Psalm, and to the 24th Psalm. That great Ascension-Psalm carries the thoughts upwards from the earthly Zion, and from its earthly King, to the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to the Lord of Hosts, the King of Glory, the Mighty Conqueror, Who triumphed over Death, and over all the ene
ders of His People.

Isaiah, being filled with the Spirit, becomes a specta
tor of Christ's glorious Ascension, and of His Session in heavenly Majesty, and of the future bliss of His servants, and turns to the faithful, and says, "He that walketh uprightly, he shall dwell" (Heb. yishon), the word used by David himself (Ps. xv. 1); and he says to every true believer, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty; thine eyes shall behold the land that is very far off,"—the Holy Land of the Heavenly Palestine. Thine eyes shall see the "King of Glory"—Christ, the King of Israel,—Who was revealed to the Psalmist, and that blessed Land, where David longed to be.

He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure] This was true, literally, in the days of Hezekiah. Hezekiah took care to supply Jerusalem with water (see Vol. V. Part I—97.
Thine eyes shall see the King
ISAIAH XXXIII. 17—22.
in His beauty.

17 Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty:
                    They shall behold † the land that is very far off.
Thine heart shall meditate terror.
† Where is the scribe?
Where is the † receiver?
† Where is he that counted the towers?
† He shall not see a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive;
   Of a † stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand.

† Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities:
Thine eyes shall see † Jerusalem a quiet habitation,
A tabernacle that shall not be taken down;
Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed,
Neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken;
But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place † of broad rivers and streams;
Wherein shall go no galley with oars,
Neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.

For the Lord is our judge,
The Lord is our † †lawgiver,
The Lord is our king;
He will save us.

2 Chron. xxix. 30; and after the destruction of the Assyrian army, Jerusalem was safe, and prospered.

But how much more is it verified in the inhabitants of the Spiritual Zion, the Church of Christ! "He" (says S. Jerome) "who is such a person as is described in the foregoing words (v. 15), shall dwell on high in the kingdom of heaven, in the mansions of the Rock, which is Christ Jesus, Who followed Israel in the wilderness, and gave to them shelter and water (1 Cor. x. 3)."
Bread shall be given him, and his waters are sure in the Word of God, and in Holy Baptism (S. Barnabas, Epist. xi); and he beholds the King in his beauty. Cp. S. Cyril here, and S. Justin Martyr, c. Tryp. Hom. § 70, where he says, These words contain a prophecy of that Bread, which Christ commanded us to offer in memory of His Body; and of that Cup which He commanded to be offered in memory of His Blood.

In the spiritual Jerusalem, the Christian Church, Christ Himself, the Divine Hezekiah, gives continual supplies of living bread and water to the hungry and thirsty soul (see John iv. 14; vi. 51—58; vii. 38); and the living waters of the heavenly Zion will never fail. See Rev. xxii. 1—17.

Thine heart shall meditate terror: Thou shalt meditate on the terrible judgment, which swept away the army of Assyria, and thou shalt ask these questions which follow.
† Where is the scribe? (towers) Where are the Officers of the Assyrian army? Where is the Scribe (the sofer), who set down in his ledger the tribute which Hezekiah was required to pay to Sennacherib? (2 Kings xviii. 14.) Where now is the Receiver—he who weighed the gold and silver that was extorted from Hezekiah? Where is now the Engineer, who made a plan of the towers of Jerusalem, which was to be stormed by the batteries of Sennacherib?
Where are now vanished the enemies of Jerusalem—the representatives of the proud foes, and surly-spoken spoilers of God's Church, who estimate the plunder to be wrested from her, and who speculate on her destruction?
St. Paul teaches us to make an application of these words to all who presume on their worldly wisdom, and rebel against God's will and Word (1 Cor. i. 20).

Thou shalt not see: Thou shalt not see the Assyrians any more. They have been destroyed, as the Egyptians of Pharaoh's host were. As Moses says, "Ye shall see them again no more for ever." (Exod. xiv. 13.)
But thou shalt see the King in His beauty (v. 17). Turn thine eyes to look upon Zion. Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation.

Observe how the prophet passes almost imperceptibly from speaking of Hezekiah and Jerusalem, to speak of Christ and the Church. The deliverance of the one is a pledge of the redemption to be wrought by the other. The joy and peace of the city of Hezekiah melt away, as in a dissolving view, into the glory of the Universal Church, the heavenly Jerusalem.

— a stammering tongue: Rather, a barbarous, or strange tongue (Gen. 410),—words illustrated by Eliaxin's request to Rabshakeh, that he would speak in the Syrian language (2 Kings viii. 26). The Assyrian was a foreign dialect, though of the same Semitic family with the Hebrew.

20. the city of our solemnities: Jerusalem, the city of our solemn feasts (Heb. moedim), See note on Ps. lxxiv. 9. It is the same word as in l. 14, where it is translated appointed feast.

A tabernacle that shall not be taken down: The mighty Assyrian host, encamped in their tents against Jerusalem; but they have been swept away; and Jerusalem, which they would have destroyed, remains a quiet habitation, a tabernacle, or tent, that will not be removed. It is established for ever in Christ.

— stakes—cords: The Church of God is compared to a Tent, extended and fastened by cords, attached to stakes (pegs, or pins of wood), driven into the ground. See above, xiii. 28. 25; and below, liv. 2; and the notes above, on the history of Jael (Judg. iv. 21. 23).

But there—thereby: But there is a glorious One, the Lord for us; He is our fortification, our mast, and our river. Other cities, like Nineveh and Babylon, are protected by broad dykes or streams. Jerusalem, the Holy City, can boast of none of these; she has only her softly-flowing brook Siloam (viii. 6). But she needs no such defences. The arms of the Lord are around her. Cp. Ps. xlvii. 5; xxv. 1, 2. He is her place of rivers, and of streams broad with two banks (stretched out wide: cp. xxii. 18, and marg.), Thither no hostile Ship of War, no stately Trireme, shall be able to penetrate, and assail us; for the Lord is our King, and will save us (v. 22).

Sennacherib boasted that "his feet had dried up all the rivers of besieged places" (xxxvii. 25). This assurance to Jerusalem was therefore very appropriate.

And how much more is this verified in Christ, and in His Church.

22. the Lord: Observe the triple repetition of the Name Jehovah, after the single enumeration of it in v. 21. It may
Wreck of Assyria.  ISAIAH XXXIII. 23, 24.  XXXIV. 1—4.  The Day of Doom.

23 || Thy tucklings 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 same take the prey.

24 And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: 

a The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.

XXXIV. 1 a Come near, ye nations, to hear; And harken, ye people: 

b Let the earth hear, and all that is therein; 

The world, and all things that come forth of it; 

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; 

Their slain also shall be cast out, And their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, And the mountains shall be melted with their blood; 

And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, And the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: 

And all their host shall fall down, As the leaf falleth off from the vine, And as a falling fig from the fig tree.

be compared with the Holy, Holy, Holy, ascribed to the Lord by the Seraphim, in vi. 3, and is a prophetic gleam of the doctrine of the Ever-Blessed Trinity in Unity.

23. Thy tucklings] He is speaking to Assyria. Like a proud Ship of war, she tried to sail up this stream of divine protection, which guards Jerusalem, but she has been wrecked, and her cargo strews the shore with the spoil, and the same take the prey. The inhabitant of Jerusalem, whom she despised, gather up the booty of the proud invader. See above, on v. 4; and the Targum here, Vatiklis and Forerius.

This also is fulfilled in the spiritual Zion, the Church of Christ. Her faithful members may be disdained by the World; but they are more than conquerors, through the power of Christ, and will divide the spoil. See Ps. 112. 12; and op. Rev. xix. 17, 18.

24. And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity] The inhabitants, literally exiled in Hezekiah, King of Judah. In the days of the Assyrian invasion he was sick unto death. See 2 Kings xx. 1, where the word is the same here (Heb. chalal); and this word is applied six times to Hezekiah in Holy Scripture. But he prayed earnestly to God, and his sickness was healed, and his life was prolonged fifteen years, and his City was delivered.

And not only so, but his iniquity (in distrust of God at first, and in giving to Sennacherib the gold of the doors of the Temple, and in looking to Egypt and Ethiopia for help, instead of trusting the Lord, see 2 Kings xviii. 15, 16, 21) was forgiven. He was brought by affliction to a better mind; he prayed and wept sore, and God had mercy on him, and healed him, and delivered Jerusalem, and overthrew his enemies. As he himself said in the writing which he composed "when he had been sick, and was recovered from his sickness" (xxviii. 9), "O Lord, Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back" (xxviii. 17).

This also is fulfilled by Christ in its largest sense to all faithful penitents in the spiritual Jerusalem. They have been sick unto death, like Hezekiah; they have not trusted in God, but in some worldly helps; but God in His mercy has afflicted and humbled them, and has healed and delivered them (Micah vii. 18, 19. Matt. ix. 12. Luke iv. 18).

THE Universal Judgment.

Ch. XXXIV.] The Prophet passes from the judgment executed on Assyria (which had already suggested visions of retribution on God's enemies) to speak of the future Universal Judgment of the whole World.

We have already seen an example of a similar transition and expansion in chapters xxiv.—xxvii., which has its Evangelical parallel in Our Lord's prophecies, in Matt. xxiv., of the Judgment impending on Jerusalem, and of the Universal Judgment.

The present prophecy of Isaiah is continued and further developed by succeeding prophets, especially Jeremiah (xxv. 30—34; xlvii. 10; l. 27. 39; li. 40), and by Zephaniah (i. 7; ii. 14, referring to Isaiah xxxiv. 6. 11, see the parallels in the margin), and all these are consummated in the New Testament, in the Apocalypse.

On the genuineness of this and the following chapter see Keil, Einleitung, § 69. A strong argument on their behalf is found in the imitation of their language by succeeding prophets; e.g. Jeremiah, see on v. 5, and Keuper, Jeremiah, pp. 79—82.

1. Come near, ye nations! In this summoning of the Nations and People (rather, peoples), we seem to hear the voice of the Angel Heralds of the Great King, before Whose judicial Throne of Judgment will "he gathered all Nations" (Matt. xxv. 32).

2. Their armies] Their host (see v. 4) warring against God and His people.

3. Their slain also shall be cast out] Like the bodies of the Assyrian army suddenly destroyed by God's wrath, and lying on the ground, before Jerusalem. See above, on xxxiii. 14; below, xxxviii. 36; lxxvi. 24.

4. And all the host of heaven] He repeats the word host from v. 2: Not only the host of the Assyrians and of the earthly enemies of God will be consumed in that day, but, such is His Might and Majesty, and such the terror of His Coming, that the host of heaven itself will be dissolved; the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll (the roll of a book, which has been read, and rolled round its cylindrical axis, as finished), and all their host, the sun, moon, and stars, shall fall like the withered leaves of a vine, or like the falling fruit of a fig-tree.

That this imagery is prophetic of the Great Day is evident from its adoption by St. Peter (2 Pet. iii. 7, 10) and by St. John (Rev. vii. 13, 14) describing the end of all earthly things.
God's Judgment

ISAIAH XXXIV. 5—9.

of His treacherous enemies.

5. My sword shall be bathed in heaven; Behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, And upon the people of my curse, to judgment; 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:

6. For the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, And a great slaughter in the land of Idumea; And the || unicorns shall come down with them, And the bullocks with the bulls; And their land shall be || soaked with blood, And their dust made fat with fatness.

7. And the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion;

8. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch,
And the dust thereof into brimstone,  
And the land thereof shall become burning pitch;  
10 It shall not be quenched night nor day;  
* From generation to generation it shall lie waste;  
None shall pass through it for ever and ever.  
11 * But the || cormorant and the bittern shall possess it;  
The owl also and the raven shall dwell in it:  
And * he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.  
12 They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there,  
And all her princes shall be nothing;  
13 And * thorns shall come up in her palaces,  
Nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof:  
And * it shall be an habitation of dragons,  
And a court for || owls;  
14 † The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with † the wild beasts of the island,  
And the satyr shall cry to his fellow;  
The || screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest;  
15 There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow:  
There shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.  
16 Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read:  

The Lord's, or associating, whether it be male or female. (Cp. v. 16.  
— gather under her shadow] Shall brood in the shade of it.  
— her mate] Its mate, or associate, whether it be male or female. (Cp. v. 16.  
16. Seek ye out of the book of the Lord] Rather, Search ye upon the book of the Lord; literally, from upon it, from the top of it to the bottom; i.e. throughout it, that is, Search ye diligently in all the roll, or volume, of Holy Scripture; viz. in all that the Lord had written in Isaiah's time, or might thereafter write, and deliver to the Church of God, to be received as His Word.  
This is an admonition from the Holy Spirit Himself, Who knew what He had written, and also foreknew what He would afterwards write; and it applies to the whole Book of Holy Scripture. It may be compared to the words of the Holy Spirit, speaking by St. Paul, "All Scripture" (that is, every thing that is written by the Holy Ghost, and that is delivered by Him to the Church Universal, and is received by the Church, or Scripture), "being given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine." See on 2 Tim. iii. 16.  
The Prophet here inculcates the duty not only of reading the Holy Scripture, but of diligently searching it (cp. John v. 39), and of weighing all its words, and considering minutely the circumstances under which it was written. Cp. Vitringa, p. 288.  
Search ye diligently throughout the Book of the Lord—the Holy Scripture—and observe what is said there, not merely concerning literal wild beasts, unclean and doleful birds and serpents, but concerning those sins which are symbolized by them; and be sure that the desolation which is here pre-announced to the literal Edom, and which is foretold in other parts of Scripture, as the doom of God's enemies, will be exactly fulfilled in all those who imitate their temper, in rebellion against God, and in cruelty and treachery to Israel. The words, no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate, have been rightly regarded as having also a larger meaning; viz., that not one of God's utterances in Holy Scripture shall fail of its effect (cp. xi., Prelim. Note).
The desert shall rejoice ISAIAH XXXIV. 17. XXXV. 1—4. in the graces of the Gospel.

Before Ch. 78, vs. 79 about 712.

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.

XXXV. 1 The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; And the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

b It 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.

3 * Strengthen ye the weak hands, And confirm the feeble knees.

4 Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not:

Matt. v. 18; xxiv. 35. Luke xxi. 22; xiv. 44. John x. 35), and that every prophecy of Scripture shall be fulfilled with its fulfillment. See Vitringa, p. 287, and Dr. Pusey, quoted above, in the notes on Deut. xxxi. 9.

A prelude of this future fulfillment is now visible in the desolation of Edom. That region abounds with venomous animals; the mountains, south of the Dead Sea was called the Maaleh Akrabin, or Ascent of Serpents, even in the days of Joshua (xv. 3). Its lonely mountains and barren table-lands are inhabited by the birds and reptiles here mentioned. Not one of them fails; not one wants its mate (see Köhler, in Mal. i. 2—5), and the "Book of the Lord" declares in solemn tones that God has appointed a more awful punishment, even from generation to generation, for all moral and spiritual Antitypes of Edom. This prophecy (says Vitringa, p. 288), which describes the desolate inhabitation of the place, assigned to unclean animals who dwell in the wilderness, and haunt its dark places, is not to be limited to them; these animals are types of men of dark and moody minds, who hate the light of truth, and love what is false and impure (cp. note above, on Lev. xi. Prelim. Note, and on Lev. vi. 9), and for whom the eternity of a howling wilderness is reserved, according to the words of the Prophet Ezekiel: "The miry places and the marshes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt" (Ezek. xlvii. 11), which words of the prophet seem to have been in the mind of our Blessed Lord, when speaking of the Day of Doom; "Every sacrifice" (see here on v. 6) "shall be salted with salt." See on Mark ix. 49.

The graves of the Church Militant on Earth, to be consigned in the glory of the Church triumphant in heaven.

Ch. XXXV.] How beautiful is the transition from the foregoing prophecy to the present! Edom, the land of ungodliness, is smitten with eternal barrenness; but the Wilderness, of all who believe and obey God, becomes a Paradise.

1. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them] Or rather, shall be glad. In the original the word genius is probably only a peculiar form of the plural (from the verb ass), and the last syllable is not, as supposed by some (Rashi, Graevius, 787), a pronominal suffix (Aben Ezra, Böttcher, Delitzsch).

This prophecy has been fulfilled in the change of heathen Wildernesses into spiritual Gardens of Christ (S. Athanasius, S. Jerome, S. Cyril, Theodoret). Christ sprang forth (see S. Justin Martyr, c. Tryphon., § 30) as a fountain of living water in the desert of the heathen world, which was barren of the knowledge of God. And Matthew Henry well says, that "under the Gospel, the desert land of Heathenism becomes blooming. This flourishing desert shall have the glory of Lebanon given to it, which consisted in the strength and staleness of its cedars; and the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, which consisted in corn and cattle. All the beauty of the Jewish Church passed into the Christian, and appeared in its perfection, as the Apostle shows in his Epistle to the Hebrews. Whatever is valuable in any institution is brought into the Gospel.

— the rose] Or the crown. The prophecy adopts here, and in the following verse, the language of Solomon in the Canticles, speaking of the glory of the Church. See Cant. ii. 1, where the Church, using this word, says, "I am the rose of Sharon" (see the note there).

2. The glory of Lebanon—Carmel and Sharon] Here again is the imagery of the Canticles. In the Church of Christ the glory of Lebanon (the type of heathen lands; see xxxix. 17; xlii. 10; iv. 13; lx. 13) shall be blended with the beauty of Carmel and Sharon, the lowliest mountain and most fruitful plain of Israel. See above, on Cant. iii. 9; iv. 8. 11. 15, as to Lebanon; and Cant. v. 7, as to Carmel; and ii. 1, as to Sharon.

These prophecies were literally fulfilled by the planting of Christian Churches in regions of Lebanon, e. g. at Tyre, Sidon, and Syria, especially at Antioch, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts xi. 22, 26; xiii. 1; xv. 35; xxi. 3. 7; xxvii. 3), and by the Apostolic labours at Cesarea, at the foot of Carmel (Acts viii. 40; x. 24; xxi. 8; xxv. 4), at Sharon and its neighbourhood (Acts ix. 35).

But the prophecy has a far wider range. Wherever heathen lands embrace the Gospel, which was foretold by Moses and the Prophets, and preached by the Apostles of the family of Israel, there the glory of Lebanon is blended with the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, in the Church of Christ.

3. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees] That this prophecy has its fulfillment in the Church of Christ, is evident from St. Paul's application of it, Heb. xii. 12, where he adopts the words in the Sept. here.

4. Strengthen ye—be strong] The Prophet here repeats the verb chazak, the formative of Hezekiah (properly Chizekeyyah,—i. e., whom Jehovah strengthens); he says, "strengthen the weak," and "say to them that be of fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you!" and thus he propounds Hezekiah's history as an encouragement and example to every age; and assures all men, in every land, that although they may be weak and fearful, as Hezekiah once was, through lack of faith, when he gave the gold of the Temple to Sennacherib (2 Kings xviii. 15, 16; see above, on xxvii. 24), yet if in the day of distress they turn to God in faith, with prayers and tears, as he did, God will come with a recompense; He will come and save them in Christ. Cp. Eph. vi. 10. James v. 8. Rev. ii. 10; and S. Irenæus, iv. 66, where he applies this prophecy to Christ.
Behold, your God will come with vengeance, 
Even God with a recompence; 
He will come and save you.

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, 
And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped;

And the lame man leap as an hart, 
And the tongue of the dumb sing:

For in the wilderness shall waters break out, 
And streams in the desert;

And the parched ground shall become a pool, 
And the thirsty land springs of water:

In the habitation of dragons, where each lay, 
Shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

And an highway shall be there, and a way, 
And it shall be called The way of holiness;

The uncircumcised shall not pass over it; 
But it shall be for those:

The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

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:

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion.

With songs and everlasting joy upon their heads:

5, 6. Then the eyes of the blind—dumb sing—the desert] 
Our Lord appeals to the fulfilment of this prophecy by Himself 
as a proof of His being the Messiah. See Matt. xi. 4—6. 
Luke vii. 22; cp. S. Justin Martyr, c. Tryphon, § 69; S. Ire- 
nens, iv. 66; Tertullian, c. Marcion, iv. 24, where it is shown 
that the prophecies in this chapter were fulfilled by Christ; 
and so S. Jerome and S. Cyril here.

This prophecy is also always being fulfilled in spiritual 
seers, in the Church. The spiritually blind are ever 
recovering their sight, and the ears of those who were spiri-
tually deaf are being opened, and the lame are enabled to 
leap as a hart, and the tongue of the deaf to sing, by the blessed 
fluence of the Church, and God's spiritual blindness, lameness, 
i. 18. Heb. xii. 13. 2 Pet. i. 9, and Hengst. here.

— streams in the desert] Streams of the living water of 
the Gospel in the wilderness of Heathenism. Cp. below, xiii. 20; 
xiv. 6. See John vii. 38, 39; Rev. xxi. 17.

7. the parched ground shall become a pool] Rather, 
the mirage shall become a real lake. The mirage, Heb. sharab, 
is the "fata morgana" (called in Sanscrit "the antelope's thirst"). A phenomenon known to travellers in the sandy des-
erts of the East, in which the horizon sometimes assumes the 
appearance of a waving and tremulous expanse of water, where 
mountains are mirrored, and which mocks their hopes of water 
by an illusory vision of it. See Gesen. herod., 949; and Fuerst, 

Before the preaching of the Gospel, the Nations of the 
World wandered like travellers in the wilderness, and were 
alured and baulked by unreal visions and dream-like phantas-
s of Truth, in the shadowy mirages of vain metaphysical theories 
and philosophical speculations; but in the Gospel of Christ 
they have pure fountains and calm lakes of living water, which 
refresh them in their weary journey to their heavenly home.

Did Mohammed allude to this passage of Isaiah when he 
said in the Koran (ch. xxxiv.), "The works of unbelievers are 
like the scrob, which the thirsty thinks to be water, until, when 
he comes to it, he finds it to be nothing?"

—in the habitation of dragons, where each lay] In the 
dwelling of jockals (see above, xxxiv. 13) its lair (W. ker lair, 
where the female jackal gave birth to, and suckled, her young), 
there green grass shall spring up, with roots and rushes, for 
defence and warmth.

8. And an highway shall be there—the way of holiness] Of 
which the Holy Baptist was the pioneer, when, appealing to 
Isaiah, he preached, saying, "This is he that was spoken of by 
the prophet Esaias, saying, The Voice of one crying in the 
wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths 
straight." " I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 
Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias " 
(Matt. iii. 3. John i. 23; cp. below, xl. 3); and which is called 
"the way" in the New Testament (Acts ix. 2; xii. 25; xxii. 20), 
being the knowledge and obedience of Him Who is 
"the WAY" (John xiv. 6). See S. Jerome here.

— the uncircumcised] Such as those who are typified in the fore-
going chapter by the uncircumcised animals there mentioned (xxxiv. 
11—16; cp. Heb. xii. 14. Rev. xviii. 2; xxii. 27).

— the wayfaring men] Literally, the man who walks that 
way (that is, every one who takes care to keep to that road), 
though he be a fool in the opinion of the world, which 
foolishly deems itself wise, he shall not go astray, but will arrive 

9. Nor any ravenous beast shall go up] The Road is so plain 
that the simplest cannot miss it; and so it is lofty and well 
fenced, that no beast of prey, however strong, can assend and cut it.

— redeemed] Heb. geftinim, from God, the Redeemer, of 
Whom the Patriarch Job speaks in those remarkable words 
Job xix. 25, and see the note there; and cp. Rev. xiv. 4.

10. the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion 
with songs] As the captive exiles returned from Babylon, 
with songs of joy to Jerusalem. See above, Prelim. Note to "the 
Songs of Degrees" (Ps. cxxx.—cxxxiv.), where it is shown that 
the consummation of that joy, and of the music of those songs, 
is realized in the going up of the faithful children of Abraham 
to the spiritual Zion of the Church of Christ on earth, and to 
the Jerusalem that is above, which is free, and is the mother of 
us all (Gal. iv. 26). In that city will be no sorrow nor sighing, 
as the beloved Disciple says in the Apocalypse: "There 
shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall 
there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away" 
(Rev. xxi. 4; cp. Rev. vii. 17; and above, xxv. 8; below, lv. 19).

Observe how, after the historical narrative (in the four 
following chapters) concerning the deliverance of Hezekiah 
and Jerusalem from the invading army of Assyria, and the sudden 
destruction of that army—a narrative which was requisite for the
They shall obtain joy and gladness, and 
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.  

XXXVI. 1 Now 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.

2 And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish unto king Hezekiah with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller’s field. 3 Then came forth unto him Eliakim, Hilkiah’s son, which was over the house, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, Asaph’s son, the recorder.

is tantamount to an assertion that the prophecies in the foregoing chapters concerning the Assyrian invasion were delivered before the events which are related in the narrative; and those prophecies are further proofs of the wonderful fulfillments of Isaiah as a prophet sent from God and filled with the Holy Ghost.

The fulfilment of other prophecies of Isaiah concerning later events, such as those which relate to the siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, and to the capture of Babylon itself, under circumstances of a very extraordinary character, namely, the visit of Melech of Babylon to Jerusalem, and in its extension into all the world, and in the interpreting of the Gospel to all Nations—these add new strength to the proof of Isaiah’s prophetic mission, and of the Divine origin of Christianity; and they afford conclusive evidence that the other great prophecies of Isaiah, which yet remain to be fulfilled, namely, those which relate to the Universal Resurrection and Judgment to come, and to an Eternity of future Rewards and Punishments, will be fulfilled also.

For annotations on the four following chapters, the reader is invited to refer to the Commentary upon them in the Second Book of Kings, chapters xvii. 13—57; xix.; xx.; and in 2 Chron. xxxi. 1—30; some few supplementary notes will be added here. The slight textual variations between the narrative here and that in the Second Book of Kings, may be seen partly in Vitringa, pp. 305, 306, and more fully in Delitzsch, pp. 533—372.

CH. XXXVI. 1. in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah] For a vindication of this chronological statement from the objections of some recent critics, antiquarians, and historians, who suppose an error in the text here, and in 2 Kings xviii. 15, and would alter the words “fourteenth year” into twentieth-seventh year, see above, on chaps. xviii., xix., xx., and on 2 Kings xviii. 13.

— Sennacherib king of Assyria] Acting as viceroy of Sargon his father, whom he succeeded on the throne; see the notes just referred to. Isaiah survived Sennacherib, for he mentions his death, xxxvi. 38. No wonder that Isaiah should call him “king of Assyria!” To Israel and his contemporaries in Judah, Sennacherib was “the king of Assyria,” and as such he wielded the power of that kingdom; and though in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, Sargon his father was still living, yet no one can be surprised that, by a prophesy or anticipation familiar to all writers in similar cases (see below, on Mark ii. 26), Sennacherib, his celebrated son and successor, should be called “King of Assyria,” when he appeared before Jerusalem at the head of the armies of that empire.

the defenced cities of Judah] See above, x. 28—32.

2. the upper pool] Where Isaiah had met Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and had delivered the prophecy concerning the birth of Immanuel; see vii. 3. Perhaps Rabshakeh wished to get possession of the water of that pool, in order to cut off the supply from the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to secure it for his own forces. See 2 Chron. xxxii. 3—5; 30; and cp. above, xii. 9. 11.

3. Eliakim, Hilkiah—and Shebna] The faithful Eliakim
4 "And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest?  
5 I say, sayest thou, (but they are but vain words) I have counsel and strength for war: now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?  
6 Lo, thou trustest in the 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: it is not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar?

8 Now therefore give || pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.  
9 How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's 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 Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, || + Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me:  
17 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; Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards.

18 Beware lest Hezekiah persuade you, 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

joined here with Shebna, who seems to have afterwards supplanted him. See on xxii. 15, 20, 21; and 2 Kings xviii. 18.

6. thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt] This assertion appears to have been true. Hezekiah at first looked for help from the power of Egypt, which was utterly overthrown by Sennacherib, as appears from Assyrian-Inscriptions, and from what is said above on xx., Prelim. Note; and xxx. 3–6; xxx. 2–5; and on 2 Kings xviii. 21; and below, Vol. V. Part I.–105

Ezek. xix. 6, "The inhabitants of Egypt ... have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel. When they took hold of thee (Egypt) by thy hand, thou didst break and rend all their shoulder, and when they leaped upon thee, thou maest all their loins to be at a stand" (or, to shake).

17. Until I come and take you away] As many of the inhabitants of Samaria had been taken away by Sennacherib's father Sargon (2 Kings xviii. 11).
Shebna the scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

XXXVII. 1 And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord.

2 And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. 3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of || 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 left.

5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

6 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

7 Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

8 So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.

9 And he heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, He 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 Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hona, 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, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, acknowledge God's Supremacy, and to seek openly for His protection, by public religious acts, especially in times of national trouble and distress.

They were also emphatic acknowledgments, on King Hezekiah's part, of the prophetic mission of Isaiah, and are practical proofs of it.

3. the children are come to the birth] See Isaiah's reference to these words in xxvi. 18. See also Hb. Andrewes' Sermon on this text (iv. 341), concerning national deliverances.

4. rumour] See above, xxviii. 19, where the same word is used; and on 2 Kings xix. 7.

5. Ethiopia] Judah had looked for help to Ethiopia, as well as to Egypt, but looked in vain. Both these nations were subdued by the arms of Sennacherib. See above, ch. xx. 1—6.
of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth. 17 Incline thine ear, O Lord, and hear; open thine eyes, O Lord, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God. 18 Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the © nations, and their countries. 19 And have \( \text{cast} \) their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men’s hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. 20 Now therefore, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord, even thou only.

21 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria: 22 This is the word which the Lord hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. 23 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel. 24 By 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 © the tall cedars thereof, and the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the height of his border, and || the forest of his Carmel. 25 I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the © besieged places. 26 Hast thou not heard long ago, how I have done it; and of ancient times, that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste defended cities into ruinous heaps. 27 Therefore their inhabitants were © of small power, they were dismayed and confounded: they were as © the grass of the field, and as © the green herb, as © the grass on the house-tops, and © corn blasted before it be grown up. 28 But I know thy © abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. 29 Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore © will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest. 30 And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such as growth 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.

24. Lebanon—cedars—© trees (or rather cypresses)] That the Kings of Assyria made havoc in the forests of Lebanon by hewing down the cedars and cypresses, appears from their own records, in extant Assyrian inscriptions. See above, on xiv. 8. 23. I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places] Or it may mean, I will dry up the rivers (or, canals) of Matsor (Egypt). See above, on xix. 6 (Kinsch, Vitringa, 325; Gesen., 501); and so Delitzsch, and others. The word matsor signifies a castle, a fortress, a citadel, a strong city (Psa. xxxii. 21; Is. 9; and Jer. x. 17. Hab. ii. 1. Zech. ix. 3). Therefore the rendering in the text is defensible, and is preferred by the ancient Versions. 25. Sennacherib subdued Arabia (see xxi. 13—17); and he is called "King of the Arabs," as well as of the Assyrians by Herodotus (ii. 141); and in his march to that country, and to Egypt, and toward Ethiopia, the former part of this boast was doubtless realized. But it was not to be verificed at Jerusalem, which was girt round and encircled by the impassable river of God’s power and love; and he was to be wrecked in his attempts to navigate that stream, and assault the city which was fenced by it. See above, on xxiii. 21—23. 26. I have done it] 1, the Lord God of Israel, In whose hand thou, O Assyria, art a rod and staff to execute My purposes (see x. 5, 15; and on xxx. 32). I have done it—not thou. 29. my hook—[my bridle] Or, my ring, my muzzle. Cp. Ezek. xxxviii. 4. 30. this shall be a sign unto thee] To thee, O Hezekiah, whose faith and patience are thus to be exercised. It was not till the third year after the delivery of this prophecy (see 2 Kings xix. 29) that he was delivered from the fear of Assyria. But God vouchsafed another sign to him personally, when he was on the brink of the grave (xxxviii. 1; see 2 Kings xx. 1, 2), viz. that on the third day he should recover, and go up to the house of the Lord. See above, 2 Kings xx. 5, 8. — Ye shall eat this year such as growth of itself[? They could not sow the lands, on account of the Assyrian invasion, and were obliged to subsist on what was self-sown. And in the following year their distress was to be still greater; for they were not to be satisfied with what they brought in the second year; but in the third year they would be delivered from all fear of the invaders, and would be enriched by much spoil taken from them. See xxxvi. 6, 9. 4. 23. Isaiah thus tried their faith, and prepared them for a dearth, and suggested the duty of making provision for it. P 2
ISAIAH XXXVII. 31-36.

Assyria's overthrow.

31 And † the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward: 32 For out of J e r u s a l e m shall go forth a remnant, and † they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this.

33 Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with † shields, nor cast a bank against it. 34 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. 35 For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

36 Then the † 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.

Here also Isaiah, like Joseph (see on Gen. xli. 34), gave a public test, which all could apply for the trial of his prophetic gifts. They stood the test; and his mission from God was proved.

31. shall—take root downward, and bear fruit upward] Although it is known to the ground, yet it shall sprout up anew in Christ. See xl. 1—10; xxvii. 6: Shemarjashub, "A remnant shall return," is a watchword of Isaiah.

32. they that escape] Heb. peleqath, rendered σώζοντος by Sept.; whence the word σώζων passed into the New Testament, e.g. Acts ii. 47: "The Lord was adding" (προσέρχεται) "daily new σώζοντος to the Church," which is best explained by the use of the Hebrew word peleqath in the Old Testament.

33. the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this] Another prophetic watchword of Isaiah. See above, ix. 6, 7; and on 2 Kings xix. 30, 31.

34. by the way that he came, by the same] He returned by the same road, without an army, contrary to the opinion, that there had been a great army against Jerusalem, nor even in sight before it with shields, is celebrated in the Hymn of Victory which was composed at that time, perhaps by Hezekiah himself.

35. I will defend this city] Cp. Hosea i. 7, foretelling this deliverance.

On the Place and Manner in which the Army of Sennacherib was destroyed.

36. Then the angel of the Lord went forth] Cp. 2 Kings vi. 16: When [they use the war horn]. When the inhabitants of Jerusalem arose in the morning, and looked forth from the walls of the city, they saw the ground beneath them strewn with the corpses of their enemies; as their forefathers, when they had passed through the Red Sea, saw the dead bodies of the Egyptians on the shore (Exod. xiv. 30). In addition to what has already been said in the note on 2 Kings xix. 35; and above, on xxx. 33; xxxi. 3; xxxii. 14, with regard to the circumstances of this visitation upon the great army of the mightiest kingdom of the World at that time, it may be observed that Isaiah himself supplies some particulars which confirm the opinion, already stated, that this terrible manifestation of Divine power and indignation on the proud and blasphemous enemy of God shall cut off, tend to place in the territory of Judah, and in the sight of Jerusalem.

In xiv. 24, 25, we read, "The Lord of Hosts hath sworn . . . that I will break the Assyrian in My land, and upon My mountains shall tread him under foot; then shall his yoke depart from off them," We have good reason for believing, that this destruction took place in the Valley of Hinom, on the south of Jerusalem (see xxx. 32; and on xxxi. 9); and that the spoil of the Assyrian army fell into the hands of Hezekiah and his people. See on xxxii. 4, 23. Cp. xxvii. 12—14. Besides, in the magnificent triumphal Psalm, which seems to have been composed on the occasion of that wonderful deliverance, perhaps by Hezekiah himself, who was a writer of hymns (see xxxviii. 9), it is said that it was achieved at Jerusalem:—

"In Judah is God known: His Name is great in Israel. In Salem also is His Tabernacle, and His dwelling place in Zion. There brake He the arrows of the bow, The shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah. The sword and the spoils are gathered: They have slept their sleep: And none of the men of might have found theirs hands. At Thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, Both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep. The Earth is still, and the heavens are at rest, until He has spoken.

Let all that be round about Him bring presents unto Him that ought to be feared. He shall be horn of salvation to His people, He is terrible to the kings of the Earth." (Ps. lxxvi. 1—12.)

Further, we have seen reason to believe that the destruction of this mighty host was suddenly effected by a hot pestilential wind, perhaps accompanied with lightning (as Vitringa, p. 331, and others suppose), scourging and blasting, as with a stream of brimstone, the army of Assyria, when encamped on the hills, and in the valley of Hinom or Tophet, to the south of Jerusalem; and that on the morning after it the ground was strewn with Assyrian corpses, burnt and blackened by its effects; and that therefore it served the purpose of inspiring a salutary awe in the minds of the inhabitants of Jerusalem who saw it, and of stimulating them to flee from the wrath to come by speedy repentance, and to escape the " everlasting burnings" of future punishment (see xxxii. 14), and the torment of the "worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched." See lxvi. 24.

It excited also other Nations to magnify the name of the God of Hezekiah, and to pay public homage to the Lord God of all the Earth, Whose name is at Jerusalem. See 2 Chron. xxxii. 23. Ps. lxvi. 11; and above, on xxx. 30, 33; xxxiii. 4, 12, 14, in addition to the note on 2 Kings xix. 35.

Probably there were many Egyptian and Ethiopian captives in Sennacherib's army (see above, xx. 4), and many of them escaped, and returned home after the terrible catastrophe, and carried to Egypt and Ethiopia the tidings of the deliverance wrought for Jerusalem, and of the overthrow of her enemies; and thus the Name of the Lord God of Israel was magnified in the sight of the nations.

The Jewish historian, Josephus, having referred to Berosus, the Chaldean Annualist, thus writes (Ant. x. 1):—"When Sennacherib had obtained his spoil against the Egyptians to Jerusalem, he found there the forces commanded by Rabshakeh. . . . And in the first night of the siege God visited his army with a pestilence, and 185,000 men, with their captains and chief officers, perished." Cp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 21.

The narrative of Herodotus (ii. 141) is as follows,—he is speaking of Egypt:—"This King (an Ethiopian) was succeeded on the throne by a priest of Hæphæstus (the God of Fire), whose name was Sethos; he treated the warrior-caste of Egypt with disdain, imagining that he should have no need of them, and deprived them of their estates.
And he went to the temple, and there, in the presence of the image (of the god) he bewailed the calamities that were about to befall him; and as he was making his lamentation, he had a dream, and the deity appeared to him, and encouraged him with an assurance that he should suffer no harm if he went to meet the army of the Assyrians, and that he himself would send succours to him, which would chastise the enemy.

When Sennacherib, the king took with him those Egyptians who were willing to follow him, and encamped at Pelusium, where is the passage for armies into Egypt. No warriors went with him, but only shopkeepers and handcraftsmen in the best sort; and the enemy was attacked by field mice, pouring in upon them by night, and devouring their quivers, and their bows, and the straps of their shields, and on the next day they fled, being without arms, and many of them were killed. And now there is in Isaiah not ascribe it to their own arms, but to the King, holding in his hand a mouse; and he is represented, by an inscription, as saying, “Let every one who looks on me learn to fear God.”

That King was Hezekiah; that Temple was at Jerusalem; that God of fire was the Lord of hosts, who consumed the host of Assyria by His breath, “as with a stream of briarstone” (Is. xxviii, 53), in one day, and also by fire, which was reduced to a great strait. Upon which he went to the temple, and there, in the presence of the image (of the god) he bewailed the calamities that were about to befall him; and as he was making his lamentation, he had a dream, and the deity appeared to him, and encouraged him with an assurance that he should suffer no harm if he went to meet the army of the Assyrians, and that he himself would send succours to him, which would chastise the enemy.

In the above narrative of Herodotus (who received his accounts of Egyptian affairs from Egyptian Priests, biased by national prejudices; see below, on Ezek. xxix.) there is much that is fabulous, blended with much that is true.

It is not true, that the Assyrians were repulsed in their invasion of Egypt. On the contrary, it is certain that Egypt was conquered by the Assyrians. This is affirmed by the extant Assyrian records, and by the express testimony of Holy Scripture. See above, on chap. xx.

It is most probable, as already stated, that the army of Sennacherib was destroyed, not (as Herodotus says, relying on an Egyptian story, and of which some modern writers of Jewish history have asserted) at Pelusium, on the north-east of Egypt, but near Jerusalem. Cp. Delitzsch, p. 369.

It is not probable, that after the destruction of that army, and in consequence of it, Hezekiah would have been magnified in the sight of all nations, and that “many” would have “brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem, and to Hezekiah, King of Judah,” as is affirmed in Sacred History (2 Chron. xxxii, 23), unless the destruction of the Assyrian army had been averted. But Jerusalem was then a city that had been notorious to other nations that it was effected by the God of Israel, who was worshipped at Jerusalem.

The national pride of Egypt must have been severely wounded by the failure of the tremendous triumph they received from the Assyrians (see xx. 4); and it is probable that the Egyptians were desirous of wiping off that ignominious stain, by imputing the destruction of the Assyrian army to the prayers of an Egyptian king. They were well aware that they could not avenge them, by taking that kingdom.

On the other hand, there appears to be some admixture of truth in the story recounted by Herodotus.

The destruction of the army of Sennacherib, King of the Assyrians, and by the prayers of a King,—of a King in great distress,—of a King not aided by any warriors,—of a King going into the Temple of his God, and praying before Him there; and it is true that the destruction was wrought by a God of fire. It is also true, that this King stands conspicuous in Holy Scripture, as a statue of imperishable marble, and that he utters these words: “Whosoever sees me, let him learn to fear God.”
His prayer and tears. ISAIAH XXXVIII. 2—12. His Psalm of thanksgiving.

Before CHRIST
v. 713.

b 2 Sam. 17, 22. & Heb. Gee
charge concerning thy

c Neh. 13, 14.

† Heb. with great weeping.

d ch 37, 35.
e 2 Kings 20, 8, 6c.

† Heb. degrees by, or, with the

an.

† Lord, even the Lord, 'in the land of the living:

I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

12 My 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 with pining sickness:

See notes above, on 2 Kings xx. 5, 6. 11; and below, on Micah v. 4—7.

There is another point of resemblance between the Type, Hezekiah, and the Divine Antitype, Jesus Christ.

At the time of his illness Hezekiah had no child; and, doubtless, his sorrow for his approaching death was greater, because, in the event of his dissolution, the throne of David would be without an heir, and God's promises to David and his house, of an everlasting kingdom in the Messiah, from his seed—a promise which had been renewed to Hezekiah's father and predecessor Ahaz, with greater clearness and fulness by Isaiah, foretelling the birth of Immanuel from the Virgin of that house (above, vil. 13, 14), would seem to be frustrate and abortive.

Hezekiah's joy and thankfulness to God for his own miraculous resurrection on the third day, and for the promise of extension of life to fifteen years, and of the victory and deliverance of his people in the third year; and for the privilege of going up to the House of the Lord, to declare his thankfulness to God, and to make it known to all his people, would be greater, for this reason among others, that it would be blended with and cheered by the hope of an heir to the throne of David, and of the accomplishment of God's promises in Christ, to him and to his people.

After his recovery, Hezekiah married a wife, whose name was Hephzibah, which means, my delight is in her (Genen. p. 290); and this name is assigned by the Holy Spirit, speaking by Isaiah, to the Church of Christ, to whom he says, 'For the Lord delighteth in thee: ... and as the Bridegroose rejoiceth over the Bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee' (lix. 4, 5); where we may compare the words of Hezekiah's royal ancestor, King David, in the Psalm where he celebrates the victory of Christ and the glory of His Church. 'Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. Hearsken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty' (Ps. xlv. 9).

When Hezekiah had been 'sick unto death,' and when he was told that he must surely die, and when he arose as it were from the grave by a marvellous resurrection on the third day, then—not but till then—did he espouse to himself his Bride, Hephzibah (my delight is in her), the prophetic type of the Church.

Here was a foreshadowing of the mystical union of Christ, the true King of Jerusalem, the Divine Hezekiah, with His Hephzibah, which owes all her life, and grace, and glory, to His Death, and Resurrection on the third day. Cp. above, on 2 Kings xx. 21, and below, on chap. liv. Prelin. Note.

Hezekiah's Psalm of Thanksgiving.

Hezekiah here presents a further resemblance to David—his royal ancestor and pattern—as a Psalmist. Hezekiah restored the Psalmody of the Temple (2 Chron. xxix. 9); he also employed certain choosen persons to copy out Proverbs, or Parables, of Solomon, and to add them to the collection received into the Sacred Canon in the age of Solomon himself. See Prov. xxv. 1.

The following Psalm is a Hymn of thanksgiving for the blessing vouchsafed to Hezekiah in his recovery from sickness. Psalm lxxvi. appears to have been composed (perhaps by Hezekiah) on the occasion of the deliverance of Jerusalem from the army of Assyria. See above, Prelin. Note to Ps. lxxvi.

10 I said There ought to be a pause after this word; what follows, to v. 15, is what Hezekiah said in his sickness, before his recovery, which is celebrated in this Psalm.

12 Mine age—a shepherd's tent Rather, My home is departed and removed from me as a shepherd's tent. The body is compared to the migratory tent, or tabernacle of the nomad shepherd, which is soon struck, folded up, and carried away suddenly and entirely, and leaves no trace behind. The same figure is used in the New Testament, in some pathetic and cheering passages, as 2 Cor. v. 1, 4. 2 Pet. i. 13, 14.

14 I have cut off like a weaver's life Rather, He (God) will cut me off from the hanging thread—the thorns by which the web is jointed to the beam (Genen. 199; Fasert, 329).
Pious resolves in sickness

ISAIAH XXXVIII. 13—17. are a path in health restored.

From day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.
13 I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones:
From day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.
14 Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter:
1
h
I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward:
O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.

What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it:
15 I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul.
16 O Lord, by these things men live:
Behold, for peace I had great bitterness:
But thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption:
For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

— From day even to night] By uttering pain, which does its work of destruction in twenty-four hours. Cp. Job iv. 20.
13. I reckoned till morning, that I set myself (to bear it) till morning; but then, instead of ease, the pain raged more violently, like a lion ready to devour me. The word that is not in the original, and would be better omitted.
14. Like a crane or a swallow] Rather, like a swallow, a crane (Bochart, Vitringa, Delitzsch; Furst, 1011). Gezer. (581. 605) renders it, like a swallow wheeling in a circle.
15. What shall I say? I say, etc.] Observe the sudden transition here, from sorrow to joy; his heart is so full that he cannot find words to express his emotion.
— he hath both spoken unto me] God Himself vouchsafed to answer my prayer by a special message delivered to me by His prophet, whom He sent; and I am enabled to say that gracious promise to me by my recovery, which is a pledge to me and earnest of His other assurance of deliverance to me and my people from the armies of Assyria. See vi. 4—6, and more fully 2 Kings x. 1—4.
— I shall go softly—sof! The verb here used (Heb. dadah), and rendered by go in our Version, occurs only in one other place in the Bible, in that remarkable passage where Hezekiah's royal ancestor, "the sweet Psalmist of Israel," when driven from Jerusalem by Absalom, in speaking of his own former happiness in walking up to the house of the Lord, and in leading his people thither, "I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday" (Ps. xlii. 4). This passage explains Hezekiah's words here; he says, I will walk humbly, with the feeling and movement of religious awe, as in a solemn and sacred procession to the Temple, not only now when I am going to the House of the Lord on the third day to render public thanks for my recovery from the grave; but I will do it all the days of my life—all my years; and I will do this in the bitterness of my soul; or rather, I will do it as one walking over (Heb. al) the bitterness of his soul. That bitterness which I lately felt when I was lying on my sick-bed, on the brink of the grave, and when I seemed to be on my death-bed, shall be to me a continual path and passage of religious meditation and continual thankfulness. The feeling of godly awe which I then had, shall not be a mere transitory emotion, but it shall be a fixed principle, and a permanent habit of mind; like a sacred bridge, over which I will ever be passing,—or, like a fair spiritual terrace which I will pace,—on my way to return perpetual thanks to God in His House for His love and mercy in my deliverance. Hence, adds Hezekiah here (v. 20), "The Lord was ready to save me; therefore will we sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.

The meaning of the Hebrew preposition at here used, and rendered by and by in our Version, is best illustrated by the words of the Psalmist, quoted by Vitringa, "This God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our Guide even over death," and through it. See above, on Ps. xliv. 14. These words of Hezekiah are a beautiful pattern for all who have received a special blessing from God, especially in recovery from dangerous sickness. The holy thoughts, and peni-
He shows his wealth ISAIAH XXXVIII. 18—22. XXXIX. 1—3. to envoys from Babylon.

For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot praise thee:
They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day:
18 The father to the children shall make known thy truth.

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.

For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, and he shall recover.

Hezekiah also had said, What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord?
XXXIX. 1 At that time Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered.

And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.

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, even from Babylon.

18. the grave cannot praise thee] Cp. Ps. vi. 5; xxx. 9; lxxviii. 10—12. Eccl. ix. 10. These words are not to be understood as if they implied that there was no consciousness in the departed spirits of the righteous, and no communion of saints in Paradise with one another and with God.

Such a notion is not to be imputed to the ancient Hebrew Saints (as Vitringa rightly observes, p. 341); although it is not to be questioned that belief in these cheerful truths was greatly strengthened by the Gospel, which shed new light on Life and Immortality (2 Tim. i. 10). But what such assertions declare is, that they who are removed from the light of this world cannot any longer enjoy the privilege of making God’s Name known to the Nations of the Earth, as Hezekiah did, by public prayer and praise in God’s House, and of thus advancing His glory, and winning many souls to God, and of saving them from eternal death by precept and by example.

The father to the children shall make known thy truth] Hezekiah at this time had no children; Manasseh, his eldest son, was only twelve years old when he succeeded to the throne (2 Kings xxii. 1), and Hezekiah reigned fifteen years after his recovery from sickness (2 Kings xx. 6); but he had received a message of comfort from the “God of David, his father,” and was assured by Him that He would deliver Jerusalem for his servant David’s sake (2 Kings xx. 5, 6); and probably this message was accompanied by an assurance that the seed of David would be continued in him, his lineal successor; certainly, in another prophecy given about the same time, mention was made to Hezekiah concerning his own sons. See xxxix. 7.

May we not believe that the repentance of Manasseh (see 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11—13) was quickened by a remembrance of the blessed fruits of the penitential tears and prayers of his father, Hezekiah, and by this Psalm of penitence and praise?
20. The Lord was ready to save me] The words in italics would be better omitted. The sense is, The Lord is over the Lord to me; and even proves it, by saying, saving.
21, 22. For Isaiah had said—Lord] It is alleged by some that these verses are misplaced, and ought to come after v. 6, because they occupy that position in 2 Kings xx. 7.

Surely this is precipitate and indiscriminating criticism. The MSS. and ancient Versions concur in authorizing the present arrangement of the Text. The reason of the variety of position may be easily explained. It was natural for Isaiah, in his modesty and loyalty, to retire into the background, and to give the prominent place to his sovereign’s faith and thankfulness; and it was no less fitting for the Historian of the Kings to relate the circumstances in their regular order, and to assign to the Prophet his proper position in the narrative. Cp. Glass. Gramm. Sacr. iv. Tract xi. Ob. 29; and Vitringa here.

This Resurrection of Hezekiah on the third day seems to be figurative of the Resurrection of the true King of Judah, the divine Hezekiah, Jesus Christ, and of our Resurrection in Him; and perhaps it is represented as such by the prophet Hos. (vi. 1—3), “Come, and let us return unto the Lord: … He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. … His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the Rain, as the latter and former Rain unto the earth.”

22. I shall go up to the house of the Lord] On the third day (see 2 Kings xx. 5). “On the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord;” and see there, v. 8, “What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day?”

Cfr. XXXIX.] For notes here, see 2 Kings xx. 12—19.

The time of this embassy from the King of Babylon was doubtless subsequent to the delivery of Jerusalem from the Assyrian invasion. Merodach Baladan would not have sent to congratulatte the King of a besieged city, and would not have incurred the wrath of Sennacherib and his army of more than 150,000 men.

23. The silver, and the gold] How came it to pass, that after Hezekiah had given away all his silver and gold to Sennacherib (2 Kings xviii. 16, 16), he had such an abundance of silver and gold, and of other treasures to show to these ambassadors from Babylon?

This has been considered above, on 2 Kings xviii. 16. It may be added here that Hezekiah had in all probability obtained much silver, and gold, and other treasures from the camp of the Assyrian army, destroyed suddenly near Jerusalem, when it was returning home to Nineveh, elided with its victories, and laden with the spoils of conquered countries,—Philistia, Arabia, Egypt, and Ethiopia. See the notes above, xvii. 14; xxx. 33; and xxxiii. 125.

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 showed them.

5 Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord of hosts:
6 Behold, the days come, 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. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away: and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

7 Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days.

XL. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

7. thy sons] A remarkable prophecy; for as yet Hezekiah had no issue. See above, on xxxviii. 19.
8. It is remarkable that the descendants of the good King Hezekiah would be "eunuchs in the palace of the King of Babylon." It is not improbable that by this means the prophecies of Isaiah himself were made known to some of those who were under Judah in Babylon. Perhaps they were thus made known to Cyrus by Daniel, who was of "the seed of the King" of Judah, and who, when taken captive, was committed to the care of "the prince of the eunuchs" at Babylon. See Dan. 1. 1—11. Thus, under God's overruling providence, the restoration of the Jews was prepared; and the Christian Church, which was brought about, and the punishment was converted into a blessing. Cp. Dean Jackson on the Third Book, vi. chap. xxvi.

HEZEKIAH AND ISAIAH.
The Prophet Isaiah, in this historical narrative (xxxvi.—xxxix.), takes leave of Hezekiah at a time when that great and good King was betrayed into a temporary weakness, for which he received a stern rebuke from the Prophet.

There is no space or place for incautious, and in a noble public display of piety to God, in a corrupt age, after the evil days of an idolatrous father, Ahaz, and in times of great public danger and distress, the condition of Creceheziah stands alone among all the Sovereigns of God's People.

We can hardly be surprised that some of the Jews have attempted to show that the prophetic promises of the Messiah which Isaiah delivered (chaps. vii. ix.) were fulfilled in Hezekiah.

But Isaiah himself takes care to guard us against this erroneous supposition—may we not say, providentially?
He presents Hezekiah before us as chargeable with pride and vain glory. As the historian relates, "his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him and upon Judah and Jerusalem." (2 Chron. xxxvii. 25); and he was reproved by Isaiah. From this we may infer—
(1) That Isaiah was a faithful and courageous servant of the Lord.
(2) That Hezekiah was not the Messiah of whom Isaiah prophesied.

Hezekiah was, indeed, as has been shown, an eminent type of the Messiah; and Hezekiah's history, as we have seen, is the basis and groundwork on which many of Isaiah's prophecies concerning the Messiah rest.

But, as is the case with all the types of Christ, there were some blemishes in him, which rescues us from Judaizing error, and prevent us from confusing the human type with the Divine Antitype. And, as is also always the case with the human types of Christ, Hezekiah failed in certain moral respects, as to which there is no failure in the Divine Antitype, both in the heavenly and in the terrestrial state. Thus, the antitypes of virtue, namely, meekness, and self-abasement, and a single eye to the glory of God (John viii. 50), which are the opposites of that failure. Cp. note above, on Judg. xvi. 3. 30. 1 Kings xi., Prelim. Note.

SECOND GREAT PORTION OF ISAIAH'S PROPHECIES.
Preliminary Note to the following Chapters.
Ch. XL.] The following chapters, beginning with the fortieth, and continued to the end of the Book, form a new series of prophetic revelations of the Holy Spirit, speaking by ISAIAH. In recent times it has been confidently asserted by some celebrated critics and historians, that this latter portion was not written by the prophet Isaiah, or by a person who lived two or three hundred years after his age.

It is not necessary to enter on a minute refutation in detail of the objections that have been alleged by some (e.g. Koppe, Derham, Döderlein, Derseh, Babington, Barthold, W. D. Wette, Rosenmüller, Gesenius) in recent times against the genuineness and inspiration of this portion. This has been done by others (as Hengeler, Piper, Beckhaus, John, Dercer, Grove, Müller, G. Müller, Kleinert, Hengstenberg, and H. O. Ewald), especially Dr. Bodolf Stier, in the introduction to his learned work, "Iesus, nicht Pseudo-Issaeus" Barren, 1850; and by Delitzsch, pp. 20—25, and pp. 385—390 of his Commentar, Leipzig, 1866.

But they have shown that the arguments drawn from supposed discrepancy of style are of no weight, and that there is an intimate connexion of imagery and language between the two portions of Isaiah's prophecies, namely, that which precedes the fortieth chapter, and that which follows it.

For the Christian reader, it will be enough to know that this latter portion is quoted as written by Isaiah, by the Apostles and Evangelists, in the New Testament. See below, on xl. 3. The writer is named Isaiah by them; and yet he is now called the "Great Unnamed" by some (e.g. Ewald, Stanley, Lect., p. 577).

But after all, the allegations against it resolve themselves into a denial of the operations of the Holy Spirit, enduring the holy men of old, whom the Church of God revere as Prophets, with the supernatural gift of foreseeing the future.

This sceptical temper has found an expression in such words as the following:—
"The latter portion of the Book which bears the name of Isaiah, and which begins with the Fortieth Chapter, is totally different in subject and character from the preceding part."
"(1) In the preceding part, with some few exceptions, there is nothing that does not harmonize with the time in which Isaiah lived; viz. the days of Uziah, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. But the following portion was evidently written by a person who lived in Judea after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans. For he does not foretell that calamity as future, but mourns over it as present. He seems to be sitting among the ruins of the desolate city and Temple. See lxxxv. 9, 10. Cp. xliv. 26; xlv. 13; xlvi. 19; lii. 9; liii. 12; liii. 3; liii. 4; liii. 17—19."
"(2) It is evident, also, that this portion of the Book is from the hand of one who saw the destruction of Babylon and the return of the Jews as events in the immediate future; and it was one of his main designs to exagelate the prince (Cyrus), who enabled them to return and to restore their national affairs to their former flourishing state. (Rosenmüller, Frommann, in Petri's Leben des Jesaias, pp. 1, 2.)"
It is deeply to be deplored, that such allegations as these should have been sanctioned by some celebrated writers in our own country (e.g. Stanley, "Lectures on the Jewish Church," Pt. iv. pp. 577—578). They who entertain such low and unworthy notions as concerning Divine prophecy, will hardly be convinced by any power of human reasoning. Otherwise, they could not have failed to observe, that such allegations as these would, if pushed to their logical results, compel them to surrender the former portion of Isaiah's prophecies as well as the latter, inasmuch as Q
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, That her warfare is accomplished, in the midst of the return of the exiling, freed by the edict of Cyrus, through the desert from Babylon to Jerusalem, Isaiah cites the prophecy of the prophet Isaiah, that God is about to consummate the Temple, which Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had destroyed, and that God will reward the exiles with the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple.

In the march of the returning exiles, freed by the edict of Cyrus, through the desert from Babylon to Jerusalem, Isaiah cites the prophecy of the prophet Isaiah, that God is about to consummate the Temple, which Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had destroyed, and that God will reward the exiles with the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple.

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That her iniquity is pardoned:

"For she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."
The The Voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,
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 mountain and hill shall be made low:
And the crooked shall be made straight,
And the rough places 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?
7 All flesh is grass,
And all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field:
The grass withereth, the flower fadeth,
Because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it:
Surely the people is grass.

The cry of the foregoing verse is taken up here, and has a glorious response, in another cry. The cry in the foregoing verse found an utterance in the edict of Cyrus, speaking by his heralds throughout all his kingdom, and exhorting all the Jews in the midst like the return of the captivity from Babylon to Jerusalem. See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23.

This is here echoed by Christ, speaking by the mouth of His herald, John the Baptist, and commanding all to prepare the Way, not now of Israel, guided by Moses out of Egypt through the wilderness; nor of Judah, marching under Zerubbabel from Babylon—but "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (see Matt. iii. 1—3. Mark iii. 2. Luke i. 17; John i. 29). The imagery of the journeying through the Wilderness under Moses, is combined here, as usual, with that of the return from Babylon; and both are treated as preparatory for the great return of Israel and the World to God in Christ. Cp. above, Introd. to the Psalms, pp. xviii, ix.

Thus also this second great portion of Isaiah's prophecies (viz. from ch. xii. to the end of the Book) is connected with the foregoing portion, which ended with an announcement of the preaching of John the Baptist, and of the Coming of Christ. See on xxxv. 10. Isaiah takes up his prophecy where he had left it, and that announcement is repeated here.

EvangELICAL TESTIMONY TO THE Genuineness OF This Portion OF Isaiah; viz., Chaps. xl.—lxx.

These words in v. 3 are ascribed to Isaiah by the Holy Spirit in Matt. iii. 3. Cp. Luke iii. 4—6. John i. 23. Chapter xiii. 1—4 is ascribed to Isaiah in Matt. xiii. 17—21. Chap. liii. v. 3 is ascribed to Isaiah in John xii. 38, and Rom. x. 16; and v. 4 is ascribed to Isaiah in Matt. viii. 17; and liii. 7, 8 is ascribed to Isaiah in Acts viii. 28, 30; and lix. 1, 2 is ascribed to Isaiah in Luke iv. 17.

And yet, this explicit testimony of the Holy Ghost is calmly set aside, and we are confidently assayed by some recent critics and historians that none of these chapters were written by Isaiah. See Pref. Note to ch. xi., and Introd. pp. xvii—xxi.

The voice said Robin, A voice said; it is not the voice of the Baptist; it is a Divine voice, giving a commission to him to cry, and to declare the vanity of all earthly things, and the everlasting duration and almighty power of the Word of God in the Gospel. Cp. 1 Pet. i. 23—25.

The message may thus be paraphrased, All flesh is grass; and Godeth like the flower of the field, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; therefore, if flesh is to live, it must be animated by the Spirit (cp. on I Cor. xv. 50); therefore the Word which "everlasting for ever was made flesh" (John i. 14) by the operation of the Spirit, and God declared Manifold in the flesh (I Tim. ii. 16. S. Jerome, Theodoret).

The Word, which is here contrasted with the Voice, is (in the highest sense) the Eternal Word, Who became Incarnate for us, and Whose Advent was heralded by "the Voice of one crying in the wilderness," and Who anoints the written Word, and speaks in it. Cp. below, on John i. 23, and on Matt. xi. 2. Luke i. 2. Heb. iv. 12. 1 Pet. i. 11. Rev. xiv. 13.
The Lord God is your Shepherd.

9. O Zion, that bringest good tidings] In the return of the exiles from Babylon, and in the rebuilding of the Temple, Zion is encouraged by the prophet, to see a vision of the Lord Himself, Who would make a new human flesh to that Temple. Cp. Haggit ii. 6—9. Mal. iii. 1—8. Here Zion itself—the mountain and citadel of David—the Mother of Christendom (see ii. 3)—is represented as endued with a living and growing power, and is exalted to rise and get up into a high mountain (in ii. 2 she is "established on the top of the mountains, and is exalted above the hills") and Jerusalem, the city of the Lord, is excited to lift up her voice. Zion and Jerusalem are exalted by the Prophet to become Evangelists, and to proclaim His Coming, to the cities of Judah, and to say, "Behold your God!"

It is to be regretted, that, in the sublime Oratorio "The Messiah," Handel has forsaken the renderings in the Text, and adopted those in the margin, and has thus lost the magnificent picture, which the Prophet presents, of Zion and of Jerusalem—having been evangelized—becoming Evangelists to the World.

It is observable, that the Hebrew verb here used twice, and rendered bring good tidings, is the piel of the verb basar, which is connected with the substantive basar, flesh (Genesis 146). It recurs in this connexion with the preaching of the Gospel, or good tidings, in Isii. 7; bx; li. 1. Its true sense appears to be, to make a good thing manifest (cp. Ezekiel (145), to display it in a bodily form to the eye; and thus it is very expressive of the preaching of the great doctrine of the Gospel, the Incarnation of the Son of God; "God was manifest in the flesh" (I Tim. iii. 16). The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John i. 14).

Since "all flesh" (of man without the Spirit, see on 1 Cor. xv. 60) "is grass," therefore there was more need of the publication of this doctrine, if the tidings brought by Zion were to be gene and gladden the heart. Consequently, the message twice repeated is, "Behold your God;" behold, the Lord JEHOVAH will come. And it is because God was manifested in the flesh, that the flesh is endued with new powers, and is made a "partaker of the Divine Nature" (2 Pet. i. 4); and the Prophet therefore says, that "all flesh shall see the glory of the Lord." v. 5; cp. lii. 10, and Joel's prophecy, "I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh" (Joel ii. 28. Acts ii. 17, and S. Jerome). 10. the Lord God will come Heb. Adonai JEHOVAH: a clear proof of the Godhead of the Messiah, Who is here called JEHOVAH and "your God," cp. xviiiii. 17. Jer. xxi. 6; xxxii 16. Hos. i. 7; Zech. ii. 10, 11. Mal. iii. 1, where He is also called JEHOVAH.

see will come The Prophet couples the Second Advent with the First, as the Baptist did, in his first announcement of Christ. See Matt. iii. 12.

— his work Rather, his retribution (Lev. xix. 13; cp. below, liii. 11. Rev. xi. 18; xxi. 12).

The Shepherd of the Flock.

11. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd—and shall gently lead those that are with young] Rather, that give succ. God's People, wandering in the wilderness, on their way to Canaan, are compared to a flock. See ixiii. 11; and Ps. lxxvii. 20; lxxxiii. 22, 23; xxx. 1. And Cyrus, who brought God's scattered people out of Babylon and the East, that they might go home to Zion, is called God's Shepherd (xiv. 28); and the people are here comforted by the Prophet with the assurance that the work of Moses, and of Cyrus, was only a figurative foreshadowing of the far more gracious work of the Good Shepherd (John x. 11), Jesus Christ. (Cant. i. 7. Luke xii. 32. Rev. xvi. 17, Who is here designated as the Lord JEHOVAH Himself (cp. Ps. xxxii. 11. Ezek. xxxiv. 29. Zech. v. 7), and Whose tender love for His sheep and lambs is here described.


Retrospect of ch. 1—11. The foregoing eleven verses are like a Synoptical Prologue of the following portion of Isaiah (ch. xi. 12 to lxvi). They comprise the whole, as in a germ, and are developed in successive repetitions and amplifications, in the following parts of the prophecy, till at length the whole scheme of God's providential and gracious dealings with His people and the Church Universal—to be gathered from all Nations—is displayed; and we are admitted to see the full and final victory of Christ, and to have a clear revelation of the bliss of the Church, glorified with Him for ever in heaven.

This mode of exhibiting the sum and substance of a series of prophecies at the outset, and of afterwards displaying it in detail, in recapitulations, repetitions, and enlargements (like the successive Maps which follow the representation of both Hemispheres at the beginning of an Atlas), is characteristic of the prophetic Books of Holy Scripture. See below, Introduction to the Book of Revelation, pp. 151, 152.

The expansion of this Synoptical Prologue may be distributed into three parts.

I. Prophecy of the deliverance of Judah from Babylon; the overthrow of Babylon, and the destruction of its idols, by a mighty conqueror, Cyrus, who restores the Jews to their own land.

II. Prophecy of the deliverance of Mankind from the bondage of Sin and Satan; the destruction of Satan's empire by a mighty Conqueror, Jesus Christ, Very God and Very Man, Who restores both Jew and Gentile to the favour of God.

III. Prophecy of His Birth, Preaching, Miracles, Sufferings, and Death; the consequent rejection of the unbelieving Jews; the overcoming of the Holy Spirit; and the extension of God's favour to the Gentiles; the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, Who is the Seed of Abraham and David, by the active ministry of Apostles, who are Jews, and go forth from Jerusalem to all Nations, which are joined together by them in Christ's Church Universal, into which the Jews are to be received, and in which they are to be restored to God. The blessed fruits of the Gospel, the glory of the Church Triumphant, and the execution of God's judgments on the wicked.
Who 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 a measure,
And weighed the mountains in scales,
And the hills in a balance?

Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord,
Or being his counsellor hath taught him?

With whom took he counsel, and who taught him,
And taught him in the path of judgment,
And taught him knowledge,
And shewed to him the way of understanding?

Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket,
And are counted as the small dust of the balance:
Behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn,
Nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.

All nations before him are as nothing;
And they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

The Editor of this Volume desires to acknowledge here the assistance he has received from some valuable remarks made on this subject in a manuscript communicated to him by the Rev. E. W. Bolton, M.A., Vicar of Ealing. These three parts may be exhibited more in detail as follows:

I. The second verse of the fortieth chapter announces the delivery from the bondage of Babylon; this is expanded in xl. 12—26, and again in xlii. 17, to the end of the chapter, into a declaration of the variety of idols (worshipped at Babylon), and the infatuation of worshipping them; and again in xlii. 1, and xliii. 8—13; and again in xlii. 21—24, and xliii. 6—20.

The promise of deliverance to Judah is repeated xlii. 27, and again in xlii. 1—7; and again more clearly in xlii. 2—20, and xlii. 14—21, where the mode of deliverance, and person and acts of the Conqueror of Babylon are unfolded; and again in xliii. 25, 26, and xliii. 21—xliiv. 21.

The causes of the captivity of the Jews (viz. their idolatry and rebellion against God), and the promise of restoration, are displayed in lv. 1—21.

II. The promise of a Conqueror who would deliver Israel from Babylon (viz. Cyrus, God’s “Servant,” God’s “Shepherd,” and God’s “Anointed”) is developed by a beautiful process of spiritualization into a revelation of the Coming of Christ, the “Servant of the Lord,” the “Shepherd,” the “Anointed” of God (xliii. 1, 2, repeated in lv. 1, the Redeemer, who will come to Zion (xliiv. 12, 13), being pre-announced by John the Baptist calling to repentance (xl. 3—8); and Who will bring blessing to all true Israelites, and to all the seed of faithful Abraham among the Gentiles, as well as the Jews (lix. 7—10, repeated in lv. 18—21), and will pour out the Holy Spirit upon them (lxix. 19).

III. The circumstances of Christ’s Coming are clearly revealed: His Nativity (lxix. 1, 2 taken up from vii. 14, 15, and ix. 6, 7); Epiphany (ix. 3—6), with a glorious anticipation of its blessed consequences in the ingathering of the Gentiles into His Church (lixvi. 9); Preaching and Prophecy at Nazareth (ix. 1—3, a section taken up from ix. 1—6, which had described Him, the Preacher of the Gospel in Galilee, as no other than a mighty Conqueror and King, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, and from xix. 1—16); the rejection of the Messiah by the Jews (lxix. 1—6); His sufferings at their hands; the cause of His Death, and its blessed fruits (lii. 1—12) in the expiation and pardon of sin, and in the purchase of an Universal Church from all Nations by His Blood; the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles by the ministry of the Apostles and their successors (lix. 1—11); the joyful reception of it by the Gentiles (lxiv. 1—17); the manner and disposition required to be admitted into the Church of Christ (lxiv. 13—13); the great ingathering of the Gentile World into the Church (lxxv. 7, 8; lx. 10—22); the lament for Israel’s rejection (lixlii. 17—19); Christ expostulates with them for their rejection of Him (l. 1—9). He declares to them that He has received the Gentiles into grace (lxv. 1, 2); and that the sins of the Jews were the cause of their rejection (lxv. 3—10). The Jews are assured of favour if they repent (lxv. 15—17; lxvii. 1—5); they confess their sin (lxvii. 2); they receive the Gentiles of Israel with the Gentiles in one Church of Christ (lxvi. 10—23); the Resurrection (lxiv. 14, Cp. xl. 31, the Ascension); the glory of the righteous (lxv. 17—25; lxvii. 23, 24); the General Resurrection and Universal Judgment upon the enemies of God (lxvi. 24).

Recapitulation.

The Prophet having uttered this PROLOGUE, now ascends to a point anterior to that from which he had started, and places himself at Babylon; and there, in the Name of God Himself, the God of Israel, makes a challenge to all Nations of the Earth, and to all false deities which were worshipped by them, especially at Babylon,—the seat and centre of Idolatry.

These earthly powers imagined that in the destruction of Jerusalem, the God of Jerusalem had been conquered, and that He was inferior to the idols whom they served. This feeling was significantly displayed by the king and princes of Babylon in the drinking of wine out of the holy vessels, taken from the Temple of Jerusalem, and praising their gods of gold and silver, brass, iron, wood, and stone on that festal anniversary, when Babylon was taken by Cyrus (Dan. v. 4, 30, 31).

The Prophet utters an indictment against this supposition, and proclaims the attributes of the God of Israel as the Creator and Governor of the World; and He exposes the vanity of idols, and the misery of all who worship them.

In a measure Literally, the third (of an ephah). Cp. Ps. lixxx. 5 "scale: Or rather, a steel-yard (Gesen. 677)

Who hath directed—taught him Rather, who hath weighed? It is the same word as in the foregoing verse, where it is rendered "measured." Who hath ganged the Spirit of the Lord? Who hath weighed it? Who hath fathomed it, so as to know it? Cp. Prov. xvi. 2; xxi. 2, where the same verb, tocain, occurs; and Gesen. 864; and this rendering is adopted by the Sept., and by St. Paul (Rom. xi. 31. 1 Cor. i. 16), where he follows the Sept. also in the second clause, "that he may instruct Him," which is a paraphrase, rather than a literal rendering.

he taketh up the isles as a very little thing As a grain of fine dust. Cp. xxix. 5. Lev. vii. 12. Gen. 205. Some render this, The isles are like dust, that flies away (Vulgate, Delitizsch); but the version in the text is preferable. Cp. Ixxxii. 9, where the same verb (nata) is used. See Gesen. 566; and Ex. 25. 9, 26. 28.

Lebanon All the stately cedars of Lebanon are not sufficient to provide wood for His Altar (cp. Neh. x. 34; xiii. 30, on the "wood-offering") and all the beasts on it are not enough to supply a sacrifice for Him. Cp. Ps. 1. 10.
To whom then will ye liken God? Or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

The workman melteth a graven image, And the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, And casteth silver chains.

He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation Chooseth a tree that will not rot; He seeth unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved.

Have ye not known? have ye not heard? Hath it not been told you from the beginning? Have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?

It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, And the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; That stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, And spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

That bringeth the princes to nothing;

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.

To whom then will ye liken me, Or shall I be equal? Saith the Holy One.

Lift up your eyes on high, And behold who hath created these things, That bringeth out their host by number:

He calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, For that he is strong in power; Not one faileth.

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?

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?

Before CHRIST

18. what likeness? What image will ye set by His side, as His resemblance? Cp. Deut. iv. 15, 16.

The gods of Babylon are made by hands of men (ev. 19, 20), who are God's creatures, out of trees or metal, which are His work. How, therefore, can ye imagine that they have power to overcome the God of Israel, or that they, who worship them, would have been enabled by them to overcome you, if ye had served Him, Whose peculiar people ye are?

20. that shall not be moved? Shall not shake on its pedestal. Such is the helplessness of the god, to whom they pray for aid. See Jer. x. 4, 5, where some of Isaiah's words here, and in xlv. 9-17, are repeated.

22. he that sitteth? He it is, Whom they proclaim. — a certain A thin transparent veil.

24. he shall also blow] Before they have taken root, if He only breathes upon them, they are withered.

26. their host] The stars are God's army; He knows all their names, and calls them over on His muster-roll; and not one of them dares absent himself from the call. Cp. Ps. cxlv. 4.

27. Why sayest thou, O Jacob] If God thus counts all the stars, which are His heavenly army, and cares for them all, why, O man, for whom all those things were created,—and why, O Jacob, and O Israel (the still dearer name: see Gen. xxxii. 28), who hast been chosen by God out of all Nations, dost thou say that thy way is hid from God, and that He does not care for thee, wandering in thy exile, and that thy judgment (cause, or right) is passed over, and neglected by Him? Cp. below, xlv. 14, 15 (where judgment is used in the same sense): iv. 17; and St. Paul's argument (Rom. xi. 1, 2).

This section, from v. 27 to xli. 16, is appointed by the Hebrew Church to be read in the Synagogues with Gen. xii. 1 —xvii. 27, which narrates the history of Abraham.
31. [they wait upon the Lord] Therefore, though Israel be led captive to Babylon, and seem to be dead, yet if they have faith in the Lord, they shall revive. See Ezek. xxxvii. 1—14.
— shall mount up to the eagle [This imagery (the mounting-up of eagles) is continued throughout Scripture, from the time of the Exodus from Egypt to the day of the Ascension of Christ, Who is called in Holy Scripture “the Great Eagle” (see Rev. xii. 14), and to the future springing up of the risen bodies of the Saints, with their strength renewed, like eagles after molting their plumes (Micah i. 6), and with glorified bodies caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. See Rom. vii. 11, Ps. civ. 5. Prov. xx. 19; on Matt. xxiv. 28. Luke xvi. 47. 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. 2 Thess. ii. 1; and S. Jerome here.]

THE LORD'S APPEAL.


1. [islands] Not only lands surrounded by water, but peninsulas, and all maritime countries. See on Gen. x. 5. Cp. above, xxiv. 15; xl. 15; below, xlii. 4, 10, 15; xli. 1.

This section, v. 22, was appointed by the Hebrew Church to be read together with Deut. xxvi. 1—xxviii. 9, declaring God’s goodness to Israel, and His blessings on obedience, and His curses for disobedience—let the people renew their strength! Literally, let the peoples, or nations, renew all their strength for an encounter with Me. He repeats the words used at the close of his forgoing chapter (v. 31). God renews the strength of His saints; He raises them from the dust. Let the Nations of the Earth renew their own strength—if they can.

CONNECTION OF THESE PROPHETIC ADDRESSES BY CATCHWORDS.

It has not, I think, been noticed that the addresses in this portion of Isaiah are connected by catchwords; that is to say, some leading word at the end of one address is taken up on the beginning of the following address, which is thus linked on to the foregoing one.

This is the same principle of connexion as that which characterizes the books of Psalms. See above. Isauid, to the Psalms, p. iv.; and on Ps. iii. 1; and v. 1. It shows the accurate exactitude with which these prophecies are joined together.

Thus, for example, in this portion of Isaiah:

(1) In xl. 31, the phrase “renew their strength,” at the end of this first address is repeated at the beginning of the second address (xli. 1); and thus these two addresses are riveted together.

(2) Again, the word breath (Heb. ruach), at the end of the second address, is taken up and repeated at the beginning of the third address, and forms thereby a striking connexion and contrast. See note on xli. 1.

(3) Again, the words, Israel and Jacob, “it set him on fire,” and “it burned him,” at the end of the third address (xlii. 25), are taken up and repeated at the beginning of the fourth address (xlii. 1, 2): “O Jacob . . . Israel . . . when thou walked through the fire, thou shalt not be burned.”

(4) Again, the words, “I have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches,” are followed by the Consolation, at the beginning of the fifth address: “Yet now hear, O Jacob, My servant, and Israel, whom I have chosen.”

(5) Again, the words at the end of the fifth address, “That faith of Cyrus, He is my Shepherd,” are taken up at the beginning of the sixth address: “Thus saith the Lord to His Anointed, to Cyrus.”

(6) Again, the divine declaration, “I have sworn by Myself, unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall sw ear,” at the close of the sixth address, is followed by the striking exclamation of its truth at the beginning of the seventh address: “Bel boweth down . . . Nebo stooppeth. They bow down together.”

(7) This divine declaration is further confirmed by the beginning of the eighth address: “Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground.”

(8) Also the words, “Every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength,” which is the second clause of that divine declaration, “I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and are taken up at the beginning of the ninth address: “Hear ye this, which swear by the Name of the Lord, but not in righteousness.”

Thus all these nine addresses are connected together.

2. Who raised up the righteous man from the east! Literally, Who raised up righteousness from the East? Who raised up Cyrus, the minister of God’s righteousness, in punishing and overthrowing Babylon and its idols, and in delivering and restoring His people? Cp. here v. 10, where God says, that He will uphold Israel with the right hand of His righteousness, and in xlv. 13 where Cyrus is declared to have been raised up in righteousness. The abstract term (righteousness) is put for the concrete. God’s righteousness, is what the prophet sees in Cyrus; and this sublime abstraction represents the great Conqueror of the East, as an instrument in God’s hands. It is God’s righteousness in Cyrus which does the work of retribution on Babylon, and accomplishes the deliverance and restoration of Israel. As in the title and Book of Ecclesiastes, the abstract word Kokeleth (i.e. the female gatherer) is used to express the wisdom of God gathering together by means of Solomon (see Ex. 1. 1), so here, the word tseleth is employed to express God’s righteousness acting in Cyrus.

Isaiah here uses the verb vei, in the hiphil, which is also applied to Cyrus, in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22: “The Lord stirred up, or raised up the spirit of Cyrus;” and also in Ezra i. 1; and also below, v. 25: “I have raised up one from the north;” and also in xlv. 13; and xlii. 17; and Jer. l. 9; and ii. 1.

We need not be surprised that many ancient interpreters (as S. Cyril, and S. Jerome) saw here a prophecy of Christ,—“the Lord our Righteousness.” Cyrus, whose name signifies Sun, in many signal respects was a type of Christ,—the “Sun of Righteousness” (Mal. iv. 2); see above, on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, and Mal. (Note to chap. xl); and his coming from the East to overthrow Babylon, by means of the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates, supplied to St. John, in the Apocalypse, the imagery by which he foretells the retributory work of
Called him to his foot,
"Gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings?"
He gave them as the dust to his sword,
And as driven stubble to his bow;
3 He pursued them, and passed safely;
Even by the way that he had not gone with his feet.
4 "Who hath wrought and done it,
Calling the 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 They helped every one his neighbour;
And every one said to his brother, "Be of good courage;"
7 So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith,
And he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil,
Saying, It is ready for the sodering:
And he fastened it with nails, that it should not be moved.
8 But thou, Israel, art my servant,
Jacob whom I have chosen,
The seed of Abraham my 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 "Fear thou not; " for I am with thee:
Be not dismayed; for I am thy God:
I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee;
Yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.
11 Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be as ashamed and confounded:
They shall be as nothing;
And that they that strive with thee shall perish;
12 Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them,
Even them that contended with thee:
That they which war against thee shall be as nothing,

Christ, and "the Kings of the East" (or, from the sunrising), that is, the preachers of the Kingdom of Christ, who come from Him Who is "the Sun of Righteousness, rising with healing on His wings," in their spiritual campaign against the mystical Babylon. See the notes below, on that mysterious prophecy (Rev. xvi. 12). The analogies between the work of Cyrus and of Christ, in destroying error, and diffusing light, and liberating God's people from bondage, are enlarged upon in the notes on that passage, which may serve as a commentary on the present and other places of Isaiah, referring to the person and office of Cyrus. It will be found, that whenever Isaiah has made mention of Cyrus, he almost always proceeds to speak of Christ. He is irresistibly borne along by the Spirit from the human type to the Divine Antitype.

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Cyrus, the Minister of Jehovah, an Object of Fear to the Worshippers of Idols.

5. The isles. Rather, maritime countries. See above on v. 1, such as Lonia, Molin, Caria, Lydia, Phrygia, who, as the Cunæans, confessed that they feared the name of Cyrus. See Herod. i. 169.
6. They helped. Nations, before divided, associated in league against Cyrus, and they paid fresh homage to idols, whose aid they invoked against the Conqueror—but in vain.
7. the carpenter. Literally, greaver, one who cuts; an artist of metal, stone, or wood (Gesen. 309).
8. Not be dismayed. The irony of xl. 20 reappears here.

8. But thou, Israel, art my servant. Those nations are worshippers of stones and stones, therefore I will give them into the hands of Cyrus (who was not a idolater, and was appointed by God to chastise idolaters; see the remarks of D. Jackson on the Creed, book vi. pt. ii. ch. xxvi.). Cyrus, who is My servant, will subdue them, and overthrow their temples, and deliver them, O Israel, and restore My Temple at Jerusalem.

10. Be not dismayed. Look not anxiously for help from others than Me. See v. 23.
And as a thing of nought.

13 For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, "Fear not; I will help thee; and fear not, thou worm Jacob,

And ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth:
Thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff;
Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them:
And thou shalt rejoice in the Lord; and thine eye shall see the reward of thy works.

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.

I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys:
I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

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:
That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, That the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob.

14. thou worm Jacob! However weak and despised, and trodden under foot thou mayest be, in thy captivity and exile, yet fear not; I will help thee. Cp. Ps. xxi. 6, where the Messias in His humiliation describes Himself as "a worm, and no man," and see Luke xii. 52.


— thy redeemer] By this word Redeemer (Heb. Goel, on which see Job xix. 25) we are prepared for the transition to the spiritual victories to be achieved by Israel, led on by Christ, to fight against His ghostly enemies and all godless powers of this world; see what follows.

The triumphs of Zion, through Christ, over the pride; His gracious gifts to the humble.

13. I will make thee to be a new sharp threshing roller having two edges (Gesen. 675), thou shalt thresh the mountains; such will be thy power, when I, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, am come to thee, saith the Lord. These words are to be understood as spoken by the King of Zion, the Messiah, whose Advent and Victory over all proud earthly Powers are compared to the triumph of the mighty Conqueror of Babylon, Cyrus, raised up by God from the East, and to whom God gave the nations, and made him ruler over kings; see v. 2, and cp. v. 25. Compare the similar prophecy of Micah (iv. 13), which is followed immediately by the announcement of Christ's Birth (v. 1, 2). Cp. Sier, p. 65.

In a spiritual sense (which is suggested by what follows), this prophecy (which is further explained and enlarged in the following chapter; see xlii. 13-15) is fulfilled in the triumphs of Christ in the Gospel, beating small into dust the mountains, that is, all the lofty pride and stubborn power of this world that opposes God. Compare 2 Cor. x. 4, 5: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God" (S. Jerome, S. Cyril, Theodoret). This prophecy will have its full accomplishment in the Great Day, when Christ, the King of the true Israel of God, "Whose fan is in His hand, will throughly purge His floor and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matt. iii. 12).

17. When the poor and needy seek water] As of old, in the wilderness—I will make it gush from the rock (see Exod. xvii. 6)—I will make the living waters of the Holy Spirit to gush out of the Rock in the Wilderness of Heshbon.

18. I will open rivers in high places—the wilderness a pool of water] By the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit on all nations (xxv. 25; xxxv. 6; xlv. 8). The present is the only passage where the word occurs in the singular number (shittah), in all other places it is in the plural (shittim). — the fir. The cypress.

— the pine, and the box tree] Cp. Ix. 13, the plane tree (or elm) and the sherbin (or tall cedar). Gesen. 855; Fuerst, 1450. 1459.

Second Appeal of the Lord. Who can foretell the future? Who can kill, and who can make alive? — not idols, but God only, the God of Israel.

21. your strong reasons] Literally, your strongholds, in which you trust. Cp. 2 Cor. x. 4.

22 * Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: Let them shew the former things, what they be, That we may ♦ consider them, and know the latter end of them; Or declare us things for to come.

23 ♦ Shew the things that are to come hereafter. That we may know that ye are gods:

Yea, ♦ do good, or do evil, That we may be dismayed, and behold it together.

24 Behold, ♦ ye are || of nothing, and your work || 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 ♦ shall he call upon my name:

And he shall come upon princes as upon morter, And as the potter treadeth clay.

26 ♦ 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 ♦ The first I shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them:

And I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings.

28 ♦ For I beheld, and there was no man; Even among them, and there was no counsellor, That, when I asked of them, could ♦ answer a word.

29 ♦ Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing: Their molten images are wind and confusion.

XLII. 1 Behold ♦ my servant, whom I uphold;

22. show us what shall happen—declare us things for to some] As the God of Israel now does, by foretelling what will be done by Cyrus, and by Christ. Here is the proof that He, and He alone, is God. He, and He alone, can foretell what will happen, even in the last days.

23. the former things—the latter end of them] The former things are the conquests of Cyrus, the overthow of Babylon, the deliverrance and restoration of Israel; the latter end of them, are the times of the Messiah, which were prepar'd by the former. Cp. Sirer, p. 70.

25. from the north] I.e. from Media (cp. Jer. 1. 3, 9), as well as from the east (v. 2). Persia—or, as it is here expressed, rising of the sun. See on v. 2.

26. Who hath—righteous] Which of the gods of the Heathen hath foretold the coming and conquests of Cyrus, that we may know and acknowledge that god to be right? Yea, there was none who showed this—none but the God of Israel; none heard your words preannouncing these events.

27. The first—behold them] These are God's words: I, the first, said to Zion, Behold, behold them; that is, Behold these persons and things (Cyrus, and his victories, and Israel's deliverance) by them, namely, the spiritual conquests of Christ, and the spiritual blessings confered by Him.

The word rendered the first (rishôn), declares that God is before all things; see v. 4, and xlv. 6; xviii. 12. The adoption of this title by Christ, Who calls Himself the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last (Rev. 1. 8; 17; ii. 8), is an assertion of His Divinity. Cp. John i. 15. 30.

— one that bringeth good tidings] In a primary sense, he brings the good tidings of the acts of Cyrus, besiegling and taking Babylon, and liberating God's captive people; and, secondarily, the good tidings of Christ's Incarnation and victories. See on xl. 9, where the same verb is used, and cp. Mal. iii. 1.

28. 29. I beheld, and there was no man—Behold, they are all vanity—their molten images are wind and confusion] I looked to the diviners and magicians, the votaries of the deities who are worshipped by Babylon and the heathen nations; but none of them could answer a word when I asked them a question.

This was exemplified in the perplexity of the Chaldean astrologers, soothsayers, and magicians, when questioned by Nebuchadnezzar concerning his two dreams (Dan. ii. 2 ; iv. 7), and by Belshazzar concerning the handwriting on the wall. They could not answer a word; but, in both cases, God, by His servant the Prophet Daniel, gave replies, which were verified by the event.

Further, if the gods which Babylon worshipped had possessed any divine knowledge, they would certainly have forewarned Babylon against the coming of Cyrus (whose rise and conquest of that city had been foretold by the God of Israel speaking by Isaiah more than a hundred years before the event), and who took Babylon suddenly on the night of a great yearly festival, celebrated by her in honour of her gods, and when she was engaged in worshipping them, and in probation the sacred vessels of Jehovah (Dan. v. 1—4).

"Behold My Servant."—The Preaching of Christ.

Ch. XLII.1.] The Chaldee Targum begins this chapter with the remarkable words, "Behold My servant, Messiah, My Beloved, in Whom My Word is well pleased; I will put My Holy Spirit upon Him, and He will reveal My Judgment to the Gentiles." So Kimchi also, and Abarbanel.

The Arabic Version prefixes to this chapter the following title: "Prophecy concerning Christ, the Lord."
Christ's ministry.

ISAIAH XLIII. 2—5. The Gentiles shall receive Him.

Mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth;
\[1.\] 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;
A bruised reed shall he not break,
And the \(\|\) smoking flax shall he not quench:
He shall bring forth judgment unto truth;
\[4.\] He shall notful nor be \(\dagger\) discouraged,
Till he have set judgment in the earth:
\[d\] And the isles shall wait for his law.
\[3.\] Thus saith God the Lord,
\[e\] He that created the heavens, and stretched them out;

That his prophecy does describe the Office and Ministry of Christ; and was fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth, we have the testimony of the Holy Ghost, in the Gospel of St. Matthew (xii. 17—21).

Isaiah proceeds here by a noble transition from speaking of the great Conqueror of Babylon and of the East,—Cyrus, the human type,—to speaking of Christ, the Divine Antitype, the King of kings, and of His conquests in the Gospel. See on xli. 2.

1. my servant] A term applied to Israel (xli. 8; xlii. 1, 2; xlv. 4; xlviii. 20; xlix. 3), and here given by the Father Himself to Christ, the Antitype and Personification of Israel in His perfect obedience, as the elect, beloved, "righteous servant," through Whom the Israel of God is justified and accepted by God. See below, xlii. 11; and lx. 13; and cp. Acts iii. 13; iv. 27; v. 30, where this title is applied to Christ. See below, on Acts iii. 13.

"The servant of Jehovah" is in these prophecies the Antitype of an historical person,—Cyrus,—in his acts as the Minister of Jehovah, the Conqueror of His enemies, and the Deliverer of His People.

The ancient Hebrew Church regarded the "Servant of Jehovah" as the Messiah (see Bp. Chandler, i. 160); and this was the uniform judgment of all early Christian expositors. Thus S. Justin Martyr (c. Tryphon, § 129) says, "If you have ears to hear, you will hearken to God, who speaks to you by JIsaiah concerning Christ, and calls Him, by a figure, Jacob and Israel. He then quotes this passage (ver. 1—4), and adds, "As all your race is called Israel and Jacob from one, so we, in Christ, Who begat us, are, as Jacob and Israel, children of God, if we obey Christ;" and in § 135, "As Isaiah calls Christ Israel and Jacob, so we, being born of Christ, are the true Israel of God." G. H. Henders, Christ, p. 293—297.

2. He that created the heavens, and stretched them out] "Israel is My Son, even My firstborn," and on Matt. ii. 15, "Out of Egypt have I called My Son", and was concentrated and summed up in Christ; as, in the Christian dispensation, the Church is summed up in Christ, and is the Body, of which He is the Head (Eph. i. 22; iv. 15; v. 23. Col. i. 18). Cp. Hübner, Vorlesungen, pp. 233—265, who has well discriminated the elements of truth in the theories just mentioned, and has supplied what is wanting in them, and has corrected what is erroneous.

my spirit] Observe the connexion of this with the close of the foregoing address, at the end of the preceding chapter. There God says, "Their molten images are wind" (Heb. ruach). But here God says of the Messiah, "I have put upon Him My Spirit." (Heb. ruach). How striking is the contrast! Idols are mere wind; but God's breath is in Christ.

—He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles] Or, as it is expressed by St. Matthew (xiii. 18), He shall show, or declare, judgment or right, that is, God's righteous law, not only to the Jews, but to the Gentiles (cp. 4), who, before the preaching of the Gospel, were in a condition of lawlessness, and consequent misery, doing what was wrong, and suffering it. See St. Paul's description of their moral condition, "being filled with all unrighteousness," &c. (Rom. i. 29—32).

2. He shall not cry] St. Matthew expands this into, "He shall not strive nor cry," which is an exposition of the sense in which the word cry was used, which might have been ambiguous.

3. bruised reed] The contrite heart and humble spirit.

Christ, the Divine King and Conqueror, is displayed in a beautiful contrast to the hated tyrants and victors of the ancient World. Their ambition was to crush and destroy; His desire is to cherish and save (see x. 7).


—He shall bring forth judgment unto truth] That is, to a firm and stable position. This meaning of the Hebrew word emeth, which is an abbreviation of aweneth, truth, is manifest from its etymology, onna, to establish (Gen. 50. 62).

St. Matthew, xii. 20, combines this clause with that in the following verse, "til he have set judgment in the earth," and paraphrases them by what expresses the sense of both, till He have brought forth judgment unto victory; that is, till He have firmly established it everywhere.

4. nor be discouraged] Literally, nor be broken (Sept.). The Prophet repeats the word, which is rendered bruised in the foregoing verse. Christ will not break, nor will He be broken. This was fulfilled literally of Him, of Whom it was written, "That a bone of Him shall not be broken" (Exod. xii. 46. John xix. 36).

—the isles] Rendered by St. Matthew "the Gentiles." See note on Matt. xiii. 17; and above, c. 1, and c. 6.

—shall wait for his law] Shall trust in His Name, Sept., paraphrasing the words; and so Matt. xii. 21.

5. This section (xlii. 10), which declares that the God of Israel is the Creator of all things, and in which He promises to comfort Israel, when He passes through the waters of affliction, was appointed by the Hebrew Church to be read together with Gen. i. 1—vi. 8, which contains the history of the World from the Creation to the Flood. The reason of this happy combination is obvious.
Christ sent to Jew and Gentile.  ISAIAH XLII. 6—14. 

His march of victory.

He that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it;
8 He that giveth breath unto the people upon it,
And spirit to them that walk therein:
9 I the Lord have called thee in righteousness,
And will hold thine hand, and will keep thee,
And give thee for a covenant of the people,
For a light of the Gentiles;
7 To open the blind eyes,
To bring out the prisoners from the prison, 
And them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.
8 I am the Lord: that is my name: 
And my glory 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 Sing unto the Lord a new song, 
And his praise from the end of the earth,
9 Ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; 
The isles, and the inhabitants thereof.
11 Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, 
The villages that Kedar doth inhabit: 
Let the inhabitants of the rock sing, 
Let them shout from the top of the mountains.
12 Let them give glory unto the Lord, 
And declare his praise in the islands.

The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, 
He shall stir up jealousy as a man of war: 
He shall cry, yea, roar; 
He shall prevail against his enemies.
14 I have long time holden my peace; 
I have been still, and refrained myself: 
Now will I cry like a travailing woman;

The Commission to Christ.

6, 7. the Lord—prison house] That this passage is prophetic of Christ's Office and Ministry, not only in giving sight literally to those who could not see, but to those who were spiritually blind, is evident from the combination of these words with the promise of a release from prison (a promise not literally fulfilled by Him, but verified in the spiritual emancipation of mankind—an emancipation prefigured by the act of Cyrus, liberating God's people from their Captivity in Babylon), and from the application of the parallel passage in xxi. 1, to Him, by Christ Himself (Luke iv. 17—21). Cp. above, ix. 4. Matt. iv. 15, 16. Eph. v. 8. Col. i. 13; and S. Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Tryphon the Jew, § 26, and § 122, where he shows that the prophecies are fulfilled by Christ.
8. my glory will I not give to another] This text is quoted by the Jews, alleging the Unity of the Godhead; and that divine worship is not to be given to Christ. To which allegation S. Justin Martyr replies (c. Tryphon. § 65), showing from Isaiah himself that Christ is God (vii. 14).
9. the former things] What I promised and pre-announced before: all My promises to Abraham, your forfader. See Josh. xxi. 45: "There failed not of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass." The new things are the blessings prefigured by the old, or former things. The new things are the graces vouchsafed in the New Covenant, by Him Who maketh all things new (Rev. xxi. 5. Cp. Rev. iii. 12; xxi. 1); and therefore the people of God are exhorted to sing a new song (v. 10), in which the Gentiles, being received into the new covenant together with the Jews (see v. 6), are invited to join (v. 10—12).
11. Kedar—the rock] Ishmael and Edom (see xxi. 11—17), formerly enemies of God's Church, and here the representatives of her foes generally, are now represented as admitted into it, and reconciled to Israel. Cp. lx. 7.

The Triumphal March of Christ.

13. The Lord shall go forth] "Conquering and to conquer," Christ is "the stronger" One, overcoming the "strong man" (see Matt. xii. 29. John xiii. 31); and He is thus represented in the first seal of the Apocalypse, describing His victories in the first ages of the Gospel (Rev. vi. 2)—victories to be consummated in the latter days. See Rev. xiv. 11—16. Here is an enlargement of the prophecy in the foregoing chapter (xii. 15, 16).
14. like a travailing woman] Christ Himself now speaks. By a bold figure, He is here compared to a travailing woman. The earnest longing, with which the travailing woman yearns for her delivery, is a type of the eager desire of the Lord of
Before CHRIST about 712.

1. Heb, swallow, or, sup up.

I will destroy and devour at once;

15. I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs;

And I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.

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 straight.

These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images,

That say to the molten images, Ye are our gods.

18. Hear, ye deaf;

And look, ye blind, that ye may see;

19. Who is blind, but my servant?

Or deaf, as my messenger that I sent?

Who is blind as he that is perfect,

And blind as the Lord’s servant?

20. Seeing many things, but 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 it honourable.

But this is a people robbed and spoiled;

They are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses:

They are for a prey, and none delivereth;

For a spoil, and none saith, Restore.

22. Who among you will give ear to this?

23. 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.

24. Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle:

CHRIST’S INVITATION TO THE JEWS.

18. Hear, ye deaf—ye blind] This is Christ’s appeal to the obstinate and ignorant among the Jews. See what follows; and cp. John vii. 43; ix. 39.

19. Who is blind, but my servant?] Who is blind, but Jacob, My people, who calls itself My servant, and whom I designed to be such? See on c. 1. Or, who is deaf, but My messenger, Israel, whom I instructed in My law, and whom I sent forth from Egypt, to declare My judgments, and to evangelize the world? None are so blind as they who, when they have a noonday effulgence of light, will not see; none so deaf as they to whom God Himself declared His will, as He did to Israel, and who would not hearken. See S. Justin Martyr, c. Tryphon. § 123, who applies these words to the Jews of his own age.

20. Who is blind as he that is perfect?] Rather, he that is God’s favoured friend (Heb. mashchit), the good form from shalom, to be at peace with (cp. Job xxi. 21. Ps. vii. 4. 2 Sam. xx. 3, to live as a favourite friend with (Gesen. 830), whomse wealalm, wesulalm.

21. Seeing many things—opening the ears] The Jews were admitted to the privilege of seeing God’s mighty and wonderful works (Deut. xxix. 1, 2), and of being hearers of His gracious messages; but in heart and mind they were blind and deaf. Cp. Jer. v. 24; vi. 16. Ezek. xii. 2; and Matt. xiii. 14. John xii. 40.

22. But this is a people robbed] Notwithstanding all God’s favour to Israel, Israel is spoiled, and carried captive; and why? Not because of any failure in God’s love, but because of their sins; because they are willfully blind and deaf. Thus God’s righteousness is manifested and vindicated in the chastisement of His people. See v. 24.

23. Did not the Lord?] It is not Babylon that has overcome Jerusalem and has conquered Jehovah; but no, but the Lord hath used Babylon as His instrument in punishing Jerusalem’s sins against Himself. Cp. Deut. xxiii. 21-25.
God's invitation in Christ

ISAIAH XLIII. 1—7.

And it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; And it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.

XLIII. 1 But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

2 When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: When thou 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 life.

5 Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, And gather thee from the west; 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;

Even every one that is called by my name:

25. it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart] The Prophet foresees God's wrath kindled, and burning up the City and Temple of Jerusalem; but the people laid it not to heart, and did not repent. This is true even to this day. The Jews do not yet lay to heart the truth of the divine assertion, that not the Roman armies of Titus, but the fire of the Lord's wrath burnt up Jerusalem for rejecting Christ. But see the promise which follows in the next chapter. Though their Temple and City have been burned, and though they have beenberted as exiles, yet His gracious words to them are, “Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee.”

God's Love to Israel. Consolatory Promises to Penitent Israel in Christ. Ch. XLIII. 2. When thou passest through the waters—rivers]

As I showed thee of old by carrying thee on dry land through the waters of the Red Sea, and in driving back the waters of the river of Jordan, that they might not overflow thee (Josh. iii. 13), These miracles of old are pledges to thee of greater mercies in Christ.

When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned] As usual, the language at the close of the foregoing address is taken up and repeated (see above on xli. 12). The fire burnt Jerusalem in the Chaldean and Roman sieges (see xlii. 25), and His faithful servants were cast into the furnace at Babylon (Dan. iii. 25). But God is always fulfilling His promises to true Israelites: “We went through fire and water, and Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place” (Ps. lxvi. 12).

The mighty power of Assyria, to which the Prophet refers in the next verse, has been already compared to a great flood of water, threatening to overwhelm every thing (xvii. 12). 3. I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee] When Semach-erih threatened to destroy Jerusalem, Hezekiah, in his temporary fear and distrust, gave him the silver and gold in the Lord's house for a ransom (see 2 Kings xviii. 14—16). But this did not satisfy the cravings of the rapacious Conqueror. Then God drew off the army of Assyria to the south, and gave Egypt, and Ethiopia, and Seba into his hands instead of Jerusalem, and as a ransom (or exchange, as Sept. renders it) for Jerusalem, till at length Hezekiah recovered his faith in God; see above, on chap. xx., which describes these events. Seba is the Ethiopian ‘Mercos, Nitotic isle’ (as it is called by Milton in Par. Reg. iv. 71), the peninsula between the White and Blue Nile, now Dar Senaar, on the northern frontier of Abyssinia. Cp. Ps. lxii. 10, and A Lapide here.

In a spiritual sense, all the enemies of God's Church are given as a ransom for her; that is, they are used by God as instruments for her deliverance (S. Cyril).

4. Since thou wast precious in my sight—therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life] Rather, I give peoples for thy life. This is an addition to what was said in the foregoing verse. Not only did I give other nations as thy ransom, for thy deliverance, but also, because thou wast precious in my sight, by the plent of such virtuous persons as Hezekiah, and because I loved thee, therefore I give men for thee, and peoples for thy life. I will give up first the Assyrians, thy former enemies, into the hands of the Medes and Babylonians; and I will give up the Babylonians into the hand of Cyrus, in order to rescue and deliver thee, O Israel, and to restore thee to thy own land. See what follows.

5. I will bring thy seed from the east] After the overthrow of Babylon by Cyrus. That restoration is represented by the Prophet as a pledge of a more general and glorious restoration of Israel by the Messiah. Cp. above, xi. 11, 12. Ezek. xxxvii. 21.

7. Even every one that is called by my name] Not only Jews, but Gentiles also united with them in the true Sion—the Church of Christ. See the words of St. Peter at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 39, “The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” “And it shall come to pass, whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts ii. 21. Cp. Acts x. 35; xv. 17).
For 'I have created him for my glory, 
= I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

8 "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:
= 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 'Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, 
And my servant whom I have chosen:
That ye may know and believe me, 
And understand that I am he:
= Before me there was || no God formed, 
Neither shall there be after me.

11 I, even I, 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 \( ^* \) strange god among you:
= Therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.

13 \( ^* \) 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 \( ^* \) let it?

14 Thus saith the Lord, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; 
For your sake have I sent to Babylon, 
And have brought down all their \( ^* \) nobles, 
And the Chaldeans, whose cry \( ^* \) is in the ships.

15 I am the Lord, your Holy One, 
The creator of Israel, your King.


9. Let all the nations be gathered together] Into one communion with the Jews, in the spiritual Jerusalem of the Universal Church of God.

10. Who among them can declare this] What oracle among the Hebræans could foretell this union of the Gentiles with the Jews? See Eph. iii. 4—6, where St. Paul says that this union of the Gentiles to be fellow-heirs of the same body with the Jews in Christ, was a mystery not made known to the sons of men, but revealed unto the holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit. There ought to be a fuller stop—a note of interrogation—after "this."

an and shew us former things] And let them shew us former things. The gods of the Hebræans are not able to declare distant things—such as the union of the Gentiles with the Jews in one Church—no; far from it. If they can, let them shew things much nearer than that event; but they are not able to do it.

—Let them bring forth their witnesses] To testify that they have foretold future things, and that their prophecies have been fulfilled.

—let them hear] Let them hearken to the prophecies of the God of Israel; and let them confess that they have come true, and that, therefore, the God of Israel alone He is God.

10. Ye are my witnesses] Ye house of Israel, my servant whom I have chosen, are my witnesses. Ye have been the depositories of my prophecies ever since the first Books of Scripture were written, which were consigned to your care (see above, on Deut. xxxii. 9; and below, Rom. iii. 2); ye are my witnesses that these prophecies have been fulfilled. Compare above, xxxiv. 16; and below, v. 12; and xlv. 7, 8, where there is the same appeal to the Jews as God's witnesses. See Davison on Prophecy, p. 139.

12. When there was no strange god among you] And therefore ye would not have learnt any thing of the future from any other god but Me. Then Israel said, "The Lord alone did lead me, and there was no strange god with me." (Deut. xxxii. 12. 14. For your sake—ships] Rather, For your sake, O Israel—"I have sent Cyrus and the Medæan to Babylon; I have driven all as fugitives (see xv. 6; xxvii. 1. Job xxvi. 13, where the same word is used; and cp. Sept., Syriac, Genesis, 141, and the Chaldeans (the military and dominant east of Babylon, see xiii. 19. Jer. v. 16), to the ships of their jubilant cry.

Babylon communicated with the Persian Gulf by the Euphrates, and with the country to the south of the Black Sea and the west of the Caspian by means of the Tigris, united to the Euphrates by a canal, and thus became the emporium of the East (Herod. i. 194), and is therefore called by Ezekiel (xvii. 4) "a land of traffic, a city of merchants."

It may be inferred from this passage of Isaiah, that, when Babylon was suddenly taken at night by Cyrus, many of the Chaldean nobles and warriors fled, in panic and confusion, for refuge to their ships on the Euphrates, and escaped as fugitives by means of those vessels, in which they had formerly gloried. Berossus (quoted by Josephus c. Apion. i. § 20) relates that Nabonnedus, king of Babylon, fled from Cyrus to Borsippa, on the south of Babylon.

In the Apocalypse, they who had once traded, in spiritual commerce, with the mystical Babylon, are represented as fleeing from her. See Rev. xviii. 15—18, "In one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every worship, and all the company are ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning."
God's goodness to Israel.  

ISAIAH XLIII. 16—27.

Israel's sin.

16. 17, which maketh a way in the sea— as thou God is ever renewing the wonders of the Exodus for His people; He maketh a way for them in the sea, and He bringeth forth the pharaohs of this world and their mighty hosts, in order to be overwhelmed in its waves (Exod. xiv. 5—31. Ps. lxxxvii. 19; below, ii. 10). And He does greater works than these; He adds new things to the old; He delivers His people from the captivity of Babylon by Cyrus, and from the bondage of Satan by Christ; and the old things, wonderful as they were, are forgotten when compared with the new (below, lxv. 17. Jer. xxxiii. 7).

19. a way in the wilderness] First from Babylon to Jerusalem by Cyrus; next from earth to heaven by Christ. Cp. li. 18.

20. dragons—owls] See xiii. 21, 22.

21.] This section to xlv. 23 (which speaks of the worship due to God and the vanity of idols) is appointed to be read in the Hebrew Synagogues with Lev. i. 1 to v. 26, which describes the sacrifices prescribed by Him.

22. But thou hast been weary of me] Rather, so as to be weary of me, that is, by laborious worship of Me. Cp. Mic. vi. 13. O My people, wherein have I wearied thee? Mal. i. 18. "Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it!" See here, v. 23, "I have not wearied thee with incense—but thou hast wearied Me with thine iniquities," v. 24. Cp. Mal. ii. 17. "Ye have wearied the Lord with your words."

Vol. V. Part I.—129

23. Neither hast thou honoured me] The emphasis is on Me: thou hast given to strange gods the honour due to Me alone. See on Amos v. 25, "Have ye offered unto Me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?" No—not to Me, but to idols. Cp. on Acts vii. 42, 43.

— I have not caused thee to serve] I have not burdened thee with service; but thou hast burdened Me by sin.

24. sweet cane] In Jer. vi. 20 God says, "To what purpose cometh there to Me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country?" This sweet cane was used for incense (Mainwodeis, and Tiritha, 467) and for the holy oil (Exod. xxx. 23).

25. I, even I] I, alone, am able to pardon thee; thy strange gods only make thee sin, while only I can blot out thy sin; and yet thou hast preferred them to Me!

27. Thy first father hath sinned, And thy + teachers have transgressed against me.
Before CHRIST

XLIV. 1 Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant;
And Israel, whom I have chosen:
2 Thus saith the Lord that made thee,
And formed thee from the womb, which will help thee;
Fear not, O Jacob, my servant,
And thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.
3 For I will 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;
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,
And his redeemer the Lord of hosts;
I am the first, and I am the last;
And beside me there is no God.
7 And who, 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: have I not told thee from that time, and have declared it?

(4) But the expression is a general one, and may best be explained by the phrase in Ezekiel (xxvi. 3), "Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite" (cp. v. 45 there). That is, Thou, O Israel, hast apostatized from the faith of Abraham and Sarah; thou hast disdained thyself; an amanat taken an Amorite for thy father, and a Hittite for thy mother, and hast made thyself to become their children, by thy sins.

We make Abraham to be our father, by treading in the steps of faith, as it were; (Gen. xi. 17; and we make Satan himself to be our father by doing the works of the devil, as our Lord said, "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do" (John viii. 44)).

28. Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary
The Priests of the Temple and Rulers of Jerusalem. Their own sin is the cause of their misery and desolation even to this day. Cp. below, xxii. 18; lxiv. 11.

GRACIOUS INVITATION TO ISRAEL.

Ct. XLIV. 2. Jesurun] Literally, a righteous one; the name given to Israel, as justified by God. The use of this name carries the thoughts back to the patriarchal times of Israel’s zeal for God. See Deut. xxxii. 15; xxxiii. 5. 26.
3. I will pour water upon him that is thirsty] I will pour out the living water of the Spirit upon all Israel who thirst for it. Cp. xlii. 17; lv. 1. John vii. 37–39. Acts ii. 16.
4. As willows] A joyful contrast to the melancholy willows by the waters of Babylon, on which the exiles of Judah hung their harps in sorrow. See Ps. cxvii. 2. These willows, of which the Prophet now speaks, are like the festive willows of the joyful solemnity of Tabernacles (Lev. xxvii. 40).
5. One shall say—another—another] The Prophet adopts the language of Ps. lxxx. 7, where the demonstrative pronoun (zeb), "this man," is repeated three, as here, and points to the number of believers, whom the Psalmist sees springing up one after another in all parts of the world, and acknowledging Jehovah as their God, and dwelling together in unity in the Zion of the Universal Church. Cp. Heb. xii. 22. That Psalm, the 87th, is the best comment on this prophecy.

Another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord:
Shall inscribe himself with his hand to Jehovah," i.e. dedicated to Him. Cp. Gal. vi. 17, where St. Paul says, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus;" and note below, on Rev. xiii. 18, where it is shown that servants were inscribed with the names of their master, and soldiers inscribed themselves with the names of their general, and votaries of deities with the names of their god.

And surname himself by the name of Israel] Shall adopt a surname, derived from Israel, not from any worldly act or privilege. Heathen conquerors derived their names from the countries they conquered, and entitled themselves Africani, Asiatici, Asiaeci, &c.; but the converts to Christ derive their surnames from their religious prerogatives. Simon is surnamed Cephas, or Peter; James and John are surnamed Boanerges; Levi is called Matthew; on account of their relation to Christ, Who is the Divine Israel,—and loves the Church as His own Holy,—and gives His Name to all His people.

6. I am the first—and I am the last] The title adopted by Christ in the Apocalypse (Rev. i. 8; xvi. 17; xxii. 13).
7. The ancient people] Rather, the eternal people; literally, the people of eternity (Heb. am idam: cp. Sept. here), the visible Church of God, existing in Adam, Abel, Seth, Noah, Abraham, David, with whom God made an everlasting covenant (3 Sam. xxiii. 5), berith olam, as He did with Noah (Gen. ix. 10), and Abraham (Gen. xvii. 7), and to whom He promised eternal continuance, and an eternal kingdom in Christ, in Whom all who believe are admitted into an everlasting covenant (iv. 3), and are loved with everlasting kindness (iv. 8), and have a sure title to everlasting salvation. Cp. xxiv. 5; xlv. 17. In all these passages the word idam is used.
Ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any. They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; And their † delectable things shall not profit; And they are their own witnesses; They see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed.

Who hath formed a god, Or molten a graven image † that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be † 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.

The smith 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; 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, And maketh after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; That it may remain in the house. He Heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, Which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: He planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it.

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; 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: And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image; He falleth down unto it, and worshippeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god.

They have not known nor understood:

The Vanity of Idols.

8. Ye must know that there is no God.
9. They that make a graven image are all of them vanity.
10. The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals.

11. His fellows; the worshippers of the idol.
12. The artificer of iron (as) a cutter—Hbl. mastosod, which is used in Jer. x. 5, a parallel place to the present, and is there translated an axe. Cp. Fuerst, S49. The workman is regarded here as an instrument for cutting; or it may mean, he takes a sharp instrument.

As to the sense generally, see above, xl. 19, 20.

13. A line] So Kimchi, or it may mean a sharp stylus (Rashi, Gesen., Fuerst).
14. Cypress] Or, pine (Saadiah and Vitringa), holm oak (Fuerst and Delitzsch). Its etymology bespeaks it to be a hard timber-tree.

Ask] So Vitringa and others. It is rendered pine by Gesen. 80; and so Vulg.
For he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; And their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none considereth it in his heart, Neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; Yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: And shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? Shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes: A deceived heart hath turned him aside, That he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand? Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; For thou art my servant: I have formed thee, thou art my servant; O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me; I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, And, as a cloud, thy sins: Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. 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. Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, And he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; That stretcheth forth the heavens alone; That spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, And maketh diviners mad; That turneth wise men backward, And maketh their knowledge foolish; 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 decayed places thereof: That saith to the deep, Be dry, *Albus ut obscuru deterget nubila colo* Sepe Notus." (Horat. i. Od. vii. 15.) 25. *the liars* The false prophets. — *diviners* Such as the Chaldean astrologers (xlvi. 13. Dan. v. 8). 26. *of his servants* The true Prophet. Op. xx. 3. — *the counsel of his messengers* The predictions of the Prophets of God, which had a Hortatory character. It is said by Josephus (Ant. xi. 1, 2), that when Cyrus read this prophecy, he was impelled by it to restore the Jews to their own land. **The River Ephratahs dried up.** 27. *to the deep* It was God Who put it into the heart of
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, Thou shalt be built;  
And to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

XLV. 1 Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus,  
Whose right hand I will hold, 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:

2 I will go before thee,  
And make the crooked places straight:  
I will break in pieces the gates of brass,  
And dry up thy rivers.

Cyrus.  
ISAIAH XLV. 28. XLV. 1, 2.  
God leads him.

Before CHRIST about 712.

1 I Chron. 36. 22, 23;  
2 Esdr. 1. 1, 2 &c.;  
ch. 45. 15, 16.

a ch. 41. 13,  
§ Or, strengthened.  
b ch. 41. 2.  
Dan. 9. 30.
c ch. 40. 4.  
d Ps. 107. 16.

Cyrus to dry up the river of Babylon. He said “to the depth,” or subjunctive conjugation. “I will dry up,” by Cyrus, Ecclus. 7. 15; Jer. 1. 38; ii. 31, 32, 36, where this prophecy of the drying up of the deep waters of the Euphrates, which were turned aside into the basin of Sepharvaim, to make a passage for the army of Cyrus on foot in its bed, is more fully developed; and see above, on xl. 1—9.

CYRUS AND CHRIST.

28. Cyrus.] On the name and acts of Cyrus, see note above, on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22 (where the reader is requested to correct the typographical error, “two hundred and forty years” into “one hundred and forty years before his birth”); Divine Prophecy in the Old Testament signifies by name four persons before their birth.—Isa. Solomon, Josiah, and Cyrus. See 2 Kings xiii. 2. “Of God’s own People but few were called by their names before they were imposed by men. This is the prerogative of such as were types of the true Emmanuel.”—Dean Jackson on the Creed, Book vi. pt. ii., chap. xxvi., where is an excellent commentary on this history of Cyrus, of whom he says, “The Lord of Hosts was the Archer, and Cyrus the bow ‘in His hands’; therefore all arrows shot by him against Babylon must reach their mark.”

It has been supposed by some recent learned expositors (as Hâvernick, Einleit. ii. 2, p. 155; Hengstenberg, Cristel. p. 193), that Cyrus (i.e. Koresch), which signifies a Sun, was an official name of Persian kings; and that Cyrus, who had originally another name, afterwards imposed on him this one when he ascended the throne; and that perhaps he was induced to adopt this title, in consequence of the prophecies of Isaiah, with which, as Josephus asserts (Ant. xl. 1. 1), he was acquainted, and which exercised great influence on his mind and actions.

That a great conqueror, like Cyrus,—who in his moral virtues, and exemption from idolatry (cp. W. Louth, on Jer. i. 38. Dean Jackson on the Creed), and in his ascension of all the glory of his victories to God (see Ezra i. 1—3), stands in striking contrast to Sennacherib, the great Assyrian monarch, who magnified himself as the author of all his successes, and who blasphemed the God of Israel (2 Kings xix. 23—24), and to Nebuchadnezzar, who 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?” (Dan. iv. 30), and to Belshazzar, who profaned the holy vessels of God, and said, “Is not this the great city, at the great feast, the holy idol (Dan. v. 3),—should have been specified by name more than a century and a half before his conquest of Babylon, and that his acts should have been described by the voice of the God of Israel, in the prophecies delivered by Isaiah at Jerusalem, and preserved in the cylinder of the Hebrew Exilarchs, who was a providential dispensation, well worthy of God, inasmuch as it afforded clear evidence of His own Omniscience and Omnipo-tence,—on which He insists in these prophecies,—as contrasted with the ignorance and imbecility of the gods which the heathen nations worshipped; and would therefore be very conducive to the diffusion of the Truth in all the provinces of the Persian Empire, and would contribute the favour of the Persian kings to the People of God. Cp. xlv. 6. It would also prove to the Jews, that their deliverance from Babylon, and restoration to Jerusalem, were not the results of accident, much less of the agency of idols (see xlvii. 5), and were not due to Cyrus himself acting independently, but to the God of their fathers, employing Cyrus, the great King and Conqueror, as His instrument to work out His purposes.

S. Jerome suggests another reason why God called Cyrus by name before his birth, viz. that he might not be supposed to be the Messiah, to whom he bore a resemblance, and of whom he was a type. See also another reason in the note on xlv. 1.

The supposition, that the prophecies of Isaiah and Daniel were known to Persian kings, affords a solution of many problems in Persian history. See above, Introductions to the Book of Ezra, p. 900; and to the Book of Esther, p. 965; note; and cp. Varinga, p. 496.

The titles here given by God to Cyrus, more than a century before his birth,—“My Shepherd, who shall perform all on His Father’s will, and, in Whom right hand I have to subdue nations before him” (xlv. 1),—and his acts in overthrowing the idolatrous power of Babylon, and in delivering God’s people from Captivity, and restoring them to Jerusalem, and in rebuilding God’s house there, and in giving back the holy vessels to it, point out Cyrus to those who have the New Testament in their hands, as a type of Him, Who is there described as the Good Shepherd, the Anointed (Messiah, or Christ), as Prophet, Priest, and King, Who came into the world to do His Father’s will, and in Whom the Father is well pleased, and Whom the Father upholds, and in Whom His soul delights (xliii. 1), and to Whom the Father has given all power, and put all things under His feet, and Who delivers His people from the Babylon of spiritual bondage, and restores them to their home in God’s presence and favour, and rebuilds the Temple of Human Nature, that had fallen down, and consecrates it into a Church Universal, and recovers its sacred vessels, and dedicates them anew to God. See on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22; and on Ezra i. 1—7; and J. Lapide, on xlv. 1.

—Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid] The City of Jerusalem was first built, then the Temple, twenty-one years after the edict of Cyrus; and, last of all, the Walls of the city, ninety-two years after the edict. See Introd. to Ezra, p. 205. The building of the Temple would have been frustrated, if the edict of Cyrus, which was lost for a time, had not been discovered in a remarkable manner. See Ezra iv. v.; and vi. 1, 2.

CYRUS.

Ch. XLV. 1. his anointed—Cyrus] See on xlv. 28. Some ancient MSS. of the Sept. seem to have read Kipph here for Kippe. See S. Baraeb., Ep. c. 12.  
— I will loose the loins] See Job xii. 21.  
— the two leaved gates] Folding doors, double gates of cities, Jesue. 10. “Let us read the eight books of Esther on the history of Cyrus, and we shall see there the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah. What city’s gates did not open to him? What king was not made subject to him? ‘I,’ says God, ‘will go before thee, that thou mayest know Me, especially with the ignorance and imbecility of the gods which are before thy birth.’ We are informed by Josephus that Cyrus read this prophecy of Isaiah, and was therefore so favourable to the Jews.” (S. Jerome.)

2. gates of brass] As those of the walls of Babylon, a hundred in number, are described by Herod. (1. 179). Also the gates leading from the streets to the river were of brass (Herod. l. 180).
3. treasures of darkness] Hoarded in secret places, as the riches of Creesus (conquered by Cyrus), and of Babylon were. Cp. Jer. 1. 37; li. 13.

4. For Jacob my servant’s sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have summamed thee, though thou hast not known me.

5. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

6. That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, That there is none beside me.

7. I am the Lord, and there is none else.

8. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and I create evil: I the Lord do all these things.

9. Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker!

10. Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What begettest thou?

11. Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me;
12. I have made the earth, and * created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and * all their host have I commanded.

13. y I have raised him up in righteousness, And I will direct all his ways:
He shall build my city,
And he shall go my captives,
* Not for price nor reward, Saith the Lord of hosts.

14. Thus saith the Lord, The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia, And of the Sabeans, men of stature,
Shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine:
They shall come after thee; * in chains they shall come over,
And they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee,
Saying, * Surely God is in thee; and * there is none else, is there no God.

15. Verily thou art a God * that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.

16. They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, of them:
They shall go to confusion together that are * makers of idols.

b 17. But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation:
Ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

For thus saith the Lord * 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:
* I am the Lord; and there is none else.

** Promise of Rebuilding of Jerusalem by the Instrumentality of Cyrus, and also of the Building up of the Universal Church of Christ.**

13. I have raised him up] Cyrus. On the verb here used in the original, see xlii. 2.

* He shall build me city] See xlv. 28. This was fulfilled in a wonderful manner. See the particulars (Neh. i. 3; iv. 1–7.

14. The labour (or, productions) of Egypt—Ethiopia—Sabeans—shall be thine] This is connected as a consequence with the success of the arms of Cyrus, and the extension of the power of Persia. The attention of the wise men of Egypt, and of the tall and robust warriors of Ethiopia had been already attracted to Jerusalem, and their homage had been paid to the God of Israel, in the days of Hezekiah, by reason of God’s merciful deliverance of Jerusalem, and on account of the marvellous overthrow of Sennacherib’s victorious army at the walls of Jerusalem. Many of them were brought thereby to acknowledge the supremacy of Jehovah, and to confess the vanity of their own deities, which could not save them. See above, xviii. 7; xix. 23.

The manner in which succeeding events, especially the conquests of Cyrus, and other Persian kings, exercised an influence over Egypt, and other countries, by the destruction of their idols, and by the weakening of their national trust in the protection of their deities and in the wisdom of their magicians, prepared the way for the reception of the Truth (see on xix. 3, 4), and fulfilled the prophecies which foretold their conversion (Ps. lvii. 31; lxxi. 10). With regard to the mission of Persia, in the destruction of idolatry, see further below, on xlv. 1. No Nation was more addicted to idolatry, and worshipped more porfous and monstrous forms of it than Egypt; and therefore its subjection to the God of Israel is one of the noblest trophies of the victory of His Truth (S. Jerome).

— Sabeans, men of stature] See above, on xviii. 2, where the Ethiopians are characterized by their stature. The Sabeans of Western Arabia were celebrated by ancient authors for their tallness. See Bochart, Geogr. Sacr. iv. 8; Theol. ii. 26; Vitringa, 502; Stier, 189.

— in chains] Spiritual chains of faith and love. See above on Ps. cxlix. 8.

Surely God is in thee] Words adopted by St. Paul, and applied to the Christian Church (1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25).

15. a God that hidest thyself] In the inscrutable mysteries of Thy dealings with men and nations, especially Thine own people (Rom. xi. 33).

16. makers of idols] The domination of Cyrus and of Persia conducd greatly to the overthrow of Idolatry at Babylon, and in other countries, and so prepared the way for the preaching and reception of the true Religion. See on r. 14.

17. world without end] Everlasting. The word (διάν) of the former clause is repeated: * Ye who trust in God shall be saved with everlasting salvation, and not (like those who trust in lying vanities) be condemned with everlasting condemnation.* Our Blessed Lord seems to have laid this sentence in His mind when, repeating the same word, He said that the wicked should go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life everlasting (Matt. xxv. 46).

He created it not in vain] Rather, He did not create (Heb. bara) it a ruin (Heb. ba’ah). The Earth was not created originally in a ruined condition; but after its creation it was ruined by an evil power; and then God restored it in its present form.

This is an important statement with regard to the history of the formation of the Earth as it now is. That formation was a restoration. “In the beginning” (in ages of ages before that formation) “God created the heavens and the Earth;” but afterwards the Earth became a ruin (Heb. ba’ah va ba’ah) by the agency of some evil powers; and God brought the Earth forth from the womb of that dark fragmentary chaos, in which it lay submerged beneath the waters, and formed it in its present condition. See above, on Gen. i. 1, 2.

1. It is here asserted by God Himself that He, Jehovah, the God of Israel, is the Elohim, Who created the World. See on Gen. ii. 4.

The connexion with the argument is this. Israel may be brought into captivity; but this is no direct design of God’s providence; it is the consequence of Israel’s sin. But Israel may be restored from their ruined condition, as the Earth was.
Come, O Israel, to Me. ISAIAH XLV. 19—25. XLVI. 1. Come all to God, in Christ.

Before Christ.
1 I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth:
2 I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain:
3 I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

Draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations:
4 They have no knowledge that set up the stones of their graven image,
5 And pray unto a god that cannot save.

Tell ye, and bring them near;
6 Yea, let them take counsel together:
7 *Who hath declared this from ancient time?
8 *Who hath told it from that time?

Have not I the Lord?
9 *And there is no God else beside me;
10 A just God and a Saviour: there is none beside me.

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth:
11 For I am God, and there is none else.

I have sworn by myself,
12 The word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return,
13 That unto me every knee shall bow,
14 Every tongue shall swear;

Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength:
15 Even to him shall men come;
16 And all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.

In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.
17 XLVI. 1 Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth,
18 Their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle:
19 Your carriages were heavy laden;
20 They are the true Israel of God, and have sprouted from the seed sown by the Apostles, and believe in Christ, will have everlasting righteousness and glory (S. Jerome, Vitringa).

The Fall of the Idols of Babylon.
21 C. XLVI. 1. Bel—Nebio Compare Jer. i. 2. "Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces." Bel, Nebio, and Merodach were principal deities of Babylon.
22 Nebuchadnezzar thus begins a document, still extant, which describes his buildings at Babylon—"Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, the elect of Merodach, the supreme lord, the adorer of Nebio. . . . I have restored the sanctuaries of the god; for Merodach is the great god who created me, and I have glorified all his great works: Nebio, his son, sustains my royalty, and I have always exalted the worship of his august divinity. Nebio, the guardian of the hosts of heaven and earth, has committed to me the sceptre of justice to govern men. Imgour Bel and Nivit Bel are the fortifications which surround Babylon. Nebopallotssasor, King of Babylon, my father, began them, but did not complete their magnificence" (Oppert, Inscription de Nebuchadnezzar, pp. 15—21. Rheims, 1866). This inscription was found at Telhes, in 1862, by Sir Harford Jones, and thence passed into the collection of the East India Company. It is now in the British Museum. It is engraved on a block of black basalt, in ten columns, making 620 lines.

Some have supposed that the Temple of Belus, described by Ieropodius (i. 181—185), stood at Bhir-Nimroud, which has also been identified with the Tower of Babel. But this site seems too far from the royal palace; and it is more probable that the temple stood at the Belak mount, on the east side of the Euphrates, a little to the north of the Karr, or palace. Rawlinson, Anc. Mem., iii. 339, 358, 389—372. It may be truly said, that "Bel boweth down;" his Temple, once the wonder of the world, has sunk so low into a confused chaos of ruins, that topographers cannot decide what its site was.}

— Your carriages were heavy laden] Rather, your golden
Isaiah XLVI. 2—11.

God will call Cyrus.

2. They are a burden to the weary beast; they stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden.
3. Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel.
4. Which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb.

5. To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?
6. 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.

7. They will cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble.

8. Remember this, and shew yourselves men:

9. Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me.

10. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

11. Calling a ravenous bird from the east,
ISAIAH XLVI. 12, 13. XLVII. 1—8.

of Babylon.

The humiliation of Babylon.

CH. XLVII.

Having described the ignominious abase ment of the gods of Babylon, the Prophet proceeds to portray the degradation of the great City herself.

1. **virgin**] Beautiful, impregnable, and adorned with jewels.  

2. **daughter of Babylon**] Or, daughter Babylon (the feminine is one of apposition).  

3. **no throne**] Or, without a throne.

4. **Chaldeans**] Who were invited by kings of Babylon from Mesopotamia, and defended the city against Arabian invaders. See Vitringa on xiii. 19; and xxiii. 13; and xlii. 14.  

5. **mean meal**] As a slave (Exod. xi. 5; Matt. xxiv. 41).  

6. **lay these things**] Or, rather, *tuck up the train,* the long flowing train of thy royal robe (Gen. 39:13; Prov. 19. 13).

— the rivers] These waters of the Euphrates in which thou didst once glory, and in which thou didst place thy trust as thy pride and defence. Cp. on Rev. xvi. 12.

3. **I will not meet thee as a man**] Rather, I shall not encounter a man, or, I shall not light upon a man (cp. xiii. 12); they will all flee before me. None of the men of this once powerful and populous city, and of its countless allies and subjects will dare to resist me (as Targ. renders it). Cp. Gen. xxviii. 11. 1 Sam. x. 5, where the same word is used,—they will all be like a chased roe (xiii. 14).


Such were the titles which the King of Babylon arrogated to himself. There is a Spiritual Power in Europe which makes a similar claim. Its Supreme Ruler calls himself also the "King Vicar," and when he is crowned, is addressed with these words:—"Know that thou art the father of Princes, and of Kings, and the Ruler of the World!"—"Seias to esse Patrem principum et regum, Recredorem Orbi." And its seat is the mystical Babylon—Rome. May not, therefore, these prophecies of Isaiah and of Jeremiah (i., ii.) have a secondary fulfilment in her? See below, on Rev. xiii. 14; p. 254; and on Rev. xvii., pp. 219—252.

6. Upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke] For proofs of Babylon's cruelty to old men, see Lam. iv. 16; v. 12; and of her inhuman barbarities towards Jerusalem generally, see 2 Kings xv. 5, 6, 26. Jer. i. 17; ii. 34.

The man that executeth my counsel from a far country: Yea, 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 stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness:  

13. I bring near my righteousness; It shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: And I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.

XLVII. 1. Come down, and 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 not more be called tender and delicate.  

2. Take the millstones, and grind meal: Uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, Uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.  

3. 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. **our redeemer, the Lord of hosts is his name, The Holy One of Israel.**

5. Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: For thou shalt not more be called, The lady of kingdoms.

6. I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, And given them into thine hand: Thou didst shew them no mercy; Upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.  

7. And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: So that thou didst not 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 dwellst carelessly,
The pride, superstition, and fall of Babylon.

ISAIAH XLVII. 9—15.

That sayest in thine heart, "I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, The loss of children, and widowhood: They shall come upon thee in their perfection, For the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments.

Therefore shall evil come upon thee; Thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: And mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: And desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know.

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.

13. Thou art weary in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, Stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; They shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: There shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it. Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, even thy merchants, from thy youth:

8. That sayest in thine heart, "I am, and none else beside me; Thouliesthmost to thyself the attribute of God. See xlvi. 9. 14; xlvii. 8, where God applies these words to Himself: Thou sayest, I shall not sit as a widow. This was true of the literal Babylon; and it is not less true of that mystical Empire, which is called Babylon in the Apocalypse, and asserts itself to be supreme. See below, on Rev. xvii. 2—6; xviii. 7, 8, where St. John uses the following language, which bears a striking resemblance to the present words of Isaiah: "How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire." Cp. v. 18: "What city is like unto this great city!"

9. For the multitude. Or, notwithstanding the multitude (Syrac., Vitriv., Dels.) but the text seems better.

10. None see thee.] He hath said in his heart, "God hath forgotten: He hideth His face; He will never see it" (Ps. x. 11).

11. That sayest not from whence it riseth.] Literally, thou shalt not know its daws, its day-break. So Targ., and Vitr., and Vitringa. With all thy magical arts thou shalt not be able to divine the dawning of that day,—the day of thine own destruction,—nor the quarter from which it will arise. Cp. v. 13. This was signally fulfilled. Babylon was taken by Cyrus in a night of secrecy, when she was celebrating a religious anniversary, and was praising her gods, whom she imagined to have made her invincible and impregnable (see on xlvii. 1). The enemy came upon her, not by any assault upon her walls, but they suddenly emerged in the very heart of the city by means of the dried-up channel of the Euphrates, which she fondly regarded as her bulwark and her glory. See xlvii. 5—9. Such will probably be the destruction of the mystical Babylon. It will come upon her when least expected, and by means which seemed most unlikely. Cp. on xxi. 5—9, and on Rev. xvi. 12. — to put it off] To expiate it. With all the sacrificial oblations to the multitude of thy gods thou wilt not be able to avert it. As to the sense of the verb, see Prov. xvi. 4. Gesen. 411. — desolation.] A storm of devastation (Ps. xxxv. 8).


14. the fire shall burn them.] When Cyrus and his forces made an irruption into Babylon, he ordered them to set fire to the houses, which were very combustible, the doors being made of palm wood, smeared over with bitumen, and the roofs covered with reeds (Xenophon, Cyrop. vii. 5. Cp. above, on xxi. 5). So it is foretold by St. John in the Apocalypse, concerning the mystical Babylon, that it will be burnt with fire. See below, on Rev. xvi. 16; xvii. 18. — there shall not be a coal to warm at—to sit before it] Rather, it is not a cool to warm oneself at, a fire to sit before it. No; but it is a cool to search, and a fire to consume them. Cp. xlv. 16.

15. thy merchants.] Who traded with Babylon by land and
They shall wander every one to his quarter; 
None shall save thee.

XLVIII. 1 Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, 
Which are called by the name of Israel, 
And are come forth out of the waters of Judah, 
Which swear by the name of the Lord, 
And make mention of the God of Israel, 
But not in truth, nor in righteousness;
For they call themselves of the holy city, 
And stay themselves upon the God of Israel; 
The Lord of hosts is his name.

3 I have declared the former things from the beginning; 
And they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; 
I did them suddenly, and they came to pass.

Because I knew that thou art obstinate, 
And thy neck is an iron sinew, 
And thy brow brass;

I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; 
Before it came to pass I shewed it thee: 
Lest thou shouldst say, Mine idol hath done them, 
And my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them.

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.

They are created now, and not from the beginning; 
Even before the day when thou heardest them not; 
Lest thou shouldst say, Behold, I knew them.

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 a transgresser from the womb.

For my name's sake will I defer mine anger,
Israel is chastened in love.  
ISAIAH XLVIII. 10—20.  
Go ye forth from Babylon.

And for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.
Behold, "I have refined thee, but not ° with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.
For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: For ° how should my name be polluted?
And "I will not give my glory unto another.

Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called;
I am he; I am the ° first, I also am the last.
Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, And ° my right hand hath spanned the heavens:
When ° I call unto them, they stand up together.
All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; Which among them hath declared these things?
The Lord hath loved him:
He will do his pleasure on Babylon, And his arm shall be on the Chaldeans.
I, ° even I, have spoken; yea, ° I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.
Come ye near unto me, hear ye this;
I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, there ° am I:
And now ° the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me.
Thus saith ° the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; ° I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit,
Which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldst go.
'O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments!
Then had thy peace been as a river, And thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:
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.

1 Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans,

— will I defer mine anger] Cp. Prov. xiv. 29; xv. 18; xvi. 32; xix. 11, where the same metaphor is used. The contraction of the nostrils was a sign of wrath; the relaxation of them a sign of patience and long-suffering.
° not with silver] Rather, not as silver, but as something far more precious; and therefore to be refined with much greater care. Compare 1 Pet. i. 7, "The trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth." The refiner of silver may lose some grains of the good ore in the smelting; but I will not lose a single grain of thee, in the spiritual process of refining thee by the furnace of affliction at Babylon.
° I have chosen thee] I have proved thee by affliction, and I have selected whatever in thee stood the trial of the fire. See Gesen. 111.
° my name] These words are rightly supplied from v. 9.
° the Lord hath loved him] Cp. Deut. xxxii. 12. Also, v. 10, 11. — And his arm shall be on the Chaldeans Or, and his arm on the Chaldeans will do His pleasure.

The Appeal of Christ.

16. Come ye near unto me] The prophecy passes from Cyrus, the human type, to his Divine Antitype, Jesus Christ. Christ Himself is introduced, and declares that He is the Divine Word from the beginning (cp. John i. 1); and He anticipates His own

Mission, and also the Mission of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, to accomplish a far greater purpose than that which was executed by Cyrus,—namely, to complete the work of God in the destruction of error, and in the liberation of all God's people from the bondage of Sin, and in their restoration to God's favour in Himself; and He proclaims Himself with these titles: "Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel."  
° the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me] Here are Three distinct Persons; the Lord God, and His Spirit— they are represented as sending, and another Person Who is sent. Here is a bright glimpse of the doctrine of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, Three Persons and One God; a doctrine shadowed forth in the apocalyptic Targum (see above, on vi. 3), and fully revealed in the Gospel, cp. S. Jerome, who says, "Brevi versiculo Trinitatis nobis est ostenditur sacramentum," and so Origen, S. Athanasius, S. Cyril here, S. Basil, S. Augustine, S. Chrysostom, S. Greg. Nyssen, quoted by A. Lapide, and Glass. Gramm. Sacr. lib. iii. Tract ii. Can. xiii.; Tilzinger, p. 552, and D. D. ed. here.
° O that thou hadst hearkened!] Words addressed by God to Israel by the mouth of Moses in the wilderness (Deut. xxxii. 29), and by Christ in His pathetic appeal to Jerusalem, Matt. xxvii. 37. Luke xxi. 34.

20. Go ye forth of Babylon] These words have a literal sense, as addressed primarily to the Jews, and a spiritual one as addressed to us; see below, 2 Cor. vi. 17, and Rev. xviii. 4.
With a voice of singing declare ye,  
Tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth;  
Sav ye, The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob.  

And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts:  
He caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them:  
He clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.

22. There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.

XLIX. 1. Listen, O isles, unto me;  
And hearken, ye people, from far;  
The Lord hath called me from the womb;  
From the bowels of my mother he made mention of my name.

2. And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword;  
In the shadow of his hand he hid me,  
And made me a polished shaft;  
In his quiver he hid me;

3. And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel,  
bowels of my mother] Cyrus was named by God more than a century before his birth (xlv. 28), but Christ was promised from the beginning, after the Full; and He was described specially in His relation to His Mother. He is the "Seed of the Woman" (Gen. iii. 15), "the son of the Virgin" (Isa. vii. 14); and in the typical Psalms special prominence is given to His Mother, as here, and in the Passion-Psalm, "Thou art He that took Me out of my Mother's womb: Thou wast My hope, when I hanged yet on My Mother's breasts" (Ps. xcv. 9, 10); and in the Gospels the message of His birth, even before His conception, was to her (Luke i. 31).

2. my mouth like a sharp sword] To which the Ineimate Word is compared, Heb. iv. 12. See also Rev. i. 16; xiv. 15. The edge of a sword is called in Hebrew its mouth (Gen. xxxiv. 26. Exod. xvii. 15); a two-edged sword is represented as coming out of Christ's mouth, Rev. i. 16; ii. 12; xiv. 15.

— In the shadow of his hand he hid me] Christ is hidden in the shadow of God's hand (cp. li. 16, "I have covered thee in the shadow of Mine hand"); that is, He is protected by Him from all assaults of the Enemy. This implies that He would be an object of attack; which is more fully developed in what follows in lii. 14—lili. And in another sense, Christ, before His Incarnation, was in the shadow of God's hand, like a sword in its scabbard.

— made me a polished shaft] Christ compares Himself also to an arrow hidden in a quiver, from which it is to be drawn forth by the Archer and discharged from the Bow in due time.

The Messiah was God's Arrow—His Apostle (Heb. iii. 1). The Apostles, were Christ's Arrows, which He, Who is described in the Apocalypse as the Archer riding on the white horse (Rev. vi. 2), discharge from His bow, and by which He subdues the World. See above, on Ps. xlv. 5; and on xxvii. 4; and below, on Rev. vi. 2; and John xx. 21, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." Cp. below on Zech. ix. 13.

3. Thou art my servant, O Israel] Christ, in His Manhood and His mission, is described as God's servant. See above, xlii. 3, compared with Matt. xii. 18; and see below, on Acts iii. 16; 27. 30.

— O Israel] Rather, not only art Thou my servant, but Thou also, Christ, art Israel, in Whom I will be glorified. Thou art my servant, and Thou art Israel, a Prince, the Prince of God (such is the meaning of the name Israel, Gen. xlix. 28). Thou, O Christ, art the true Israel. Christ is called Israel, because He was typified by Jacob, in suffering, and in victory consequent on suffering (see above, on Gen. xlix. 24, where this is shown at large); and because, as Jacob was the father of the twelve Patriarchs, and of all the family of Israelites through them, so Christ was the spiritual Father of the Apostles, and, through them, of the Universal Church.

The Holy Spirit, speaking by St. Matthew (xi. 15), applies to Christ the words of Hosan (x. 1), "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt;" and thus teaches us that the Nation of Israel, in its Exodus and in its mission to evangelize the world, was a figure of Christ.

The name of Israel was first given to a man, Jacob, and then was extended to the Nation which sprang from him. Christ is the Head of the Nation, "the Israel of God" (Gal. vii. 21—22. XLI. 21. XLI. 1—3. to all Nations.)
4 * In whom I will be glorified.

5 * Then 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 my work with my God.

6 And now, saith the Lord, that formed me from the womb to be his servant, To bring Jacob again to him, || Though Israel be not gathered, Yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, And my God shall be my strength.

7 And he said, || It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the || preserved of Israel:
I will also give thee for a * light to the Gentiles, That thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

8 Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, || To him whom man despiseth, To him whom the nation abhorreth, To a servant of rulers, || Kings 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.

9 Thus saith the Lord, || In an acceptable time have I heard thee, And in a day of salvation have I helped thee: And I will preserve thee, And give thee for a covenant of the people,
To establish the earth,  
To cause to inherit the desolate heritages;  
That thou mayest say to 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.  
They shall not hunger or thirst;  
Neither shall the heat nor sun smite them:  
For he that hath mercy on them shall lead them,  
Even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

And I will make all my mountains a way,  
And my highways shall be exalted.

Behold, these shall come from far:  
And, lo, these from the north and from the west;  
And these from the land of Sinim.

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.

But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me,  
And my Lord hath forgotten me.

Can a woman forget her sucking child,  
That she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?  
Yea, they may forget,  
Yet will I not forget thee;

Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands;  
Thy walls are continually before me.

Israel, "the Servant of the Lord," in this chapter cannot be (as some allege) the Hebrew Nation; for how could it be given by God to be for a covenant unto itself? (cp. on v. 6.) but this is true of Christ. He is the bond which unites the Nation to God. See xliii. 6. Eph. ii. 14, 15. Cp. & Justin Martyr, e. Tryph. p. 122.

To establish the earth] Rather, to raise up the earth, which before lay buried in ruin and darkness, and is raised up by Christ from sin and the grave.

To cause to thee to know] To demystify the waste wilderness of heathenism with inhabitants, who will inherit it in successive generations.

That thou mayest say to the prisoners] Christ is the World's Cyrus. See above, xlii. 26—28; xlv. 1—4.

Neither shall the heat] That all these promises are fulfilled in Christ, appears from the adoption of these words in the Apocalypse, and from the application of them to Him (Rev. vii. 16.)

The land of Sinim] Probably Chalma (Manasseh b. Israel, Montanus, Calmet, Winer, Mauvier, Hitzig, Henderson, Umbreit, Knobel, Green. 584; Fuerst, 977; Kittel, p. 212; Delitzsch, 477, 478).

Zion is comforted—She is the Spiritual Mother of the Universal Church.

But Zion said] Zion is represented as alleging that if the Gentiles are accepted by God in Christ, she herself is rejected. But this inference is refuted as erroneous. Cp. Rom. xi. 1, 2. God's love to Zion is immutable. Zion ought not to grieve at the reception of the Gentiles into the Church, but to rejoice; she herself is their Spiritual Mother. Christ is the Seed of Abraham and of David. He is a Jew (Zech. viii. 23. John iv. 22. Rom. ix. 5). All His Apostles were Jews. The Holy Ghost came upon them at Jerusalem. Out of Zion went forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem, to evangelize the World. See on lii. 3. Zion is the Mother of Christendom.

Wherever a believer in Christ is, there is a son and citizen of Zion. See above, on Ps. 87.

This section to chap. ii. 3, is the Haphtarah to Deut. vii. 12—xi. 25, which declares God's love to Israel.

I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands] The names of the tribes of Israel were graven by God's command on the precious stones of the breast-plate worn by the High Priest when he presented himself before the Lord; and they were engraved also on the two onyx stones which clasped the breast-plate to his shoulders.

Christ, our great Universal and Everlasting High Priest, bears His people on His shoulders and at His heart, when He presents Himself before God. See above, on Exod. xxviii. 19—17.

The names of heathen deities were punctured on the arms of their votaries. (See on Rev. xiii. 16; and Dr. Thomson, L. and B., p. 67.) This is reversed here. The Divine Person, Who here speaks, declares that He has graven the portraiture of His Church on the palms of His own hands. This is fulfilled in a mysterious manner in the Blessed Hands of Christ Himself, pierced by the nails, the instruments of His death; and thus the evidence of His love is engraved for ever there. They are written on Him, Who is the Rock,—the Rock of Ages. See above, on Job xvi. 21, 25; and S. Augustine, Soliloqu. c. 2: "Thy hands, O Lord, have fashioned me; those hands which were nailed to the Cross for me. Despise not Thou the work of Thy hands. Look on the work of Thy hands. Thou hast graven me on Thy hands. Read that engraving, and save me."

Here is a striking contrast to the action of God's Enemy in the Apocalypse, who makes all receive his own mark on their hands. See Rev. xiii. 16.

—Thy walls are continually before me] I am the Architect, Who designed and built them, and I will watch over and sustain them. I have the ground-plan and elevation of them ever before my eyes. Cp. Ezek. iv. 1, where God commands Ezekiel to draw a plan of Jerusalem upon a tile or brick.
The Gentiles shall come to Zion. ISAIAH XLIX. 17—23. Kings her nursing fathers.

17 Thy children shall make haste;
   d Thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.
18 ° 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, as f Prov. 17. 6, with an ornament,
   And bind them on thee, as a bride doth.
19 For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction,
   Shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants,
   And they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.
20 ° The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other,
   Shall say again in thine ears, The place is too straight 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?
22 ° 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 arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.

17. Thy children shall make haste] Zion's children come to her with loving alacrity; and her enemies are made to flee from her. Cp. v. 19.

The Coming of the Gentiles to Zion.
Jerusalem is represented as the Mother Church of the World. All believers in Christ are Abraham's seed, and the Israel of God. They are Jews in the true sense of the word. See Rev. ii. 9; iii. 9. The Law was to go forth from Zion, and the Word of God from Jerusalem (iii. 3. Micah iv. 2). All the Apostles were of the seed of Israel—Jews. They were commanded by Christ to tarry at Jerusalem till they were endued with the Spirit from on high (Luke xxi. 40). The Holy Ghost came upon them there, and thence went they forth to teach all nations, and to baptize the world.

This is the true ground of comfort and joy to Jerusalem, that though her Temple is in ruins, and her walls levelled with the dust, yet she lives and grows for ever in the Church of Christ, which sprang forth from her womb: see above on v. 14.

The following prophecy (see 18—23) is repeated with further enlargements and amplifications in lx. 4—14, which is to be compared with the present section.

18. thou shalt surely clothe thee with them] Cp. Jer. xliii. 12: "He shall array Himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment."

Shall even now be too narrow] Literally, yea, now thou shalt be too narrow (the verb is the second person feminine in kal of yatanar: Gesen. 362). Observe the pronoun thou put in apposition with ruined places. Zion had become a ruin, but she shall be filled and the earth shall be filled with知识.

20. after thou hast lost the other] Zion lost many of her children by their obstinacy and unbelief when Christ appeared, but she received the Gentiles in their place. See Rom. xi. 1—36. And Hosea says, "The number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered" (Hos. i. 10).

21. Who hath begotten me these] These Gentile tribes, raised up like stones of the wilderness to be children of Abraham (Matt. iii. 9). When the Temple stood, Jerusalem was the centre of Unity, and all the faithful locked to it. But "without the Gospel" (as Matthew Henry says here), "the union of believers is by a spiritual accession to the mystical body of Christ in faith and love. Those who come to Jesus as the Mediator of the New Covenant, do thereby come to the Mount Sinai, the Church of the First-born" (Heb. xii. 22, 23).

23. kings shall be thy nursing fathers] Cp. lx. 16: "Thou shalt suck the breast of kings." So tender shall be the love of Kings and Princes to the Church of Christ that they are there compared to mothers. So St. Paul, in his affection for his spiritual children, speaks of himself as their nursing mother (1 Thess. ii. 7, 8. Gal. iv. 19).

That National Establishments of True Religion are pleasing to Almighty God, and bring down His blessings, spiritual and temporal, upon those who maintain them, is evident from such declarations of Holy Scripture as these:—"All power is given unto Me," says Christ, "in heaven and earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18). He it is "King of kings, and Lord of lords" (Rev. xiv. 16). "All Kings shall bow down before Him, and all Nations shall do Him service" (Ps. lxxvii. 11). He is the Arbiter of the destiny of all Nations. And therefore the royal Psalmist says, "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings!" (Ps. xli. 10); be instructed, ye that are judges of the earth; Kiss the Son (that is, do homage to Christ), "lest He be angry, and so ye perish from the right way, when His wrath is kindled but a
God's love to the Jews. ISAIAH XLIX. 24—26. L. 1, 2. He has not cast them off.

Before CHRIST about
117. t Heb. the prophecies.
m Ps. 72. 9. Micah 7. 17.


And their † queens thy nursing mothers: They shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and "lick up the dust of thy feet;" and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: For "they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

24. * Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, Or † the lawful captive delivered?

25. But thus saith the Lord, Even the † captives of the mighty shall be taken away, And the prey of the terrible shall be delivered:

26. For I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.

And I will * feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; And they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with || sweet wine: And all flesh * shall know that I the Lord

L. 1 Thus saith the Lord,
Where is * the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? Or which of my † creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities ² have ye sold yourselves, And for your transgressions is your mother put away.

² Wherefore, when I came, was there no man?

little." And the promise of Christ to His Church is, "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and Queens thy nursing mothers" (Jsa. xlix. 23); and the song of triumph will one day sound on high, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ." (Rev. xvi. 15). Assuredly, it must be a blessed thing for men and Nations to do, what Christ Himself commands to be done, and which, when done, will be celebrated with praise and thanksgiving by the angels of God.

Hence it is evident that every Country which has a National Religious Establishment, ought to endeavour to improve it; and that any country which has such an Establishment, and does not maintain it, but destroys it, falls away from God, and forfeits His blessing, without which there can be no peace in this world, and no happiness in another.

But it must also be remembered that the Ecclesiastical Supremacy of Sovereign Princes is represented in Holy Scripture as an honourable and binding Influence. It is compared here by the prophet Isaiah to the wise care of a father for an infant, and to the tender affection of a mother.

This divine delineation of the Royal Supremacy has been too often forgotten. Instead of being fostering Parents, Civil Rulers have been harsh Taskmasters of the Church of Christ. They have not allowed her to develop herself with elasticity and energy, but have made her spiritual essence to be the slave of her temporal accident, as if the Church of Christ had been founded by Him for the sake of the National Establishment, and as if the Establishment did not exist for the sake of the Church.

This temporal jealousy of the spiritual attributes of the Church, and this civil restraint of her spiritual agency, is fatal to the welfare of State and Throne. It has alienated the affection of Churches from them, and has disabled Churches for doing their proper work in diffusing a spirit of religion and loyalty. If the United Church of England and Ireland were now allowed to expand itself in all the integrity of her Apostolic doctrine and discipline, with faithful Bishops placed in the great towns and cities of the Realm, then the best interests of the English Monarchy would be promoted, and the loyalty and happiness of the people would be placed on a solid and secure foundation of religion and piety.

Let "Kings be nursing fathers, and Queens be nursing mothers of the Church of Christ;" and He, who is "King of kings," will give them His blessing in this world, and in another. Cp. lx. 16 and above, Introduction to this Volume.

— They shall bow down to thee! The allusion to Cyrus, the Persian King, is kept up. They shall bow down to Thee, that is, to Christ, Who is in thee; as the Persians bow before their King. Cp. below, lx. 14.

24. * Shall the prey be taken? Can the Jews be delivered from their strong Babylonish masters? Yes; they can be delivered, and they will be delivered, by Cyrus. So will captive souls be rescued from Satan, the strong man, by Christ, Who is stronger than he (Matt. xii. 29. Luke xii. 22).

— the lawful captive! Rather, the captive company of the righteous, the penitent Israel of God.

25. But thus saith the Lord! Rather, Yeas, saith the Lord.

26. I will feed them—with their own flesh! The obdurate and unbelieving Jews will be driven to desperation by famine, and will devour their own offspring, as some of the Jews did in the siege of Jerusalem, when it had rejected Christ and His Apostles, and continued obstinate in its rebellion against Him, Who is Head and Saviour of the true Israel of God. Cp. on Deut. xxviii. 55—56; and Zech. xi. 9. Rev. xvi. 16.

The Miseries of the Jews are due to themselves, not to any defect of love or power in Christ.

Cp. L.] At the close of the foregoing chapter, Christ had referred to the miseries that would be suffered by the unbelieving Jews who rejected Him. He proceeds now to show that their rejection by God was not due to any lack of power, or love, or wisdom on His part, as the Saviour sent by God. On the contrary, that He submitted to shame and suffering for their sakes, and that this was His path to glory; and thence He takes occasion to comfort all suffering believers, and to warn all who reject Him.

1. Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement? God has not given to the Hebrew Nation a bill of divorcement, and put her away, so as never to receive her again. See Deut. xiv. 1—5. Cp. Jer. iii. 1. Nor has He made merchandise of her by selling her as a slave to pay any debt of His own to His creditors. But the Hebrew Nation has severed herself from Him by her sins. Cp. lxx. 2: "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God;" and Rom. xi. 1: "Hath God cast away His People? God forbid."—Ego (respondens Deus) Synagogae, materce vestram, cui datas tabellas Legis quasi Maritus dederam, repuli, quae ipsa prius divortium fecit me. (Augustine).

2. Wherefore, when I came, was there no man?—thirst! Why, when Christ came to preach the glad tidings of salvation to the Jews first of all, did they reject Him? "Wherefore, when He came to His own, His own received Him not?" (John i. 11; cp. Acts xiii. 46; xvii. 6; xxviii. 28.)
Christ remonstrates with them.  

ISAIAH L. 3—9. His sufferings will lead to glory.

"When I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver? Behold, I at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: Their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst. I clothe the heavens with blackness, 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 him 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.

He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together: who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me.

Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me?"

It was not through any lack of power, or of love, and of readiness to save, on His part. No; He had plunged Egypt with darkness for their sake (v. 8), and dried up the Red Sea for their fathers, and had brought them over the Jordan into Canaan; He dried up the rivers of Babylon, and involved her Empire in blackness (cp. Rev. vi. 12), in order that the Hebrew exiles might return to Jerusalem.

Observe how almost imperceptibly the address of the Lord in v. 1—"Thus saith the Lord,"—passes into that of the Messian, in v. 2,—"When I came,"—a clear proof that He Who came as Man, is no other than the Everlasting God.

Christ's Voluntary Humiliation.

4. The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned. The rejection of Israel is not due to any lack of wisdom on the part of the Messiah, Who was sent by God to them. Not only was Christ mighty in Divine power, and gracious in Divine love, as He showed himself to the Hebrew Nation at the Exodus, and at the return from Babylon, but, as Man, He stooped to their weaknesses, and became His Father's disciple, in order to teach them Divine wisdom. As He Himself says, "As My Father hath taught Me, I speak" (John viii. 28, 38).

"The Lord God hath given Me the tongue of the learned" (or of disciples that are taught), "that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary;" or rather, "to comfort the weary with words" (Vulg., Aquila, Gesen., Delitzsch). Cp. Matt. xi. 27. Luke iv. 21. John iii. 34; "He whom God hath set apart spoken the words of God," and "Though He was a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." (Heb. v. 8).—He wakeneth The Father did not speak in dreams or visions to the Well-beloved Son; but continually every morning He spoke in His opened ear, and declared what He was to say; and thus the Messiah was the "Wisdom of God" (I Cor. i. 30), speaking unto men face to face.

5. The Lord God hath opened mine ear See above, on Ps. xl. 6—8. Cp. 1 Sam. xx. 12. 2 Sam. vii. 27 (see margin).

The Church has declared her judgment that this prophecy was fulfilled in the Passion of Christ, by appointing it to be read as the Epistle on the Tuesday before Easter.

I was not rebellious] No; His meat and drink was to do the will of His Father, Who sent Him, and to finish His work, even in His Agony, and unto Death (Matt. xxvi. 39. John iv. 34; xvi. 31. Rom. v. 19. Phil. ii. 7, 8. Heb. v. 8).

The Sufferings of the Messiah.

The Prophet having revealed the triumphs of the Messiah in foregoing prophecies, now proceeds to speak of the voluntary abasement to which He submitted, and by which He ascended to glory. Our Lord adopted a similar method in His dealings with His disciples. He displayed His glory in the Transfiguration before He described circumstantially His future shame and suffering. See Mark viii. 31; ix. 30—32.

The sufferings of the Messiah as "the Servant of the Lord," which led Him to glory, are very appropriately reserved for this Second Portion of Isaiah's prophecies, in which He is comforting the sufferings exiles and captives at Babylon with hopes of restoration by Cyrus, and of eternal redemption through Christ (see above, Introduction).

6. I gave my back to the smiters—spitting As our Lord Himself declares (Luke xviii. 31): "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. For He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spit upon, and scourged, and put to death; and after three days He shall rise again. Our Lord is there referring to this place of Isaiah, and is applying it to Himself (Hengstl.). Cp. Matt. xxvi. 67; xxvii. 28—30. Mark xv. 19. John xix. 15—16. plucked off the hair] Perhaps of the beard (2 Sam. x. 4). See Neb. xiii. 25. In the Septuagint Version here are three words, which re-appear in the Gospel history of Christ's Passion,—

Philoteia—μητροπλησσα—μετροτησσα. 7. I set my face] These words are applied to Christ going to His Passion (Luke ix. 51).—like a flint In holy endurance, as if He had no more feeling when struck than a flint (cp. Ezek. iii. 8, 9), although in His Agony in the Garden His sweat was like great drops of blood falling down to the ground (Luke xxii. 44).

— I shall not be ashamed] No; the shame and suffering of the Messiah was His road to glory. See Phil. i. 8, 9. Heb. ii. 9, 10; xii. 2.
Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; * the moth shall eat them up.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord,
That obeyeth the voice of his servant,
That walketh in darkness, and hath no light?
Let him trust in the name of the Lord,
And stay upon his God.

Behold, all ye that kindle a fire,
That compass yourselves about with sparks:
Walk in the light of your fire,
And in the sparks that ye have kindled.

This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.

**Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn,**
And to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged;
Look unto Abraham your father,
And unto Sarah that bare you:
For I called him alone,
And blessed him, and increased him.

For the Lord shall comfort Zion:
He will comfort all her waste places;
And he will make her wilderness like Eden,
And her desert like the garden of the Lord;
Joy and gladness shall be found therein,
Thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

Hearken unto me, my people;
And give ear unto me, O my nation:
For a law shall proceed from me,
And I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

My righteousness is near;
My salvation is gone forth,
Awake! awake! O arm of the Lord.

1. And mine arms shall judge the people;  
And mine arm shall they trust.

2. Lift up your eyes to the heavens,  
And look upon the earth beneath:

3. And the heavens shall be moved like smoke,  
And the earth shall wax old like a garment:

4. And they that dwell therein shall die in like manner:

5. But my salvation shall be for ever,  
And my righteousness shall not be abolished.

6. Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness,  
The people in whom is my law;

7. Fear ye not the reproach of men,  
Neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

8. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment,  
And the worm shall eat them like wool:

9. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord;  
Awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old.

10. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab,  
And wounded the dragon?

11. Art thou not it which hast dried the sea, the waters of the great deep;  
That hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed over?

12. Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return,  
And come with singing unto Zion;  
And everlasting joy shall be upon their head:

13. They shall obtain gladness and joy;  
And sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

14. I, even I, am he that comforteth you:  
Who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die,

15. And of the son of man which shall be made as grass;

16. And forgettest the Lord thy maker,

17. That hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth;

18. And hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor,

as if he were ready to destroy?
And where is the fury of the oppressor? 
14 The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, 
15 But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared:
16 And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, 
17 Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury; 
18 There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth; 
19 These two things are come unto thee; 
20 Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net: 
21 Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, And drunken, but not with wine: 
22 Thus saith thy Lord the Lord, And thy God that p leadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, 
23 But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; 
24 Which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: And thou hast laid thy body as the ground, And as the street, to them that went over.

13. Where is the fury of the oppressor? Where is the fury of Pharaoh's host? At the bottom of the Red Sea; and Israel is delivered. And where is the fury of Babylon? It also is fallen in the hour of its idolatries revelry, and Israel is free. Where is the fury of Satan? He has been vanquished by Christ on the Cross, and the World is redeemed.

14. The captive exile hasteneth] Literally, he who is bound down (in chains) springs forth in haste to be free; as Israel went in haste from Egypt and from Babylon. So the World leaped forth from its fetters when ransomed by Christ.

And that-fail] Rather, and he shall not be in the pit (in a spiritual sense, the prison of sin, and the grave), and his bread shall not fail—he is fed with living bread from heaven by Christ. See John vi. 31—53, 49—52. 58.

15. But I] Rather, and I, even I. Christ here asserts His own Godhead, and declares that the miracles and mercies of the Exodus were effected by Him.

16. I have put my words in thy mouth] Christ teaches Israel—He instructs His Apostles and Evangelists raised up in Israel—in order that by their means, as the World's Missionaries, He may make a new generation in Himself, and so prepare the way for the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness (see Lxxv. 17; Lxxvi. 22. 2 Pet. iii. 12), and make citizens to dwell for ever in the New Jerusalem (Rev. iii. 12; xxi. 2).
Awake! awake! O Zion.

ISAIAH LII. 1—7. Go forth, evangelize the World.

LII. 1 Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion;
Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city:
For henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

2 Shake thyself from the dust;
Arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem:
Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck,
O captive daughter of Zion:
For thus saith the Lord,
Ye have sold yourselves for naught;
And ye shall be redeemed without money.

4 For thus saith the Lord God,
My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there;
And the Assyrian oppresseth them without cause.

5 Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord,
That my people is taken away for nought?
That they rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord;
And my name continually every day is 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 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,
That publisheth peace;
Before CHRIST about 712.

a Heb. Uri, wri.—Arise, arise! This second appeal of Christ to Jerusalem. Arise, arise! is different in the original from that in 17, which is translated by the same words; and it corresponds to that in li. 9, where Zion calls to Christ to arise. Observe the connexion. Zion had called on the arm of the Lord to arise, and put on strength as a garment. Christ, having called upon her in li. 17 to stir herself, now calls upon her to arise, and put on her beautiful garments.

This second appeal excites her to a still more strenuous effort than that of emancipation from Babylon, which was the primary purpose of the former call to awake (li. 17).

This is an ahorum which sounds from Him to her, and from her to the whole world. It is a call to Zion to awake, and to arouse the world from the slumber and prison of sin and Satan by the trumpet of evangelical preaching to all Nations. See vers. 7, 10.

— put on thy strength The arm of the Lord has been invoked to Zion to awake, and to put on strength (li. 9). This has been done. And Zion must now awake and put on her strength, and not only go forth from her captivity at Babylon, but she must go forth to evangelize the World.

2. Arise, and sit down. As a queen on a throne (Targum). 3. Ye have sold yourselves—money Ye have sold yourselves by your sins (see 1), for what profited you nothing, but rather brought misery and shame; and ye shall be redeemed without money ye shall be redeemed freely from Babylon by Cyrus, without any payment or effort on your part; and much more shall ye be redeemed freely by Christ, not only without any cost on your part, but with the price of His own blood shed freely for you (1 Pet. i. 18).

On this text, considered in its Christian sense, see Bp. Sanderson, Sermon i. 173.

4. to sojourn Israel went to Egypt to dwell there for a time as a guest, but it became to him a house of bondage; and the Assyrians (Heb. and Asshur) oppressed them without cause (see Genes. 72); that is, without having any right to possess Israel as a slave. The comprehensive word Asshur is used to signify the oppression of Israel by Assyria, as well as that of Judah by Babylon (Vitringa, Delitzsche).

5. what have I here What have I to do here? Jehovah is represented as present, and as afflicted with His people in their afflictions, and as asking whether it can be supposed that He will remain any longer in bondage with them. No; He will burst through the chains of their prison-house; and will go forth and bring them out with Him. Thus He went forth from Egypt and from Babylon. Thus He brought out the World in Christ.

— They that rule over them make them to howl! Rather, they that rule over our people shout triumphantly (lit. yell, Ssymmach, Theolol., Vitringa, Gesen., Fuerst).

— my name—is blasphemed My Name is blasphemed by the heathen, who imagine that in conquering My People they have conquered Me.

7. How beautiful—Thy God reigneth! The Prophet beholds a messenger coming over the mountains (which stand around Jerusalem, Ps. xxv. 2) with glad tidings; the watchmen of Zion discern him at a distance, and they exult at the sight, and call on her to rejoice.

The tidings of the deliverance from Babylon were joyful, and they lead onward, by a rapid transition, to a prophetic anticipation of the more gladsome news of a greater and more glorious deliverance—that of Zion and of the World redeemed and restored by Christ. See above, x. 1—5.

That this passage refers to that Evangelical deliverance, is certain from the testimony of the Holy Spirit, speaking by St. Paul, and applying these words to the preaching of the Gospel by the Apostles and other Messengers of Christ (Rom. x. 15).

— the feet It is not said, “How lovely are the Messengers,” but, “How beautiful are their feet!” Not what they are in themselves, but what they bring, as sent from God, and running in obedience to Him, is here presented to the view, as in Nahum 1. 15, “Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!” See also above, in xxi. 20, “Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass.”
Behold My servant.

That bringeth good tidings of good,
That publisheth salvation;
That saith unto Zion, 1 Thy God reigneth!

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.

9 Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem:

and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; Go ye out of the midst of her;
Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord:
For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight:
And the God of Israel will be your reward.

Behold, My servant shall deal prudently,
He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

11 Depart ye—be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord! This is addressed to the captive exiles at Babylon. God commands them to go out of her (in compliance with the proclamation of Cyrus, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23; Ezra i. 1—3), and not to defile themselves with any of her idolatries. Cp. Jer. i. 8; ii. 6. 45. He specially exhorts those to purify themselves, who bare the sacred vessels of the Lord, which had been carried to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, and which were restored to Jerusalem and the service of God by Cyrus. See on Ezra i. 7—11, where it is shown that these words have also a larger spiritual meaning in Christ, to Whom the prophet returns in v. 13. Cp. 2 Cor. vii. 17, where St. Paul refers to them; and so Tertullian (c. Marcion. iii. 22); S. Jerome, S. Cyril, Vitringa, and others.

These words contain a solemn admonition to all Christians (who, in a certain sense, have a priestly character; see on 1 Pet. ii. 5. 9, Rev. v. 9, 10), and especially to the Ministers of the Sanctuary, to eschew all the contaminating pollutions of Babylonish idolatry; and they have a special significance for us in the latter days, as is evident from their adoption in the Apocalypse. See note on Rev. xvii. 4.

12 ye shall not go out with haste As from Egypt (Exod. xii. 39. Deut. xvi. 3), where the same word (chiphüzim, haste) is used, as here.

The Obedience and Love of the Messiah Shown by His Voluntary Sufferings, His Consequent Triumph and Exaltation.—The Redemption of the World by Him.

13—15 Behold, my servant!—Behold, my servant, the Messiah. See xii. 1. These verses begin the prophecy that is continued in the following chapter, which ought not to be separated from them. Accordingly, in the Arabic Version there is a break here; and the following title is inserted, "A Prophecy concerning Christ; His Crucifixion, and the taking away of sins."

The ancient Jews always connected these three verses with what follows in the fifty-third chapter, and applied them to the same Person—the Messiah. See Bp. Pearson on the Creed, Art. ii. p. 57, and pp. 88, 89. This prophecy is applied to Christ by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament (Mark xv. 28. Acts viii. 32. Rom. x. 16; xvi. 28. 1 Pet. ii. 24), and by all ancient Christian Expositors; as Justin Martyr, Origen, S. Augustine, de Civ. Del. xviii. 29. "In this prophecy Isaiah speaks so plainly of Christ, that he seems to perform the part of an Evangelist, rather than of a prophet" (S. Jerome; see also his Epistle to Paulinus, p. 571).
He shall sprinkle many nations. ISAIAH LII. 14, 15. LIII. 1. Unbelief of Jews foretold.

14 As many were astonished at thee; His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men: So shall he sprinkle many nations; The kings shall shut their mouths at him: For that which had not been told them shall they see; And that which they had not heard shall they consider.

15 Behold, our rule report?

13. shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high] The prophecy of Christ's sufferings begins with the narration that He was delivered by the Lord, and the Lord's servant, in obedience to the Father's will; and that in suffering He dealt prudently, or rather acted prudently and prosperously. See the margin here. Deut. xxix. 9. Josh. i. 7, 8. 2 Sam. xvii. 14. 1 Kings ii. 3. 2 Kings xvii. 7. Prov. xvii. 8, in which all places the same word (the kaphil of sacal) is used as here, and is applied to personal types of Christ, e.g. Joshua, David, Solomon, and Zechariah, and is rendered in our Translation by prospered, or had good success; after that he had been delivered the Christian church extolled its righteousness,—in Jer. xxiii. 5, which opens with the same words as the present: "Behold, ... a King shall reign and prosper." Cp. Vitrings here, pp. 652, 653.

The Messianic suffering, Christ shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high; and thus he happily prefaces the prophecy of the PASSION OF CHRIST by a declaration of the Resurrection, Ascension, and Session in Glory, to which the Passion led Him, and to which it will bring all His faithful followers. Cp. the next chapter, ex. 10, 11; and Phill. ii. 6—7.

That this is a prophecy of the sufferings and exaltation of the Messiah, is confessed by many of the Hebrew Rabbis, as in the Angle of Nathan here, R. Simonel, and R. Moshe, R. Alshech. See Nthal TheoI. Judaeica, i. 318. 450; Poli Synopsis, p. 406; Vitrings, p. 658, who shows that the notion of two Messiahs,—one, the Son of David, a triumphant Messiah; the other, the Son of Joseph, a suffering Messiah,—is a commoninstance among the Jews, endeavouring to evade the force of this prophecy. Cp. Hengstenberg, Christol. ii. pp. 311—316, Engl. transl., 1861, where is an account of the history of its exposition; and Haverneck, Vorlesungen, 1831, pp. 260—265.

14. As many were astonished at thee] The Prophet now addresses Christ Himself, and says, that His glorious exaltation shall be as lofty (e. 13) as His voluntary humiliation was lowly; and that, as multitudes were astonished at His wonderful appearance (cp. Ps. xxvii. 6, vi. 1, and prov. 13. 20), so multitudes would adore His glorification consequent upon it.

15. So shall he sprinkle many nations] The Messiah was broken for our sake, so He might be heaved and vilified by His friends, as Job was; but, like Job, He was raised from the depths of shame and suffering, and ministered as a Priest, like Job, for the purification of others. See Introf. to Job, pp. xii. xiii.; and on Job xii. 10—17. He was exalted to a height, and so lifted up, (see the next chapter, ex. 4. 8.),—smitten of God, as one unclean, needing to be cleansed by blood sprinkled upon Him (Lev. xiv. 7). But by His own Blood, shed by Him on the Cross, when stricken of God, He, Who was the Author of life, was made life to many; and is even the Heathen World, as well as God's People, the Jews. In the words of S. Jerome: "Iste aspeter gentes multas, mundans eas sanguine Sae, et, in baptismate, Dei consecrare servitorii;" and though Jewish and heathen Rulers conspired against Him, "to cast Him as a slave, yet all kings shall be dumb with awe at His Coming, and shall adore Him, as "King of kings and Lord of lords." The word rendered, he shall sprinkle, is the hiphil of waza, properly, to cause to leap out, or to spring forth, or to be sprinkled, Lev. vi. 27; below, lxxvi. 3. In hiphil, the word means to cause to leap out, or to spring forth, as a liquid does, and thence signifies to sprinkle. It is specially applied both to describe the sprinkling with the blood of atonement, on the great day of atonement, and with the water of purification. See Lev. iv. 6; xvi. 7; lxxvi. 14, 18, 19. Num. xiii. 19.

It doubtless would be more in accordance with usage that a preposition (signifying upon) should follow the verb sprinkle, and be prefixed to the noun nations; but this is not absolutely necessary. See Gesenius, § 118, and § 138; and Simonius, in voce; and Hengstenberg. The rendering in the text is that which is found in Theophyl. and is adopted by the Latin Christian Fathers, and by Menochius, Tironia, Fovensian, Calcin, A Lapide, Vitrings, Röckert, Hengstenberg, Haverneck, and others, and is confirmed by various passages in the Old and New Testaments, referring to the cleansing work of Christ, as our Great High Priest and Victim, sprinkling the nations with His own Blood (Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Heb. ix. 13, 14; xii. 22; xiii. 1. Pet. i. 2).

The Jews rightly believed that it would be one of the functions of Messiah to baptize: "Why baptized thee?" they said to John the Baptist, "if thou art not the Christ?" (John i. 19—25). And their belief that the Messiah would baptize, is supposed to be grounded on this text: He shall sprinkle many nations; and on others, referring to the cleansing efficacy of Christ's Blood is applied in the Sacrament of Baptism.

CH. LIII.] That this prophecy, which affords the strongest argument of the truth of Christianity, and ministered the most soothing consolation to all Christian sufferers in affliction, which is their appointed path to glory, was written by Isaiah, and that it foretells the sufferings of Christ, the Son of God, very God, very true, and very certain, from the sure testimonies of the HOLY GHOST, speaking in the New Testament, by the mouth of St. John (xii. 38), of St. Matthew (xvii. 17), of St. Luke (xvii. 37. Acts xviii. 28—35, and St. Paul (Rom. x. 16), and has ever been the unanimous judgment of the Universal Church of Christ, from the days of the Holy Apostles, (pp. 320, 321). It would be superfluous to quote individual Fathers here. Not a single Father of the Church can be cited as holding a different opinion.

The Church has declared her judgment to this effect by appointing this chapter to be read as a Proper Lesson on Good Friday.

Therefore, the pious meditations of the Christian reader need not be disturbed by the speculations of some in later days, who, adopting the sceptical language of a more recent revolutionist (postulating from the faith of its fathers, who acknowledged that Isaiah speaks here of the MESSIAH: see on lii. 13, and Pfeiffer, Dubin, p. 582), have endeavoured to wrest this prophecy from the true meaning which has been given to it by the Holy Spirit of God, and to apply it either to the Hebrew Nation personified (Eichhorn, Rosenmüller, Hitzig, Hendewerk, Köster), or to the Order of the Hebrew Prophets (De Wette, Gesenius, Schenkel, Umbreit), or (with Buxen, Ewald, and others) to Jeremiah, or some unknown martyr-prophets. On the other hand, we may refer to the names of many learned German critics (such as Duhke, Heugeler, Koppe, J. D. Michaelis, Palen, Schneider, Storr, Krüger, Jahn, Stendel, Sack, Reiske, Tholuck, Haweiss, Stier, Keil, Dolliehau), as maintaining the ancient, Scriptural, Catholic and Apostolic interpretation of this prophecy.

An excellent popular exposition of it has recently been published in our own country by the Rev. Alfred Godd, M.A., Vicar of Bourneham, Dorset.

Isaiah, in the earlier part of his prophecies, had foretold the Incarnation of the Son of God, and His Birth from a Virgin, of the house of David, when reduced to low estate, and had declared His Divine Nature and everlasting dominion, and the blessed consequences of His Coming (vii. 14, 15; ix. 6, 7; xi. 1—16).

He reserved for this later part of his prophecies the description of Christ's Sufferings, and of His coming即是Victory, and of the Birth of the Universal Church from His Death, and of her Espousals as the Bride, purchased and cleansed by His most precious Blood, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and reception of all Nations into the fold of Christ, and the final subjugation of all things to His sway, and the everlasting...
A root out of a dry ground.  
ISAIAH LIII. 2, 3.  

The Man of sorrows. 

And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant,

And as a root out of a dry ground:

4 He hath no form nor comeliness;

And when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him;

A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;

And we hid as it were our faces from him;

glorying of His people, the Israel of God, in the heavenly Jerusalem.

He did this with good reason. The second part of these prophecies reveals the captivity of Israel at Babylon, and its consequences. What could be more consolatory to these afflicted exiles and prisoners at Babylon, than to be assured by the Spirit of prophecy in those Scriptures, which they held in their hands, that the Messiah Himself, the Son of God, the Redeemer of Israel, and of the World, would be “a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,” and that by suffering He would rise to glory, “and divide the spoil with the strong,” and would restore Jerusalem to herself, and to God?

The Messiah, “the Servant of the Lord,”—He whom the Lord upholdeth,—the Elect, in Whom His soul delighteth (xiii. 14), He was the perfect personal representative of the Israel of God. He was the Head of the Holy Nation, the peculiar People, the Kingdom of Priests; He was its Crown of Glory, spiritualizing, exalting, and divinizing it. See above, on xiii. 1. 

The Servant was called to suffer shame and sorrow, to be despised, rejected, and spit upon by men, and that this was His chosen path to glory, would impart a sanctity and beauty to suffering, in the eyes of all faithful Israelites, who, when their City and Temple were in ruins, read this prophecy of old in the land of their exile and captivity, by the side of the waters of Babylon; and they would be filled by it with faith and hope, in the prospect of a joyful deliverance from bondage, and restoration to their own land, and learn to look even beyond it,—to the everlasting Jerusalem that is above.

How much more is this verified in the Christian! The Messiah is the Head of the Church Universal, which is His Body. He is Very God, the Eternal Son of the Father; and He is also人的head, and became the house of David, and became Emmanuel, God with us, according to Isaiah's prophecy; and by virtue of His Incarnation, and of our baptism into His mystical body, He has joined us in Himself, and to the heavenly people, who partake of His Divine nature (2 Pet. i. 4), and has purchased us with His blood, and washed away our sins thereby, and procured for us an eternal inheritance.

Therefore, when we sit by the waters of our Babylon, in the land of our banishment, and read this prophecy of Isaiah, and as the perfect fulfillment of the Gospels of the New Testament, we rejoice in suffering, as making us like to Christ; and as well knowing that “if we are planted together in the likeness of His Death, we shall also be planted in the likeness of His Resurrection” (Rom. xvi. 20).

1. Who hath believed our report? Our preaching; literally, what is heard (see xxxii. 9, 10); Greek akouo. It signifies what the Prophet hears from God, and what he makes others hear by preaching it. See John xii. 38. Rom. xii. 14 (Rev. iv. 3), whereas it appears that the Prophet is here foretelling that the great body of the Jewish Nation would not believe the doctrine of a meek and suffering Messiah. Thus, therefore, the unbelief of the Jews is an argument in favour of our belief in Christianity; for it was insisted by the Jews that the Jews would not believe in Him, Who is the Messiah, but would reject Him on account of His low estate and bitter sufferings. This prophecy has been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. The Cross is their stumbling-block (chap. xiv. 22), and it is by faith that we know Him. 

Thus also the testimony of the Jews to the Genuineness and Inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old Testament is of greater force. It cannot be said that this testimony is the result of a study of the Cross, of Christ Crucified, to bear in their hands the Books, from which the Truth of the doctrines of Christianity—especially of a suffering Messiah, and of a Messiah glorified by suffering—are proved, as Christ Himself showed on the Day of His Resurrection from the dead. See Luke xxiv. 25—27; 46, 47; and so S. Paul, Acts xxiii. 27. Cp. S. Justin Martyr, Cohort. ad Graecos, c. 13; S. Augustine, in Ps. 40 and 56; and e. Faustum, xii., and De Univ. Ecid. c. 16. (To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?) Christ is the outstretched Arm of the Lord. It is in Him that God manifests His power. Cp. John i. 1—3 (Tertullian, S. Cyril, S. Jerome, S. Hierom.)

The Prophet asks, "Who hath recognized God's glorious working in Christ, delivered from the World from a worse bondage and exile that of Babylon? The Prophet takes up the word of the chapter. ii. 9: "Awake, awake! put on strength, O arm of the Lord;" and of iii. 10: "The Lord hath made bare His holy face;" and we are to see in the Jewish people, are blind, and will not behold it (John xii. 38. Matt. xxi. 25).

2. He shall grow up. Christ, who has been described as the Arm of the Lord, revealed from heaven by reason of His Godhead, is now represented as a Shoot growing out of the earth by reason of His Manhood.

— before him] In the eye of God, though not known to the World.

— a tender plant] Although Christ was of the royal stock of David, yet He did not appear as a stately Oak or Cedar (see ii. 13), but only as a layer-shoot (comp. Ezek. xvii. 22) from the root of David, when the trunk was hewn down to the ground; and, therefore, He is likened to a root sprouting forth out of the earth. See above, in xiv. 1. These two prophecies were fulfilled by the birth of Christ from the seed of David, when the royal Stem was cut down, and seemed almost to have perished. Then He, Who is “the Branch,” sprouted forth from it. (see xiv. xxiv. 11) What are those who know not the law, that are cursed? (John vii. 48. 49) — cursed for believing the Blessed One!

— a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief] Bodily and mental, proceeding from a perfect sense of the impenitent sin of God's sight, the depth of which no mind of man has ever fathomed. “He was a man of sorrows, and therefore able to sympathize with the sorrowing. See Heb. iv. 15; v. 2.

— and we hid] Literally, like a hiding of faces from Him. The expression is the manner of the hiding of faces, expresses in the strongest terms the character of the Holy One as regarded by His own nation. It was not a revealing of His face to them in its beauty and glory, but a hiding of their faces from Him in disdain and loathing. Cp. above, i. 6; and Ps. xxi. 6, 7. To them He was “a Samaritan,” and “beside Himself,” and had an “unclean spirit,” and “had a devil;” and they cried, “Not this Man, but Barabbas?” (John viii. 48. Mark iii. 21. 30. John xii. 38. 39.)

Some have supposed that there is an allusion here to the Law of the Leper, who was obliged to cover and hide his lip and beard, and to cry, “Unclean!” (Lev. xiii. 45). But the
He was despised, and ἡ we esteemed him not.

Surely ὁ he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:
Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was ἡ wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities:
The chasistmation of our peace ἦν upon him; and with his ἵπ stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way;
And the Lord ἡ laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, Yet ἡ he opened not his mouth:
He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearsers is dumb,
So he openeth not his mouth.

Other interpretation seems much preferable. Christ did not hide His face from any, even from His enemies, nor from their insults. See I. 6. He hid not His face from shame and spitting. And He is the Light of the World (John viii. 12).

Surely ἦν He (and no one else). "He" is emphatic. It is not ἐγώ, but ἡς, the Greek ἐγώρος.
— hath born—and carried] Literally, ἐκκαρτισμένος God, who was angry with us on these ideas are contained in the two words here used (αἰσθησάμενος and σαβαθάμενος), and are expressed in the words of St. Matthew (viii. 17) by which he renders them. Cp. the note on 1 Pet. ii. 24.

The Evangelist St. Matthew applies this prophecy to the act of our Lord in leading diseases, which are the consequences of sin; and St. Peter (1 Pet. ii. 24) applies it to the "bearing of our sins in His own body on the tree;" whence it has been rightly inferred that many prophecies of Scripture, especially those referring to Christ, have a twofold, and indeed a manifold, sense, and are fulfilled in manifold ways. See below, on Matt. viii. 17; and W. Lightfoot's excellent Preface to Isaiah, pp. 225—227.

— stricken] With a painful and lornsome disease, which was specially regarded as the stroke of God. The verb here used (ἀσθένα) is connected with the substantive ἀσθήνη, which is applied no less than sixty times in Lev. xiii. and xiv. to describe the plague or stroke of leprosy; see also 2 Kings v. 5, where the word is applied to Uzziah, who was a leper of the day of his death. And in this sense the verb is understood here by Jerome, Aquila, Theodotion, Vitringa, Hengst, and many others. The Vulg. has "leprosum."
— smitten] The word here used (υποθήκη) is applied to Job, in Job ii. 7, where it is said Satan "σταμάτησεν Job with sore boils."

Our Lord was regarded by the unbelieving Jews as unclean, and smitten of God, like a leper. He was a second Job, scorned and condemned as a great sinner by His friends on account of His sufferings. See introd. to Job, p. vii.

But this supposed leper "sprinkled many nations," and cleansed them by His Blood; this Divine Job mediated for them by the sacrifice of Himself. See above, on lii. 15.

5. he was wounded] From this prophecy the ancient Christian Fathers proved, against the Jews, that the Messiah was to suffer. See S. Justin Martyr, Dial. c. Tryphon. § 32, and passim in that Dialogue. This chapter of Isaiah is quoted about seventeen times by S. Justin, in his argument with his Jewish opponent.

— The chastisement of our peace] The chastisement by which our Peace with God was procured. This word Peace includes all health and blessedness. The Prophet sets before us the wages of sin, which was the real reason of our base condition and account of our sins (see above, on xviii. 22, "There is no voice for the wicked;") and below, Rom. iii. 25; v. 10. 1 John ii. 2; iv. 10; and Col. i. 20, 1 Pet. iii. 18); and as paying the debt due us to God (see Matt. xxvii. 27—22, Rom. iii. 21—20); and as purchasing salvation for us, and an eternal inheritance by His Blood (Eph. i. 14. 1 Thess. v. 9. 2 Thess. ii. 14); and as thus being "our Peace," as the Apostle calls Him; and making Peace by the Blood of the Cross (Col. i. 16), and coming to preach Peace to them that were afar off, and to them that were nigh (Eph. ii. 14, 15, 17).

Before Or. 22:7 171

g John 10. 11. h Matt. 8. 17. i Heb. 2. 18. ii Pet. 2. 24. 1 Cor. 15. 4. 1 Pet. 2. 21, 24. i Pet. 2. 25.

1 Heb. hath made the iniquity of us all to meet on him.


6. All we] The Prophet, as an Israelite, joins himself in the national confession of the Jews, turning, with contrite heart and weeping eyes, to Him. See on e. 2.

In a still more comprehensive sense, he utters these words as one of the universal human family, which was involved in the guilt of original and actual sin, and was scattered thereby, and far removed from God, but which is now gathered together in one, and reconciled to God in Christ (2 Cor. v. 18, 19. Col. i. 20, 21).

— the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all] As the Apostle says, "He made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21). And again, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13); "He was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. ix. 28). See the notes below, on 2 Cor. v. 21.

The Messiah, "the servant of the Lord," the Well-Beloved Son, in Whom the Father is well pleased," could not in Himself be an object of punishment, especially when He was voluntarily undertaking a work acceptable to God—the salvation of mankind.

The punishment of a perfectly sinless Person is irreconcilable with God's righteousness and omnipotence, unless that punishment is vicarious. Our Lord made Himself One with sinners, whose nature He had taken; and, being sinless, He presented Himself as guilty, and subjected Himself to that wrath of a Holy and Righteous God, which they had deserved, and which is the necessary consequence and corollary of human sin. This voluntary endurance of wrath on His part, procured voluntary forgiveness of sins on God's side. The self-sacrificing love of the Mediator satisfied God's justice, and appeased His wrath against sin, and greeted the gracious love of our Heavenly Father; so that on the Cross of Calvary, "Mercy and Truth met together, Righteousness and Peace kissed each other." See Ps. lxxv. 10; cp. Rom. iii. 24.

7. He was oppressed] As by a hard master. Cp. iii. 1. 1 Sam. xiii. 6; xiv. 24. Gesen. 533.

— He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter] He, the "Good Shepherd," was led as a lamb to the slaughter; He, the true Paschal Lamb (Exod. xii. 5. 1 Cor. v. 7) "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29; cp. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19) was slain as a sinner; and by His death He saved those from death who, "like sheep, had gone astray" (v. 6).

This passage was read by the Ethiopian Treasurer in his chapter on the word of the Ethiopian, who applied for instruction in the meaning of this prophecy, taught him to see Jesus here. He preached to him Jesus, and baptized him in His name. And in that preaching and baptism, and in the consequent joy of the Ethiopian, we may recognize a specimen of the blessed effects of this prophecy in every age of the world. See Acts v. 27—35.
With the rich in his death. ISAIAH LIII. 8—10. He shall see His seed.

9. He was taken from prison and from judgment: And who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: For the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; Because he had done no violence, Neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, He shall see his seed, and he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

8. He was taken from prison and from judgment: He was carried away, as it were, a prey to a generation of malefactors. See above, iii. 5; and Jer. xviii. 46, and the Syriac here.

In the Prophet’s mind there is a silent parallel here between the Messiah and the Jewish Nation. They were taken away on account of their sins. He was taken away, although His seed remained; He was taken away for our sins; and He was taken away from prison and from judgment; eternally, He was taken away from (not by, as some render it) restraint; viz. from bonds, see Ps. cxii. 39, where it is rendered oppression, which appears to be a reference to the captivity at Babylon. See above, on Ps. cxii. 

Note. Israel was taken away from the chains and oppression of the prison, and of their captivity, in order to be restored to their own land. But Messiah, the King, was taken away from the chains and oppression of His captivity, in order to be destroyed by His own People. He, the future Judge of all, was taken away from the hall of human judgment of Caiaphas and Pilate, in order to be crucified. The Sept., which is followed by St. Luke (Acts viii. 33) paraphrases these words thus: “In His humiliation His judgment was taken away,” which appears to mean, that all right and justice were denied Him in His abasement. Another interpretation, given below in the notes on that passage (Acts viii. 33), was delivered from tribulation and exalted by it, is supported here by S. Jerome, Michaelis, Vitringa, and Stier; but the former seems preferable.

And who shall declare his generation? Although He was thus taken away, yet He was everlastingly; He, by His obedience and voluntary death, hath purchased His human nature, and secured a glorious immortality for Himself and for all His faithful followers and relatives; as He Himself says, “I am the First and the Last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore” (Rev. i. 17. 18). He “loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own Blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father” (Rev. i. 5. 6).

The word rendered generation is dôr; literally, an age, or generation of men (see xii. 20; xxxvii. 12; ii. 8. Eccles. i. 4. Num. xxxii. 13. Deut. xxxiii. 3. 4. Genesis. 194). The generation of a mortal man is but for a few years, his contemporaries soon pass away; but Christ, though cut off by a cruel death, raised Himself again from the dead, and lives for ever, and has purchased a blessed life for us by His voluntary and voluntary death, for all His faithful people. His friends never die, His contemporaries are immortal, “God is in the generation of the righteous” (Ps. xiv. 5; lxxvi. 15): “the generation of the upright shall be blessed” (Ps. cxii. 2).

The best exposition of these words is in the Passion Psalm (Ps. xxii. 30), which, after describing Christ’s sufferings and exaltation, and the preaching of His Gospel, and the extension of the Gospel, adds: “a seed shall he see of the travail of his soul; and shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation (Heb. dôr). They shall come, and shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that He hath done this.”

Ps. xxii. 30, which continues the prophecy of the twenty-second and twenty-third Psalms, and reveals the glory of the Ascension, “This is the generation of them that seek Him.”

—my people] See on r. 4; cp. r. 6.

The Messiah’s Burial and Resurrection.

9. he made his grave] They made His grave. The verb is put impersonally; they (who crucified Him) assigned His burial 150 with the wicked, but He was with the rich in His death. Pilate and the Jews intended that our Lord’s Body should be cast into the charnel-house of condemned malefactors: but before He was buried, He “was with the rich in His death.” Joseph of Arimathæa, a rich man (so designated by St. Matthew, xxvii. 57, probably referring to His family and wealth, and the place of the money wherein His body was buried), laid boldly in Pilate, and craved the Body of Jesus before Pilate was aware that He was dead (Mark xv. 42. 47. John xix. 38. 39); and Nicodemus, another rich and honourable man, came and brought spices to anoint Him; and they took down the Body of Jesus, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in the new sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathæa, in the garden, in the tomb wherein was never man yet laid (Matt. xxvii. 59, 60. Mark xiv. 46. Luke xxiii. 53. John xix. 30, 42). Thus, though Pilate and the Jews made His grave with the wicked, He was with the rich in His death.

10. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin] Rather, when His soul, or life (see r. 11), shall have made a guilt-offering (see Vitringa, Hengst., and Delitzsch), Heb. askih, on which see the Prelim. Note on Lev. v.

The Prophet declares that the soul of Christ offered itself voluntarily as an askim for the guilt of the world.

The soul made the offering (cp. r. 11 and 12); for God says in His Law, “The soul of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul” (Lev. xvii. 11). Cp. Gen. ix. 4, “The life is the blood;” and Heb. ix. 22, “Without shedding of blood is no remission.

The World is regarded as a debtor owing an infinite debt to God; and the askim, which Christ paid, is that which liquidated that debt, and obtained for us peace from God. The askim, in the Levitical ritual, was the restitution, or compensation, made to God as satisfaction for injury done; a payment for a debt due, and thence an offering for guilt. (Cp. Hengstenberg and Delitzsch, pp. 522, 523.)

The askim signifies, first, the guilt or debt, then the compensation for it (Lev. v. 15), and the sacrifice which discharges the guilt or debt and sets the man free. Christ’s sacrifice was an askim, or satisfaction for the guilt of the World.

Observe that the soul is here described as making an offering for sin; and that offering was the soul itself, which is in the blood. This is perfect harmony with the Christian faith, which believes that Christ voluntarily offered Himself. See Matt. xx. 28. John x. 11. 15. 17. 18. It is also a declaration of the verity of His Manhood.

The chaitlith (the sin-offering) denoted, first the sin, and the punishment of the sin, and the expiation of it, and the sacrifice which took it away. Christ’s sacrifice was a sin-offering, an expiation and propitiation.

Christ’s sacrifice was also a whole burnt-offering (dôbâh), and a meat-offering or libation (mîshkîdâh). It was likewise (which was the consumption of all) the spiritual shelâmîm, or Enchatic thank-offering and peace-offering, in which we have communion with God.

See above, Introduction to Lev., p. iii. and on Lev. i. v. on the characteristics of these various typical Levitical sacrifices, all of which are furnished in the One SACRIFICE of CHRIST on the Cross.

He shall see his seed] The Prophet adopts here the language of David in the great Passion Psalm (see Ps. xxii. 30, “A seed shall serve Him”), and of the three Psalms which follow it, and which describe Christ’s glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and the glory of His seed and generation. See
Christ conquers by His Death. ISAIAH LIII. 11, 12. LIV. 1. Thence the Church lives.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: 
"By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; 
And he shall divide the spoil with the strong; 
Because he hath poured out his soul unto death: 
And he was numbered with the transgressors; 
And he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

LIV. 1 "Sing, O barren, thou didst not bear; 

Ps. xxiv. 6; xxv. 18, "His soul shall inherit the earth."
The Chaldee Targum has here the remarkable words, "They shall see the work of his hands."
This thought is fully developed in the following chapters of Isaiah. See Proleg. Note to chap. iv.
11. He shall see of the travail of his soul] Rather, By reason of the travail of His soul He shall look and be satisfied. 
Because He shall divide the spoil of His soul. He shall behold a harvest of Churches rising in all parts of the world, and shall rejoice in their faith (S. Jerome). As He Himself says, "If the corn of wheat die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John xii. 24); and "When I shall divide the spoil among the虏, I will draw all men unto Me" (John xii. 32).

— By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many] Christ will do this by the knowledge of His truth. By faith, love, and obedience (Rom. iii. 26; v. 1-9), and by coming to those who are alone is righteous, and Who alone can impart righteousness, for He is "the LORD our righteousness" (Jer. xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16), will justify many; that is, He will make them to be no longer aliens from God and enemies to Him, but righteous in His sight and "accepted in the acceptance of God" (Eph. i. 6). He is sanctified by His Spirit (1 Cor. ii. 30). "This is life eternal," says our Lord, "that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent" (John xviii. 3). "Christ, Who knowest me, and sawest me," as well as those of Israel that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him "(2 Cor. v. 21).

— For he shall bear their iniquities] See above, on v. 4. Christ bears the iniquities which we could not bear, and by the weight of which we were pressed down, and which He took willingly on Himself (2 Cor. viii.).
12. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great] God sets His seal of loving approval on the great work of Calvary by these final words, "I will divide him a portion with the great." And he shall divide the spoil with the strong] Or rather, He shall divide the strong as a spoil (Luther, Hăvernick). He shall enter the house of the Strong Man—Satan—and bind him, and spoil his goods, and rescue his prey from his grasp (see Matt. xii. 23. Luke xi. 22. I John iii. 8). He will overcome Death and the Grave by His own Death, and will deliver their captives from their grasp.

Isaiah returns to his prophetic anatomy here. Christ is the World's Cyrus. As Cyrus, the great conqueror of Babylon, divided the spoil of the strong city when he had besieged and taken it, and liberated the People of God, and restored the sacred vessels to Jerusalem for God's service, so Christ, the mighty Victor of all opposing Powers, when He had delivered the Church, Satan, and Death, and had spoiled principalities and powers, and led captivity captive (Ps. cxlvii. 18. Eph. iv. 8. Col. ii. 15), and had by that "death destroyed him that had the power of death—that is, the Devil, and delivered those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii. 14, 15), and restored to God those who were held in prison by Satan. See on Ezra i. 7.

He was enabled to do this, because He poured out His soul unto death for them; that is, He was grieved with the transgressors (Jerome), in which the Holy Spirit and Christ Himself apply to Him in the Gospel history of His Passion, Mark xv. 27, 28. Luke xxii. 37), and made intercession for the transgressors (Cp. Rom. viii. 34. Heb. vii. 27; ix. 24.
"Glory," therefore, "be to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and glory, and blessing, for ever and ever." Amen. (Rev. v. 12.)
The Church will go forth from Zion. ISAIAH LIV. 2—4. to enfold the World.

Before CHRIST about
b i Sam. 2, 5.
c ch. 49, 19, 20.
d ch. 53, 3 & 61, 9.

Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not traveil with child:
For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.

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;
For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left;
And thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles,
And make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed:
Neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame:

(8) This is now revealed in the present and following chapters, which succeeded, in a beautiful order, the foregoing prophecy of the sufferings and exaltation of Christ.

ZION, THE MOTHER OF US ALL.
1. SING, O baren] Jerusalem, like Sarah, to which she is compared by St. Paul, who adopts these words of Isaiah (Gal. iv. 21—29), was bearing barrenly, when Christ came, and died, and purchased her with His own blood, and sent down the gift of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, then she became the Mother of many children, through the Divine seed of the Word, preached by His Apostles and Evangelists, who went forth into the world from that city.

See above, Proleg. Note; and cp. below, ix. 1—14, where the promises of this chapter to Zion, the mother of Christendom, are amplified; and see li. 1—6; and Zeph. iii. 14: "Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel: be glad and rejoice with all thy heart, O daughter of Jerusalem;" and Heb. xii. 22—24: "Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn, which are written in heaven, ... and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant."

Jerusalem, so far as she had a faithful remnant within her receiving Christ, and in that she sent forth Apostles to the Gentile world, and thus brought forth children to Christ in all the world (as Jeremiah says, "They shall call Jerusalem the Throne of the Lord; and all the Nations shall be gathered unto it, to the Name of the Lord, to Jerusalem," Jer. iii. 17), is regarded by Isaiah as the true Church of Abraham, and of the Patriarchs, the Church of David, and of all the Prophets.

See above, on xliii. 6; and on Ps. lxxxvii. 4—7, where all Nations are represented as born in Sion; and below, in our Later words: "Salvation is of it (i.e. proceeds from) the Jews" (John iv. 22). Observe God's mercy to His ancient People the Jews.

John the Baptist, our Lord's forerunner, was the son of a Priest, and his birth was pre-announced to that Priest, ministering in the Temple at Jerusalem; and his mother was of the daughters of Aaron (Luke i. 5), and he was born in the country of Judah (Luke i. 39, 40); and our Lord, according to the ancient prophesies, was "born under the Law," and "came of Judah," and His nativity was at Bethlehem, the city of David. And all His Apostles were Jews; and He limited His personal mission to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel;" and as long as He was on earth He commanded His Apostles to preach exclusively to them (Matt. x. 6; xvi. 24); and even the Apostle St. Paul, "the Apostle of the Gentiles," uniformly offered the Gospel in the first instance to the Jews. See on Acts xiii. 5, 7. 

Remark, also, that the design of our Lord, that the Gospel should go forth from Zion to embrace the World, was intimated even in His own Ministry. He was born at Bethlehem, in Judah; but He, the Branch from the root of Jesse, grew up at Nazareth, "in Galilee of the Gentiles;" and, according to Isaiah's prophecy of the Messiah, was "given up by the Prince of Majesty" after His Ascension He sent forth from Jerusalem His Apostles into all Nations. This truth,—that Zion is the Mother of all faithful people,—is very important in its positive character, and also as a safeguard against errors.

By it the unity of the Church of Christ with the Church of the Patriarchs and Prophets is displayed; and the reader is guarded against the heresy of those (such as Marcion and the Manichæans), who set the Old Testament against the New, and who said that the Law of Moses was at variance with the Gospel of Christ.

By it we are also defended against a more modern heresy, that which is involved in the assumption of the present Church of Rome calling herself "the Mother and Mistress of all Churches" (in the Trent Creed, a.d. 1564, imposed on all Roman Ecclesiastics, who affirm, under oath, "Romanam Ecclesiam omnium Ecclesiarem Matrem et Magistrum agnoscere"), in defiance of the prophecies of the Old Testament and the history of the New, and in spite of the testimony of Christian Antiquity that Jerusalem was regarded as the Mother of all Chris the Church, as S. Jerome says (in Euseian ii., "In Hierosolymam primum fundata Ecclesias totius orbis Ecclesias seminavit," and Concl. Constantinop., Synod. Epist. apud Theodoret. Ecl. Hist. v. 9: μητηρ υμῶν των Εκκλησιων ἡ Ιερουσαλημ).

More are the children of the desolate. More are the children of Jerusalem, when she seemed to be a widow (i.e. when her Temple and her City were in ruins, after their destruction by the Roman armies, and when Christ, her Husband, was on the cross). And his Virginity was not broken till His visitation, when he was married, that is, when the Temple was still standing, and God's presence was visibly revealed in it.

Christ's Death was the falling of "the corn of wheat" into the earth, which produced a harvest in all the world (John xii. 24). He was lifted up upon the Cross, that He might draw all men unto Him (John xii. 32). It was expedient that He should go away, and leave His Church seemingly a widow, and His children seeming fatherless (John xiv. 18), in order that the comforter might come and extend the Church from Jerusalem even to the ends of the Earth (John xiv. 16, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7). As He said to His Apostles just before His Ascension into heaven, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke xxiv. 49, Acts i. 4). "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts i. 8). And He said to them, that Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in His Name among all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem (Luke xxiv. 47); and see S. Jerome here; and S. Augustine (De Consens. Evang. i. 15).

This Truth has been embodied by the Church in her sacred Services for Good Friday. The three Collects for that day begin with a recognition of God's infinite love in giving His Son to die for the World; and then proceed to invoke the interpolation of the Spirit on the Mystical Body of Christ, and to pray for the gathering together of all who are scattered abroad,—especially the lost sheep of the House of Israel,—into His fold.

2. thy tent—curses—cords—stakes. The Tent of the Church of Christ was at first confined to "the upper room" at Jerusalem, where He had eaten the Passover with His Apostles, and where He instituted the Holy Eucharist, and where, it is probable, He appeared to them on two successive Lord's Days (after His Resurrection, and then the Holy Ghost came down upon them; but it was to be extended, so as to enfold the World. See on Acts ii. 1.

The Tent, and its cords and stakes, are typical of the Church and its attributes, and of expansion and steadfastness. See above, on xxxii. 20; and on Judg. iv. 4, 21; and when x. pp. 99, 100; and on Eccles. xii. 11, "nails" (wooden stakes, or pegs of a tent), "fastened by masters of assemblies," or of gatherings.

Her Maker is her Husband.

ISAIAH LIV. 5—10.

Her everlasting glory.

For thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth,
And shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more;

For thy Maker is thine husband;
The Lord of hosts is his name;
And thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel;
The God of the whole earth shall be called.

For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit,
And a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

For a small moment have I forsaken thee;
But with great mercies will I gather thee.

In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment;
But with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

For this is as the waters of Noah unto me:
For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth;
So have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed;
But my kindness shall not depart from thee.
Neither shall the covenant of peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.

The Perpetuity and Glory of the Church of Christ.

For this is as the waters of Noah unto me:
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And thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel;
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The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed;
But my kindness shall not depart from thee.
Neither shall the covenant of peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.
O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted,
Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and
lay thy foundations with sapphires;
And I will make thy windows of agates,
And thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.
And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord;
And great shall be the peace of thy children.
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.
Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me:
Whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.
Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire,
And that bringeth forth an instrument for his work;
And I have created the waster to destroy.
No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper;
And every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment shalt condemn.
This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord,
And their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

LV. 1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters,
And he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat;
Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.
Wherefore do ye 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.

Incline your ear, and come unto me:

— for his work] Or, according to his trade.
— I have created the waster] The Sennacheribs and Nebuchadnezzars of earth are God's vassals; an Antichrist, a Herod, a Dacieus, a Decadent, and a Julian, are His servants. Cp. x. 5. All that they do will finally be overruled to the manifestation of His power and glory, and to the purifying of His Church by the fires of affliction, and to the good of His faithful People.

The Universal Invitation of Divine Grace in Christ, the Seed of David.

Before CHRIST about 712.  

d ch. 54.  & 61. 8.  

Jer. 52. 10.  

c 2 Sam. 7. 8, &c.  

Ps. 89. 28.  Acts 13. 31.  

f John 18. 37.  Rev. 1. 5.  

g Jer. 36. 9.  

Ezek. 34. 23.  Dan. 9. 25.  

Hos. 3. 5.  

h ch. 58. 15.  

Eph. 2. 11. 12.  1 ch. 60. 5.  

k ch. 60. 9.  Act. 3. 12.  

1 Ps. 32. 6.  

Matt. 5. 25. & 25. 11.  

John 7. 34. & 5. 21.  

2 Cor. 6. 1. 2.  

Heb. 3. 13.  

m ch. 1. 16.  

† Heb. the man of righteousness. 

n Zech. 8. 17.  

c Ps. 139. 7.  

Jer. 2. 12.  

† Heb. he will multiply to 

p pardon.  

q Ps. 103. 11.  

r Deut. 32. 2.  

6. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found,  

Call ye upon him while he is near:  

5 Let the wicked forsake his way,  

And the unrighteous man "his thoughts:  

And let him return unto the Lord,  

And he will have mercy upon him;  

And to our God, for † he will abundantly pardon.  

3 For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  

Neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.  

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  

So are my ways higher than your ways,  

And my thoughts than your thoughts.  

10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven,  

And returneth not thither,  

But watereth the earth,  

And maketh it bring forth and bud,  

That it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:  

11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth:  

It shall not return unto me void,  

But it shall accomplish that which I please,  

And it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.  

God's Promises to David are fulfilled in Christ.  

3. The sure mercies of David] The blessings guaranteed to David by God's promise in Christ are extended to all Nations in Him. See above, Psalms, Note to 2 Sam. vii, and on Ps. lxxxix. 2 Chron. vi. 42; and Amos ix. 11, where the Church of God is called "the Tabernacle of David." Cp. Acts xv. 16, and also Acts xiii. 34, and Luke i. 32, 33, "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Cp. S. Justin Martyr, c. Tryph. §§ 12, 14.  

4. I have given him]) I have appointed Christ, Who was in David, and came forth from him, and Who is called "David" (by Jeremiah, xxx. 9. Ezekiel, xxxiv. 22; xxxvii. 24. Hosea, iii. 5), to be a Witness (see Rev. i. 5, where He is called "the faithful Witness;" and Rev. iii. 14, "These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness;" and our Lord's words to Bethpage, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth," John xviii. 37), and to be a Leader and Commander (Micah v. 2; Is. 25. Acts v. 31. Rev. xiv. 10.  

— the people — the people] Rather, to peoples; i.e. to Gentiles as well as to Jews; see ii. 2; xiiii. 1; xiii. 6.  

5. Thou shalt call a nation] Jerusalem, the mother and home of the Universal Church, will call all Nations into her bosom. Wherever the Universal Church is, there Zion is. See above, on Ps. lxxxvi.; and cp. above, on ii. 3. 1 iv. 17; below, iv. 5. 9.  

Man's consequent Duties.  

6. Seek ye the Lord] In proclaiming God's loving promises VOL. V. PART I.—161 (liv. 9—17), and the free offers of divine grace, the Prophet does not forget man's duties both in will and work (see vv. 1—3, and see lvi. 1). Thus Isaiah prepares the way for St. Paul (Phil. ii. 12. Titus ii. 14; iii. 6—8).  

This section, to lvi. 8, is a Haphtarah to Deut. xxxi. 1—30.  

8—11. For my thoughts are not your thoughts—I sent it] The Prophet takes up the word thoughts (lit. weighings, con- 

trivancens, imaginations, devices; see Ps. xxxviii. 10; xl. 5; and on Ps. xcvii. 5; xcviii. 11, where there is a contrast, as here, between God's devices and man's, which are compared below to clouds, which never "become garments" (lix. 5, 6); and see Prov. vi. 19; xv. 20; xvi. 3, where the same word is used. All man's plans, without God's help, are abortive; but God's de- 

vices, like the rain in the clouds, which brings forth harvests on the earth, are sure of success. Therefore trust in Him; and ye shall be like a fertile field, which was desert and 

bare, and shall bring forth fair flowers and rich fruits (see 12, 13; cp. xxxv. 1, 2; xil. 19, 20. Ps. xcvii. 12; civ. 16).  

This declaration was verified in the Gospel of Christ. Ac- 

cording to the human cognitions of God's own People, the Jews, the kingdom of the Messiah was to be a earthly one;  

and they had no notion that the Gentiles would be received into it on equal terms with themselves.  

But God's thoughts were higher than theirs, and His ways 

higher than theirs. He designed that the Gospel should be a highway for all Nations; and that the whole earth, even the wilderness of heathendom, should become a fruitful field and spiritual Paradise, sown by the seed of His Word, and watered by the rain and dews of His Spirit.  

Y
12 'For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands; instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree: and it shall be to the Lord a for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

LVI. 1 Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye [Judgment, and do justice:

"For my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it;

That keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

Neither let 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.


briar] Perhaps the nettle (Urtica); it is some prickly plant growing freely in the desert.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO ALL WHO FEAR GOD.

CH. LVI.] Having declared in the two foregoing chapters the universality of the Church, which, having its origin in Jerusalem, is to enfold all nations, God now speaks specially to the Gentiles, and gives precepts and encouragement to them. Isaiah here anticipates the Sermon of St. Peter to Cornelius and his friends at Caesarea (Acts x. 34-43).

2. Blessed—the man—the son of man] Blessed is every one, every child of Adam (as the original has it), in whatever Nation, however feeble he may be (even edok, see Ps. viii. 4), that keeps right, and does righteousness, for My salvation is near to come to him who was once afar off, and to be revealed to him who once sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, in heathen lands. See Rom. iii. 21, 22.

THE SABBATH.

That keepeth the sabbath from polluting it] In order that it may not be supposed that, in the extension of the Church from Jerusalem to all nations, the moral substance and spiritual essence of the Levitical Law was to pass away, together with the letter and shadow of its Ceremonies; viz. its Passovers, Sacrifices, New Moons, and Seventh-day Sabbaths, which are fulfilled in Christ (see on Col. ii. 16, 17); and lest the Levitical Law should be disparaged, as an idle and empty thing which God had disowned, instead of being, as it was, of divine institution, and prophetic and typical of Christ and Evangelical doctrine, and a rich treasury of divine Truths of everlasting significance (see above, Intro. to Leviticus); the Holy Spirit here puts the ordinance of the Sabbath in the first place when He is speaking of the future Christianization of the Gentiles.

The Sabbath was a witness that the Elohim Who created the whole world was Jehovah, the God of the Covenant with Israel, the God Who was to be revealed in the Gospel as the TRINITY GOD. The essence, therefore, of the doctrine of the Sabbath is everlasting and universal.

Besides, as the Apostle teaches, a Sabbath of rest after work is a pledge of something future, and is to be observed as a figure of that eternal rest (Heb. x. 9). The substance, therefore, of the Sabbath is an earnest of a blessed Eternity; and the observance of it is a profession of faith.

Also, the meditation on God's Law, and the public Worship of God, which were special duties of the Sabbath, are of perpetual obligation, under the Gospel.

The consecration of one day in seven to the worship of God was to be perpetual, and of everlasting moral obligation, in the Christian Church. And it was to be a badge of Christian righteousness (as distinguished from unbelieving Jews, heathens, and infidels), in the setting apart of a particular day in the week for religious rest and worship,—namely, the first day, that day on which Christ the Father shewed forth light by creation, and God the Son brought back life and immortality to light by His Resurrection, and God the Holy Ghost came down from heaven in the spiritual light of regeneration and sanctification at Pentecost. Thus the doctrine of the Sabbath was spiritualized into an everlasting and universal profession of faith in the Ever Blessed Trinity, into Whose Name the whole world is to be baptized. See above, on Exod. xx. 8—11, and ep. Tibringa here, pp. 726, 727.

We recognize, therefore, the propriety of this mention of the Sabbath here as the groundwork of what follows, especially of the moral duty of "keeping the hand from doing any evil;" and the Prophet returns to this duty of keeping the Sabbath holy, in its evangelical sense, in lvii. 13.

In a similar spirit, the Prophet Zechariah, speaking of the days of the Gospel, declares that all nations shall keep "the Feast of Tabernacles" (Zech. xiv. 16, 19); that is, they will keep it in the spiritual essence of its doctrine, which proclaimed the Incarnation of God the Son tabernacled in our flesh, and the future union of God and His Saints glorified in heaven by means of the Incarnation of Christ, Very God and Very Man, See on Lev. xxiii. 34. Dent. xvi. 13—16. 2 Chron. viii. 13. Ezra iii. 4. John vii. 2. Rev. vii. 15; xxi. 3.

3. the son of the stranger] They, who were foreigners under the Law, but attached themselves to the Lord under the Gospel, are not to be separated (as some of the Jewish members of the Church would have separated them) from the Jews, in the Church of Christ.

Here again Isaiah prepares the way for St. Paul, who contended at Antioch for this admission of the Gentiles on equal terms with the Jews, even against St. Peter himself, who had been the first of the Apostles to go as God's instrument for the reception of Gentiles into the Church, and had admitted them at Cesarea into parity of privileges with the Jews, yet who afterwards wavered for a time, but at length recovered himself, and boldly declared the truth which is here revealed. See below, on Gal. ii. (the note at the end of the chapter); and ep. Eph. ii. 11—22, where St. Paul declares the fulfilment of what God here foretells by Isaiah.

— Neither let the eunuch say] In the Levitical Law (Deut. xxiii. 2), the persons here mentioned were excluded from the congregation of the Lord. But the Baptism of the Ethiopian Treasurer by St. Philip the Deacon, proclaimed the fulfilment of this prophecy (as St. Jerome here observes), which foretold their admission into the Church. See note on Acts viii. 27.

In a spiritual sense, the wilderness in which he was traveling "then blossomed as the rose" with the fair flowers of Christian faith and love (Acts v. 29). Instead of the thorn came up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier came up the

162
Moral obligation of the Sabbath. **ISAIAH LVI. 4—10.** God's house of prayer for all.

4 For thus saith the Lord unto the emnachs 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 mine house and within my walls A place *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 bring to my holy mountain, And make them joyful in my house of prayer:

8 Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar. For mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

9 The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yea, all ye beasts of the field, come to devour, Yea, all ye beasts in the forest.

10 His watchmen are *blind:*

myrtle-tree " (iv. 13). Even in that desert God raised up sons to Abraham (Matt. iii. 9). The inspired record in the Acts of the Apostles, which relates the conversion and baptism of the emnachs, in the Ethiopian Treasurer of Candace, proceeds to narrate the conversion and baptism of the great Hebrew of the Hebrews, the Pharisee of the tribe of Benjamin, the Apostle of the Gentile World, Saul, the persecutor (see Acts x. 18); and the conversion and baptism of the "son of the stranger" in Cornelius, the Roman centurion at Cæsarea (see the note on Acts viii. 27; x. 1—48). Thus we see that the baptismal font is made the central point of union for three children of Noah—Haim, Simeon, and Japheth. Christ there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision; there is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian, Sceithian, bond nor free, but He is all in all (Gal. iii. 8, Col. iii. 11).

5. A place Hebrew, yâd, lit. a hand (cp. ivii. 8); or it may mean a memorial, a monument. See on 2 Sam. xviiii. 18, "Ab- salom's place."

7. will bring to my holy mountain—mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. Rather, for all Nations, as it is rendered by Sept. and by St. Mark (xii. 17), where our Lord is described as purging the Temple of the buyers and sellers; thus overshadowing the purification of the Church from the sins of covetousness and profaneness, after He had ridden up to Jerusalem on the—figure of the Gen- tile World received into the Church (see on Matt. xxi. 2—7. Mark xi. 4—11. Luke xix. 30—38. John xii. 12—15); and had cursed the barren leafy fig-tree, the figure of hypocritical and unfruitful Judaism. See Matt. xxi. 18—22. Mark xi. 12—13.

8. The image of the Temple is spiritualized and generalized here, in the Universal Church of Christ. The Prophecies fre- quently describe the state of the Christian Church by repre- sentations taken from the Jewish Temple and Service (see above, x. 10; below, ix. 7; lvii. 23. W. Loeb, on Ezek. xx. 40). "The Mountain of the Lord's House" at Jerusalem grows with living expansion, and is wrought above the top of the moun- tains, and all nations flow into it (see above, i. 1—3, and Ezek. xx. 40). The House of the Lord, which had, under the Law, its "wall of partition," dividing the "court of the Gentiles" from that of the Jews, becomes a "house of prayer for all people, and for the Nations) in the Catholic Church (see Eph. ii. 12—22, which is the best commentary on this passage); and the spiritual sacrifices which are offered there by the faithful of all Nations, are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Pet. i. 1—19; cp. Mal. i. 11; ii. 12. Rom. xvi. 16. Phil. iv. 18. Heb. xii. 10, 15).

8. **The Lord God—saideth** The original has a very solemn significance. It is Ne

above, on Ps. cx. 1. This is a preface like St. Paul's. It is a "faithful saying" (1 Tim. i. 15; iii. 1; iv. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 11; Titus iii. 9): as much as to say, Whatever others may think, this is the "catholic Domini"—the Word of the Lord.

— Yet will I gather others to him As the good Shepherd says, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and One Shepherd" (John x. 16); and the Apostle of the Gentiles adopts Isaiah's language, "That in the dispensation of the fulness of time He might gather together in one all things in Christ" (Eph. i. 10; ii. 11—16).

**WARNING TO EVIL RULERS, CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL.** The foregoing part of this chapter has been occupied in the assertion of the moral and spiritual character of the Divine Law, and of its universal and eternal obligation; and it has declared that every one of every nation, who worketh righteousness, will be received into God's Church (cp. Acts x. 35).

This statement involved a condemnation of the Pharisaism of those false teachers who laid the principal stress on the exter- nal forms of religion; and it prepared the way for the follow- ing denunciation of them.

The selfish Rulers and Governors of God's Church and People are to be given up to be devoured by the beasts of the field, who are here invited to come and prey upon them. This is their punishment for being ravenous wolves, who devour God's flock instead of feeding it. Parallels to this invitation are found in Jer. xii. 9, and in the Apocalypse (xiv. 18), where the fowls of the air are called together to feed on the flesh of the carcases of the kings and mighty men of the world who contend against Christ, and will be compassed by Him (Rev. xiv. 17—21).

The following section, xx. 9 to lvii. 12, describing the sins of the Rulers of Jerusalem, presents a serious embarrassment to those critics who regard this portion of Isaiah, from chvp. xxi. to the end of the Book, as a production of a later age, and who assign it to a writer who lived during the Babylonish Captivity; and it is therefore rejected by them as an interpolation (e.g. by Stanley, Lectures, ii. 588, by whom it is called an "earlier fragment incorporated"). See above, Introduction.

10. His watchmen The Priests and Pastors of His Church. See above, on Cant. iii. 3; v. 7, where the sins of the watchmen are described.

This which refers primarily to evil Rulers and Priests of Jeru- salem, whose sins were the cause of the destruction of the city by Babylon and afterwards by Rome; and of the transfer of God's favour to the Gentiles, whose admission into the Church was the subject of the foregoing prophecy. See above, and Ps. cxlix. 2. Isai. cxvii. 6: curant spectaculares quin tecumiam Domini Salvatorem, nee leniemrurventque videre presenistant " (S. Jerome, and so S. Cyril, Theodore). Doubtless this prophecy is also
They are all ignorant, 
1. They are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; 
2. Sleeping, lying down, loosing to slumber; 
3. Yea, they are greedy dogs which 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; 
4. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, And we will fill ourselves with strong drink; 
5. And to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.

LVII. 1. The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: And merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. 
2. He shall enter into peace: They shall rest in their beds, Each one walking in his uprightness.

Recapitulation.—Josiah and Christ.—Comfort and Encouragement to the Righteous, in their Sufferings and Death.

Ch. LVII. 1. 2. The righteous perisheth—uprightness] The Prophet, having brought his prophecy down to the death of Christ, and to the extension of His Church from Jerusalem (the spiritual origin and centre of universal Christendom) to the Gentiles, and having addressed words of exhortation and encouragement to all Nations to be gathered together unto Christ in the Gospel; and having delivered a solemn warning to the Rulers of God's Church and People, whose sins brought His wrath on Jerusalem, returns to a higher point in the prophecy, as is usual with the prophets of the Old and New Testaments, and starts afresh from it. See Intro, to the Apocalypse, pp. 151-152. 

He predicts an event (as Grotius and others have suggested) which was to happen about ninety years after his own death—namely, the death, seemingly premature and sad, of the righteous King of Judah, Josiah (n.c. 608). The connexion of this event with what has just gone before is obvious. Josiah, the good king, the zealous maintainer of God's Law, and the reformer of His Church and Nation, which had declined into idolatry, was the very opposite of those blind watchmen, dumb dogs, and faithless shepherds, who were denounced in the foregoing chapter. 

And further, there were many remarkable points of resemblance between Josiah, the righteous king of Judah, the restorer of God's Law and worship, cut off by a sudden and violent death, and the "righteous Servant of Jehovah," the King Messiah, the Restorer of true religion, cut off by a cruel and shameful death. This has been already pointed out at large in the notes on 2 Kings xxii. 30, where it is shown that the Prophets, and especially Zechariah (cp. on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 25), pass on, by an easy and natural transition, from speaking of the death of Josiah, to speak of the death of Christ. 

King Josiah was the most signal type, in all Jewish history, of a righteous and suffering Messiah. We need not, therefore, be surprised, that after Isaiah has been speaking of Christ's Death and the punishment of unbelievers, and also has been denouncing the blindness of the spiritual rulers of Jerusalem, who rejected Him, he should refer to the righteous king Josiah, whose endeavours for religious Reformation were thwarted and seemingly frustrated.

The death of Josiah, like that of the Messiah, might appear to present a moral difficulty. How could it be explained that a king so faithful and zealous for God, in an evil time, as Josiah was, should be cut off in the flower of his age, in the midst of his beneficent career? Might it not be thought, that God was unwilling or unable to protect His "righteous servant," or that, after all, the Law and worship which Josiah had restored were not so precious in His eyes, and that idolatry, which Josiah suppressed, was not so hateful as He had affirmed them to be? 

Josiah here gives the solution of this problem. He declares that the death of a righteous king like Josiah, taken away by a violent death, which some deemed premature, was far more blessed than the life of those wicked men who are allowed to go on in their wickedness, and who, though they may prosper for a time, are the cause of woe and perdition to themselves and others. 

The death of the righteous Josiah is peace (v. 2); he is taken away from the evil to come—the iniquities of the siege and capture of Jerusalem by the armies of Babylon; he rests at peace in his grave in a sweet slumber, with a blessed hope of resurrection. But the evil men who survive are reserved for shame and sorrow here and hereafter. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (v. 21). And therefore the Prophet Jeremiah (who lamented over Josiah) says of him, "Woe not for the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep sore
3. But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, 
The seed of the adulterer and the whore.
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,  
Enflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree,  
Slaying the children in the valleys under the clifts 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. Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set 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 made thee a covenant with them;  
Thou lovestest their bed, where thou sawest it.

for him that goeth away;" that is, for his son, who is to be carried away captive for his sins (Jer. xxii. 10).

The Book of Wisdom (iv. 7–20), which is an enlargement of the present passage.

But the best commentary on these words of Isaiah is found in the answer of Huldhah the prophetess to Josiah himself, in 2 Kings xxii. 19–23. After hearing the chapter he had been fixed on the present words of Isaiah, "Thus saith the Lord, I will bring evil upon this place" (the "evil to come" here specified by Isaiah) "because they have forsaken Me, and have burned incense unto other gods—therefore My wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched. But to the King of Judah which sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say unto him, Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, I also have heard thee, saith the Lord. I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered unto thy grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place."  
The similarity of sense and language between that passage and these words is remarkable, and is obvious to the readers of our English Version; but there is one beautiful feature of resemblance which is not presented there. In v. 1 here it is said, "Merciful men are taken away," the righteous are taken away; but the literal rendering is, "Merciful men are gathered, the righteous is gathered," i.e. to their fathers. The Vulg. rightly has "colligunt," "collectus," here. The word (from the Hebrew asaph, to gather) is the same in the original as in Hul- dah's answer to Josiah, "I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace."  
The meaning of this word may be seen in Num. xxvi. 13, where God says to Moses, "Thou shalt be gathered unto thy people as Aaron thy brother was gathered." Cp. Job xxvii. 19. Jer. viii. 2; xxv. 33.  

Good and beautiful men, who are taken away in the midst of their efforts to do good in their generation, and whose endeavours appear to be disowned by God, and to be blighted and withered by Him, may perhaps seem to men to be cut off by a violence, and a divine dissimulation, and may be mourned by some as having died an untimely death; but the truth is—which these Scriptures reveal—they are gently gathered by God in love, and are in peace.  

May we not also reverently suggest, that the Holy Spirit here states a truth by Isaiah, which (as the Christian Fathers assert, see S. Justin Martyr, c. Tryph. § 16; Apol. i. 48) is to be applied to Josiah's divine Antitype, Christ Himself (contrasted with the evil men of His own age, displayed to us in the prophecy of the foregoing chapter), and which solves the problem of Calvary? He is cut off out of the land of the living (lii. 8). Jesus Christ the righteous perished, and no man taketh it to heart. But He also is taken from the evil to come—from the terrible evils of the siege and capture of Jerusalem by the armies of Rome. And He enters into peace, and is gathered to a glorious company who receive Him with joy and adoration. And all who follow Him rest upon their beds, each one who has walked in the way lying straight before him, instead of turning to the right hand or to the left—or it may be (as Kitchei readers it), before Him, i.e. God. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them" (Rev. xiv. 13). They have been changed to their fathers, and hereafter will be gathered together like eagles, mounting to meet the Lord in the air, and so be ever with the Lord. See on Matt. xxiv. 28. 1 Thess. iv. 17. 2 Thess. ii. 1.

3. But draw near here! He now turns from Josiah (for whom he has words of comfort) to the godless men of Judah, on whom he denounces God's wrath. Cp. the prophetic description in Ezek. xxiii. 1–44.  

4. Against whom make ye a wide mouth? Compare Ps. xxxxi. 21, where these words are used by the Messiah Himself; see also another Passion Psalm, xxii. 7.  

5. with (idol) Or, terebinthas, sacred to Ashtoreth (Delitzsch).  


1 Kings xi. 7. 2 Kings xvii. 16, 17; or to Baal, Jer. xix. 5.  

Ezek. xvi. 20; xxiii. 39. Hosea xiii. 2.  

5. among the smooth stones of the stream? Objects of idolworship. On these smooth stones libations were poured, and meat-offerings were placed (cp. Herod. iii. 8); such stones are called "Inribiae lapides" by Arnobius, i. 39; cp. Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. 302. The idol of Ares in Petra was a black stone (Seidens), and the black stone in the Kaaba at Meecen was once devoted to Kronos (Krehl). Cp. Retan, B. D. iii. 1381;  

Winer, W. B. ii. 520; and note above, on Gen. xxviii. 18.  

7. thy bed? As a harlot; and see Ezek. xxviii. 17. Rev. ii. 22.  

8. thine remembrance? Thy memorial, thy idol (Dargur, Vrilings).  

Instead of placing there My memorial, that is, a memorial prescribed by Me (see v. 11). Thou hast not remembered Me by placing before thine eyes such mementoes, as sacred sentences copied from My Law, see Exod. xiii. 9, where they are called a memorial; or the holy ephod of My worship, also called a memorial (Exod. xxviii. 12); or My offering, also called a memorial (Num. v. 18); thou hast set up a memorial devised by thyself, in thine own idolatrous imaginations.

Thou lovestest their bed where thou sawest it? Literally, thou lovest their bed; thou sawest a hand; or rather, thou hast a vision of a hand (the word here rendered thou sawest, generally has the sense in Isaiah of seeing a vision); see i. i.; ii. 1; xi. 1.  

But what is the meaning of the word gem (literally a hand) here?  

Various interpretations of it have been given, which may be seen in Poli Synopsis, p. 585; Vitringa, 754; Gesenius, p. 332; Delitzsch, p. 551; Ritter, 600; Fuerst, 599.
And ifk thou wentest to the king with ointment, And didst increase thy perfumes, And didst send thy messengers far off, And didst debate thyself even unto hell.

Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; 1'Yet saidst thou not, There is no hope:
Thou hast found the | life of thine hand;
Therefore thou wast not grieved.

And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, Thou that hast lied, and hast not remembered me, Nor laid it to thy heart?

Have not I held my peace even of old, And thou fearest me not?

I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works;
For they shall not profit thee.

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;
And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, Take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people.

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity,
Whose name is Holy;
I dwell in the high and holy place,
With him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit,
To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

For I will not contend for ever, Neither will I be always wroth:
For the spirit should fail before me, And the souls | which I have made.

May it not be explained from v. 10, "Thou hast found the life of thine hand"? May not the meaning be, "Thou didst not trust in My hand"—the hand of the Lord—on which xii. 2. 22; l. 2. 11; li. 16, 17; lix. 1; lixi. 3; thou didst not behold there a vision of strength and glory; but thou hast a vision of some other hand; thou wert inflamed with a craving for that. This may be made clearer from the act of Ahaz, to which the Prophet refers in the next verse, foretelling the God of Israel, and not relying on His hand, but sending messengers to Tidgath-pileser, king of Assyria, for help, and dwelling on the vision of the idolatrous altar at Damascus; and commanding the priest Urijah to make an altar according to the pattern of it, and to set it in the Temple at Jerusalem; and this was the hand to which he looked for help. See the history in 2 Kings xvi. 3—16, 2 Chron. xxviii. 2—5. 14—25, which throw much light on this chapter.

9. Thou wentest to the king Tidgath-pileser, king of Assyria, to whom Ahaz resorted for help, instead of trusting in God. See 2 Kings xvi. 7. 2 Chron. xxviii. 16. 20. — with ointment—perfumes] As a harlot. See Prov. vii. 17. Cp. Ezek. xxiii. 41. Hos. xiii. 1. Also, in a literal sense, “spices and ointments” were among the royal treasures. See the description of the wealth of the son of Ahaz, 2 Kings xx. 13. 10. Thou hast found the life of thine hand] Thou hast obtained strength from thine ally. The kings of Assyria destroyed Damascus and Samaria, the enemies of Judah (2 Kings xvi. 9; xvii. 6), but afterwards they ravaged Judah.

13. thy companies] Thy multitudinous troops of idols and idolaters gathered together, to whom thou resorted for aid, instead of trusting in Me, the One True God.

God’s Comfort to the Meek and Penitent.

14. And shall say] Rather, And be saith. This is a new beginning of a sentence. A voice is heard crying aloud like John the Baptist. Cp. xl. 3, 4; lixii. 10. Cast ye up] Raise up a highway for our God. See above, on Ps. lxxvii. 4, where the same word occurs. 15. that inhabiteth eternity] Or rather, that inhabiteth forever—whatever He fixes His Name in. The idols which ye worship and in which ye trust (see above, v. 5—10) are My abomination, and will be scattered by the wind; but I dwell for ever (Heb. adj.) in the humble and contrite soul. Cp. below, lxvi. 2, and Ps. lxxiv. 4. He, Who dwells in the Holy of Holies, enthroned upon the Cherubim, has His perpetual shrine in the meek and lowly heart, in all ages and nations of the world. The Christian soul is a living temple, a tabernacle of God the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19. 2 Cor. vi. 16). 16. the souls which I have made] God here declares His love to all Nations. He hateth nothing that He has made. Cp. on Acts xv. 18, where St. James declares this truth, "Known unto God" (i.e. beloved by God) "are all His works from the beginning of the world," as a reason for extending the Gospel to the Gentiles.
No peace to the wicked. ISAIAH LVII. 17—21. LVIII. 1, 2. Warning to hypocrisy.

17 For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him:

"I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart."

18 I have seen his ways, and "will heal him:"

I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners;

19 I create the fruit of the lips;

Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; And I will heal him.

20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest,

Whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

21 "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

LVIII. 1 Cry 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.

17, his covetousness] The worldliness of Israel, especially of its priests. See lv. 10—12. Micah iii. 10.

18. Peace, peace to him that is far off] Peace and all its blessed fruits to the Gentile that is far off, no less than the Jew, that is near. See Acts ii. 39; and above, on lii. 5; and on the repetition of the word (peace, peace) see xxxvi. 3.

21. no peace, saith my God, to the wicked] See xxxviii. 22, where the words are, "There is no peace, saith the Lord (Jehovah), to the wicked." There address is to the people of Jehovah, but here we have the Name Elohim.

The Second Portion of Isaiah's prophecies (from chap. xl. to ch. lxvi.) consists of two Parts.

The First Part (xl.—lxvi. 22), beginning, "Comfort ye my people;" and ending, "There is no peace, saith Jehovah, to the wicked," is addressed specially to the Jews, to whom the Gospel was first to be preached.

The Second Part, beginning, "Listen, ye isles, and hearken, ye people, from far;" and ending, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked," is addressed not only to the Jews, but also to the Gentiles. It is addressed to all, of every age and nation, who are united to God in Christ, and in His Church Universal. Hence we see the reason why in the former case the Name Jehovah is used, and in the latter Elohim. Cp. the notes above, on Ps. lixiv., "(God Elohim) be merciful unto us and bless us;" and Ps. lixvii., "Let God (Elohim) arise;" which, when compared with Num. vi. 21—26, and x. 30 respectively, will illustrate this use.

It is a solemn thing to reflect that all the three parts of this Second Portion of the prophecies of the Evangelical prophet Isaiah, which overflow with words of comfort and joy to the humble believer, conclude with stern denunciations of woe to the wicked.

Similarly, we find, in the New Testament, the beloved disciple, the Evangelist and Apostle of Love, St. John, who is most eloquent in his revelations of God's mercy, is also most severe in his condemnations of unbelieving, ungodliness, unholiness, and idolatry, in his Epistles, and presents clearly and fully the terrible doom reserved for them, in his Apocalypse: Let no one pervert God's grace into an occasion of sin; for though He is infinite in goodness to all who love Him, yet to those who do not believe and obey Him, our God is a consuming fire. See lxvi. 24. Heb. xli. 29.

CALL TO REPENTANCE—WARNING AGAINST FORMALISM IN RELIGION; AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO GENUINE PIETY.

Ct. LVIII.] Here begins the third and last part of the Second Portion of Isaiah's prophecies. Its main design is to show God's righteous severity towards the unbelieving Jews, on account of their unthankfulness and ungodliness, particularly in their rejection of Christ, Who in this part is represented no longer as a sufferer, but as a mighty Conqueror; and in their spiritual pride and hypocritical and corrupt worship, and in their jealousy of the Gentiles; and His gracious mercy toward the believing remnant of His People Israel, in making Jerusalem to be the Origin and Wellspring from which the living waters of the Gospel are to flow into all Nations, and in employing the faithful among them as Preachers of His Truth to all the world; and His love for all Mankind in calling them to partake in the graces of the Church militant, and in the glories of the Church triumphant: "Beloved therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness" (Rom. xi. 22).

This part opens with the peal of a trumpet, calling to repentance.

1. Cry aloud—lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins] This exhortation, and the substance of the message to be uttered, carry the thoughts forward to the mission of the Baptist, who represents himself as the voice of one crying in the wilderness (Matt. iii. 3; cp. Mark i. 3. Luke iii. 3. John i. 23), and who was sent to preach Repentance, and the need of vital religion, as contrasted with the hypocritical shows and solemnities of it. See Matt. iii. 7—10. Luke iii. 7—14. The Prophet had already described Jerusalem in his own age as making hypocritical professions of religion, and displaying the outward forms of it, with much ceremonious pomp and formal self-righteousness, but with little inward and moral practice of it (i. 10—17; cp. xxix. 12). And this description applied also to the Jews of the Captivity, and those who returned from it (see Zech. vii. ; viii. 16—19. Mal. iii. 14), and who were called onward to the Jerusalem of our Lord's age (see Luke xxi. 36—47), which was a leafy but barren fig-tree, to be withered by the breath of Christ (Matt. xxi. 19. Mark xi. 13).

We are here brought into contact with what was announced above (xl. 3): "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God," where the imagery of the march of Israel returning from Babylon to Jerusalem, was projected forward to describe the progress of Christ Himself coming as a King to His People.

— a trumpet] Heb. shiphah, the trumpet of Jubilo (see Lev. xxv. 9; cp. on Josh. vi. 4), the type of the preaching of the Gospel. See Luke iv. 18.

2. they seek me daily] In the worship of the Temple, and its daily sacrifices.

— They take delight in approaching to God] This seems to
be the true rendering (Yale, Sept.). Others understand it as
signifying the approach of God to His people. The sense is
expressed by our Lord Himself, quoting Isaiah (xxix. 13):
"This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and
honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me."
(Matt. xv. 8); and so Ezekiel (xxiii. 31): "They come nigh
thee, and sit before thee as My People, and they hear thy
words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they
show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness."
Here is a warning to all, that there may be much outward
show of religion in daily approaches to God in His house, while
there is no vital piety; and that God is offended by this mockery
of empty forms, without spiritual substance. See vv. 4, 5.
Nothing profits without charity (1 Cor. xiii. 1–5).

3. ye fluid pleasure] In vain-gloryful display of yourselves
and of your attire (ep. iii. 17–25) in My courts, and in frivolous
amusement and dissipations (Ps. iv. 3). Nothing of the
labourous service which you require of your labourers on
other days. Cp. Prov. v. 10; x. 22, where the same word
( rendered labour) occurs.

4. ye fast for strife] The leisure which the fast gives you
is spent in angry debates and passionate controversies, not in
works of piety and charity.

— to make your voice to be heard on high] As if God would
hear you by reason of your loud voice "and much speaking"
(Matt. vi. 7). "Climor ad Deum non est voce, sed corde"
(St. Aug.).

6. ye fast] Literally, the fast, which was fastened to the
head of the oxen; hence any harassing galling burden and
bondage.

7. thine own flesh] Nehemiah appears to have had these
words in his mind. See Neh. v. 1–11: "Our flesh is as the
flesh of our brethren; ... and do we bring into bondage
our sons and our daughters? And I was very angry when I
heard their cry, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and
said unto them, Ye exact every one of his brother. Will ye
even sell your brethren? Restore, I pray you, their lands."

9. The putting forth of the finger] To point at thy neighbour
with scorn ("infami digito", Persius, ii. 33); as the Pharisee
says, "εικαστικχος, "this Publican!" (Luke xviii. 11; ep. Prov.
vi. 13). Here is a solemn warning against the sharp, sarcastic,
scurrilous, personal censoriousness and detraction, which were
characteristic of some who called themselves religious in Isaiah's
age, and in the last days of Jerusalem (see James i. 26; iii.
2–10), and are, alas! too common in our own days.

10. if thou draw out thy soul] If thou draw out thy soul—and satisfy the afflicted soul] If thou draw out, not only thy bread and thy money to relieve his body, but thy utmost soul to comfort his soul; then the Lord
will satisfy thy soul (v. 11).


3. Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not?
Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?
Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure,
And exact all your || labour.

4. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate,
And to smite with the fist of wickedness:
|| Ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

5. Is it such a fast that I have chosen?
|| A day for a man to afflict his soul?
Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush,
And 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,
To undo the heavy burdens,
And let the || oppressed go free,
And that ye break every yoke?

7. Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,
And that thou bring the poor that are || cast out to thy house?
When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; And that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

8. Then shall thy light break forth as the morning,
And thine health shall spring forth speedily:
And thy righteousness shall go before thee;
"The glory of the Lord" thy rewar.

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 "speaking vanity;
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 noonday:
And the Lord shall guide thee continually,
And satisfy thy soul in full drought, and make fat thy bones: And thou shalt be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters shall not fail not.

And they that shall be of thee shall 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.

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; And call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; And shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; And I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, And feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father:

For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, And your sins shall have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; Your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: They trust in vanity, and speak lies; They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

They hatch cockatrice' eggs, And weaver the spider's web:

14. to ride upon the high places of the earth'] Quoted from the Song of Moses (Deut. xxxii. 13. Cp. xxxiii. 29).

This was fulfilled, in a subordinate degree, in the successes of Ezra and Nehemiah, aided by the Kings of Persia; and it has had a still larger fulfilment in the glorious conquests of Christian kings, and in the spiritual victories of the Christian Church (2 Cor. ii. 14), which were promised to Abraham and Jacob, through Christ. See Gen. xxvii. 29; xxviii. 14.

"Let us hence learn not to seek our own glory" (says a learned Roman Catholic Expositor, Cornelius A Lapide, here) "on our Sabbath, which is the Lord's Day; but let it be our glory to promote the glory of God."

The perpetual obligation of the doctrines and duties involved in the spiritual essence of the Sabbath (as distinct from its temporal, local, and ceremonial accidents) has been already stated (see lvii. 2-7); and when these are considered, it cannot be matter of surprise that the due observance of the Sabbath should be insisted upon by Isaiah as a matter of primary and permanent importance. It would greatly conduce to the public and private happiness of the present and future ages, if the warnings and exhortations of the Evangelical Prophet on this subject were duly considered. The Editor may perhaps be allowed to refer for further elucidation of this topic to his Sermon on "The Christian Sunday" (Occasional Sermons, No. 44), and to the notes above, on Exod. xx. 8-11.

The Need of a Redeemer; and the Promise of Christ.

Ch. LIX. 1. Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened] Here is an answer to a question, often asked,—Why was the Coming of Christ so long postponed? The delay did not arise from any want of power and will of God to save, but from man's sins. See v. 2.

5. cockatrice' eggs—the spider's web] The one, the offspring of malice (see xi. 8); the other, of human pride and intellectual presumption: the one poisonous and deadly, the other fruitless and abortive.
He that catcheth of their eggs dieth, and
|| That which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.

6 Their webs shall not become garments,
    Neither shall they cover themselves with their works:
    Their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands.

7 Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood:
    Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity;
    Wasting and † destruction are in their paths.

8 The way of peace they know not;
    And there is no || judgment in their goings:
    They have made them crooked paths:
    Whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

9 Therefore is judgment far from us,
    Neither doth justice overtake us:
    || We wait for light, but behold obscurity;
    For brightness, but we walk in darkness:

10 We grope for the wall like the blind,
    And we grope as if we had no eyes:
    We stumble at noonday as in the night;
    We are in desolate places as dead men:

11 We roar all like bears, and † mourn sore like doves:
    We look for judgment, but there is none;
    For salvation, but it is far off from us.

12 For our transgressions are multiplied before thee,
    And our sins testify against us:
    For our transgressions are with us;
    And as for our iniquities, we know them;

13 In transgressing and lying against the Lord,
    And departing away from our God,
    Speaking oppression and revolt,
    Conceiving and uttering † from the heart words of falsehood:

14 And judgment is turned away backward,
    And justice standeth afar off:
    For truth is fallen in the street,
    And equity cannot enter.

6. Their webs shall not become garments] The ingenious schemes and subtle theories, which they spin, will be as vain as spiders’ webs. See Job viii. 14.

Cobwebs are woven by heretics, who devise subtle and specious sophistries in religion; and by fraudulent persons, who cheat others by crafty wiles, and by those who forge vain traditions in religion, and catch unwary souls with them (S. Greg. Naz., S. Ambrose, S. Jerome).

7, 8. Their feet—not know peace] That this description was applicable to the moral character of the Jews in a later age, is evident from St. Paul’s quotation of it, and comment upon it (Rom. iii. 15–19).

Confession of Sin rewarded by Pardon and Grace.

Observe the change of pronoun here from they to we. Henceforward, to vv. 15, is an expression of a deep sense of sorrow on the part of the “contrite ones” in the Jewish Nation. This consciousness of sin and misery, and this humble confession of it, conciliates God’s mercy and favour; and their spirit and heart are revived by the Curing of Christ according to God’s promise. Cp. lvii. 10.

10. We grope for the wall] We grope along the wall to guide us.

We are in desolate places as dead men] Rather, in the midst of dainties (Literally, fatnesses), we are as the dead, who have no power of any enjoyment. See Gesen. 87. The puerile Jews confess that though they had the noonday light of God’s revelation, yet they were blind; and though they had the narrow and fatness of His spiritual favour in His Word and worship, yet they had no more appetite and relish for them than lifeless corpses. They were spiritually dead. See on Matt. viii. 22. John v. 35. Rom. vi. 11; viii. 10. Eph. v. 14. James ii. 17, 20, 26.

Remark now the blessed result of this confession. It brought Christ from heaven to earth. See vv. 10–21. The secret sorrows and earnest prayers of the Simeons, and Annas, and Nathanael, in the twilight of that age of expectation, were rewarded by the dawn of the Sun of Righteousness on the world.

Can we, therefore, doubt, that when the Jews are again animated with this spirit of penitential remorse for their sin in rejecting the Messis, and express an earnest craving and longing for Him, then the veil will be taken from their hearts, and they will “see the King in His beauty”? (xxxii. 17, 2 Cor. iii. 16.) May He hasten the time!
The coming of Christ as a Saviour and a Judge.

16. no intercessor] To mediate between God and His people, like Aaron (Num. xvii. 1, 2), or Phinehas (Num. xxvi. 7; cp. Ezek. xxi. 30, below, chiii. 9).

— his arm brought salvation unto him] Christ alone is able to save: “neither is there salvation in any other” (Acts iv. 12). His Name was to be called Jehovah; for He” (He alone, aorho) “shall save His people from their sins” (Matt. i. 21).

Observe, salvation is put first here and in ixiii. 5; His primary design and desire is to bring salvation to all. The work of righteousness, which is seen in punishing the wicked, as well as in justifying the faithful, is subordinate; but unless He had righteousness, and were “the Lord our Righteousness,” He could not bring salvation.

Here again, we seem to listen to the preaching of the Baptist. Christ’s double character as Saviour and Judge was proclaimed by him. His joyful announcements, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John i. 29), and, “He that hath the Bride, is the Bridegroom” (John iii. 29), were joined with the solemn declaration, “Whose foot is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” (Matt. iii. 12). The herald of His first Advent to save, announced also His Second Coming to judge.

In like manner the range of Isaiah’s prophecies comprehends both Advents of Christ. (See above, Introduction.)

17. 18. he put on the garments of vengeance—to the islands he will repay vengeance] The word vengeance (Heb. nabad) is repeated in ixii. 2; ixiii. 4, as characteristic even of the first Advent of Christ. Cp. xxxvi. 4, which is also connected with the first Advent. Christ is here revealed as the Judge both of Jews and Gentiles (islands: see xi. 11; xii. 4; xliii. 5; li. 5).

This judicial retribution began to be executed not long after His Ascension, in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies for its unbelief and ingratitude; and this is extended to the Gentiles; as the Apostle says, “Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jews first, and also of the Gentiles” (Rom. ii. 9).

19. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun] The extension of the Gospel to the western world is here foretold; and what is remarkable is, that the Prophet represents the diffusion of the Gospel as contemporaneous with a great overflow of ungodli-

ness. These are precisely what are predicted also by our Blessed Lord as two great characteristics of the Latter Days. “Iniquity” (or, lawlessness) “shall abound, and the love of the many shall wax cold; but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved. And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matt. xxiv. 12—14).

When the enemy—standard against him] This rendering, though not expressly authorized by ancient Versions (the Tarquins and Syrinx convey a similar idea), seems to have much to recommend it, and is adopted by Aries Moulana, Tiberius, Siter, and Raha. Cp. Judg. vi. 34; ix. 29. Ps. lx. 4. Zech. ix. 16. The word enemy (Heb. teror) is repeated from the foregoing verse, where the plural of it is rendered adversaries.

The coming of enemies is compared to a flood by the Prophet (see xvii. 12, 13), and the Hebrew verb to “lift up a standard” (nassar), carries back the thoughts to Jehovah-nissei (Exod. xvii. 15).

The enemy will come in as a flood in the latter days. Satan will “come down, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time” (Rev. xii. 12). Then the Lord will lift up His standard against him. When Antichrist rages most furiously, then Christ will come. Cp. 2 Thess. ii. 8. Rev. xx. 9.

20. the Redeemer shall come to Zion] Compare Mal. iii. i: “The Lord shall suddenly come to His Temple.” That this refers primarily to Christ’s First Advent (although it may be extended to the Second Advent), is clear from what precedes, and what follows (ix. 1): “Arise, shine; for thy light is come.” See also ix. i, 1, words quoted by Christ Himself at Nazareth (Luke iv. 18).

St. Paul (Rom. xi. 26) seems to be referring to this passagé, when he is speaking of the future conversion of the Jews. He says, “There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.” See xvii. 9. The Apostle’s quotation may be viewed in the light of a paraphrase of the prophet’s words, and as an exposition of them. Since, as Isaiah declares, the Redeemer was to come to Sion, and to abide there for ever (see v. 21); and since Sion, which is the Universal Church, expanded from its origin and centre in Jerusalem, is the Kingdom of Christ, to which He has promised His Spirit and Presence for ever (see above, on Ps. 87; above, liv. 1. Matt. xxviii. 20. John xiv. 16; S. Jerome and S. Cyril here), therefore if the Jews “turn from transgression,” they will behold Him coming out of Sion, as well as to Sion.
21. My spirit—shall not depart out of thy mouth] Jerusalem is the Mother of the Catholic Church of Christ. "Salvation is of the Jews" (John iv. 22). The Law of God went out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (li. 3), and overspread the world. All the Apostles were Jews, and all went forth from Zion. Wherever the Church is, there is Zion. See on li. 1. Exxvii. Christ promised to give the Spirit to abide with her for ever (John xiv. 6). This is here foretold, where it is said that God's Spirit and His Word shall not depart out of the mouth of Zion and of her seed for ever.

The person addressed in this last verse is supposed by some to be the Messiah, or Israel, because the suffix to the pronomous thy, indicates it to be a masculine noun. Sion is feminine. But this makes no difference in the sense, because by the union of the Messiah with His Church, what is said to Him, as having the Spirit of God, is said also to her, who is His body, and who receives the Spirit by Him.

The Universality of Zion, Illumined by Christ.

CH. LX. 1. Arise, shine; for thy light is come! This (as the Arabic Version entitles it) is an address of the Prophet to Zion, to whom he has just announced the Coming of the Redeemer (lx. 20), and who is the spiritual Mother of all Christians. See on liv. 1; lx. 21.

The Arabic Version adds, that this chapter is read on Easter Day, when by His Passion Christ had purchased for Himself an Universal Church. The Church of England has fitly appointed it to be read on the Festival of the Epiphany, because it foreshadows the coming of the Gentiles into Zion (the origin and centre of Christendom)—a coming pre-signified by the visit of the Wise Men of the East to the Infant Saviour at Bethlehem (Matt. i. 1, 2).

Observe the contrast between Zion and Babylon. To Babylon it is said, "Come down, and sit in the dust" (xlvii. 1); but to Zion it is said, "Awake, awake" (lit. Wake thyself, awake thyself, awake thyself), "stand up" (li. 17); "Awake, awake; shake thyself from the dust; Arise" (lii. 2); "Arise, shine!" (lx. 1).

"When the Sun rises upon the Church, her Antipodes must needs be in darkness" (Archbishop Leighton).

Zion here is the Church of Christ Universal, which had her origin in Jerusalem, and which receives the World into her bosom (Tertullian, S. Ambrose, S. Cyril, S. Jerome, S. Augustine, Theodoret. See also Forerini, Vatablus, Calvinus, and others; particularly Archibishop Leighton's two Sermons on this text, Serm. iv. and v.)

— the glory of the Lord] The Shechinah of the Godhead, which rested upon the Ark in the Holy of Holies in the Temple, has now risen and settled upon the Christian Church.

The revelation of the "glory of the Lord" was connected with the coming of the Messiah, in the mind of the ancient Hebrew Church (Bp. Chandler, l. 82).

On this sense of the word glory (Heb. kol, Hebrew), see above, iv. 2. 5; vi. 3, "The whole earth is full of His glory" and xlv. 2; xl. 5; lvii. 8; and e. 2 here; and Ps. cxi. 20. Jer. lii. 11. Hag. ii. 3. 7. Cp. the use of the Greek word ἀλή, Luke xi. 31. 2 Pet. i. 17.

2. the people] Rather, the nations. The contrast is between the darkness of the whole Heathen world when Christ came, and the light which shone forth from Zion when He, "the Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. iv. 2), "the Light of the world" (John x. 9), had risen. Cfr.

3. the Gentiles shall come to thy light] The first-fruits of the heathen come, in the Wise Men, to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" (Matt. ii. 1, 2); and there was another foreshadowing of the gathering together of the Gentiles to Zion, when there were certain Greeks at the Passover, who came to Philip and said, "Sir, we would see Jesus," and our Lord commented on that desire in these remarkable words, "Jesus answered them" (Philip and Andrew) and said, "The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John xii. 20—24). The corn of wheat of our Lord's Blessed Body rose from the grave, and brought forth the fruit of a spiritual Harvest in the Heathen World; or, as He then expressed it, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (John xiii. 32). And at that time of His Passion, this coming of the Gentiles to Zion was typified also by His riding into Jerusalem on the ass, the figure of the Heathen World. See below, on John xii. 12—15; and cp. above, the prophecy of Jacob (Gen. xlix. 10).

4. Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters] "This" (says S. Jerome) "began to be fulfilled in the gathering of Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven, on the Day of Pentecost, into the Christian Church at Jerusalem, by the ministry of St. Peter and the other Apostles, who were Jews, and preached Christ and baptized in His Name. See on Acts ii. 5—11. St. Peter's quotation from Joel (ii. 28), "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh: your sons and your daughters shall prophesy" (Acts ii. 16—18; cp. ev. 38, 39), gave a further interpretation of the prophecy, as applicable to all Nations.

— shall be nursed at thy side] Rather, shall be nursed at the side—i.e. of their spiritual foster-fathers (namely, the Apostles and other Teachers of the primitive Church, which had its origin in Jerusalem), and they shall be fed with the pure milk of the Word by them (1 Pet. ii. 2. S. Jerome). On the phrase nursed, or carried, at the side, see xlix. 18. 22; lxvi. 12.
The Gentiles

ISAIAH LX. 5—9.

shall come to Zion.

5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, And thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; Because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, The forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, The dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; All they from Sheba shall come:

They shall bring gold and incense; And they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord:

7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, The rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee:

They shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, And I will glorify the house of my glory.

8 Who are these that fly as a cloud, And as the doves to their windows?

9 Surely the isles shall wait for me, And the ships of Tarshish first,

To bring thy sons from far,

Their silver and their gold with them,

— Kedar] The Ishmaelites; in the N.W. of the Arabian peninsula. See above, on xxi. 16; xliii. 11. Gen. xviii. 13. Ps. xxxiv. 5. Cant. i. 5.


— mine altar—the house of my glory] The imagery of the Temple is used to describe the Christian Church, in which the ritual of the Tabernacle and Temple is consummated and spiritualized; see the Pentecostal Psalm, Ps. lxxiii. 17. "Sinai is in the Sanctuary " of the Church; all the glory of the Law is absorbed into the Gospel.

8. Who are these—doves to their windows?] The Messiah (see v. 9) beholds the souls of believers flying from the storms of this world, and flocking for rest to the columbia of the Church (as the Dove took refuge in the Ark in the Flood, Gen. vii. 9), and feeling the spiritual joy which accompanies the gracious reply to the prayer of its weary spirit, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest." (Ps. lv. 6).

This imagery is very beautiful and appropriate, and may be illustrated from the Pentecostal Psalm, where it is promised that the Church herself, when she shall have received the Gentiles and Jews into her bosom, will have the plumpage of the Divine Dove, and be covered with wings of silver and feathers of gold. See the notes on that passage, Ps. lxxiii. 13; and cp. S. Ambrose de Isana, i. 4.

9. Surely the isles shall wait for me] The Messiah speaks here as in ii. 5, "The isles shall wait upon Me, and on Mine arm shall they trust." Cp. xiii. 4.

— the ships of Tarshish] Ships trading with Tarshus, and Spain, and the West. See the note on 1 Kings x. 22, where it was observed that Solomon's navies, trading with Tarshish and the West, and also with Ophir and the East, were prophetic of the spiritual commerce of Christ, sending forth His missionary fleets from Palestine to West and East, and into all lands. Cp. Ps. lxxiii. 7; lxxii. 10; and above, ii. 16.

It is not unmeriting of notice, that the great Apostle of the Gentiles, St. Paul, "the Hebrew of the Hebrews," who argues from his own apostleship, that God hath not cast off His People (Rom. xi. 1), in his Epistle to the Rome, the greatest city of the West, speaks there of his intention to visit Spain, in which Tarshish was. See Rom. xvi. 24, 25.

— first] Literally, in the beginning. This is a prophecy that the Church should begin with missionary enterprises westward. Not only does St. Paul speak of visiting Spain (see the foregoing note), but all his Apostolic journeys from Antioch and Jerusalem were in a westerly direction. Cp. S. Clement, i. 5, where he says, that St. Paul "went to the extremity of the West."
Unto the name of the Lord thy God, 
And to the Holy One of Israel, 
Because he hath glorified thee.

And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, 
And their kings shall minister unto thee:

For in my wrath I smote thee, 
But in my favour have I had mercy on thee:

Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; 
They shall not be shut day nor night;

That men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, 
And that their kings may be brought:

For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish;

Yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.

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 the place of my feet glorious.

The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee;
And all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, 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, And shalt suck the breast of kings: And thou shalt know that 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 thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

19 The sun shall be no more thy light by day; Neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee:

20 Thy sun shall no more go down; when describing the splendour of the celestial city, adopts this imagery and language of Isaiah. See Rev. xxii. 23—27; xxiii. 5.

17. For brass (copper) I will bring gold] Compare 1 Kings x. 21. 27, the description of the days of Solomon (the Son of David, the Peaceable, King of Jerusalem, the Builder of the Temple, the type of Christ), when silver was counted as nothing.

— thy officers] Heb. pekuddah; properly a visitation (and so Targ.), or oversight (Gen. 657), επιτροπή. See below, on Acts i. 20, “His bishopric let another take.” The Sept. paraphrases these words thus: βασιλιά τού πρεσβύτερον σοι επιτρέπειν, a royal title, equivalent to ἐπιτρήσκειν σοι τον βασιλεύον, and this text was applied by primitive Christian Fathers (S. Clement, i. 42; S. Irenæus, iv. 20) to the Episcopate of the Church of Christ. And S. Jerome says (lv. p.728, ed. Vallarsi.), “Scriptura Sacra et maxima majestas et principes futuros Ecclesiae Episcoporum numinavit, quorum omnis visitatio in pace est.” The paternal love, combined with earnest zeal, of the Apostolic office of Bishop, is designated by these words, and by those which follow. Op. 2 Tim. ii. 21; iv. 2; and Vitianges, p. 815.

— exactors] Literally, those who impel others to work (see viii. 3), and hence, generally, Rulers, See iii. 12; xiv. 2 (Genes. 553).

18. Violence shall no more be heard] See on v. 19.

— thy walls Salvation] See xxvi. 1: “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.”

— thy gates Praise] A remarkable declaration,—that the public worship of God, in praise and thanksgiving to Him,—is the strongest defence of the Church. This was exemplified on some memorable occasions, even in the old Dispensation. See above, on 2 Chron. xx. 13—26.

19—22. The sun shall be no more thy light—I the Lord will hasten it in his time] The Prophet passes, by a noble transition, from a description of the Church Militant on earth to a description of the Church Triumphant and glorified in heaven; and thus the prophecy of Isaiah scorns upward, and melts away into the Apocalypse. See Rev. xxi. 4. 23—27; xxii. 5, where these words are adopted.

— these prophecies] (says S. Jerome) “are already daily fulfilled in part in the Christian Church; but they wait for their perfect accomplishment in the End of the World, and in the Second Coming of Christ.”
Neither shall thy moon withdraw itself:
For the Lord shall be thine everlasting light,
And the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

Thy people also shall be all righteous:
1 They shall inherit the land forever,
2 The branch of my planting, "the work of my hands,
That I may be glorified.

A little one shall become a thousand,
And a small one a strong nation:
I the Lord will hasten it in his time.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me;
Because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek;
He hath sent me "to bind up the broken-hearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to them that are bound;
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,
And the day of vengeance of our God;
To comfort all that mourn;
To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion,
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 Lord will hasten it in his time] In its proper season,—a remarkable conclusion to this divine prophecy. The Lord will hasten it in Assyria. It is not for us to know the times and seasons which the Father has put in His own power (Acts i. 7). But the season will come, and when it comes, it will appear to have come speedily (Hab. ii. 3; cp. 2 Pet. iii. 8—10). "The time is at hand" (Rev. i. 3). "Surely I come quickly" (Rev. xx. 20).

The Prophetic Office of Christ, Anointed by the Holy Ghost, to be the Teacher of All Spiritual Truth to the World in His Own Person, and by the Ministry of His Church, which has her Origin in Zion, whence she goes forth to expound all Nations.

Recapitulation.

Ch. LXI.] The Messiah Himself appears here, as in chapters xlix., li. 1—8. He also declared the sense of this prophecy, by applying it to His own ministerial work, on the first occasion when, after His mission by the Holy Ghost descending on Him at His Baptism in the river Jordan, and after the utterance of the Voice of the Father from heaven proclaiming Him to be the Beloved Son, in Whom He is well pleased—He preached in the Synagogue at Nazareth, see Luke iv. 16—23, where v. 14, are adopted nearly verbatim from the Sept. here.

In the second clause ("the Lord hath anointed Me") the Evangelist represents "the Lord" by the pronoun "He," and thus declares that the Holy Spirit is "anointing"—He represents the word 'mekh by 'poor" ("poor in spirit," Matt. v. 3). The Evangelist paraphrases Isaiah's words, "the opening of the prison to them that are bound," by "recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." This is a just paraphrase. Isaiah is referring to the joyful circumstances of the Jubilee (see Lev. xxv. 9—17), one of which was release from bondage. In an Evangelical sense, release from bondage implied recovery of spiritual sight, because Satan, who is the keeper of the prison in which the unregenerate soul lies, blinds the eyes of them that believe not (2 Cor. iv. 4); and the Jubilee of the Gospel brings recovery of sight (see Luke i. 79. John ix. 39. Acts xxvi. 18), as well as release from chains.

Perhaps this chapter of Isaiah was a part of the Proper Lesson for the Day on that Sabbath in which our Lord preached in the Synagogue at Nazareth. If this was so, then that Sabbath was the third Sabbath before the Sabbath of the Feast of Tabernacles,—the feast which was prophetic and typical of the Incarnation and Indwelling of Christ in His Church. On that third Sabbath the Proper Lesson from the Prophets was Isa. ix. 10 to xiii. 9; and the Proper Lesson from the Law was Deut. xix. 9 to Deut. xxx. 20, where there is a dear prophecy of the preaching of the Gospel, as St. Paul himself declares. See above, on Deut. xxx. 11—14, compared with Rom. x. 4—10.

I the Lord hath anointed] A declaration of the Divinity and office of the Holy Ghost (cp. S. Ambrose, De Spiritu, iii. 1—5; S. Irenaeus, iii. 15). This union of the Messiah was at His Incarnation, and publicly at His Baptism. See below, Matt. iii. 16. Luke iii. 22. S. Jerome here; S. Augustin, De Trinitate, iv. 40, and was prefigured by the successive unions of David. Cp. above, on 1 Sam. xvi. 3.

The acceptable year] The Evangelical Jubilee. See above, on Lev. xxv. 8; and below, on Luke iv. 16—19.

the day of vengeance] See above, xiv. 17; and below, xiv. 24—25.

To appoint] To set, as a permanent thing, that would not be revoked.

unto them that mourn in Zion] Christ's promise is not to the proud, and obstinate, and self-righteous, but to them that mourn in Zion for their sins. They receive comfort from Him, and they are made His ministers in comforting others. "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted" (Matt. v. 4).

beauty for ashes] In the Hebrew it is, "pery," or "bpher," i. e. a spiritual light on the head, instead of ashes upon it, which they who mourn have heaped upon their head, in penitential sorrow for their sin. The ashes of lamentation will be taken from their heads, and they will be crowned with a bridal diadem.

oil of joy] On their heads—oil flowing from Christ, their Head, Whose union is mentioned in r. 1, and Who was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. Ps. xiv. 6, 7. Heb. i. 9.

176
7. For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion; therefore in their land they shall possess the double: Everlasting joy shall be unto them.

8. For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

9. And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: All that see them shall acknowledge them, That they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed.

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

— That he might be glorified] Our Lord alludes to this prophecy, when he says, “Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit” (John xv. 8),—fruit borne by those living trees of righteousness, which the Lord hath planted in the house of his Church.

4. They shall build the old wastes] The humble and penitent in Zion, who mourn for their sins, and for their desolations, like the weepers at Zion in Ezr. (iii. 12, 13), are enabled by Christ, as Builder of His Church, to raise up the old waste places, not only in the Hebrew Nation, but in the whole human family. See above, xlii. 19; li. 3; lvii. 12.

5. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks—vinedressers. The prophecy fulfilled by the admission of children of Heathens,—such as Timothy, the son of a Greek (Acts xvi. 1), and Titus, a Greek (Gal. ii. 3), by St. Paul, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, into the Episcopate of the Christian Church, to be Shepherds of Christ’s flock, and keepers of His heritage; and by the call of such Gentile Teachers as Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Pantanistes, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose, Augustine, and innumerable others. The Vineyard of God’s Church has been taken away from the wicked husbandmen, the Scribes and Pharisees, who killed the Heir, and has been given to others (Matt. xxi. 41-46), bringing forth the fruit thereof. How few among the Jews are true dressers of the Vineyard! How few of them are preachers of the Gospel of the Kingdom! But they who formerly were idolaters and strangers to the Covenant, and aliens from the promise, and without hope in the world, are now Bishops of the Church, and they till the soil of Heathendom with the plough of the Gospel, and sow the seed of the Word (St. Jerome).

6. Ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord] This was specially verified in the Apostles, who were all Jews, and not of the Tribe of Levi (with the exception of Barnabas), and yet were “all Priests of the Lord, and Ministers of our God.” In the history of Barnabas, the Levite, bringing the price of his land, and laying it at the feet of the Apostles, we see an image of the subordination of the Levitical Priesthood to the Christian, and of the absorption of the former into the latter. See below, on Acts iv. 36, 37.

7. For your shame ye shall have double] Double glory and joy. See xlii. 2.

8. I the Lord] Observe the transition here. The Messiah rises into the Majesty of Jehovah. The Sufferer, of chap. iii., is no other than the Lord of hosts. — hate robbery for burnt offering] So Vulgate, Taumud (Snech 30), and Hebrew interpreters generally, and Luther, Bruntius, Calvinius, Vitriinga, and others; and this seems to be the correct rendering. The pure faith and holy worship of the Gospel is contrasted with the hypocrisy and rapine of Pharisaism. Cp. Mal. i. 13. Matth. xv. 5; xxiii. 14. Mark vii. 7; xlii. 40.

9. Among the people] Rather, among the nations.

10. I will greatly rejoice] These are the words of Zion praising God, that she has been made the recipient of spiritual blessings in Christ, and the Dispenser of them to the world by means of the Apostolic Church, which had its origin in Jerusalem. She rejoices in her investiture by Christ, and in her glorious privileges, as the Bride of Christ, and as the Teacher of all Nations. See Targum here, and Vitriinga. — As a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments] Literally, as a bridegroom binds on a nuptial tiara, like a priest. See Vitriinga, 855; Gesen. 855, 665; and Delitzsch here. The Church of Christ has both a bridal and a priestly character. — And as a bride] See xliii. 18. Observe, the Church is a

In the Church of God.
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 righteousness and praise to spring forth  
Before all the nations.

11 For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace,  
And for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,  
Until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness,  
And the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness,  
And all kings thy glory:  
For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace,  
And for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,  
Until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness,  
And the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

And thou shalt be called by a new name,  
Which the mouth of the Lord shall name.

Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord,  
And a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken;
Neither shall thy land any more be termed ‘Desolate:
But thou shalt be called || Hephzi-bah, And thy land || 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 † as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride,
So † shall thy God rejoice over thee.

6 † I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem,
Which shall never hold their peace day nor night:
|| Ye that make mention of the Lord,
Keep not silence, 7 and give him no † rest,
Till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem  † a praise in the earth.

4. Hephzi-bah That is, my delight is in her.—the name of the wife of Hezekiah (the type of Christ), whom he married after his miraculous recovery. So Zion, Christ’s Bride, in whom His delight was, was married to Him after His Passion and Resurrection. || See above, on 2 Kings xx. 4. 11. 21; and John xix. 28. Note. || Hephzi-bah (ch. xxxi. 10) || I will betroth thee unto Me for ever,—in righteousness,—and in lovingkindness,—and in mercies. . . . And I will sow her unto Me in the Earth;—the whole Earth shall be a Jerizel, the seed of God. Cp. Zech. v. 10. || The stay and Beulah] literally, possessed, as a wife, who is subject to her husband as her lord, baal. || See Gesen. 130. Cp. Gen. xx. 3. Deut. xxi. 22; and on Prov. xxxvi. 11. 23. 28, in all which places the word baal (lord, husband) is used.

The whole of Christendom is the Land of Zion. || See above, on ev. 1. 2. The best exposition of these words is to be derived from God’s promises to Abraham, and from St. Paul’s commentary upon them. God said to Abraham, “I will make my name — the dust of the earth” (Gen. xvii. 10), and as the stars of heaven (xv. 5); and “I will multiply thee exceedingly”; and “My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant. . . . And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession” (Gen. xvii. 1—8). All Nations are Abraham’s seed in Christ, and all are blessed in Abraham. || Cp. Gen. xiii. 18; xviii. 18; xxvi. 4. Gal. iii. 8. And they have in Him an everlasting inheritance,—not the earthly Canaan merely (a country not so large as a fourth part of England), which has never been given to all Abraham’s seed,—but all that is contained in, and symbolized by, the “Canaan” namely, universal Christendom on earth, growing up into the Church glorified for ever in heaven; or, as St. Paul explains the words, the promise to Abraham and his seed, that he should be heir of the world,—was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith (in Christ, Rom. iv. 15). || See on Gen. xvii. 4. 7. Zion is Hephzi-bah in the Universal Church, which is the One Bride. || See above, on Cant. vi. 9. There are not two Brides, nor more Brides, but One Bride, the Church; One Christ, and One Church; One Husband, and One Bride. Zion becomes the Bride by being universalized in the Catholic Church; but she does not cease to be Zion. Jerusalem was the well-spring of the Catholic Church; and wherever the Church is, there is Jerusalem; and her land is married, or possessed by a Husband, Christ, because by spiritual conquest all Christendom belongs to Zion, where Christ died, and where He purchased to Himself an Universal Church by His Blood; and whoso Hie, to Whom is all power is given in heaven and in earth.” (Matt. xxviii. 18, 19), sent forth His Apostles to subdue all Nations to Himself, the promised Seed of Abraham, and of David, and of Solomon, and Who is the Everlasting King of David, || (Gen. xxv. 18), and therefore the Apostle says to all Christians, “Ye are come unto mount Zion” (Heb. xii. 22).

5. as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee The sons of Zion are every where, in all Nations. || See above, xl. 18—23; lx. 4. “Thy sons shall come from far . . . the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.” And they marry Zion, i.e. they possess her (see on v. 4), not as a master possesses a slave, or land, but with pure and tender love, as a husband possesses a wife, who is one flesh with him. This variety of metaphors (as was before remarked) reminds the reader that these promises are to be understood spiritually. || See xli. 10. — the bridegroom || Christ is the Husband of the One Bride, the Church Universal, whose home was at Jerusalem, and whose dowry is the world. || See Introduction to the Canticles, p. 122; and 2 Cor. xi. 2. John iii. 29. Rev. xvi. 2. || The Bridegroom here is the same as the Bridegroom Who is described by the Psalmist as going forth out of His chamber (Ps. xix. 5); and the Bride is the spouse, who is celebrated in the Canticles, and by St. Paul, as not having spot or wrinkle (Eph. v. 27), and whom he desires to present as a chaste Virgin to Christ (2 Cor. xi. 2), and who is the Queen, standing at the right hand of Christ (Ps. xlv. 9). “This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church” (Eph. v. 32. 1 Pet. x. 25. 26. 27; and Ezek. xli. 17; xxvii. 2—7. || Ye that make mention of the Lord] Ye that make mention of the Lord, and exhort others to remember Him, and who also “are the Lord’s remembrancers,” and implore Him to remember His People. || The word has both senses. || Cp. xii. 4; xxvi. 13; xiii. 26; xiii. 7; lvii. 3; Margin. || 1 Chron. xvi. 4. Titles of Ps. xxxviii. and lxx. || Gesen. 245. These words describe the double work of the Evangelical Priesthood and Ministry, in exhorting the Lord’s People to bear in mind His attributes and acts; and also in entreating Him to remember His promises to them in His well-beloved Son, their Divine Head, Who has died to redeem them, and to reconcile them to the Father.

This work is done by them as Preachers of His Word, and as praying to Him, and as Ministers of His Sacraments. As Preachers of His Word, they must make perpetual mention of the Lord, and never keep silent, and remind the people of their duty to Him, in faith and practice; and as continual offerers of Prayer, and as Ministers of His Sacraments, they ever implore Him to remember His People, especially in the administration of the Holy Eucharist, instituted by Christ for the perpetual remembrance and commemoration of Himself. || See Luke xxi. 19. || 1 Cor. xiv. 24. 25. || T. give him no rest,—a praise in the earth] Cease not, ye Evangelical Remembrancers, to importune God by earnest intercessions, and to solicit Him with a “sigh of earnestness” (see on Luke xvii. 10) till He make known the glad tidings of the Gospel, which was “to go forth from Zion” (see ii. 3) to all Nations, so that Jerusalem may be a praise in the earth; or, as the Psalmist expresses it, Zion may be the joy of the whole earth (Ps. xxvii. 2), and glorious things may be spoken of thee, thou city of God; see above, on Ps. lxxvi. 3—7, a Psalm which is the best exposition of such passages in the Prophets.
Zion will evangelize the World. ISAIAH LXII. 8—12. LXIII. 1. The Victories of Christ.

8 The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, 
† Surely I will no more give 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 
† In the courts of my holiness.

10 Go through; go through the gates; 
* Prepare ye the way of the people; 
Cast up, cast up the highway; Gather out the stones; 
* Lift up a standard for the people.

11 Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, 
* Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; 
Behold, his * reward is with him, 
And his || work 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 * not forsaken.

q ver. 4.

1. Who is this that cometh from Edom, 
as the present, and which declares that every Christian, in 
every age and nation, is a native and citizen of Zion.

8, 9. Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies—they that have gathered it shall eat it—in the courts of my holiness! The Israel of God, that is, the blessed company of all faithful people in all the world (see Gal. vi. 16), shall enjoy a privilege not granted to the literal Israel.

The literal Israel were commanded to consecrate their harvests by bringing the first-fruits and third years' tithes, and dedicating them to the Lord in His house with confession, thanksgiving, and praise. See Deut. xiv. 22, 23; xxvi. 1—15. They could not, however, always perform this duty, by reason of hostile invasions. But the Evangelical Antitype of this is perpetuated and universalized in the Christian Zion, in the courts of the Lord's holiness, especially in the Holy Eucharist, where the faithful offer themselves, and their substance, as a sacrifice to God, and commemorate and represent the One offering of Him, who was the First-fruits of the universal harvest, and where they feast with thankfulness before Him at the spiritual banquet instituted by Him to be the Communion of His Body and Blood (1 Cor. x. 16), and for the continual conveyance and personal application to every faithful receiver of all the benefits procured by His Sacrifice on the Cross. See on Lev. xv. 10; and below, on Rev. vi. 6: "See thou hurt not the oil and the wine;"—the symbols of spiritual blessings. 

10. Go through; go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people! Israel had been commanded to rise up from its captivity, and to go forth from the gates of Babylon, and to return to Zion. See xlvii. 20; li. 11; lii. 14. 

Now the Prophets of the Gospel are exhort to go forth from the gates of Zion, and to cast up a highway (see xl. 3; liii. 14), and gather out the stones (which might be stumbling-blocks to travellers on it), and to lift up a standard for the peoples (not the people of the Jews, but for all Nations), that they may master, and rally round it; and to become Missionaries to the world, and to deliver the dispersed of Israel among all nations from captivity, and to proclaim the glad tidings of the Gospel to the end of the earth, i. e. to the heathen. See xxli. 6, where this phrase is paralleled to "the Gentiles," and distinguished from "Israel."

Observe, that Zion is here spoken of as existing in the end of the World; and the messengers are commanded to prepare the way of the people (i. e. Israel), and also to lift up a standard to the peoples (i. e. to the Gentiles). 

This was done when the Apostles, who were all Jews, went forth from Zion and Jerusalem, according to Christ's commission, to teach and lay hold on all nations, as well as to gather the outcasts of Zion, the tribes of the dispersion, among all nations, into one Zion (see the Epistle of St. Peter to the tribes scattered abroad, 1 Pet. i. 1, 2; ii. 11—11),—the Christian Zion, which goes forth from Jerusalem to enfold the world. Cp. S. Jerome here; and S. Justin Martyr, c. Tryphon. § 26. 

— Lift up a standard! The banner of the Cross, lifted up to all Nations to gather them into the army of Christ (S. Cyril). 

11. Behold, his reward is with him! See xl. 10. 

12. The holy people, the redeemed of the Lord! See 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; ii. 4—9. 

— Sought out! By God, Who sent his beloved Son to seek and to save that which was lost, and Who sends His ministers to search for the outcasts of Israel in all Nations, and to bring them and the Gentiles to one Jerusalem,—"the Jerusalem above, which is free, which is the mother of us all" (Gal. iv. 26). Cp. S. Justin Martyr, c. Tryphon. § 119. 

A city not forsaken! See xlii. 14—16. 

Whosoever receives the Gospel of Christ, whether it be in Scythia, or in Judæa, he is said in the language of prophecy to come to Zion, and to join himself to Israel. Such persons, and such only, are true citizens of Jerusalem, true Israelites, true Jews (see Rom. ii. 28, 29; Rev. ii. 9; iii. 9); and they, and they only, will enjoy the blessings which God has promised to His People (Calv. p. 314). 

The Messiah, as a Mighty Warrior and Conqueror, beginning His Victories at His First Advent, especially in His Passion; and consummating them at His Second Advent. 

Ch. LXIII. The Prophet—having declared in the foregoing prophecy that "salvation cometh to Zion," and that this salvation will be wrought by some Mighty Personage, of Whom he says, "His reward is with Him and His work before Him;" and that the effect of His Coming and actions will be, that the people of Zion will be called "the redeemed of the Lord;" and Zion herself will be called "Sought out, a City not forsaken"—proceeds now to describe more fully the doings of this mighty and merciful Saviour. 

The subject of this prophecy may be described in the words of the Apocalypse, at the opening of the first seal: "I saw, and behold a white horse; and He that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto Him; and He went forth conquering, and to conquer" (Rev. vi. 2). 

Christ at His First Coming went forth conquering, treading under foot the hostile powers of this World, and overcoming Satan, Sin, and Death; and He went forth in order to conquer, to subdue them utterly at His Second Coming. 

Therefore another prophecy near the close of the Apos-
With dyed garments from Bozrah?
This that is, glorious in his apparel,
Travelling in the greatness of his strength?
I speak in righteousness,
Mighty to save.

Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel,
And thy garb like him that treadeth in the winefat?

I have 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.

4 For the day of vengeance is in mine heart,  
And the year of my redeemed is come.

5 And I looked, and there was none to help;  
And I wondered that there was none to uphold:  
Therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me;  
And my fury, it upheld me.

6 And I will tread down the people in mine anger,  
And make them drunk in my fury,  
And I will bring down their strength to the earth.

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 In all their affliction he was afflicted,  
And the angel of his presence saved them:  
In his love and in his pity he redeemed them;  
And he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

10 But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit:  
Therefore 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 
\(^9\) brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock?

\(^9\) Where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?

\(^12\) That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, 
\(^5\) dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?

\(^13\) That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness,

\(^14\) As a beast goeth down into the valley,

\(^15\) Look down from heaven,

\(^16\) Doubtless thou art our father,

\(^17\) O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways,

\(^18\) The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while:

Our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.

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The Complaint of Israel for the Desolations of Jerusalem and the Destruction of the Temple (v. 18; iv. 12); the consequence of their own sin in rejecting Christ.

With regard to the spirit of this complaint, see further on lv. Prelim. Note.

15. Look down from heaven.] The Prophet foresees Israel scattered, and their Temple and City destroyed by the Romans, and introduces them here as using the language of their forefathers when carried captive by the Chaldeans: "Return, we beseech Thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine. . . . It is burned with fire, it is cut down" (see here, lv. 11). "Turn us again . . . and we shall be saved" (Ps. lxxv. 14—19).

18. "towards me! are they restrained?] Rather, are they restrained toward me? Those bowels of fatherly mercy which yearn toward all Thy children, and which of old yearned so tenderly toward me, Thy favoured people, are they now restrained toward me? This is a mournful and piteous appeal from Israel to God.

16. Doubtless—everlasting.] Rather, For Thou, O Lord, art our Father, although even Abraham (our father) should forget and disown us on account of our sins (see lv. 7), our Lord (the true Israel) should not acknowledge us as his children, and should say that we have dispossessed ourselves by our iniquities; yet Thou, O Lord (Who art ever merciful to the penitent, much more merciful than any earthly parent, as Thou hast declared, see above, xlix. 15, 16), art our Father, our Redeemer, Thy Name (the merciful and gracious God, Exod. xxv. 6) is from everlasting, and unchangeable; therefore Thou wilt have compassion upon us. Return, for Thy servants' sake, the tribes of Thine inheritance.

Observant the Jews are here represented by the Prophet as no longer relying on any vain-glorious conceit of their merits as children of Abraham (as they did in their Lord's day, John viii. 33, 39), but as casting themselves on God's mercy alone.

17. O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear? The obduracy of the Jews is their punishment (see vi. 10); like the punishment of Pharaoh. See above, on Exod. lv. 21; and cp. Waterland, Scriptura Vindicata, vi. 293.

18. The people—our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.] Our Lord explains these words when He says, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke xxi. 24). Jerusalem has now been trodden down of her adversaries for 1800 years. How short a time did the holy people possess it in peace, in comparison with the time of desolation! Cp. below, lv. 12. As S. Jerome observes here; All that is said in this passage is to be referred to the time of the desolation of Jerusalem after its capture by the Roman armies, which is described by Josephus in his History of the Wars of the Jews, And so S. Cyril, "All these things were done after the crucifixion of Christ, and as a punishment for it." Cp. above, xliii. 28, where God Himself declares the cause of the desolation of Jerusalem and its Temple. And this is clear from the exposition of the
Earnest prayer of the Jews; ISAIAH LXIII. 19. LXIV. 1—9. their penitential confession.

19 We are thine: thou never barest rule over them; 
|| They were not called by thy name.

LXIV. 1 Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, That thou wouldest come down,
That the mountains might flow down at thy presence,
As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, To make thy name known to thine adversaries, That the nations may tremble at thy presence!
When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for,
Thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.
For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear,
Neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee,
What he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.
Thou meetest him that rejoiceth * and worketh righteousness,
Those that remember thee in thy ways:
Behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned:
In those is continuance, and we shall be saved.
But we are all as an unclean thing,
And all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;
And we all do fade as a leaf;
And our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.
And 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 consumed us, * because of our iniquities.
But now, O Lord, thou art our father;
We are the clay, * and thou our potter;
And we all are the work of thy hand.
Be not wroth very sore, O Lord,
Neither remember iniquity for ever:

Behold, see, we beseech thee, * we are all th' people.

Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation.

Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee,

Is burned up with fire:

And all * our pleasant things are laid waste.

The Gentiles are preferred.

The answer of the Lord to the foregoing complaint and prayer of Israel.

Preliminary Note.

Ch. LXV.] In order to understand what follows, we must review what has gone before.

The complaint and prayer of the Jews in the latter part of the last chapter but one, and in that which follows (viz. xxiii. 15, " Look down from heaven," to ixvi. 12, inclusive), has much that is commendable in it, but it is also characterized by some grave defects.

The Prophet represents the Jews,—scattered for their rejection of Christ,—as humbled by the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and as mourning over their desolations. He represents them also as confessing that these evils have overtaken them on account of their sins, and as praying to God to return and restore them.

But in the complaint and prayer, that we have just read, there is a mention of their special and paramount sin in rejecting and crucifying Christ, which was a subject of the foregoing prophecies, especially chap. liii., and again chap. lixiii. This penitential acknowledgment, on the part of the Jews, beclouds the whole of the latter part of their complaint, as well as the looking up to God among the Gentiles; and to the glorious, spiritual, living fabric of the Church Universal, which has grown up upon those ruins, and which, after its work is done upon earth, and after it has been purified by trial, will mount upward, and become the golden City of pears and jewels,—the Jerusalem glorified in heaven.

Hence may be explained the language of rebuke from the mouth of God Himself in the following chapter. If the foregoing complaint and prayer had been altogether laudable, it would have been graciously accepted; but it is corrected by Him. See, for example, ve. 1, 2, 5; ixvi. 18—21, as to the reception of the Gentiles on equal terms with the Jews; and ixvi. 25, as to the material Temple, and as to the true Offerings and Sacrifices, in which God delights; and ixvi. 23, as to the communion of all flesh united together in the worship of God in the Church here, and in the Church triumphant hereafter.

The two following chapters extend from the Passion of Christ to the Universal Judgment, and the consummation of all things. See ixvi. 21.

1. I am sought of them that sought not for me; I am found of them that sought me not—thoughts.] Namely, the Gentiles, as St. Paul explains the words (Rom. x. 20). Cp. S. Justin Martyr, c. Tryph. 24; Apol. i. 49. Here is God's answer to the foregoing complaint of the Jews. Do not suppose that your miseries are due to any abatement of Divine Love.
God declares the guilt of the Jews. ISAIAH LXV. 2—8.

Yet a remnant will be saved.

Before CHRIST there were 698.
- e Rom. 16. 31.
- d Deut. 22. 21.
- e ch. 1. 29. & 60. 17.
- See Lev. 17. 5.
- f Heb. upon brick.
- g ch. 56. 17.
- h See Lev. 11. 7.
- i Or, piece.
- h See Matt. 2. 11.
- Jude 19.
- || Or, anger.

Yet your and see for thus. And burneth incense † upon altars of brick; which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine’s flesh, and ‡ brooth of abominable things is in their vessels;  

Behold, † it is written before me:

I will not keep silence, † but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom.

Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the Lord, which have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills:

Therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.

Thus saith the Lord, as the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for ‡ a blessing is in it:

— a fire that burneth all the day.
— swine’s flesh
— broth containing fragments of meats forbidden by the Law as impure.
— swine’s flesh
— a fire that burneth.

"a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Sept., Rom. x. 21), and ye would not accept My overtures of affection, even those made to you in Christ, the well-beloved Son. As He Himself declared: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. xxiii. 37. 38).

3. A people—that sacrifice in gardens i.e. which comply with idolatrous practices. To "sacrifice in gardens" is, in prophetical language, to commit idolatry. Compare i. 29. 30; lxvi. 17. It has been supposed by some Expositors that these words cannot refer to any class of Jews after the Babylonish Captivity, and much less to any after the Crucifixion of Christ.

But this notion is refuted by the records of the Maccabees, and by Josephus, describing the compliance of many Jews with heathen customs in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes; cp. Dan. xi. 31—35; 1 Macc. i. 41—44; 2 Macc. vi. Josephus, Ant. xii. 7; and Lib. De Maccabaeis, c. 4; S. Jerome, in Dan. viii. and xi.; Prid.us, Connexion, Ad n. c. 108, who well says, "The more to propagate among the Jewish People the heathen worship that was enjoined, and to bring all to conform thereto, they did set up alters, graves, and chapels of idols in every city; and officers were sent to them, who on the day of the King’s birth in every month forced all to offer sacrifices to the Grecian gods, and to eat the flesh of swine and other unclean animals, then sacrificed to them (forbidden by the Levitical Law: see Lev. xi. 7. Deut. xiv. 8); and when the feast of Baccus came, the Jews were forced to join therein, and carry ivy as the heathen did."

In our Lord’s discourse, Herod, and the Herodians, who were named from him, did not scruple to comply with heathen usages, and to erect heathen temples and heathen images, and endeavoured to conciliate the favour of Rome thereby. See Josephus, Ant. xv. 8. 9; and B. J. i. 21. 12. St. Peter also, in writing to the Jews of the Dispersion in his first Epistle, (which supplies a divine comment on these two chapters of Isaiah,) says to them that, "The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness... and abominable idolatries" (1 Pet. iv. 3).

It is said by some Expositors (as Wm. Lowth here, and on 189 Michav v. 12—14; and on Zeph. xiii. 12), that these prophecies have also a reference to Jews in later times, who comply with idolatrous practices in some countries of Europe.

— altars of brick Contrary to the Law (Exod. xx. 24. 25).

4. remain among the graves To practise necromancy by endeavouring to evoke the spirits of the dead.

— lodge in the monuments In hiding-places and caves (like that of Trophonius, at Lebadea), for purposes of divination (Gesen. 563).

5. Which say, Stand by thyself! Here is another form of corrupt Judaism prevalent in our Lord’s age,—spiritual pride, as portrayed in His own parable of the Pharisee and the Publican (Luke xviii. 11). The sins before specified (in vv. 3. 4) were those of Herodianism: the vice described here is the vice of Pharisaism.

— a smoke Something unclean and abominable (Lev. vii. 18; xix. 7. Ezek. iv. 14). Even as idolatry itself. As our Lord says to the Pharisees, "Ye are they that justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God (Luke xvi. 15)."

6. and the iniquities of your fathers The Jews of our Lord’s age, by not repenting of their fathers’ sins, and by bringing all the iniquity of the Nation to the brim and overflow in the Crucifixion of Christ, entailed upon themselves all the arraignment of punishment due to the sins of their ancestors, as our Lord Himself declares (Matt. xxiii. 32—30).

Cp. 1 Thess. ii. 15. 16; and above, lix. 2. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God?" and on lix. 7.

8. As the new wine is found in the cluster Though the Jewish Nation has sinned as a Nation, yet there is a remnant in it, which shall be saved. See above, x. 21. Rom. ix. 27; xi. 5. 25. 26.
God's promise to Jewish believers: ISAIAH LXV. 9—14.

So will I do for my servants' sakes, That I may not destroy them all.

And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, And out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: And mine elect shall inherit it, And my servants shall dwell there.

And 'Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, And 'the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, For my people that have sought me.

But ye are they that forsake the Lord, That forget 'my holy mountain, That prepare a table for that troop, And that furnish the drink offering unto that number;

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.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: Behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: Behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:

Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, And ^shall howl for † vexation of spirit.

9. an inheritor of my mountains: Not of one mountain at Jerusalem, where the Temple was, but of My montanaus in all the Earth, which, by becoming the Church of God, will be an universal Jerusalem. Cp. Joel iii. 18. 20: "It shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim" (in Moab); "and Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation;" and see Ezek. xxvii. 8—10, describing the abundant issues and outpourings of divine grace under the Gospel.

The holy Patriarch Jacob (says Osianer) will have a numerous spiritual progeny,—namely, the believers of Christ in all nations,—who will worship God, not in the one mountain of Zion, but in many mountains; that is, in the Churches throughout the world, where the Gospel of Christ is preached; for they who believe in Christ are the Israel of God (Gal. vi. 16); and see Jer. xxx. 8. 9. Morter, referring to this passage of Isaiah, in his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, says, "We who believe in Christ are the true seed of Israel."

10. Sharon shall be a fold of flocks: This was fulfilled, in part, when Christian shepherds for gathering in the flock of Christ arose in Sharon and its neighborhood. See Acts ix. 35; above, xxxv. 2. But Sharon is a general name for a wide, open, pastoral country (Gesen. §50); and the sense is, that the Sharonian Jews, and of the World, shall be filled with spiritual flocks, tended by Christian shepherds, set over them by Apostles, of whom were descended from Jacob. See S. Jerome here, and Vitrina, who asks well (p. 902), "Why should you be surprised that the Prophet here speaks of flocks and herds in a spiritual sense, since he has frequently done so already in all parts of his prophecy?" (Xi. 6; xxx. 24; ix. 7. Cp. the words of Isaiah's contemporary, Micah vii. 14; and 1 Cor. ix. 9.

— the valley of Achor: Achor is another name which is to be understood, not only literally, but in a spiritual sense, like the proper names in the Song of Solomon. See Intro. to it, p. 125. There was a Christian community in early days at Jericho, near Achor, even from the days of Zaccheus (see Luke xix. 1—10); and every Achor, that was once connected with sorrow and execration (see Josh. vii. 24), has become a door of hope (see Hosea ii. 14, 15, describing the blessed condition of Israel returning to God in Christ), now that the curse is taken away by the death of Christ, the Seed of Abraham, the Good Shepherd giving His life for the sheep. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. v. 20); and spiritual food and refreshment are given to Him to the flock which He has purchased by His own blood. Cp. Ezek. xxxiv. 13, 14. Acts xx. 28. 1 Pet. v. 2.

12. But ye—prepare a table for that troop: Or, ye prepare a table—a lecti-sterium, like that of Bel and the Dragon (see B. and D., 13. 18. 22)—for God, i.e. for the false deity Fortune (as the Only, and Syracoe have it). See above, note on the name God, Gen. xxx. 11. Cp. Josh. xi. 17; xii. 7; Vitrina, 904; Gesen. 157; Delitzsch; Fuerst, 262; Siler, 822. The Sept. has ἑαυτοῦ, a general term, a false god, or devil; and perhaps St. Paul refers to this passage, when he says to some of the Christians, probably Judaeans, of Corinth, "Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils" (1 Cor. x. 21).

— furnish the drink offering: Cp. Jer. vii. 18; xlix. 17.

— unto that number: Or rather, unto Meni, another false deity, perhaps Venus (Gesen. 487; Delitzsch); or rather the Moon, (see) the measure of the number of days in the months (Fuerst, 533; Siler, 822).

12. Therefore will I number: I will number,—a paradoxism on the preceding word Meni. You have chosen Meni for your deity, therefore I will number (from Heb. manah, to number) you to the sword.

13. My servants: The elect remnant of the Jewish nation, who embrace the Gospel (see v. 8), are contrasted, in character and in their future lot, as God's servants, with those who serve other things, whether it be their own wayward wills, or false deities.
The new Name.  ISAIAH LXV. 15—18.  New heaven and new earth.

15. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: For the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name, and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and they are hid from mine eyes.

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

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.

16. the God of truth Literally, the God of Amen,—a remarkable word, repeated here, and found only in two other places in the prophetic Books (Jer. xi. 5; xxviii. 6). When we hear in mind that “in Christ all the promises of God are Yes and Amen” (2 Cor. i. 20), and that our Lord adopts this word AMEN in His Gospel, where He uses it about one hundred times, and that He calls Himself “the Amen” (Rev. iii. 14), we are led to recognize here a reference to Him and to the Gospel in this title, “the God of Amen;” and we see here a declaration that the characteristic of those Jews who are God’s servants, and plead with Him, and are rewarded by Him, is this,—that they seek for blessing through Christ. “The Way, the Truth, and the Life” (John iv. 6), and adore Him as God. Cp. above, xiv. 23. Ps. lxiii. 17; below, Jer. iv. 2. Rom. ix. 5.

**The New Heavens and New Earth.**

Thdt this prophecy will have its consummation in the future world, after the consummation of the present Earth, and the general Resurrection of the Just and the Unjust, is clear from the testimony of the Holy Spirit in 2 Pet. iii. 7—13. Rev. xxii. 17. Rom. viii. 19—23, which are the best commentaries on this passage.

It is the prophecy of Christ's Victory (which will receive its full and final consummation in the Second Advent) that has its beginning in His First Advent, especially in His Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension, which involved all the things which are to be displayed in His future triumphs (see above, on chap. xxii. Pref. Note); so “the New Heavens and New Earth,” which are to be fully revealed in the Church glorified of His Second Advent, had their foundations in the Church Militant at His first Coming.

The wonderful process of “fore-shortening,” Divine Prophecy delineates the two Advents of Christ blended together in one glorious picture. See above, Introduction.

The present prophecy has its starting-point in the Gospel, which makes Christ's Name “the Kingdom of Heaven” (Matt. iv. 17), and extends to Christ's future appearing at the Great Day. See xlvi. 23.

Many of the features of this prophecy belong to the condition of man in this lower world (see e. 20; Jer. i. 21). And this is the sense which the Lord Himself, speaking by Isaiah, has taught us to give to this prophecy. When describing Christ's Advent, He says, “I am the Lord thy God, and I have put my words in thy mouth, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say, ‘The Lord God and Art My People’” (Is. 55:5). See also the remarkable words of Haggai (ii. 6) compared with Heb. xii. 26. It is also altogether in accordance with the general character of the prophetic Scriptures, that a prediction begun in the Old Testament by Isaiah should be completed in the New by St. Peter and St. John. It is always to be borne in mind, in comparing this and other prophecies, that there are not two Churches of Christ, but one Church Universal in two different states,—militant here on earth, and to be glorified hereafter in heaven. This chapter, therefore, is fittingly appointed by the Church to be read on the sixth or last Sunday after the Epiphany, when we are exorted specially to meditate on the circumstances of His glorious Great Epiphany, or Second Appearing, and to prepare ourselves for it. “O God, Whose Blessed Son was manifested that He might destroy the works of the Devil, and make us the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life; Grant us, we beseech Thee, that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as He is pure; that when He shall appear again in power and great glory, we may be made like unto Him in His eternal and glorious kingdom; where with Thee, O Father, and Thee, O Holy Ghost, He liveth and reigneth ever one God world without end.”

17. I create new heavens and a new earth] The new heavens and new earth were first founded in the preaching of the Gospel. As St. Paul says, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature” (or new creation); “the old things” (άνωτάτος τά ἀρχαία, the original things) “are passed away” (literally, passed away at once—συντριβανεῖται, nowt); “behold, all things have become and are new” (πάντα δὲ νέα). See below, on 2 Cor. v. 17. In the language of prophecy, the desolation of the Jewish Dispensation, and of all earthly polity, is called the “shaking of the Heavens and the Earth,” for the establishment of the kingdom of the Messiah (see Haggai ii. 21—23). “The creation of the New Heavens and the New Earth began with the Gospel, and is consummated at the Second Advent,” says Vitringa, p. 913. The prophet Calvstile beholds both these at one glance. He sees the Evangelical Dispensation introduced with the punishment of the rebellious Jews, and the calling and conversion of the Gentiles, and the reconciliation of God with Mankind; and, eventually, the union of the Gentile tribes with Jews converted to Christianity, in glorifying the Lord Christ, and in adoring His Name. See the foregoing note, and Luther, as quoted by Calovius, p. 370.

He explains what the creation of “new heavens and a new earth” means, by adding, “behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing” (c. 18).

— the former] The Jewish Dispensation. See Heb. xii. 26, 28.

18. I create Jerusalem a rejoicing] These promises refer to the present world. This is evident from e. 20, where is mention of death of sinners, and from v. 24, which speaks of prayer. Such things are not applicable to the perfection of the future state of heavenly beatitude.

Jerusalem is here the universal Church on Earth, which has been called, after the names of Zion. Her Founder is Christ, the Seed of Abraham; and her Patriarchs are the Apostles, all of whom were Jews, and who, being filled with the Holy Ghost, given at Zion, went forth from it to make the whole world into a City, a holy City, the “City set on a Hill” (Matt. v. 14), the City of the living God. See S. Jerome here; and cp. above, lix. 5.

This is the true comfort to the Jews. Here is a divine answer to their complaint in the foregoing chapter. Let them think of the old children of the faith of Abraham, who believed in Christ—let them become Israelites indeed. Then—but not till then—they will be citizens of the true Jerusalem, the Jerusalem that is above, which is the mother of us all (Gal. iv. 29). See above, on li. 2, and liv. 1.

These promises have their full accomplishment in the Church of the Gospel, militant first, and at length triumphant. In the graces and comforts which believers have in and from Christ,
And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in my people: And the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, Nor the voice of crying.

There shall be no more thence an infant of days, Nor an old man that hath not filled his days:

For the old shall die an hundred years old;

But the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed.

And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; And they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

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 long enjoy the work of their hands.

They shall not labour in vain, Nor bring forth for trouble;

Although he attains to old age in years, yet since he is a sinner, he is smitten by the curse of God. Cp. Eccles. viii. 12. As Death reigns by sin, so Life reigns by righteousness (Rom. v. 21). Believers in Christ, "the Life," shall be satisfied with life, though it be ever so short on earth. If an infant ends its days quickly, it shall not be reckoned to die untimely. (They that are dying in the arms of Christ, and belonging to His Kingdom, are not to be called infants of days; but even the child shall be reckoned to die a hundred years old; for he shall rise again at full age to Eternity. An old man who is wise and good, may truly be said to have filled his days; but the unbeliever shall be unhappy in life, although it be never so long. The longer he lives, the more weight he treasures up; his long life is a curse. It matters not, whether our lives be long or short, but whether we live as saints or as sinners (M. Henry).}

And there shall be in Eden a reservoir of the waters of life; and there shall be also a place where the leaves of the tree shall be for the healing of the nations. (Isa. lix. 12.) Therefore, when a man shall...}

23. as the days of a tree are the days of my people! Or, as the days of the tree, which by some is rendered the tree of life, so Sept., Targum, and so S. Jerome and others; cp. Rev. ii. 7; xvii. 2. 14. There is much to be said in favour of this rendering; and perhaps there is something mysterious in the word, on account of the connexion of the Tree of Life with the Cross of Christ. See above, on Gen. ii. 9. The Tree of Life had the privilege and essence of immortality in it; so has the Cross of Christ. And all true citizens of the spiritual Jerusalem partake of that immortality. They are "planted in the likeness of His Death, and will be planted in the likeness of His Resurrection" (Rom. vi. 6). They will feed of the Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God. See Rev. ii. 7; xxii. 2. 14.

Although he attains to old age in years, yet since he is a sinner, he is smitten by the curse of God. Cp. Eccles. viii. 12. As Death reigns by sin, so Life reigns by righteousness (Rom. v. 21). Believers in Christ, "the Life," shall be satisfied with life, though it be ever so short on earth. If an infant ends its days quickly, it shall not be reckoned to die untimely. (They that are dying in the arms of Christ, and belonging to His Kingdom, are not to be called infants of days; but even the child shall be reckoned to die a hundred years old; for he shall rise again at full age to Eternity. An old man who is wise and good, may truly be said to have filled his days; but the unbeliever shall be unhappy in life, although it be never so long. The longer he lives, the more weight he treasures up; his long life is a curse. It matters not, whether our lives be long or short, but whether we live as saints or as sinners (M. Henry).}
God loves the true Zion; ISAIAH LXV. 24, 25. LXVI. 1, 2. rejects the material temple.

Before CHRIST about 698.
ch. 61. 5.
o. Ps. 32. 5.
Dan. 11. 11.
p. ch. 11. 6, 7, 9.
q Gen. 3, 14.

24. before they call, I will answer.] For God loves them and has heard the thoughts of their hearts (cp. John xiv. 13; xv. 16; vii. 23—27). "Intentio cordis, charus ad Deum" (S. Augustinii). "Ut ausus hominius ad voce nostro, sic ausus Dei ad cogitationem nostram" (S. Augustin). Christ is ever praying for them (Heb. vii. 25, and Acts iv. 31).

25. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together—holy mountain.] See above, xi. 6, 7, 9. A specimen of this happy conjunction was seen when Saul, who had ravened as a wolf in the morning, became meek as a lamb in the evening—"ipus et agnus pacebantur simul persecutor Saluus et Ananias discipulus" (S. Jerome; see on Gen. xlix. 27).

All may be called lambs who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth (Rev. xiv. 4); and He speaks of them when He says, "Feed My lambs" (John xxi. 15); and the lion eats straw like the ox, when men who were formerly strong and wild in this world, feed on the same Word of God as those who are tame, and labour like oxen, in God's husbandry. See S. Jerome here. —dust shall be the serpent's meat] Compare Gen. iii. 14 and Micah vii. 17. The faithful have power to tread him under foot (Luke x. 19. Rom. xvi. 20).

It has been supposed, with much probability, that the descriptions of a future time of happiness and peace, which have found their way into the Syriac versions, and thence passed into the poetry of the Augustan age, especially the fourth Eclogue of Virgil, refer to these inspired relics of Isaiah (cp. above, xi. 6—9, and above, lxv. 17—25); and below, Amos ii. 13. Hos. ii. 22. Zech. viii. 12; for example, Virgil, Eccl. iv. 5—24:—

"Magnus ab integro securorum nascitur Ordo, Jan nova progenies soli demititur alto;— nec magnos aequant armenta leones; Occidet et serpens; et fallax herba veneer.
Ociddet—
To quos, si quanam sceleris vestigia nostri, Irida perpetua solvant formidine terras; Aspice! venturo lactantur ut omnia sede.
"


Conclusion of the Reply of God to the Complaint of the Jews.

CH. LXVI.] This is the conclusion of the revelations of the Evangelical Prophet. They reach to the future World—to the felicities of Heaven and to the woes of Hell. It was probable, a priori, that there would be no decline in the conceptions and dictum of these wonderful prophecies, but that rather they would grow with increasing fervour of imaginative splendour as they approach the hour of sunset; and this expectation is fully realized by internal evidence.

In v. 21 we read that the Gentiles are to be admitted into the Priesthood or order, and are to be called to the Temple to sacrifice. They are called His Priests and Levites. Thence it is clear that the Levitical dispensation is here regarded as a thing of the past. It has been superseded by the Gospel. "The Priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the Law" (Heb. vii. 12).

This being established, the interpretation of this chapter becomes easy. All its language is figurative, and is to be interpreted in a spiritual sense (see ver. 10, 17. 20, 23). This is the method of interpretation which has been adopted in the exposition of this chapter by S. Augustine, De Civitate Dei, xx. 21, 22, and by other ancient Christian Fathers; and the soundness of its will, it is anticipated, approve itself to the thoughtful reader, who does not look at texts of Scripture singly, but takes a large and comprehensive view of them as an harmonious whole, and "compares spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. ii. 13), and endeavours, by the help of the Holy Spirit, to interpret the Divine Word according to the "proportion of Faith." See on Rom. xii. 6.

1. Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: Where is the house that ye build unto me? And where is the place of my rest?

2. For all those things hath mine hand made, And all those things have been, saith the Lord:—
The humble heart is God’s Temple. ISAIAH LXVI. 3—6. He hates hypocrisy; loves meekness.

But to this man will I look, and will exalt him in my presence instead of those who follow their own devices, instead of trembling at His word, and obeying His Will, as there revealed, all their worship is as hateful to Him as impure orgies and abominable idolatries. And when God comes in grace, He destroys the sacrifices of Judaism, which imply disbelief of Christ (S. Jerome).

The sacrifice which God demands, and delights in, is that of the heart. See Micah vi. 6—8. Hosen vi. 6. Joel ii. 13. Matt. ix. 13; xii. 7. Mark xii. 34.

I also will choose their delusions] Rather, Also (this word, the Heb. ḫūn, stands euphemistically at the beginning of the sentence, and is repeated from the previous clause, where it is rendered γεγονόται I will choose their shame,—the everlasting shame and contempt” (Dan. xii. 2).—to which theirself-chosen ways will lead them (see Sept. and Delitzsch),—or their destruction (Targum, Vulgate, and Gesen. 570). They have chosen their own ways, and I will choose their shame and woe. See what follows. This divine verdict has been fulfilled in the woes which have overtaken the Jewish Nation.

Your brethren that hated you, That cast you out for my name’s sake, Said, ‘Let the Lord be glorified: But he shall appear to your joy, And they shall be ashamed.”

A voice of noise from the city,

2. to this man will I look—contrite spirit] The humble and contrite heart is My Temple. “Thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, Whose Name is Holy; I dwell...with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit” (lxxv. 15). “Know ye not” (says the Apostle) “that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19). “Ye are the Temple of the living God” (2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. ii. 21, 22). “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. ii. 5).

And trembleth at my word] Cp. v. 5. In their complaint to God the Jews had owned that they were sinners (lxiv. 6); but they had prided themselves on being All his people (see on lxiv. 9), and they had not trembled at God’s word. See above, Pref. Note to ch. lxv.

The word, the Heb. ḫūn, stands euphemistically at the beginning of the sentence, and is repeated from the previous clause, where it is rendered γεγονόται I will choose their shame,—the everlasting shame and contempt” (Dan. xii. 2).—to which their self-chosen ways will lead them (see Sept. and Delitzsch),—or their destruction (Targum, Vulgate, and Gesen. 570). They have chosen their own ways, and I will choose their shame and woe. See what follows. This divine verdict has been fulfilled in the woes which have overtaken the Jewish Nation.

Your brethren that hated you, That cast you out for my name’s sake, Said, ‘Let the Lord be glorified: But he shall appear to your joy, And they shall be ashamed.”

A voice of noise from the city,
Woe to faithless Jerusalem. ISAIAH LXVI. 7—12. Zion the mother of Christendom.

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.

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.

9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord:

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 consolutions: that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

12 For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream:

Then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dallied upon her knees.

tumult, a sound of discord and anarchy. This was the onom of the destruction of Jerusalem. See below, on Matt. xxiv. 15.

— A voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord] Ye Jews glory in your City, and in your Temple, and restrain God's presence and favour to them: but your City and your Temple will become the scene of faction, riot, and bloodshed: and thus a voice will go forth from them pronouncing your condemnation. See below, the notes, Matt. xxiv. 15.

There will also go forth a voice from the Lord, Whom ye profess to worship in that Temple; and that voice will be to you a sentence of woe. This voice was heard from the mouth of Christ, before His Passion: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Luke xxi. 39), and in those eight woes denounced by Him on the City and Temple (Matt. xxiii. 1—39), when He reproved those words, "Your house is left unto you desolate."

It was heard, also, in the mouth of one (whose name was Jesus), crying in the streets of Jerusalem four years before the siege, at the Feast of Tabernacles, and continuing his cry at intervals in the siege till he perished,—"A voice from the East, a voice from the West, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem, against the city, against the temple, against the bridegroom, and against the bride, a voice against this whole People" (Josephus, Bell. Jud. vi. 53).

And a voice was heard from the Temple by the Priests on the Feast of Pentecost, in the Holy Place, with noise and motion, as of one going out of the Temple; and the voice said, "Let us depart hence" (Josephus, ibid., and S. Jerome here); and then, by the agency of the Roman armies, the Lord rendered recompense to His enemies, who had rejected Him.

COMFORT TO JERUSALEM.

7—9. Before she travailed—saith thy God] Observe this sublime contrast. Jerusalem rejected Christ, and was destroyed. But the Christian Church at Jerusalem became the Mother Church of Christendom.

The City was taken, the Temple was burnt, the Jews were scattered. But Zion became the parent of the world, and brought forth Nations to Christ. The Gospel of Christ, and the Seed of Abraham, and of David, the promised Messiah, was the fulfilment of the Mosaic Law, and all the Patriarchs and Prophets had yearned for it; and it went forth from Jerusalem, by the agency of the Apostles, who were Jews, and who had been baptized by the Holy Ghost at Jerusalem, at the Hebrew festival of Pentecost, and brought forth fruit in all the Earth, and joined the Gentiles with their brethren the Jews, who believed in Christ, in one household, the Church Universal of Christ. See S. Cyril, S. Jerome, and Theodoret here. The siege and destruction of Jerusalem were followed by a wonderful increase of the Church of Christ, as it were, in one day. "Hæsterni sumus" (says Tertullian, Apol. 38), "et orbem impellemus."
Resurrection and Judgment.

ISAIAH LXVI. 13–17.

"One in the midst.”

13. ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.] All the true Israelites, “the Israel of God” (Gal. vi. 16), who are children of Abraham by faith (Gal. iii. 7, 9, 29), and who are Jews inwardly, and have the circumcision of the Spirit (Rom. ii. 29), will come, as the Apostle says, to Mount Zion, the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the general assembly of the First-born, which are written in heaven, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant (Heb. xii. 22—24). They are gathered in a spiritual sense into the mystical Temple of God, Who is the Root and Offspring of David (Rev. xxii. 16), and are fellow-citizens of the Saints in the true “Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all” (Gal. iv. 26). Therefore the Church of Christ prays to God,—“Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, and let them repent themselves of their wickedness, lest they be not saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under One Shepherd, Jesus Christ, our Lord” (Collect for Good Friday).

In this figure a picture of the setting up of the Christian Church in the World, and the replenishing of it with children who are named from Jesus Christ. When the Spirit was poured out on it, and the Gospel went forth from Zion, nations were born at once to Christ (M. Henry).

There is now no need of one certain place for meeting, as the Temple was of old. Christ is our Temple, in whom all believers meet by faith (M. Henry on lxvi. 23).

14. And when ye see this] Rather, and ye shall see,—your eyes shall be opened, like an herb.] Like fresh herbs: first, in the Resurrection of grace in this life, in the Sacrament of Baptism, which is called by St. John “the first Resurrection” (see below, on John v. 25; and Rev. xvi. 5); and, secondly, in the Resurrection to everlasting life and glory in the world to come. See Rev. xx. 5, 6; and S. Augustine, De Civ. Del. xx. 21; and cp. Ecles. xiv. 12; xiii. 10: “Let the bones of the twelve Prophets flourish again out of their place,” and above, on xviii. 4; xxvi. 19, according to our Version.”—Thy dew is as the dew of herbs,—the tree of Life,—that eat swine’s flesh, and abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.

15. The Lord will come with fire.] At the Great Day (Dan. vii. 9. 2 Thess. i. 8, 9).—his chariots]. Of Angels (S. Augustine. Ps. lxviii. 17. Dan. vii. 10—13. Matt. xxv. 31. 2 Thess. i. 7. Jude 14).

16. The slain of the Lord shall be many.] As Christ Himself says, “Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before Me” (Luke xix. 27); and as is said in the Apocalypse, describing their future destruction: “they were slain with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse.”—Christ (Rev. xix. 21). Cp. Joel iii. 2. 12—15.

The Sinners that sanctify themselves in the Gardens, behind one in the midst.

17. They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree.] Or rather, They that consecrate and dedicate themselves for the gardens (Sept. Sifre, Deut. lxxvii) after one man (the word tree is not in the original). The sinners, who consecrate themselves as religious votaries for the gardens, after one, that is, in conformity and obedience to one man, their leader and chief, who is in the midst of the Vol. V. Part I. 159

18. Before CHRIST about 592.

19. See Ezek. 37. l. & c.

20. See ch. 9. 5. 2 Thess. 1. 8.

21. See ch. 27. 1.

22. The sin central object (the one in the midst, to whom these votaries look, who are dedicated to the service of idolatrous gardens, and who suppose themselves to be holy (“munos se potant," "cry"), and whom they follow), is an object of offence to God; he is, as it were, the antithesis of the Tree of Life,—the type of Christ,—in the garden; he is a figure of Antichrist.

This one in the midst is rightly supposed by many expositors (Pfeiffer, Gesenius, Sifre, Delitzsch) to be some one Hierophant or Pontiff (as Jozaniah is described by Ezekiel as being in the midst of the seventy men, with crowns in their hands, who were practising idolatry in the secret chamber of the Temple at Jerusalem, Ezek. viii. 11), who leads the devotions of these votaries in the gardens, and to whose words and gestures they conform themselves with obstinate servility.

On the subject of this prophecy, and on the meaning of the word gardens, see below, after the next note.

—Eating swine’s flesh, and the abomination (or, and abomination,—there is no definite article, “the” in the original), and the mouse] The meaning is, although they profess sanctity, and have made a dedication of themselves for the gardens, where they practise their worship, yet in following and obeying the dictates of their own Hierophant, they do what is offensive in God’s sight;—they eat swine’s flesh, and abomination (cp. Lev. vii. 21; xi. 11), and the mouse, an unclean animal (Lev. xi. 29), the emblem of pestilence (see above, on xxxvii. 36); they feed on what is foul, loathsome, and deadly, instead of being nourished and refreshed with the delights of the Tree of Life, in the midst of the Garden or Paradise of God.

That these words are not to be interpreted literally, as referring to meats forbidden as unclean by the Levitical Law, but that they are to be applied to sinful acts, symbolized by those unclean animals (see on Lev. xi., Prelim. Note), is clear from the consideration that the time to which this prophecy relates is long subsequent to the abolition of the Levitical Law, and is no other than “the latter days.” And, therefore (De Civ Dei, xx. 21), “Sub figura ciborum in Lago vetere vetitum pecatorum impresque significative, recapitulat ab initio gratiam Novi Testamenti a primo Salvatoris Adventu usque ad ultimum functionis percutens finemque sermonem.” See below, n. 24.

“The Gardens.”—The one in the midst.

We are now brought to the inquiry, What are the gardens for which these persons dedicate themselves? And who is the one in the midst,—the Hierophant, to whom they all look, and whose dictates and movements they all obey and follow?

Here is a question of no mean moment. It may be solved from the prophecies of the New Testament concerning the latter days, particularly from the Apocalypse.

(1) God Himself promises to dwell in the midst of His people: and this phrase, Heb. er-thoos, in the midst, is specially used of God’s presence. See Ezek. xxix. 46. 48. Lev. xxi. 33.
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.

And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, To Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, To Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off,

That have not heard my name, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

Mal. i. 11.

Rom. xvi. 10.

And they shall bring our brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations.

11. 12. 1 Kings vi. 13. Jer. ix. 6. Hag. ii. 5. Zech. ii. 10; viii. 8; and see Ezek. ii. 2, where One Angel (probably Christ) is described as in the midst of six others, and directing them. Cp. Ezek. xii. 8; xlii. 10; also xxxvii. 2. 6. 28; xlvii. 10; xlviii. 8. 10, where the same Hebrew word bethoeh is used and applied to the presence of God, of His Name, and Sanctuary in the midst of His Church.

(2) The word garden here represents places dedicated to idolatrous worship. See i. 29; lxv. 3. It is the Jew's characteristic of Christ, in the New Testament, to be in the midst." He is the Centre of all things in the Church. See Rev. i. 13; ii. 1; v. 6; vii. 17. Any one man who puts himself in the midst of the Church, makes himself a rival of Christ; he is a forerunner of Antichrist.

(3) St. Paul speaks of a Person, setting himself in the Temple of God," or Christian Church, as if he were God, and claiming universal suzerainty (see on 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4); and this Person or Power is described in the Apocalypse as making all receive its mark (Rev. xiii. 16, 17; xiv. 9. 11; cp. xvi. 2; xix. 20), and bow down before it; and as giving to the Nations a cup full of abominations (Rev. xiv. 9).

There seems, therefore, to be good reason for the exposition of some interpreters (such as Cocceius and Crusinus), that the Power displayed more fully there, is pointed out here by the Holy Spirit in this prophecy of Isaiah.

That Power dominates over all men and things. It is "the One in the midst." It boasts itself to be the centre of unity of Christendom. It is, as it were, "in the midst of the gardens;" for it contemneth creature-worship, and en- courageth idolatry; it confoundeth many nations; it plucks the blessed Virgin before the people as "Queen of heaven," and as "co-redemptress" and "co-mediatrix" with her Divine Son; its chief Pontiff lifts himself up on high in the Church as if he were a God upon earth. See below, on Rev. xiii. 4. 14.

It is "in the midst of the gardens." It professes to be "a tree of life in the midst of the garden" of Eden; it claims to be the standard of the Truth, and asserts that all must accept as divine whatever is professed by it (see on Rev. xiii. 15, 16); it professes to be a source of spiritual grace,—like Christ on the Cross,—to all who dedicate themselves to the service of religion in the Church, and yet it is a figure of Antichrist;

it declares that its chief Pontiff is the One Supreme, Visible Head of Christendom, and that all must follow his movements and conform to all his decrees. Its language is as follows:—"The Roman Pontiff alone is rightly called Universal. He alone can depose Bishops. He alone can make new laws, according to the exigencies of the times. All Princes must kiss the feet of him alone. His name alone is to be recited in Churches. No chapter of Scripture is to be accosted canonical without his authority. No Council can be named General without his consent and assent. There is only one Name in the World,—that of the Pope,—Unique est nomen in mundo, Pape videlicet. These are its own words. They are the words of one of its Pontiffs (Gregory Vili.), whom the Church of Rome has canonized as a saint, and for whom she has appointed a festival in her Breviary; and she would make as the universal Book of Common Prayer on the whole World, and in which she prays for grace to imitate him, in a special canon on his Anniversary (May 25). These words are called, "Dictatus Pape," and they may be seen in the "Actes Ecclesiasticii" of Cardinal Baronius (vol. xii., p. 634, ad d. 1076.)

Must we not add that he may be truly said to require his vassals "to eat swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse"—that is, things unclean and hateful to God, Who is a jealous God? Does he not compel his devotees to gorge any garbage in religious doctrine or worship which he may give them, however offensive it may be to God, e. g. the new dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin,—a dogma which the Pope put forth on Dec. 8, 1854, on his own assumed authority, and which he requires all to receive, on pain of damnation; and which was practically an assertion of his own personal infallibility?

A solemn woe is denounced against him and his adherents (Rev. xiv. 10. 11).

19. For I know their works and their thoughts] Rather, And I (will) punish their works and their thoughts. There is an apophasis, as in the "Quo ego,"—of Virgil (Ec. i. 139).

—It shall come] Though men may doubt it. See 2 Pet. iii. 3—10: "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His Coming? But the Day of the Lord will come, as a thief in the night."

19. I will set a sign among them] Or, I will set a sign upon them, like those who are signed with the mark, as God's holy ones, in Ezekiel (Ezek. i. 4. 6), and as those who are sealed in their forhead, in the Apocalypse (Rev. vii. 3. 4).

A joyfui transition.

I will send them that escape of them] I will send the Apostles, and other primitive Teachers of Christianity, who are the chosen remnant of Israel, saved from the unbelieving Nation which brought destruction on itself by the rejection of Christ; I will send them to the Nations.

These three men were professedly judged by us when our Lord sent His Apostles into all the world, and said to them, "Go ye into all the world, and teach all Nations" (Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 15).

The Prophet begins with the West—Tarschish, in Spain. Pul is an Assyrian name (the Sept. read it, Put; cp. the parallel place—Jer. xlvii. 9, where we have Cush, Phut, and Lud; cp. Ezek. xxi. 10; xxxv. 5), probably in Africa, as was Lud (cp. Gen. x. 13); Tubal, the Tiberines, on the S. E. coast of the Black Sea (cp. Gen. x. 2; Javan, Greece and Ionia (Gen. x. 4), connected here with the Isles, the western lands of the Gentile world (xlix. 1; i. 5). The Sept. here has "Greece," the Vulgate has "Italy and Greece."

When this prophecy is fulfilled in Christ, when the Israel of the Twelve Tribes believe the Gospel, and leave the cold regions of Infidelity, and the dominions of the Evil One, then they enter the Land of Promise, which God assured to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (S. Jerome, in Jer. iii. 18). And they shall bring all your brethren] The dispersed of the Jews, and the Gentiles joined together as brethren.

—For an offering] They shall come to Christ in His Church, not as men came of old to Jerusalem, to be offerers of sacrifices, but in order to be themselves an offering to the Lord. This is the sacrifice that God delights in; not slain beasts, but the offering of the faithful souls, consecrated and presented to Him, see 2; and what follows here; and St. Paul's words (Rom. xii. 12), "They shall bring all your brethren (to the Gentiles, that the offering up of the Gentiles may be acceptable to God; and see 2 Cor. xi. 2.; Col. i. 28); and St. Peter's (1 Pet. ii. 5); and cp. M. Henry here, who says, "The Apostle says of all true Christians, that they have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem;" and shows, Heb. xii. 22, that the meaning of Isaiah's prophecy is that "they shall be brought into the Church by the grace of God, and by the use of the means of that grace, as carefully, safely, and comfortably, as if they were carried in chariots and litters."
21 And I will also take of them for *priests and for Levites, saith the Lord.

22 For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.

23 And it shall come to pass, that *from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, Shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.

24 And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: *ver. 16.

— Upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters—and upon swift beasts—Swift camels, dromedaries (Genen. 414). This rapid accumulation of words serves to show the loving eagerness and alacrity with which all nations will be brought into the communion of the Church of God. The metaphor is derived from the custom of the new era of the world to convey the service of the sacrificial and other people to their service the carriages and horses and other animals of the subjects of their sovereigns, in order to convey intelligence with rapidity from one part of their dominions to another. See above, on 2 Chron. xxx, 6; and on Esther iii. 18; viii. 10-14.

627. The expression *swathos of Christ, the great King of the World, and will use all means within their reach, human and divine, for bringing men in all Nations unto the Church of God, diffused in all the World, and written in the profession of one faith, in all the walking of Jerusalem. As S. Augustine, says, commenting on these words (De Civ. Dei, xx. 21), "Addecut ex omnibus gentibus unus Dominus in jumentis et vehiculis (quem bene intelliguntur adjuvatoria essse divina per ejusque generis ministeria Dei, vel angelica, vel humana) in civitatibus sanctorum Jerusalem, quae nunc in sanctis sedibus diffusa est per terras. Ubi enim divinitatis adiuvantium, et ubi credunt, et ubi veniunt. Comprarit autem illus Dominus illius Israell offerentibus El suas hostias cum psalmis in domo Eius: quod ubique fons faciei Ecclesiae."

"See also S. Jerome, and Brunetiis, and Kell on Ezekiel, 340—358; and Calovius here, p. 354, who says, "It is manifest that this bringing of the brethren to the holy mountain of Jerusalem is not effected by corporeal loyconation, but by faith in the Gospel of Christ.

628. These expressions "(says M. Henry here) "are figurative, and these various modes of conveyance are heaped up to intimate (says the learned Mr. Gataker) the abundant provision which all gracious helps requisite to bring the elect home to Christ."

21. And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites As we now see fulfilled in the Gospel. The Priesthood is not now confined to the family of Aaron, but it is extended to all Nations according to the grace given to every one by God (S. Augustine, S. Jerome, and Matthew Henry here).

In the Apostolic age, Timothy, the first Bishop of Ephesus, was a Grecian by his father's side (Acts xvi. 1); and Titus, Bishop of the Greek (Gal. ii. 3). We may here compare the Evangelical prophecy in Jer. xxxiii. 15-18, "In those days will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David. For thus saith the Lord; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of his house; neither shall the Priests the Levites want a man before Me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually." See also v. 21 there; and cp. above, liv. 7, lxii. 6, where it is shown, that some of the noblest and most heroic elements, and learned spirits of Hethendom, have become Christian Priests and Levites, in the Spiritual Sign of the Universal Church of God.

22. as the new heavens) The new heavens and the new earth of Christ's Church which will come as Long as the walking of Jerusalem (see Matt. xvi. 18, and above, lxv. 17), and will be glorified for ever in the world to come; so the seed of the Israel of God, and the Name which they receive from Christ Himself, will endure from age to age. Cp. iii. 10, "He shall see His seed," iv. 5, Ps. xxviii. 30, Phil. iv. 3. 1 John iii. 9. Rev. iii. 12. 195

23. from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. For the Hebrew prophets to take their figures of things in the age to come, from the Hebrew Temple, and its service. The conversion of the Gentiles is foretold by their coming from new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, to worship before God; although, in these figures, according to the better of their prophecies, the things there specified were to be out of use, or even unlawful to be used in the manner thus foretold (Bp. Chantler). Cpa. Mal. i. 11; above, xix. 19; and see Jer. 16. 18.

In the worship of God, the Church possesses the substance of that holy joy which was foreshadowed by the festal solemnities of the Levitical Law. All Nations of the World will come and look upon the Christian Church on earth, and much more in the heavenly City. This worship will be perpetual, and will combine the peaceable rest of the sabbath (as the Apostle says, "There remaineth a rest, literally, a sabbattios, "to the people of God," Heb. iv. 9), with the jubilant exultation of the festal new moon (see S. Augustine and S. Jerome), and with the glories of the Feast of Tabernacles fulfilled in the presence of God and of Christ. Compare what the Prophet Zechariah says (xvi. 16), "All the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles," l. c. shall dwell in His blessed Presence, which will tabernacle upon them. See the references above in the note on xii. 3, and lvi, l; and cp. Vireyings, p. 905; and M. Henry here, who enforces the obligation of this appointment of Christian assemblies for the due exercise of religious offices at stated seasons: "God is to be worshipped in solemn assemblies, and it is the duty of all to wait upon Him there."

24. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases) Here is a declaration of the Resurrection of the body. Isaiah in this place seems to compare the sight of the wicked condemned at the Great Day to the awful spectacle seen by Hezekiah, and by those who were saved by God's mercy in Jerusalem; among whom was Isaiah himself, when they went forth from the city in the morning and looked upon the dead corpses of the Assyrians at the approach of Sennacherib's army, 185,000 in number, strewn the ground near the city (see above, on xxxvii. 30, and lying scorched with fire in the valley of Hinnom at the approach of Jerusalem (see above, xxx. 33) — a sight which evoked from the lips of some the words, "Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

See above, on xxxiii. 14, and xxxiv. 3, where is a similar transition from the circumstances of that judgment in the valley of Jehoshaphat and of Tophet to the transactions of the Universal Judgment of the Great Day.

As the inhabitants of the earthly Jerusalem went forth and looked on the carcases of the Assyrians, who were to besiege and spoil the Holy City, but were blasted suddenly in their enterprise by the wrath of God, so the citizens of the Heavenly Jerusalem will see the destruction of the enemies of Christ and His Church; as is revealed in the Apocalypse. Those hostile forces will come in a vast number, like the sand of the sea, and they will "compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved City: and the fire will come down from God out of heaven and devour them" (Rev. xx. 9), as it devoured the Assyrians encamping before Jerusalem.

The righteous will go forth and see the vangard (Ps.
For their worm shall not die, 
Neither shall their fire be quenched; 
And they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

Isaiah LXVI. 24. of the wicked.

Lxxiii. 10. The Prophet Isaiah ends his prophecy with the End 
of the World (S. Augustine). The righteous will enter into the 
joy of their Lord (Matt. xxv. 21). But the wicked cannot 
come into that joy; the righteous are therefore said to go forth, 
to see the destruction of God’s enemies. They will know, from 
what miseries they themselves have been saved by the free 
grace of God and love of Christ. “Egredientur non loco, sed 
intelligentiā” (says S. Jerome). They will know, what the woe 
and the shame of the wicked are. Otherwise, they could have 
no adequate sense of the greatness of their own debt to God in 
Christ, and of the felicity of heaven, which is not only great in 
itself, but great in comparison with that other miserable lot 
which might have been theirs. They will learn to regard them-

selves as “brands plucked out of the burning.” No one can 
understand the joy of those on the right hand, if he has no 
knowledge of the woes of those on the left.

— their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be 
quenched! He had spoken of carcases, but he adds that these 
carcases are not dead, but suffer everlasting punishment. 
Their punishment is the “vernis mordax et mora vivax” 
(S. Bernard). These words refer to the torments of the Lake 
of Fire, “the Second Death,” which are prepared “for the Devil 
and his Angels,” and into which the Wicked will be cast at the 
Great Day. This is certain from the testimony of our Blessed 
Lord Himself, our future Judge, Who repeats these words of 
Isaiah three times with solemn emphasis and warning, “Their 
worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” Mark ix. 44, 
46. 48. Cp. above, xxiv. 22; xvi. 19; below, Ezek. xxx. 11—16, 
Dan. xii. 2. Matt. xxv. 41. Rev. xvi. 5; and Ps. 46. 5—6. 
It is remarkable that the Evangelical Prophet, Isaiah, who

is more copious than any other writer of the Old Testament in 
merciful revelations and comforting assurances of God’s free 
grace and love to all men in Christ, and especially in this Second 
Portion of his prophecies (chapters xl.—lxvi.), concludes each 
of the three parts of this Portion, with a solemn denunciation of 
punishment and woe to the wicked; see lxviii. 22, “There 
is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked;” lxvi. 21, “There 
is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked;” and he sums up all 
with these terrible words: “Their worm shall not die, neither 
shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto 
all flesh.”

In the same spirit, the Apostle and Evangelist, St. John, 
who speaks more fully of Divine Love than any other writer of 
the New Testament, reveals most clearly in his Epistles and in 
the Apocalypse, the punishments which are reserved for all 
unbelief and sin. The beloved disciple of Christ delivers there 
the most solemn warnings against Antichristianism, whether 
it display itself in the denial of the true Faith, or in corruptions 
of it by heretical dogmas or idolatrous worship. “The Lamb 
of God which taketh away the sin of the world” (John i. 29) is 
also “the Lion of the Tribe of Judah” (Rev. v. 5); and though 
He is infinite in mercy to all who love Him, yet to all who do 
not believe and obey Him “our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. 
xii. 29).

“O Lord God most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and 
most merciful Saviour, deliver us not into the bitter pains of 
eternal Death. 

“O Saviour of the World, Who by Thy Cross and precious 
Blood hast redeemed us, save us, and help us, we humbly beseech 
Thee, O Lord. AMEN.”
## CONTENTS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Jeremiah</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronological Table</td>
<td>xvii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremiah</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Lamentations</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamentations</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Ezekiel</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezekiel</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrospect of the Vision of Ezekiel</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

There are two Prophets in the Hebrew Canon of Holy Scripture, whose history and writings may best be studied in connexion, as illustrative of each other. Both of them were Priests as well as Prophets; both foretold the destruction of Jerusalem by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; both were contemporaneous with that event; both survived it. The one dwelt among Hebrew exiles and captives at the river Chebar in Babylonia, and echoed the voice of the other, prophecying at Jerusalem. Both were signal types of the Lord of all the prophets, the Incarnate Word of God; both pre-announced the graces and glories of His Advent, and the building up of His Church Universal; both are exemplary and instructive to all, especially to pastors and priests of the Church of Christ, who are commissioned to maintain and to declare the truth in evil days, and to cheer fainting hearts with hopes of future victories, and who, though feeble in themselves, are assured of strength and support from above, if they are faithful witnesses to Him Who has called them to their work.

One of these two prophets is Jeremiah: the other, Ezekiel.

The prophetic mission of Jeremiah at Jerusalem lasted about forty years, dating from the thirteenth year of the good King Josiah 1, and closing with the fall of Jerusalem in the eleventh year of his son Zedekiah.

These forty years of probation, granted to Jerusalem during Jeremiah’s prophetic ministry, may be compared with the forty years beginning with our Lord’s mission, inaugurated at the river Jordan, and continued in His Apostles, sent by Him and filled with the Holy Ghost given by Him from heaven, and preaching of coming judgments to Jerusalem, until the time of its destruction by the armies of imperial Rome.

After the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, Jeremiah prophesied in a heathen land, Egypt; and, similarly, after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, the prophetic work of Christ was extended to the heathen world.

There is no Hebrew prophet with whose personal character and history we are so intimately acquainted as Jeremiah. But the time, place, and manner of his death are not known. He vanishes from the sight in a mysterious manner. The Jewish rabbis supposed that he would re-appear as a herald of the Messiah 2; and in the ancient Christian Church it was a prevalent opinion, that Jeremiah would come again in the latter days to fight against Antichrist 3.

There is a moral significance in these popular traditions. The spirit which animated Jeremiah breathes and moves in all faithful witnesses, who prepare the way for the Second Coming of Christ; and among the prophets of the Old Dispensation none affords more instruction than Jeremiah, both by his history and writings, how they may contend against the Antichristianism of the last times before the Second Advent of Christ.

Let us contemplate him in this light.

1. First, then, Jeremiah teaches us to plant our feet firmly on the solid and sure foundation of God’s written Word, especially on His Moral Law, which denounces punishment on all who disobey it, and promises rewards to all who observe and do it.

It has been alleged by some in our own days, especially by one 4 who has revived in England the sceptical speculations of some Biblical critics of Germany 5, that Jeremiah, being a priest, and having easy access to the Temple, and whose father’s name was Hilkiah—supposed by them to be the same Hilkiah the high priest who is related in the Second Book of Kings to have found the Book of the Law in the Temple in the reign of Josiah 6—was himself the writer of the book.

1 B.C. 627. Jer. i. 2; xxv. 3.
3 Victorinus Petro., in Apocalypsim, xi. 3; Sixtus Severus, Bibl. Sac., v. ann. 316; Neumann, Einl. pp. 68—72.
4 Bishop Colenso.
5 Von Boklem, De Wette, and others. See above, Introduc- tion to Deut., pp. 195—201.
6 2 Kings xxii. 8.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

which was said to have been found there, and that the book in question was no other than the Book of Deuteronomy, which the Hebrew and Christian Churches have agreed for many centuries in attributing to Moses, and which was received as the genuine work of Moses by Christ and His holy Apostles.

Such theories as these, however groundless, have their uses to the reverent and thoughtful student of Holy Writ. The allegation just specified may serve to remind us of an important truth. Not only is there a striking resemblance between the prophecies of Jeremiah and the Book of Deuteronomy, but the spirit of Moses lived and moved in Jeremiah 1. Jeremiah’s mission began as the mission of Moses began, and as the mission of all true prophets begins—in a confession of personal weakness, and in words of humility: “Ah! Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child.” Jeremiah’s prophecies are impregnated with the Pentateuch. Many of the phrases and portions of them are not intelligible without reference to it, especially the Book of Deuteronomy 2. The Book of Deuteronomy is like that written roll, of which his brother prophet Ezekiel speaks, which he was commanded to take into his hands and eat 3. Deuteronomy was such a roll to Jeremiah. He took it and ate it. It passed into his life-blood, and assimilated itself to his spiritual being. Jeremiah had a special mission to show to the Hebrew nation that the Pentateuch had a living power for himself and for his own age. He throws himself back upon the Law, and grounds himself upon it; he appeals to its code as a divine standard of moral and spiritual truth; and he declares that the curses for disobedience which had been denounced in Deuteronomy nearly a thousand years before were now growing up and springing forth in vigorous energy, and were about to be fulfilled in all their terrible reality. But he also comforts them with the assurance that the promises made in Deuteronomy would be accomplished, if they turned to God with contrite hearts. Hence the prophecies of Jeremiah ring with a clear note of power which sounded forth in the book of the Law at Horeb and in the wilderness of Arabia.

2. A like use may be made of another sceptical allegation of modern times, with regard to Jeremiah’s prophecies.

It has been observed with truth, that a great portion of these predictions, especially those concerning Babylon, Moab, and Edom, are repetitions or amplifications of the prophecies of his great predecessor, Isaiah.

Hence it has been inferred by some, that either the prophecies of Isaiah were interpolated by the author of those predictions in Jeremiah, or that those prophecies in Jeremiah are due to an unknown author, whom some critics dignify by the name of “the second Isaiah 4;” but who never had any existence 5.

Such theories as these vanish before the light of truth.

Jeremiah, in the latter days of Jerusalem, stood forth in the midst of an unbelieving age, and asserted the divine authority of the written Word. He affirmed the Inspiration of Holy Scripture, and he did this by repeating the solemn accents of the Law and the Prophets, especially of Isaiah 6. He did it by adopting those accents as utterances of the Holy Spirit, by Whom he himself spake; and by recalling the mind of a rebellious nation to their commands and threatenings; and in endeavouring to disabuse his contemporaries at Jerusalem of the fond presumption, that because they enjoyed great spiritual privileges, and were inhabitants of the Holy City, and had access to the courts of the Temple 6, and offered sacrifices there, and observed the forms of its Ritual, they would


Compare Lev. xiii. 45; Num. iv. 15. Lev. xiv. 12; Jer. v. 2. Lev. xiv. 16; Jer. vi. 28; ix. 3. Lev. xxvii. 27; Jer. ix. 20. Lev. xxix. 32; Num. v. 12. Lev. xxvi. 6; Jer. xiv. 13. Lev. xxvi. 13; Jer. lii. 20. Num. xxx. 33; Jer. xxvii. 27.


"Vides, nullam Pentateuchesi esse partem, quam in usu vocata sit. Simul consequitur, quin, que de lege divina antiquitas data apud Prophetam decurrit, ad Pentateuchum referenda esse, ita ut Jeremiah saltem aetate Judicis nihil de posterius legis origine compertum esse potuerit.—Knepper, Jeremiae Librierum Sacrorum Interpess, atque Vimelic, p. 48. Berlin, 1837.

2 Jer. i. 6. Compare the words of Moses, Exod. iv. 10; vi. 12, 90.


4 Ezek. iii. 1; for example, ii. 19; 34; v. 2, &c.


6 See the author’s Introd. to Isaiah, pp. xvi.—xxi.


8 See Jer. vii. 4.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

be saved from the sword of Babylon; and in warning them that all the threatenings of the Law and the Prophets would be executed upon their own heads 1 by the Chaldean armies, if they did not show their reverence for God and His Holy Word, by confessing their sins, and by humbling themselves before Him, and by practical amendment of life.

Jeremiah, in the last days of Jerusalem, discharged a sacred office in repealing and authenticating the prophetic oracles of former generations. By his ministry the Holy Spirit gathered together His own words, uttered by former Prophets, and gave them new life and light. Jeremiah's prophecies are like a fair tessellated pavement, in which the enamelled glasswork, and precious stones, and rich jewels, of divine truth are inlaid and incrusted as in a sacred mosaic spread before the altar of some beautiful temple 2.

In this work of authenticating Holy Scripture, and re-affirming the Authority and Inspiration of the Law and the Prophets, Jeremiah, who prophesied in the last days of Jerusalem, before its capture by the Chaldeans, was a forerunner of Christ, the great Prophet of the Hebrew nation and the world. Christ, in His conflict with Satan at the Temptation, overthrew him with three quotations from the Law of Moses—all of them from the Book of Deuteronomy 3; and in the days of His earthly ministry before the fall of Jerusalem, the Incarnate Word set His own divine seal on the whole written Word of the Law and the Prophets, that is, on the entire volume of the Old Testament, and assured the world of its divine Inspiration and Authority, and directed the attention of all to its sacred precepts and solemn warnings.

The prophet Jeremiah, by his example, has taught all in these latter days, whether they be preachers or hearers, that they must look back upon the past, and feed upon the lively oracles of God as their daily bread, that they must incorporate them in their whole spiritual being, and appeal to them as their rule of faith and practice, and must endeavour with God's help to build themselves and others on that immovable Rock, which no winds or waves of this world will ever be able to shake.

3. Another arbitrary assertion of the same recent criticism may also be specified here, in order that it may be converted to good by reminding us of another remarkable attribute of Jeremiah's character, which renders it specially instructive and exemplary to the champions of the truth in days of public trial and distress.

It has been alleged, that some of the prophetic portions of Holy Scripture which foretell the sufferings of Christ, especially the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah 4, and the sixty-ninth Psalm 5, have no reference to Jesus of Nazareth, but were fulfilled in the person of Jeremiah.

True it is, that the language of that fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and of that sixty-ninth Psalm, had a remarkable applicability to Jeremiah. But why was this? Because Jeremiah was not only a prophet, but a prophecy. Jeremiah is among the prophets what Job is among the patriarchs 6.

Jeremiah is the suffering prophet. He was a signal type of "the Man of sorrows." He was a figure of Him Who suffered on the cross, and Who conquered by suffering.

When therefore we read in Isaiah, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter" 7; and when we hear Jeremiah saying, "I was like a lamb brought to the slaughter" 8; and when we hear the Psalmist say, "I sink in deep mire where is no standing" 9; and "let not the pit shut her mouth upon me" 10; and when we read of Jeremiah the prophet, that "they took him and cast him into the dungeon or pare Odad. 1—8 with Jer. xlix. 7. 9. 10. 14—16); but, as the exposition will show, that in Obadiah it is more closely connected, and apparently more original than in Jeremiah. But if it be a fact, as this unquestionably proves, that Obadiah's prophecy is more original, and therefore older, than that of Jeremiah, Obadiah cannot have prophesied after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, but must have prophesied before it, since Jeremiah's prophecy against Edom belongs to the fourth year of Jehoshaphat. See Ciesperti, p. 14, sqq.; and Grafs's Jeremiah, pp. 558—559, compared with p. 566 (Keil, Die zwolf Kleine Propheten, p. 243. [Introd. to Obadiah].

3 Matt. iv. 1—10.
4 [Brauns, Enwald. See the Author's Commentary on Isa. iii. Prefim. Note.]
5 [Hitzig.]
6 As the writer has endeavoured to show in his Introduction to the Book of Job, p. xii, Jeremiah is called by the Christian Fathers the προφήτης ἡλεθίνου τῶν Προφητῶν, Isid. Pelag. Epist. 270; and this qualified him to be what he is also called by them, the συμμετρόπος. See Greg. Nazian., Orat. x. C. Heb. ii. 18, concerning Jeremiah's Divine Antitype—Jesus Christ.
7 [Isa. iii. 7.] Jer. xi. 19. 9 [Ps. lxix. 15. a]
rather the pit (it is the same word in the original as in the Psalm, and is repeated no less than six times in the seven verses of that narrative concerning Jeremiah 1), “and they let down Jeremiah with cords, and in the pit there was no water, but mire; so Jeremiah sank in mire;” when we hear and read such words as these, and many others in Jeremiah’s history 2, and when also we remember that Jeremiah was cast into the pit and left to die there (as far as they were concerned) by the rulers of Jerusalem, and was drawn out of the pit by a Gentile stranger, the Ethiopian eunuch Ebed-melech (as the Gospel of Christ, rejected and put to death by the Jews, was gladly received by the Gentiles), we are brought to the conclusion, which is confirmed by countless incidents in Jeremiah’s life, that in his history we have a foreshadowing of the Gospel, and that in seeing the struggles of Jeremiah standing alone against princes, prophets, priests, and people, and contending as a faithful witness of the truth, amid scorn, calumny, and insult, injury and violence; and foretelling the fall of Jerusalem in his prophecies, and yet weeping amid its ruins in his Lamentations, we have a vision of the agony in Gethsemane, and of the arraignment in the hall of Caiaphas, and of the precious death on Calvary, of Him Who shed tears of compassion over Jerusalem, and Who shed His Blood upon the Cross, to redeem her from her sins 4.

The ancient Hebrew Church appointed the Lamentations of Jeremiah to be continually repeated year after year on that solemn fast-day in the fifth month when she mourned for the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldean armies, and for her own sins which caused that desolation; a day made more memorable by the second capture of Jerusalem by the legions of Rome under Titus on the same anniversary. And the Christian Church, from ancient days, has set apart the Lamentations of Jeremiah for her own solemn offices in the week of her Lord’s Passion 5; and in contemplating the prophet Jeremiah sitting amid the ruins of Zion and pouring out his sorrow there in piteous cries of agony, she has ever had a vision of Christ hanging upon the Cross, and mourning over the ruins of our fallen human nature, which caused the bitterest pangs of His anguish there.

This typical adumbration of Christ in Jeremiah’s sufferings, is not only a beautiful spiritual picture of the deepest pathos, but it has a living reality and practical power. There is no prophet in the Old Testament whose life, as displayed in his writings, extends over so long a period of time of great public difficulty, and with whom we are so familiar as Jeremiah. His prophecies are his autobiography. They reveal the inmost workings of his soul from his youth to his old age. He does not conceal from us his weaknesses 6. “I am a child,” he says, “I cannot speak.” He does not disguise from us his impatience and his disappointments; he reveals his feelings of discontent, and records his words of murmuring: “Wo e is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and contention to the whole earth.” He does not hide from us, that, like the prophet Jonah, he shrank back from his prophetic work; through fear of scorn, and insult, and persecutions, not only from men in high place and power, but even from his own friends and relations in his native town, Anathoth. His brethren, he tells us, the house of his father, dealt treacherously with him, and sought his life, and said, “Prophecy not to us in the name of the Lord, that thou die not by our hand.” And therefore he exclaimed: “Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people, and go from them 9.” He was also bitterly distressed by the seeming failure of his own prophecies and of his ministerial labours: “Behold, they say unto me, Where is the Word of the Lord? let it come now.” He is staggered and perplexed by the fact, that he himself, the prophet of the Lord God of Israel, is the victim of injury, and that his enemies and the adversaries of the Lord triumph over him. “Wherefore,” he asks, “doth the way of the wicked prosper, wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?” He complains of his seeming desertion by God: “Why is my pain perpetual and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? Wilt Thou, O God, be to me altogether as a liar, and as waters that fail?” He expostulates and remonstrates with God, saying that he had not coveted

1 Cep. Lam. iii. 55, where the same word is used.
2 As e.g. Jer. xx. 27: “I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me” (cp. Ps. xxii. 7); and again, “They devise devices against me, saying, Let us destroy him altogether; with the fruit thereof; let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.” See on xi. 19, and xxvi. 11: “Then spake the priests, This man is worthy to die” (cp. Matt. xxvi. 61. 69); and xxvi. 13: “If ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof” (cp. Matt. xxvi. 25).
3 The prophecy concerning Christ’s betrayal for thirty pieces of silver appears to have been delivered originally by Jeremiah. See below, on Matt. xxvii. 9; see also Del Rio, Proleg. in Thesaus, cap. ii. S. Jerome (on xl. 18, 19) following Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Cyprian, says, “Omnium Ecclesiariam est consensus, ut sub personali Jeremiah Christi hic intelligent?’, an asserio to be explained from St. Peter’s assertion, that the Spirit of Christ spake in the prophets, especially concerning His sufferings, and the glory that would follow (1 Pet. i. 11).
4 See Jer. xxxvii. 12, 13.
6 On Munday Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Even. See Introit, to Lamentations.
7 Jer. xii. 6.
8 Jer. xv. 10.
9 Jer. ix. 2.
10 Jer. xii. 2.
11 Jer. xvii. 15.
12 Jer. xv. 18.
the prophetic office, and had not desired to be a messenger of woe to his people, and that he had been constrained to utter his prophecies by the overpowering force of God. "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 burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing and could not stay. For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. All my familiar watched for my halting."

And in a moment of despondency and anguish of soul, like another Job, he cursed the day of his birth: "Cursed be the day wherein I was born; let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed. Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee; making him very glad."

Nor was this all. Jeremiah was commanded to go forth and declare God's sternest judgments on Jerusalem; and yet he was a man of the most loving spirit, and tender affection. His heart was well-nigh bursting with sorrow when he thought of the terrible message which he was ordered to deliver. What a wonderful depth of sympathy is there in that piteous ejaculation, "Oh that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"

4. These things are full of instruction to those who live in these last times. Each of us, whatever our calling, has a commission from God. Each has a message from Him to deliver, in evil days. In a certain sense we are all Jeremiahs. And this is specially true with regard to some among us. They who are candidates for the sacred ministry of Christ's Church—they who have its vows upon them, will often feel as he felt. They may often find themselves saying within themselves, "I am a child, and cannot speak." When they are called upon to encounter dangerous error, and to reprove deadly sin; when it is their duty to stand forth boldly as Jeremiah among the many, the powerful, and the great; whenever it is their mission to denounce God's judgments upon that dangerous error or deadly sin, although that error and sin may be patronized by some who are their superiors in age and station, and it may be, in intellectual gifts, and literary and scientific attainments, they may then perhaps feel their heart sink within them, and may ask themselves the question, Who am I that I should do this? They may long to retire from their post at Anathoth or Jerusalem, and may sigh for some lodge in the wilderness. They may perhaps be tempted to repine at their lot, and even to murmur at God, for calling them to the priestly and prophetical office, and to arraign the dispensations of His providence in allowing wickedness to prosper, and in seeming to forsake His ministers and to allow His truth to fail. Let them not be surprised at this. Strange it would be, if in times of severe trial such emotions as these did not sometimes arise within them. They were felt by Jeremiah. But let them remember him: think of his sufferings. He stood alone in a godless age. God did not allow him to take to himself a partner of his sorrows. He had no wife to comfort him, as Isaiah had. His own flesh and blood forsook him. His own fellow-townsmen of Anathoth sought his life, and hooted at him in the streets, and went about to kill him as a false prophet. He was smitten and put in the stocks by Pashur, who had chief authority in the house of God. The sanguinary King Jehoiakim sought his life, and the weak and vacillating Zedekiah surrendered him to his enemies. At first some of the princes interceded for him; but they also forsook him, and conspired with the priests and false prophets against him. At the close of his forty years' mission, when the Chaldeans were at the gates, and Jerusalem was near her fall, they cast the prophet into the pit, or cistern, of the state prison, and left him there to sink in the mire and starve. And the only person in the holy city, Jerusalem, who was found to have pity on God's prophet Jeremiah was a stranger, an Ethiopian cunuch, Ebed-melech.

Let this also be observed: Jeremiah's words of weakness, timidity, and impatience belong to the earlier stage of his career. As his sufferings became more intense, he received more grace from God, and gained fresh courage, and derived inspiration from difficulty and danger. As time passed on, he who once himself had faltered was enabled to encourage others. His dear friend and secretary, Baruch, seems to have been a person of honourable family; Baruch's brother Seraijah attained to a high position as chamberlain in the court of Zedekiah, and enjoyed the royal favour; and Baruch appears to have had some ambitious desires, and to have aspired to advancement in public life. But his connexion with Jeremiah, the stern reprover of courtly and princely vices, frustrated his hopes and obstructed his rise. Baruch was a faithful and steadfast friend to Jeremiah, and executed his commands in writing and reading the prophetical roll which denounced woe on the

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1 Jer. xvii. 16.
2 Jer. xx. 9, 10.
4 Jer. ix. 1.
5 Jer. ix. 2.
6 Jer. xvi. 2.
7 Isa. vii. 3; viii. 3.
8 Jer. xi. 10—21; xii. 6.
9 See below, on Jer. li. 59—61.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

princes and people of Jerusalem. Baruch’s life was threatened as well as that of Jeremiah, and he murmured for the failure of all earthly hopes, and he shrank back with fear, and said, “Woe is me, the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow: I fainted in my sighing and I found no rest.” Then Jeremiah assured him of protection, and consoled him for the loss of worldly advancement: “Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not.”

5. Yet further, Jeremiah the prophet of suffering, not only was enabled by God to triumph over difficulty and danger, and to supply comfort to his own friends in distress, but he was also a divine minister of consolation and joy to the whole Hebrew nation, whether in the city of Jerusalem or scattered throughout the world. He cheered them with bright hopes of the future, and with glorious promises of Him, Whose Gospel was to go forth from Zion to gladden the hearts of all nations. It is a marvellous thing, that the most glowing prophecies of Jeremiah, concerning the future triumphs of the Gospel of Christ, and the glory of God’s Church, which was to have its origin at Jerusalem, and the infinite joy and eternal splendours of the coming kingdom of Christ, blaze forth from the darkest cloud of the woes of Jerusalem, and from the thickest darkness of Jeremiah’s sufferings. The midnight of his human sorrow was the noonday of his prophetic glory. The twenty-eighth to the end of the thirty-third chapters of Jeremiah, which foretell the graces of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and our justification in Him Who is “the Lord our Righteousness,” and the extension of the Church of God from Jerusalem to enfold all nations, and the eternal monarchical and priesthood of Christ; and His victory over sin and death; and our resurrection to glory through Him; and the spiritual graces of His Church; and the pouring forth of the Holy Ghost; and the blessings of the new Covenant of grace, and love, and peace—all belong to the last days of Jerusalem, when the magnificent fabric of its Temple was about to sink into the dust, and its walls and princely palaces were about to be thrown prostrate on the ground.

6. Whence was this light from darkness?

It was the work of God’s grace, given to the prophet’s prayer, and working together with his will.

The name of Jeremiah, like that of the other Hebrew prophets, is significant. Some have supposed that it implies that he was exalted by the Lord. Others assert with more probability that it means set by the Lord, as a solid foundation; or sent forth by the Lord, as lightning from the cloud, or as an arrow from a bow.

Whichever etymology we adopt, the name Jeremiah intimates, that whatever he did and whatever he suffered, all was from the Lord. The Lord worked in him, and by him. The Lord had said to him, “Thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: I am with thee to deliver thee. I have set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, to pull down and destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant. Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee a fenced city, and an iron pillar, and a brazen wall against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.”

This was the mission of Jeremiah, and he had grace to accomplish it; he stood firm for forty years, alone in a rebellious and godless nation of adversaries and persecutors. He was set by God’s hand as a solitary beacon on a lofty tower, in a dark night, in a stormy sea; lashed by waves and winds, but never shaken from his foundations. He was insulted, mocked, beaten, and imprisoned. His warnings were despised and rejected, but they were the words of God; his prophecy concerning the false prophet Hananiah, his prophecies concerning the last four kings of Judah—Shallum, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah, were fulfilled in his own age; his predictions that Egypt, to whom the kings of Judah resorted for aid against Babylon, would not be able to succour her, and that Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Chaldeans, and that Egypt itself would be subduèd by them, were accomplished in his own times. The armies of Babylon, who burned the Temple and

the city of Jerusalem, wrote in characters of fire the evidence of Jeremiah’s mission from God. Jeremiah was strengthened by these proofs of his own divine legation; but he was not elated by the abundance of his revelations, and by these signal tokens of God’s special favour to him. Nor; although as a prophet he had been strengthened by God, and raised to a lofty eminence above all his contemporaries in Jerusalem, yet he still felt as before. He was still the same tender-hearted and sympathizing man, the same loyal subject, and the same devoted patriot. His own sufferings made him more compassionate for those of others. The destruction of Jerusalem was the proof of his mission from heaven; but after that terrible catastrophe, Jeremiah went down from the heights of Mizpah, to which he had been conducted by Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, and he sat down on the ground as a mourner amid the ruins of Sion, and poured forth his Lamentations over her.

7. In another respect, the prophecies of Jeremiah are fraught with instruction, comfort, and encouragement in these latter days.

At the close of his prophetic volume we have a series of predictions of God’s judicial visitations with which He would punish those Nations that rose up in bold insurrection against Him, and in bitter hostility to His Church. Such are the prophecies of Jeremiah against Egypt (chap. xlvi.), against Philistia (chap. xlvii.), against Moab (chap. xlviii.), against Ammon, Edom, Syria, Kedar, Hazor, Elam (chap. xlix.).

These heathen Nations had not only an historical existence, and acted as enemies of the literal Israel, but they had also a typical character, as representatives of various kinds of enmity against the Church of Christ. In this respect, these prophecies possess a growing interest and living power for the Church of God, which is commissioned to bear the Word of God in her hands, and to utter its voice to the World in these latter days, when she may expect to be assailed by many discordant adversaries, united in a powerful confederacy against her.

Especially the prophecies of Jeremiah concerning Babylon (in chapters I. and li.) will be read by the thoughtful student of God’s Word with increased and increasing diligence, as years pass by. He will see good reasons, in the history of the Church and of the World, and in the events of his own day, for the marvellous fulness and circumstantial minuteness of those prophecies.

Suffice it here to invite the reader’s attention to them, and to reserve further observations upon them for their proper place in the notes in the following pages.

The sum of all is this. Whatever dangers may await the Word of God and may menace the Church of God, from unbelief and ungodliness, pride, presumption, and vainglorious self-confidence on the one side, and from spiritual usurpations, superstitions, and idolatries on the other, this may be concluded as certain, from these and other prophecies of Holy Writ, that the Day is coming, when all the enemies of God and of His Church will be utterly routed and confounded, and when all who have contended valiantly for the Truth will receive their full reward, and the Word of God and the Church of God will be enabled by His power to achieve a victory which will be made more glorious and illustrious by the conflicts which they have had to encounter, and by the power and violence of those enemies which have risen up in hostility against them.

On the Arrangement of the Prophecies of Jeremiah.

8. The prophecies of Jeremiah are not arranged in chronological order. The earlier portion of them (chaps. i.—xx.) has a general character, and is a prelude to the rest, like the first five chapters of Isaiah. It is the vestibule of the building. Some of these earlier chapters belong to the days of Josiah (iii. 6); others to the time of Jecoiann, the son of Jehoiakim (xiii. 18). But at the beginning of the twenty-first chapter, which is introductory to the second great portion of the book, we are carried forward to the days of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah. The Prophet hastens, as it were, to the end, and sets before us the fate of that king of Judah, to be delivered into the hands of the Babylonian monarch, Nebuchadnezzar; and the fate of Jerusalem, to be destroyed by fire; and of the whole land, to be spoiled by Nebuchadnezzar and by the armies of the Chaldeans (xxi. 1—14). The next chapter, the twenty-second, contains prophecies delivered in earlier times, concerning the four predecessors of Zedekiah; namely, Shallum, or Joash, the son and successor of the good king Josiah (xxii. 10—12); and Jehoiakim, the elder brother and successor of Shallum (xxii. 13—19); and concerning Jehoiakim’s son and successor—Jehoiachin, Jecoiam, or Coniah, the immediate predecessor of Zedekiah (xxii. 24, 30).

Note to Isa. xiii.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

What was the reason of such an arrangement of these prophecies?

Clearly it was this: It was intended to show that Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, had ample notice from God, by the ministry of Jeremiah, with regard to the fatal consequences of his own acts, both to his country and to himself, if he persisted in his rebellion against God, speaking to him by the voice of the prophet.

The fulfilment, which Zedekiah himself had seen, of Jeremiah's prophecies concerning his three predecessors on the throne—namely, Shallum and Jehoiakim, his two brothers, and Coniah, his nephew—was a solemn warning to him, that unless he himself repented, the predictions of the same prophet concerning himself would be fulfilled also; and it contained also a merciful assurance that if he listened to the prophet's voice, and turned to God with a true penitent heart from his evil ways, he would thus escape the punishments hanging over his head.

This is a specimen of the principle on which the prophecies of Jeremiah are arranged in the Book before us; and if we bear this principle in mind, and apply it to the rest of the prophecies in this portion of it, we shall perceive that these prophecies are not thrown together, as has been alleged by some recent critical writers, without method and system, but that they have been disposed in such a manner as to exhibit in a clear light the Wisdom, Justice, and Mercy of God in dealing with His own People, and to justify His dispensations in executing His sentence upon them; which, after His other methods of correction had been exhausted, led at length, by the severe but salutary discipline of their captivity of seventy years, to their conversion from idolatry, and to their restoration to God's favour and to their own land.

The prophecies of Ezekiel to the Hebrew captives in Babylonia are arranged in chronological order. This was perfectly reasonable; for Ezekiel was dealing throughout with the same community of persons. But the prophet Jeremiah at Jerusalem was commissioned to prophesy to various persons—to four different Sovereigns, and to Priests, Prophets, and Princes following each other in changeful succession.

Therefore, when he came to arrange his prophecies in one Book, and to bequeath it to posterity, he did not adopt a chronological order, but preferred that method which would best subserve the purposes for which all Prophecy is given; namely, the manifestation of God's glory, and the edification of His People.

In further illustration of these statements, it may be observed that, in his prophecies concerning heathen nations, Jeremiah adopts the same method as Ezekiel, and as Isaiah had done before him; he separates them from those which concern Judah, and places them in a class by themselves; and he places the prophecy concerning the fall of Babylon, which God used as His own instrument to punish His own people and other nations, after the prophecy concerning the chastisement which would be inflicted upon them by Babylon.

The Style of Jeremiah.

With regard to the style of Jeremiah, it does not often rise to the lofty flights of Isaiah, nor march with the sustained majesty and the rhythmical harmony of his magnificent periods. It has rather the character of animated oratorical prose, than of sublime and ornate poetry. It seems as if he purposely disregarded the graceful embellishments of style, and the musical cadences of Hebrew poetry, as ill suited to his mournful theme, and to the temper of his own mind, when contemplating the sins, miseries, and sorrows of his people. But that he was capable of the highest flights of poetic imagination is evident from his predictions concerning heathen nations.

1 E. g. to chap. xxii., which was delivered in the first year of Zedekiah, the last King, and is followed by chap. xxii., delivered at the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim. So again, chapters xxvi.—xxvii., delivered in the time of Zedekiah, are followed by xxxv., which contrasts with its impress the example of the obedience of the Rechabites, blessed by God in the days of Jehoiakim; and by chap. xxxvi., delivered in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. So again, chapters xxxvi.—xlvi., which belong to the last times of Zedekiah, are followed by xlv., which belong to the fourth of Jehoiakim. This arrangement is perfectly rational. It is like an argument à fortiori. If even Jehoiakim ought to have been warned, and to have repented, and was punished because he did not repent, how much more Zedekiah.

2 Dating from the fourth of Jehoiakim, the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, and of the establishment of the Babylonian supremacy—the principal epoch in Jeremiah's prophecies—to the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, and his edict for the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. See Jer. xxv. 12, 13; xxvi. 10—14; xxviii. 10—14, and the notes above on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, and on Ezra i. 1, as predicted by Jeremiah.

3 It is well said by S. Jerome (on chap. xxv.), "Non curae est prophetis, propheticis tempora conservare, sed scribere utemque auditurque lecturis utile novens." Cp. Carpzov, Introd. p. 145, who says that the Prophet knew that the history of the events was exhibited accurately in the Books of Kings, and he preferred to arrange his prophecies with a view to their subject, and to dispose them in such a manner as to be most conducive to the edification of his own nation and of the Church of God in every age.

4 Cp. Keil, Einlief. § 76, who rightly argues that this method of arrangement (which is not chronological, but logical) is a confirmation of the belief, that not only the substance of the Book, but the disposition of the materials, is from Jeremiah himself.

5 See below, on chapters xvi.—xxiii. Cp. on Isa. xiii.—xxviii. and on Ezek. xxxv.—xxvii.
His prophecies abound in repetitions\(^1\) and quotations\(^2\); the reason of which has been already specified\(^3\).

In one respect he is unrivalled.

No Hebrew Prophet reveals so unreservedly the secret recesses and inmost workings of his own heart. None throws himself so unhesitatingly into the condition of those to whom he speaks. He is peculiarly the Prophet of the affections; the Euripides—and more than the Euripides—of the Hebrew Canon\(^4\).

The Religion, the Monarchy, and the other Institutions of his country, seem to be absorbed and concentrated in him; and his own individuality is lost in sympathy with them. His prophetic sternness is a consequence of the intensity of his zeal for the glory of the God of Israel, and of his love for the People of the Lord.

Like persons of strong emotions, he trembles at the power of his own passions, and resorts to mechanical helps, which may employ his attention, and may save him from being overcome by his feelings, and swept away by the strong tide and current of the violent impetuosity of his passions\(^5\). As an Alpine traveller, skirting the sharp edge of a precipice, is not unthankful for the wooden handrail which runs along it, and by which he supports his steps if his eyes become dizzly at the sight of the dark deep gulf and the foaming cataract below him, so Jeremiah does not disdain to lean on artificial supports in the most vehement outbursts of his emotions. His Lamentations amid the ruins of Jerusalem are the most impassioned utterances of Hebrew Poetry; and the alphabetical arrangement of the stanzas, which at first sight may seem to be a rigid mechanical device, was doubtless designed, not only as a help to the memory of his Hebrew fellow-countrymen, who would recite them in their captivity and dispersion\(^6\), but also to be a stay and support to himself in his own vehement agitations.

In other parts of his prophecies he indulges in ideal symbolisms. Some have regarded his recourse to what is called the Hebrew *Atthabash\(^7\) as fanciful and artificial. But this is a rash censure. Symbolical language often supplies food and delight to a lively fancy and a fervid imagination. What a noble grasp of comprehensive generalization, and what a grand picture, executed with masterly energy, is there in the description of Jeremiah representing the work of Christ in purifying the moral leprosy of Sin, and in making Death itself to be a source of Life and Immortality. This is effected by symbolical language\(^8\); “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the City shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareh, and shall compass about to Goath.” These words, Hananeel, Gareh, Goath, are all symbolical. How much is brought out before the eye by the lightning flashes of such words as these! How much, again, is expressed, as in the twinkling of an eye, by Jeremiah’s symbolical names for Babylon, Merathaim and Pekod, as well as her king, Sheshach\(^9\)!

On the Relation of the Greek Septuagint Version to the Hebrew Text of Jeremiah.

10. The Septuagint Version deviates in many respects from the Hebrew Original. This divergence is partly verbal, partly formal. The Septuagint is not a literal Version, but a Paraphrase; and in many cases it offers an Exposition, rather than a Translation; it is a Hellenistic Targum; and, in the prophecies of Jeremiah, this exposition is sometimes grounded on erroneous readings, or on misapprehension of the sense of the Hebrew Original.

The formal difference between the Septuagint and the Hebrew consists mainly in the place which that Version assigns to the prophecies of Jeremiah concerning Heathen Nations\(^11\).

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\(^1\) For a list of which, see Kell, Einb. § 73.


\(^3\) Above, sect. 2, p. vii.

\(^4\) Cp. Umbreit, Comm. p. xv.; who calls him the “greatest Poet of solitude and sorrow,” and “the most poetical of all the Prophets of human nature.” And cp. Nigelsbach, p. xiv.; who observes, that It is the characteristic of a true Poet to feel the whole, and each part, of his subject, and to feel it with purity; and this subjective side of the poetical endowments is eminently realized in the tender-hearted Jeremiah.

\(^5\) “Jeremiah prophet simul esse quidem apud Hebrews Isaiæ et Hoseæ et quibusdam alias prophetês videtur esse rusticiæ; sed sensibus par est.” S. Jerome, Pref. ad Jeremiah.

\(^6\) See below, Introdr. to Lamentations.

\(^7\) As in the word Sheshach, the symbol of Babylon. See below, on xxv. 26.

\(^8\) xxvi. 38.

\(^9\) See the notes on the above. This has not been appreciated by some, as is evident from the circumstance that the word Gareh, which never had any existence, except in the ideal map of Jeremiah’s symbolic terminology, has found a place in some Plans of Jerusalem.

\(^10\) See below, on 1. 21; xxv. 26; and li. 41.

\(^11\) Order of Chapters in the Hebrew.

xxv. to v. 14.

xxv. r. 15 to end.

xxvi.

xxvii. to v. 19.

xxviii.

xxix.

xxx.

xxxi.

xxvili. to v. 14.

xxvili. to v. 14.

Order of Chapters in the Septuagint Version.

xxv. first thirteen verses.

xxvi. iv.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

In the Original Hebrew, these prophecies are reserved for the conclusion of the Book (chaps xlvi.—li.), and this seems to be the most appropriate position for them.

But the Septuagint takes occasion from the words in xlv. 15, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me, Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand and cause all the nations (the heathen) to whom I send thee, to drink it," to insert immediately after that verse the prophecies concerning the Heathen Nations, which, in the Hebrew, are the close of the Book.

It also transposes their order as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Septuagint</th>
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<tr>
<td>xxv. 15, &amp;c.</td>
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<td>Edom, xlvi. 7—22.</td>
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<td>Ammon, xlvi. 1—6.</td>
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These differences between the Hebrew Original and the Greek Translation have been made by some learned critics to be the occasion and groundwork of a theory of a double recension of the Hebrew Text of Jeremiah; viz. a Palestinian or Babylonish (which is supposed to be preserved in our present Hebrew Manuscripts), and an Egyptian, which, it is alleged, is represented by the Septuagint; and some have gone so far as to prefer the supposed recension which they imagine to be represented by the Septuagint, to the text which is exhibited in the Hebrew Manuscripts.

This theory of a double recension seems to vanish before one consideration. How is it that we still possess many hundred Manuscripts of the present Hebrew Text, but not a single Manuscript can be produced of the supposed Hebrew Text from which the Septuagint Version is alleged to be derived?

If the Septuagint is to be received as the more correct of the two, this phenomenon is still more strange. And further, the Hebrew contains one-eighth more of matter than the Septuagint; and are we to suppose that all this has been interpolated?

The additions in the Septuagint are few, and are for the most part expository glosses on its meaning, designed for Alexandrine and Hellenistic readers. In many cases the Translators appear to have had a faulty MS. of the original, or to have not been well versed in its language.

Order of Chapters in the Hebrew.

xxxiv.
xxxv.
xxxvi.
xxxvii.
xxxviii.
xxxix.
xl.
xli.
xlii.
xlii. to r. 45.
xiii. 1—5.
xiii. first seven verses.
xiv. 1—5.
xiv. last five verses.
xv. 1—5.
xv. first seven verses.
xvi. 1—5.
xvii. xxv. 1—5.
xvii. xxv. 1—5.
xviii. xxv. 1—5.
xviii. xxv. 1—5.
xix. xxv. 1—5.
xix. xxv. 1—5.
xl. xxv. 1—5.
xli. xxv. 1—5.
xlii. xxv. 1—5.
xlii. xxv. 1—5.

Order of Chapters in the Septuagint Version.

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On the whole, the more closely we examine the Septuagint, and the more carefully we compare it with the Hebrew Text of the prophet Jeremiah, the more strong will probably be our conviction that the Septuagint is not a representation of any independent Hebrew text, but only a paraphrase, often abbreviated and inaccurate, of the original words of the Prophet, which, by the good Providence of God, we possess in the Hebrew Canon of Scripture.

On Jeremiah’s place in the Hebrew Canon of the prophetical writings, see above, Introd. to Isaiah, p. xvii; cp. Carpzov, Int. p. 127.

The principal patristic commentaries on Jeremiah are those of Origen (thirty-nine Homilies), S. Jerome (on thirty-two chapters), and Theodoret; Rabbis, Rashi, D. Kimchi, Abarbanel, Solomon Ben-Melech. Later Christian Expositors: Aquinas, G. Sanctius, Ghislerus; Maldonatus, Bucer, Æcolampadius, Bugenhagen, Calvin, Osiander, Piscator, S. Schmidt, W. Lovest, Venema, Blayney, J. D. Michaelis, Schnurrer, Hensler, Eichhorn, Dahler (with a translation into French, Strasburg, 1825), Rosenmüller, Ewald, Hitzig (2nd ed., 1866), Umbreit, 1842; Neumann, 1856-58; Graf, 1862; Meier, 1863; Nügelsbach, 1868.

### CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

**TO ILLUSTRATE**

**JEREMIAH AND EZEKIEL.**

[For the earlier chronology, see *Intr. to Kings*, p. xx; and for the later, see *Intr. to Ezra*, p. 295. The received chronology is lowered by two years in the following Table, in accordance with the results of recent investigations.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>639</td>
<td>Josiah comes to the throne, and reigns 31 years. Religious Reformation. Sargon, last King of Assyria.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>633.—Median Empire founded by Cyaxares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>627</td>
<td>Jeremiah prophesies at Jerusalem 40 years.</td>
<td>Nabo-Polassar founds the Babylonian Empire.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Alyattes, King of Lydia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>625</td>
<td>Halakhkuk and Zephaniah prophecy in the reign of Josiah.</td>
<td>In conjunction with Cyaxares, he takes Nineveh before the year n.C. 610.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tarquinius Priscus at Rome. Media and Lydia; war of Cyaxares and Alyattes ended by the mediation of Nabo-Polassar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>616</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>615</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>610</td>
<td>Josiah is killed in battle against Pharaoh Necho. Jehoahaz, or Shallum, succeeds Josiah, and reigns 3 months, and is dethroned by Pharaoh Necho, and dies in Egypt. Jehoiakim is set up by Pharaoh Necho, and reigns 11 years.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>608</td>
<td>Jeremiah’s prophecy of the 70 years’ captivity, and of the 70 years’ supremacy of Babylon, ending n.C. 536. Nebuchadnezzar takes Jerusalem, and carries away sacred vessels of the Temple to Babylon. First Captivity of Judah.</td>
<td>Neco (or Pharaoh Necho) marches against Babylonia.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>604</td>
<td>Jeremiah’s roll read.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>603</td>
<td>Jehoiakim revolts from Nebuchadnezzar.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>602</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>597</td>
<td>Jehoiachin, Jeremiah, or Coniah, succeeds Jehoiakim, and reigns 3 months. Jerusalem again taken. King Jehoiachin (Jehoiachin or Coniah) is dethroned by Nebuchadnezzar. Great Captivity. Ezekiel carried captive to Babylon with Jehoiachin. King Zedekiah succeeds and reigns 11 years.</td>
<td>Nebuchadnezzar sent against Necho by his father Nabo-Polassar, and defeats him in the battle of Carchemish; and succeeds his father on the throne of Babylon. Daniel at Babylon.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>598</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>598.—Nebuchadnezzar marches against Jerusalem; resumes siege of Tyre, and thence returns to Jerusalem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>594</td>
<td>Psammetichus II.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>594.—Solon at Athens. 598.—Astyages King of Media.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

#### CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>588</td>
<td>Jerusalem besieged by Nebuchadnezzar.</td>
<td>Nebuchadnezzar marches against Jerusalem and against Egypt.</td>
<td>Pharoh Hophra (Apries) takes Gaza, but retreats before Nebuchadnezzar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>587</td>
<td>Jerusalem’s vain hope of relief from Egypt (Pharaoh Hophra).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>586</td>
<td>Jerusalem is taken and destroyed. The end of kingdom of Judah. Zedekiah is carried to Babylon, where he dies. Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, is set up as governor by the Babylonians. Gedaliah is treacherously murdered by Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, of the seed royal. Jeremiah and other Jews go into Egypt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>585.—Nebuchadnezzar takes Tyre.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>582</td>
<td>Further captivity by Nebzaradan, generalissimo of Babylon.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pharoh Hophra (Apries) defeated by Nebuchadnezzar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>581</td>
<td></td>
<td>581.—Nebuchadnezzar overruns Egypt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>572</td>
<td></td>
<td>572.—Destroys Tyre.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>570</td>
<td></td>
<td>570.—Second invasion of Egypt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>569</td>
<td></td>
<td>569.—Madness of Nebuchadnezzar?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>561</td>
<td>Jehoiachin, at Babylon, is released.</td>
<td>Evil Merodach.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>559</td>
<td></td>
<td>559.—Neriglissar.</td>
<td></td>
<td>558.—Cresus King of Lydia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>556</td>
<td></td>
<td>Laborosoarchod.</td>
<td>Alliance of Babylon, Egypt, and Lydia.</td>
<td>560.—Epoch of the Greek Tyrants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>538</td>
<td>Daniel’s vision at Shushan of the ram and he-goat. Daniel’s prophecy of the seventy weeks.</td>
<td>The edict of Cyrus (in his first year when sole monarch) for the restoration of the Jews and rebuilding of the Temple.</td>
<td></td>
<td>554.—Cyrus conquers Lydia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>536</td>
<td>Return of the Jews to Jerusalem.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

JEREMIAH.

I. 1 THE words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were 1 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 formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I h sanctified thee, and I f ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

6 Then said I, f Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

THE DIVINE COMMISSION TO JEREMIAH.

Ch. I. l. Jeremiah] On the name and history of Jeremiah see the Introduction to this volume.

This chapter to chapter ii. 3 is the Haphtaroth, or proper prophetical lesson to Exod. i. vi. 1, which narrates the divine mission of Moses, and this appointment of that Haphtaroth suggests the comparison of the mission of Moses with that of Jeremiah. It is also the Haphtaroth to Num. xxx. 2—xxxii. 42, which describes the division of the land by Moses on the east of Jordan.

In a certain sense Jeremiah was a second Moses; and it is one of the principal characteristics of his prophecies, that they adopt and reiterate the language of Moses in the Pentateuch, especially in Deuteronomy. See above, Introd.

— Hilkiah] Supposed by some to be the High Priest in the days of Josiah, 2 Kings xxii. 4 (Clem. Alex., S. Jerome, and some Rabbis, and Eichhorn and V. Bohlen); but this is improbable. Anathoth was inhabited by priests of the house of Ithamar (1 Kings ii. 28), but Hilkiah was of the house of Phinehas (1 Chron. vi. 13), and the indefinite expression of "the Priests," seems to imply that Hilkiah was not the High Priest. Cp. Havernick, Eln., p. 195, Keil, Eln. p. 249.

— of the priests] Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the two Prophets of the Captivity, united the offices of prophet and priest. Here was their dignity and reward. Though, on account of the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem in their days, they were no longer able to minister there, yet they had a sacred function of nobler character: they are ever propheying in their writings, not only to Israel, but to the world. See Introductions to Jeremiah and to Ezekiel.

— Anathoth] A priestly city in the tribe of Benjamin (Josii. xxii. 18, 19), now anatra, on a broad ridge about four miles N.N.E. from Jerusalem. It is surrounded by cultivated fields of corn, figs, and olives; the remains of its walls are still visible, and its quarries supply Jerusalem with stone for building (Robinson).

2, 3. To whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah—unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah—king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month] Jeremiah began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of Josiah, and continued to discharge his prophetic office at Jerusalem till the eleventh year of Zedekiah, a period of forty years; from B.C. 628 to B.C. 588.

VOL. V. PART II.—1

In this enumeration of Jewish kings, Jeremiah omits two, namely, Jehoshaz or Shallum, and Jehoachin or Jeconiah (or Coniah), both of whom reigned only three months; the former succeeded his father Josiah; the latter succeeded his father Jehoiakim; Jehoiakim and Zedekiah reigned each eleven years.

After the destruction of Jerusalem, Jeremiah still continued in the Holy Land (xl. 1; xlii. 7), and afterwards prophesied in Egypt (xxxii., xlv.).

This protracted period, during which Jeremiah prophesied, is an evidence of God's longsuffering toward His People, and of His earnest desire for their repentance (Origens, Homil. in Jer.).

4. Then] Rather And or Now. It is not an adverb of time, but a conjunction.

5. Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee] As Samuel (Judg. xiii. 5; xvi. 17), John the Baptist (Luke i. 15), and St. Paul (Gal. i. 15), and above all, Christ. In this respect, as in many others, Jeremiah, who was sanctified from his mother's womb, and was known, i.e. loved, by God before he was conceived, and was made a Prophet to the Nations, was a figure of Christ, Who was loved by the Father from the beginning, having been always in the Father, and the Father in Him, before He was formed in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, and Who was the Prophet of all Nations, and sent His Apostles to baptize all Nations, and to preach the Gospel to every creature (see S. Jerome here, and compare S. Cyprian, c. Judaeos i. 21; S. Ambrose, in Ps. xliii.; and Origens, Homil. 1, in Jeremiah). S. Jerome (on chap. xxvii. 9) says, "I for my part am sure that no one was more holy than Jeremiah;" Certè nullum profecto sanctiorum Jeremia, qui virgo, prophetæ, sanctificatusque in utero, i.e. nonnullique praedestini Dominui Salvatorum." & Jereme (who is regarded as a Saint, and as a great doctor of the Church, by the Church of Rome) could not have written these words (in which he declares his firm assurance that no mortal was holier than Jeremiah), if he had known anything of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception (i.e. of the original sinlessness) of the Blessed Virgin, which is now enforced by the Church of Rome as an article of faith necessary to everlasting salvation. Cp. above, on Job xxiii. 24.

6. I cannot speak] Jeremiah, whose mission it was to awaken the Law of Moses, and whose prophecies are grounded on that
JEREMIAH I. 7—14. The rod; the seething-pot.

Before CHRIST about 2085.

7 But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. 8 Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. 9 Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. 10 And I will have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

11 Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree. 12 Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it.

13 And the word of the Lord came unto me the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, I see 'a seething pot; and the face thereof is toward the north.

14 Then the Lord said unto me, Out of the north an evil shall break

Law, especially on Denteronomy, reminds us of Moses, at the very beginning of his prophecy, and receives an answer of encom- mendation from God, and a commission from Him like that which was given to Moses (Exod. iv. 10. 12. Theodoret, Kneper).—I am a child] Solomon called himself “a little child” when he was sent by his father, at the age of seventeen, to speak to a man of advanced years (I Kings xxv. 17). Jeremiah imitated him and Moses in humility (see Exod. iv. 10). We must little children in our own sight, in order to be prophets (Matt. xi. 25. Mark x. 15. Luke x. 21).

6. Be not afraid] So Jeremiah’s brother-prophet and priest, Ezekiel, was encouraged by God in his mission to a godless people (Ezek. ii. 17), and Moses before them (Exod. iii. 12), and so St. Paul (Acts xxvi. 17).

9. the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth] As He touched, by the angel, the rod of Aaron (Num. x. 16), and gave the written roll to Ezekiel (ii. 9; iii.), and as Our Lord breathed on the Apostles (John xx. 22), and sent the Holy Ghost in tongues of fire, sitting upon each of them (Acts ii. 3).

10. I have—seen thee over the nations—to root out! Even in heathen literature a man is said to do what he declares will be done. See Ruhuken in Tausi Lexicon, κατὰ τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν Πάλαις, ζῷον κινεῖσθαι ἔλεγεν, and Horat. 1 Serm. x. 57.

11. The rod of an almond tree] Something more is meant by such expressions as these in Holy Scripture. The Word of God in His prophets has power to do what it says will be done (see Isa. vi. 10. 11; cp. 2 Cor. x. 4. 5); it is therefore compared to a fire (xiii. 29. Rev. xi. 3. 5), to a hammer that breaketh the rock (xiii. 29), and a two-edged sword (Heb. iv. 12).

For a similar reason the Prophets are described as giving a cup of divine fury to all nations to drink (xxv. 15), and as prophesying to dry bones so as to make them arise (Ezek. xxvii. 7—10).—See Hos. vi. 5.

Here is a striking proof of the Inspiration of the Sacred Writers; they are said to do what God does, because God is in them. Compare on Ezek. xlii. 3, where the prophet says, “The Vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city.”

Indeed, in the attributes assigned to the Word spoken by the prophets, we see a foreshadowing of the divine prerogatives and energy of Christ, the Eternal Word Himself, Who was in them (1 Pet. i. 11). See below, on Heb. iv. 12. Rev. xix. 13.

The Two Signs; the Almond-Rod, and the Seething-Pot.

11. 12. I see a rod of an almond tree—I will hasten] Literally, I see a rod of a shōkēd tree (so called from śōkéd, to wake, because it is the first tree to arouse and awake from the sleep of winter (Pilu. N. H. xvi. 42. Genesis. 8:47). Hence these words are reverenced by some (Aquila, Symmachus, Jerome), I see a waking rod.

To which the Lord replies, Thou hast well seen, for I am wakeful (shōkēd) over My Word to perform it. That is, I may perhaps appear to thee to connive at sin (cp. Ps. lxxxiii. 1—9; xxv. 9.), and to be asleep, like a dry and leafless tree in winter, but do not be mistaken; God is, indeed, long-suffering, but He will perform what He has said. His divine power and glory will awake suddenly into action, like a grove of almond-trees bursting forth into blossom in the earliest days of spring.

Here is a beautiful type of the Resurrection, especially the Resurrection of Christ. “Virga Aaron, quae palatibus eorum, in Resurrectione Domini orbuit” (S. Jerome).

The Almond is here called a rod (makkel, from mâkël, to strike with a rod, Genesis. 503), because God’s Word possesses royal authority, and a punitive power; which were symbolized by the rod in the hand of Moses (cp. Exod. iv. 20), and of Aaron (Num. xviii. 2. Sam. vii. 14. Ps. ii. 9; lxxxix. 32. Ezek. xl. 7—14).

Besides, the Almond was an appropriate type of such prophecies as those which Jeremiah was commissioned to utter; calling men to repentance and bringing forth fruit unto salvation by warnings of impending woe. “Dominus oricit, ut emendet; et quoniam nymgalum amassuamus habet corticeum et testa durissima cingitur, ut detraeta austerioresibus, fructus dulcissemus repereantur, sic omnis corregro amara videtur ad præsentem, sed fructus purit dulcessimus” (S. Jerome).

13. I see a seething pot] Literally, a pot (Heb. sir), boiling, or posing, like a puffing and snorting animal violently agitated by internal passion, and breathing forth fire and smoke (Job xii. 23—23. Genesis. 668).

Jerusalem is represented as a seething-pot, being about to be bestowed by God with the fury of Chaldaean besiegers.

This comparison was converted into a subject for profane and incredulous scurrying and jesting by the inhabitants of Jerusalem (see below, on Ezek. iii. 7. 11) ; but it was verified to the full, when Jerusalem blazed to heaven with the confusion and carnage of the armies of Babylon. Cp. Ezek. xxiv. 3.

We shall have frequent occasion to observe, that the prophet Ezekiel in Babylonia echoes the voice of the prophet Jeremiah at Jerusalem. Cp. below, on iii. 7; and notes on Ezek. xii. 2. 3; xiv. 11. xxii. 10. 11. — and the face thereof is toward the north] Literally, its face (the direction of the pot) is dependent on, or acted on, from the face (of the heaven) toward the north. Jerusalem is exposed to the northern fire of the armies of Chaldaen, which will destroy it. See what follows; and cp. Graf here, p. 10.

Moses received two signs when he received his divine commission at Horeb—one of power, the rod changed into a serpent,—the other of judgment, the leporus hand (Exod. iv. 1—12). So Jeremiah (the reveiver of the Law) had two visions,—that of the almond rod, and the seething pot,—one of correction, the other of judgment.

14. Out of the north] Not from the south, viz. from Egypt, which the people of Jerusalem most feared at this time, but from Chaldaen, which they little dreaded in comparison with Egypt. Cp. iv. 6; vi. 1; x. 22; xxv. 9; xxxix. 1.

These two images declared, that if Jerusalem would not repent when corrected by the rod of God’s Word, she would be consumed by the fire of the armies of Babylon, whom He would send against her.

So it may be said generally of all men and nations: “Qui nolearint percutientem virgōl Dēi emendarii, mittentur in ollam
forth upon all the inhabitants of the land. 15 For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the Lord; and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah. 16 And I will utter my judgments against them touching all their wickedness, who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands.

17 Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto all the cities that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. 18 For, behold, I have made thee this day a defended 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. 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.

II. 1 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 thee, the kin dys of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, 3 when thou wast after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. 4 Israel was holiness unto me to make me known in the earth, to shew forth my praise among all the nations. 5 Jerusalem was the foundation thereof. b

æcum atque succensum" (S. Jerome). "Deus prius exhibet penitentissium virgiam correctionis, quam si noluit accipere, reservat impenitentissum ollam succensum gehemum" (S. Ambrose, in Ps. xxxviii.).

2. burned incense] rather, have burned sacrifice, not incense only, but any other offering. cp. xxxiii. 18; xlv. 3.
3. amos iv. 5 (graf, nigelpoeh). 4 i. kings xxii. 5. "i have given thee. prophets are god's gifts to the church; and all that they speak is given them by him. see below on ezk. iii. 17; xxxii. 7.
5. a defended city] thou, who art god's prophet, art a defended city, and must be prepared for a siege from thine enemies, and even from thy brethren, and from the kings and princes, and other inhabitants of jerusalem. but thou wilt not be taken, as jerusalem will be, and destroyed; for i have made thee to be an iron pillar, and thou shalt not be removed, as her pillars will be (iii. 17); and i have made thee to be brasen walls, and thou shalt never be overthrown and burnt with fire, as her walls will be. compare the words of the lord to ezkiel (i. 6; iii. 8, 9), and our lord's words concerning himself (isa. xxvi. 21; cf. xxviii. 13).

This promise to jeremiah was fully accomplished. see below, prel. note to chap. xxxiv.; on chap. xxxv.; and the following excellent summary of the evidence on this subject:

"for forty-one years, from the thirteenth of josiah to the last of zedekiah, jeremiah declared one future for israel, destruction from the north, captivity in babylon. after josiah's death, his life was sought by those of his native place (xi. 19--20), it continued to be plotted against (xxvii. 15. 22. 29. 20). he was defamed (xx. 10), reproached, derided. its length (xx. 7, 8; add xxii. 33--10), cursed by the people man by man, as they curse those who grudged them with envy (xx. 10), accused falsely (xxvii. 15--15), placed in the stocks (xx. 2, 3), put on trial for the truth (xxvii. 8--34), imprisoned (xxxii.), given over to death (xxxvii. 5, 4; xxxvii. 16--21; xxxviii. 6--20), yet he had foretold from the first that god would preserve him to the end, and that he should be treated kindly by the enemy at the latter end (xxv. 11).

"he went about among them, persecuted by all, but invulnerable. for god was his invisible defence. i have made thee this day, were the words of his inauguration (i. 18, 19, add xv. 20, 21; xx. 11) a defended city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of judah, and the princes thereof, and against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. 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.

ch. ii. the following five chapters do not refer (as has been alleged by some) to the evils brought upon judah by a supposed invasion of scythians (eicohro, dahler, hitzig, berthen, ewald), but to its internal confusion and miseries in the days of joshoakahim. see graf, pp. 15--20.

2. i remember thee (literally, i remember for thee, for thy credit, and on thy behalf), the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals when thou was betrothed to me as a bride, in mystical wedlock at sini. see above, on exod. xix. 8; and below, iii. 14, 15. ezk. xvi. 6. 60. do not suppose that i forget thy former affection to me. no, i loved thee in thy youth (hos. xi. 1). i loved thee then as a husband loves his spouse. cp. hos. ii. 19, 20. amos ii. 10. "joel i. 8; and thenedoth here. the reason of thy present distress is, that "thou hast left thy first love" (rev. ii. 2--4).

—i was in a land that was not sown] the land through which thou passest for forty years was not sown with corn, and yet i sustained thee there with bread. such was the response
unto the Lord, and † the firstfruits of his increase: † all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord.

4 Hear ye the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel:

5 Thus saith the Lord, † What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are far from me, † and have walked after vanity, and are become vain? † Neither said they, Where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt? † And I brought you into || † a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination.

6 The priests said not, Where is the Lord? and they that handle the law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, † and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit.

9 Therefore † I will yet plead with you, saith the Lord, and † with your children's children will I plead.

10 For pass over † over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing. † Hath a nation changed their gods, which are † yet no gods? † but my people have changed their glory for † that which doth not profit. † × Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. † For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

14 Is Israel a servant? † is he a homeborn slave? why is he † spoiled? † The young lions roared upon him, and † yelled, and they made his land waste: his cities are burned with inhabiting. Also the children of Noph and † Tahapanes † have broken the crown of thy head.

of My love to thine. Here is a reference to Deut. viii. 2, 3: "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years, and fed thee with manna, that He might make thee know that man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord.

3. all that devour him shall offend] Rather, all that devour him shall incur guilt, and will themselves be liable to God’s wrath.

4. Hear ye the word of the Lord?] The following words, to v. 28, and iii. 4; iv. 12, were appointed in Hebrew Symanogras as a Haphtaroth to Num. xxxiii. 1—xxxi. 12, which describe the journeyings of Israel in the wilderness, the borders of the land, and the Levitical cities. The reason of this appointment is obvious.

5. What iniquity have your fathers found in me?] God, in His infinite love and condescension to His people, does not condemn them as a judge, but pleads with them as a defendant in a suit (Theodoret). Cp. Isa. vi. 3. Micah vi. 3.

6. of pits.] Literally, of the pitfall, into which a man falls unawares (Gesen. 810). Cp. xviii. 20. 22.

7. a plentiful country.] Literally, the land of a Carmel, a beautiful garden like Carmel. Cp. above, Cant. vii. 5. Isa. xxxii. 19; xxxv. 2.

11. Hath a nation changed their gods—my people have changed their glory?] They have changed it as an article of commerce and traffic, with a view to their own gain! Cp. note on Ps. cxiii. 22, where the same verb is used as here. They changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass; and cp. Rom. i. 23. The heathen nations of the constellations of the Mediterranean and of Arabia are constant to their false gods; but Israel has forsaken the Only True God!

12. be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate] Slumber, and be withered away (Gesen. 305).

13. have—hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns] Rather, leaky cisterns. They have deserted Me, the living Fountain of infinite truth (Ps. xxxix. 9). John iv. 14; vii. 37—39, and have been for themselves in the earth cisterns, or pits, made by human device, contrary to God’s law; and those cisterns are leaky, and will not hold water; and when men are thirsty, and come to them for refreshment, they find them dry. So Israel, when they resorted for help to their idols, and to Egypt, and to Assyria, which they preferred to the Everlasting Fountain of all Good, found nothing but sand or mud.

This may be applied to every sinner; “qui rectito fonte fudit, sibi cisternas rimosas et” and to heretics; “qui purum doctrinam fertam in Scripturis et Ecclesiâ Dei deserunt et formidant sibi cisternas eorum falsorum doctrinarum” (S. Isidore, lii. 40; S. Cyprian, Ep. 40; A Lapide). Cp. Ecclus. xxi. 13, 14; and Bp. Sanderson, i. 301.

14. Is Israel a servant?] Is Israel a slave, a bondman, and captive, that he should suffer such evils as he now endures? No (the Almighty answers), Israel is not a slave, but a beloved son, whom I have delivered as My firstborn (Exod. iv. 22) from the land ofbondage. But he has forsaken Me, His Father, and has brought those miseries on himself by his apostasy. Cp. Isa. i. 1.

15. The young lions] Israel’s enemies; first, the Syrians and Assyrians before the days of Jeremiah, and afterwards the Babylonians. See below, iv. 7; cp. Ezek. xix. 3. 6. Nah. ii. 11, 12. Dan. vii. 4.


— have broken the crown of thy head] Rather, they have
JEREMIAH II. 17—25.

With Israel.

17 "Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, when he led thee by the way?

18 And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river?

19 This own 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 have I broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not || transgress; when 1 upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, k playing the harlot.

21 Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me? 22 For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.

22 How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim? see thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done: || thou art a swift dromedary traversing her ways; 24 || | A wild ass || used to the wilderness, that snatcheth the wind at || her pleasure; in her occasion who can || turn her away? all they that seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her.

23 Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but || Heb. laught. † Heb. the desire of her heart.

22. — the degenerate plant] The bastard slips (Gen. 552).
23. — nitre—soap] The former is mineral alkali, the latter, perceptible (Winer; Thomson, 529).
24. the valley] Probably the valley of Hinnom, where Moloch was worshipped, at the south of Jerusalem. Cp. vii. 31; xix. 2. 2 Kings xxi. 10.

[1] Heb. laught. † Heb. the desire of her heart.
Before CHRIST about 629.

27. to a stone} Heb, then—female, regarded here as a mother; as the stock is regarded as a father.

30. your own sword hath devoured your prophets} Instead of heartening to your prophets, and of receiving instruction and blessing from Me through them, ye have evicted them (see 1 Kings xvii. 4. 2 Kings xxii. 16. 2 Chron. xxiv. 21); therefore are ye punished by Me. Cp. Matt. xxiii. 37. Luke xi. 47; xiii. 34. Acts vii. 51, 52. 1 Thess. ii. 15.

31. O generation} Yo, who are a chosen generation (cp Ps. xxi. 30; xxiv. 6; xxii. 2. Isa. liii. 8), have become a perverse generation (Deut. xxiii. 5. Ps. lxxvii. 8); the generation of My wrath, a generation of vipers (vii. 29. Matt. iii. 7; xi. 16; xii. 31. 39. 41—45; xvi. 4; xvii. 17).

— We are lords} Rather, we are free to wander when we will, like an animal which has broken loose from the rein, and has dashed off from the fold, and ranges freely over the steppes of the desert. Cp. Hos. xii. 1. Genes. 759.

32. her attire} Her girdle (Hitzig, Knobel), or her bosom-band (Jerome). Cp. Isa. iii. 20.

God is the glory of His Church (see ii. 11. Isa. lii. 10. Exod. xxi. 12), yet Judah has cast Him from her, and has defiled herself with the foul stains of idolatry and of bloodshed (ver. 22. 34).

33. Why trimmest thou thy way} Rather, How dost thou set straight thy way (vii. 3. 5; xviii. 11; xxvii. 13. Isa. xiii. 16)—not as thou oughtest to do, to seek Me—but to gratify thy roving lust!

34. Also in thy skirts—all these} Rather, Also on the skirts (literally, the wings of thy garments) is found blood of the souls of poor innocents (of children sacrificed to Moloch and of prophets and other righteous men, v. 30). I have not found them (the blood stains) by breaking in (like a thief in the dark night), by secret irrigation into thy house, but in broad daylight.

Here, again, is a silent reference to the Pentateuch. See Exod. xxii. 2, the only other place where the word here used is found, and which Jeremiah (who is ever referring to the Mosaic Law) has here in his mind. I have not found it by secret irrigation, like a thief in the night (cp. the Evangelical metaphor, Matt. xxiv. 43. 1 Thess. v. 2. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 10. Rev. iii. 3; xvi. 15), but I have found it in open day, upon all these thy princes, prophets, priests, and people, who boldly declare their sin, which defiles the robes that they wear in public places in the light of day.

After all that has been written on this controverted passage (see Rosenm., Dukler, Hitzig, Neumann, Graf, Nögels), this seems on the whole to be the most probable sense. Above, in v. 20, we read, “As the thief is ashamed when he is found;” and this confirms the above interpretation.

36. Egypt—Assyria} See v. 18. In order to escape the Egyptians, the inhabitants of Jerusalem used to take refuge in Assyria; and again, in order to avoid the anger of Assyria, they were wont to take refuge in Egypt. They are condemned by God, because they forsook Him and put their trust in men (Isa. Jeroue).

37. thine hands upon thine head} To signify the pain that they feleest there. Cp. 2 Sam. xiii. 19.

Return, O Israel.—The Future Conversion of the Jews.

Ch. III. 1. They say} Here is another tacit reference to the Mosaic Law. The Hebrew word here (le-amar, the infinitive of ‘amar, to speak, and usually rendered “dicoed”), not absolutely,
become another man's, 1 shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast 2 played the harlot with many lovers; 3 yet return again to me, saith the Lord.

2 Lift up thine eyes unto 4 the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. 5 In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; 6 and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoresoms and with thy wickedness. 7 Therefore the 8 showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hast a 9 whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed.

4 Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou art 10 the guide of my youth? 5 Will he reserve his anger for ever? will he keep it to the end? Behold, thou hast spoken and done things as thou couldest.

6 The Lord said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which 2 backsiding Israel hath done? she is 3 gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.

7 And I said after she had done all these things, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not.

And her treacherous 8 sister Judah saw it. 8 And I saw, when 9 for all the causes whereby backsiding Israel committed adultery I had 10 put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; 11 yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.

9 And it came to pass through the 2 lightness of her whoredom, that she 12 defiled the land, and committed adultery with 13 stones and with stocks. 10 And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me 14 with her whole heart, but 15 feignedly, saith the Lord.

11 And the Lord said unto me, 2 The backsiding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.

12 Go and proclaim these words toward 16 the north, and say, Return, thou and her treacherous sister. 17

has been supposed to cause a difficulty; but there is a parallel to it in Judges xvi. 2, and it seems better to regard it (with

the Targum, Vulgate, Jerome, Houbigant, Rosenmüller, Dathie, and others) as signifying, "it is a common saying," than to connect it with what is gone before, or to resort to conjectural emendations, with some recent critics.

Besides, this phrase (te-amar) is the universal formula for introducing a message from God; e.g. "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying" (te-amar) (i. 4. 11. 13; ii. 1. 2; vi. 1; xi. 1, and very many other places), and it is here used by the Prophet to intimate that what he is uttering is a quotation from the Law of the Lord.

If a man put away his wife—shall he return unto her again? 2 No; this is against the Law of God (Deut. xxxiv. 1—4). But yet God in His great mercy will suspend His Law, by a special exception, for thy sake.

Yet return again to me! Israel must return to God, her first Husband, and then He will return to her. The rendering of the text (which is that of Vulg., Syriac, Targum, Rosenm. Nægell, and others, and is confirmed by vs. 12. 14. 22) seems preferable to that of some interpreters (Maimon, Hhilg. Ewald, Umbreit, Neumann, Graff), who render it: "will thou return to me?"

2. as the Arabon in the wilderness. Lying in wait for the traveller in his way, in order to despoil him. 3 Hec genis dedita latronicii usque hociel incurmant terminos Palmastum (Jerome).

3. the showersex have been withheld. 4 For thy sins. Cp. ix. 12; xiv. 4; and see Deut. xxviii. 22. Zech. xiv. 17.

5. no latter rain. 6 In March and April. Cp. on Deut. xiv. 14.

4. Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me? Now that I have visited thee with My judgments, in order that thou mayest repent. Probably those words were uttered in the age of Josiah (see ii. 2), and were ministerial to the religious reformation of his days (2 Kings xxiii. and 2 Chron. xxiv. 3. See v. 6 here).

This remonstrance (says S. Jerome) may be addressed spiritually to those who desert the Living God, the Guide of their youth, to whom their souls were exposed in Holy Baptism (2 Cor. xi. 2), and who go after heretical doctrines, and commit spiritual fornication.

5. Behold, thou hast spoken—couldst! Rather, Behold, thou hast said to me that thou hast spoken fair words and didst intend to repent; and yet thou hast done the evil, and hast thoroughly wrought it!—thou hast persevered in it to uttermost (cp. v. 10). These words indicate, that the reformation of Judah in the days of good King Josiah was not hearty and permanent.

6. In the days of Josiah. See on v. 4.

—Hast thou seen that which backsiding Israel hath done? 2 Literally, that which hath done Apostasy Israel! Israel, who was "holy unto the Lord" (Gen. xlii. 3), is called here (and in Gen. xvi. 11, 12) Defection or Apostasy in the abstract (see Genesis, 515), as if she were wholly such: "Non virtuosus homo es, Zofla—sed vitium" (Martialis).

—Hast played the harlot With her idolatries (v. 9).

7. her treacherous sister. Literally, her Treachery sister Judah—the abstract for the concrete. See Graf. Judah is called Treachery, as Israel is called Apostasy (v. 6).

We may compare the language of Ezekiel concerning Israel and Judah, represented as two sisters, Aholah and Aholibah (Ezek. xxiii. 2—11). The judgments executed by God on Israel (in the deportation of the Ten Tribes to Assyria) for their idolatries, ought to have deterred her sister Judah from a like offence; for "Alicorn torauta alicorn remediunt sunt" (N. Jerome), but they did not have that effect; therefore Judah's sin is worse than that of Israel.

9. through the lightness of her whoredom—she defiled the land! Rather, with the cry of her whoredom, which went with a loud voice to heaven, like the sins of Sodom (Gen. xviii. 21), and called down God's vengeance upon it. Cp. below, Rev. xviii. 5.

10. Israel hath justified herself! (cp. Ezek. xvi. 51, 52. 12. toward the north! Where the Ten Tribes of Israel are
backsliding Israel, saith the Lord: and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am "merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever. 13 Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast "scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the Lord.

14 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord: for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion:

15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

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: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall || that be done any more.

17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, "to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they "walk any more after the || imagination of their evil heart.

18 In those days "the house of Judah shall walk || with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have "given for an inheritance unto your fathers.
promised to Abraham, 

"the heir of the world," in Christ (Rom. iv. 13). The Jews will one day find their home in the Holy Land of the Catholic Church. See S. Jerome here.

Hence it is declared in what follows, that they will have a 

godly heritage among the nations." Whenever men enter the Church of God, which sprang forth from Sion (see above, on Ps. lixxvii. 1—5), where Christ suffered, and where the Holy Ghost was given to the Apostles, who were the Patriarchs of the spiritual Israel, they come to Jerusalem, which is now universally diffused in the Catholic Church of the whole world. Cp. A Lapide here.


— a godly heritage of the hosts of nations: Literally, a 

heritage, the glory of the hosts of the nations. The Jewish Messiah, as the Heir of God, a spiritual army, formed of the collected hosts of all Nations. This is rendered by some (Michaelis, Gesen., Hitzig, Graf, Nielé) the ornament of 

ornaments (the chief ornament) of the nations. But the former interpretation seems preferable.

20. A voice The prophet, whose inner ear is quickened by the Spirit, catches the far-off sounds of the future penitential mourning of the Jewish Nation for its rejection of Christ; and he recognizes those pieces of weeping and supplication. Compare, below, xxxii. 9; l. 4. Ezek. xxix. 23—29. Zech. xii. 11—14.

— upon the high places Where they had worshipped idols.

23. Truly] Israel takes up the words (Heb. een) of Jehovah in v. 20, where it is rendered surely. "Surely ye have forsaken Me" (said God). "Surely only delusion comes from the hills of our false gods" (is Israel's answer). "Surely we look for salvation to Thee alone."

—in eia—mountains] Surely for delusion from the high places (is) the clamorous multitude (Hebr. hâmón) of the mountains. The votaries of Baal and other false gods assemble themselves with tumultuous crowds and vociferous adoration on idolatrous high places (e. v.), like the Priests at Carmel (I Kings xviii. 26—28). But though they are numerous and clamorous, yet what they do, tends only to deceit, and to the delusion of all who trust in them. But the One True God, Who dwells in the solemn stillness and awful solitude of the Holy of Holies in Zion, He, and He alone, is our help.

24. shane hath decreed] Shame, that is, the idols worshiped by Israel, which trusted in them for help and honour; but they proved their shame. Shame, an abstract word, is used for the concrete (as above, v. 6; cp. xl. 13). Cp. Hos. ix. 10, where bôshekh (shame) corresponds to Baal; and see above, at 2 Sam. ii. 8, the note on the name Baal-bolm. "Verily, My voice is the salvation of Israel. 21 For shame hath devoured the labour of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters. 25 We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us: for we have sinned against the Lord our God, 26 and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God.

IV. 1 If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, a return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove. 2 And thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, in ch. 3. 12, 65. 16. See ch. 5. 2.

2. Thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth] Thou shalt swear not, by thine idols (Amos xiii. 14. Zeph. i. 5), but by the Lord; and thou shalt swear, not with vain oaths, but for such causes, and with such conditions, as constitute a righteous oath.

On swearing, as an act of worship, see above, Deut. v. 20. Ps. lii. 18, and the notes below, on Matt. v. 34: and xxv. 63. 72. Heb. vi. 16. James v. 12; 13: and on what constitutes a good oath, as contrasted with a bad one, see Matt. xiv. 9, and Bp. Sanderson, iv. 360: v. 210. 330, and the Expositors of the Thirty-Nine Articles, Art. xxxvi., where reference is made to these words of Jeremiah, Thou shalt swear the Lord liveth, and thou shalt confess the Lord, and condemn idols, by which Israel had sworn, and which are dead, whereas the Lord liveth.

Observe, a good Oath has always these three concomitants —Truth, Judgment, and Justice. If these are wanting, an Oath becomes a perjury (S. Jerome). "Juramentum, ut sit licitum, tres habere debere comites; verum, veritatem, nec falsum, nec juridicium, nec sit iniquum, nec ei nocensum. Si quid horum triun desit, non est juramentum sed perjurium" (A Lopide, Aquin.). Here, therefore, is a protest against such unholy Oaths

God's call of Israel to repentance.

Ch. iv. 1. If thou wilt return—then shalt thou not remove. Rather, then be not removing, but be thou steadfast in thy repentance.

Repent in deed, not in show. The word rendered remove by our Translators is add, which is applied to the reeding of areed in the wind (1 Kings xiv. 15), and to the flitting of a bird ( Ps. xi. 1. Prov. xxvi. 20), and to the flitting of a bird (Ps. xi. 1. Prov. xxv...
and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they 6 glory. 3 For thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, 'Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. 4 Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings. 5 Declare ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem; and say, Blow ye the trumpet in the land: cry, gather together, and say, Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defended cities. 6 Set up the standard toward Zion: || retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the north, and a great † destruction. 7 The lion is come up from his thickets, and † the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate; and thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant. 8 For this o gird you with sackcloth, lament and howl: for the fierce anger of the Lord is not turned back from you. 9 And it shall come to pass at that day, saith the Lord, that the heart of the king shall perish, and the heart of the princes; and the priests shall be astonished, and the prophets shall wonder. 10 Then said I, Ah, Lord God! 9 surely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall have peace; whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul. 11 At that time shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem, 'A dry wind of the high places in the wilderness toward the daughter of my people, not to fan, nor to cleanse, 12 Even || a full wind from those places shall come unto me: now also will I † give sentence against them. 13 Behold, he shall as those which are now imposed by the Bishop of Rome on all other Bishops; and against such an Oath as "the Solemn League and Covenant" (which was treasonable against God and the King), and of which an abjuration was therefore required by the Act of Uniformity, at the Restoration of Charles II. 7 The nations shall bless themselves in him] In the Lord Christ. In Him, not Israel only, but all Nations, shall be blessed. Cp. on Ezek. xvii. 15. 3. Break up your fallow ground] Make a thorough reformation. Plough up, not a part only, but the whole of your Civil and Ecclesiastical estate, which is now lying barren and un fruitful; and sow the good seed in the spiritual soil cleared of weeds and thorns. The Lord here repeats by Jeremiah the words which He had spoken to Israel by Moses (x. 12) "Sow to yourselves in righteousness; break up your fallow ground" (cp. Matt. xiii. 7). 4. Circumcise yourselves] Trust not in the outward ceremonies of your religion; but circumcise the foreskins of your hearts. Here is another reference to the Pontifical (Deut. x. 1). See also (cp. xxx. 6) and an anticipation of the true Circumcision not made with hands, the Circumcision of the Spirit, given in the Gospel; see Rom. ii. 28. Col. ii. 11, and the Collect and Epistle and Proper Lesson of the Church on the Festival of the Circumcision, January 1. — because of the evil of your doings] Another quotation from the Mosaic Law (Deut. xxviii. 20), and often repeated with solemn emphasis by Jeremiah (xlii. 22; xxlii. 3. 22; xxvi. 8). Present Judgments on the Wicked are Earnest of the Future Judgment. Therefore Repent. The Prophet foresees the invasion of the Chaldean armies, and the consequent alarm in Jerusalem. The fulfilment of this prophecy is a warning to the Jews and to all Nations, that the rest of the prophecies of Jeremiah, and other writers of Holy Scripture concerning the Universal Judgment, will be fulfilled also. 5. let us go into the defenced cities] For protection from the enemy.

6. Set up the standard toward Zion] That the inhabitants of Judah may flee to it for refuge from the invaders. In a spiritual sense, this may be applied to the work of the Christian Zion, in her preparation for the battle against Sin and Satan. As an Ancient Father says, "Hoc audiat Jerusalemen, in quia confessus fidei est, et in quia Christi habitation; hereticorum bella conspexit, Christi munificentia nos tenetur. Levate Crucis signum in speculii, sublimitate Ecclesiae: ad Christi auxilium currite. Malum ego adducce ab Aquilone, verum Nabuchadnosor, qui klercreo in mundu Me esse permittit: ex isto vero partum, etc. (S. Jerom.)"

7. The lion] The King of Babylon. Cp. Dan. vii. 4. 10, thou hast greatly deceived this people] By their false prophets, whom they preferred to Thy prophets, and whom Thou, O God, didst use as Thy instruments for punishing those who forsok Thee, the God of Truth, and resorted to them who were prophets of lies. Compare x. 18 and Theodoret here, and the history in 1 Kings xxii. 15—24. 2 Thess. ii. 11, "God shall send them a strong delusion that they should believe the lie" which are the best comments on this passage, to which some groundless exceptions have been taken by some sceptical writers (see Dr. Waterland, "Scripture Vindicated," vii. 234—237). 11, 12. A dry wind—not to fan, nor to cleanse—shall come unto me] The wind of the fury of the invading army (says the Lord) shall come unto Me: it obeys My Voice; I summon it, to do My pleasure. Do not imagine that the Chaldean will conquer My people by their own prowess. No, I empower them, and I command them to do My will, and execute My judgments on Israel for rebellion against Me. I (not Nabuchadnezar) will give sentence (or will utter judgments) against them. The wind here described, and to which the Chaldean army is compared, is not a refreshing breeze, but a dry parching wind; it comes from the bare cliffs of the wilderness on the N.B. of Palestine; and it comes, not as a wind which winnows away chaff, and purifies a threshing-floor, but as a blast that consumes every thing.
come up as clouds, and his chariots shall be as a whirlwind: his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for we are spoiled.

14 O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? 15 For a voice declareth from Dan, and publisheth affliction from mount Ephraim. Make thine own mention to the nations; behold, publish against Jerusalem, that watchers come from a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah.

17 As keepers of a field, are they against her round about; because she hath been rebellious against me, saith the Lord.

18 Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thine heart.

19 My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment. How long shall I see the standard, and hear the sound of the trumpet?

20 For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.

21 I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. 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.

22 For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end. For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above black; because I have spoken it, I have purposed it, and overflow Jerusalem, when about to reject and crucify Him (Luke xix. 42); and St. Paul's sympathetic effusion of sorrow for his brethren, who scorned and denounced him as a renegade and apostate (Rom. i. 2).

— my very heart Literally, the walls of my heart. Thy heart, or Jerusalem, is pierced (v. 18). Thy walls shall be rent asunder by the crash of the besiegers; the walls of my heart are burst at the sight; and it bleeds for thy wounds as my own. Therefore he speaks of the tents of Jerusalem as my tents (v. 20).

21. the standard] The signal-flag (as the trumpet is the signal-sound) to call the fugitives together, in order that they may rally against the enemy, in a place of defence.

23. [I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void] A confused ruin, like the Earth before its present creation; see the note at Gen. i. 2, whence Jeremiah has adopted these words (thou canst).

Jeremiah, like Isaiah (ii. 1—21; xiii.—xxiv.), proceeds from speaking of local judgments, to describe the Universal Judgment to come on the whole earth; and thus the prophets prepared the way for the grandest and clearest of all prophecies, uttered by the Lord of all the Prophets, first concerning the impending judgment on Jerusalem, and, secondly, concerning His Own Second Coming, and the Judgment of the World (Matt. xxiv.).

There is an interesting passage in S. Jerome's commentary here, describing the desolate condition of the most fruitful parts of Palestine (where he was then living), in consequence of its sins.


25. the birds] Cp. Zeph. i. 2, 3.
Jeremiah is searched.

Woe is me.

Jeremiah IV. 29—31. V. 1—8.

1. Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it. And though they say, The Lord liveth; surely they swear falsely.

2. 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. 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.

3. 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 therein shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings, yea, are increased.

4. How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them, that are no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. They were as fed horses in the morning: every one will not repent, neither will I turn back from it.

29. every city] Rather, the whole city (Nagel).

30. rentest thy face with painting] Rather, enlargest thine eyes with paint; the paint which was used to give greater fulness, lustre, and fire to the eye. Jerusalem, on the eye of her destruction, tricking out and bedizennng herself with gaudy trumpery, to allure or overawe her lovers, is here compared to Jezebel. See the notes above, on Jezebel's history, especially in her last hour, 2 Kings ix. 30, and below, on Ezek. xxiii. 40.

Ch. V.] All the foregoing and following prophecies, fraught with words of warning and woe to Jerusalem, ought to be applied by Christendom to herself, as a solemn call to repentance and holiness of life: "Quisquis juxta historiam de Jerusalem discineas et Judææ, referamus ad Ecclesiam Dei" (S. Jerome).

The corrupt State of Jerusalem.

3. O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth? Doest not Thou look for Truth in Thy People? Yes; but Thou dost not find it. No; but only lies. So our blessed Lord looked for fruit on the leafy fig-tree, which symbolized the Jerusalem of His days; but He found none, and therefore He withered it. See below, on Matt. xxii. 19, 20; and Mark xi. 13—20.

— thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved] Cp. Isa. ix. 13.

5. but these have altogether broken the yoke] That is, but even these—even the great men, who are instructed in the Law, and ought to teach others (Micah iii. 1)—they too have broken its yoke. Cp. ii. 20.

6. wolf of the evenings] Rather, of the deserts, as in the margin. The Chaldeans are compared to lions, wolves, and leopards, as combining in themselves the various qualities of savage animals and beasts of prey, in their onslaught on Jerusalem.

7. when I had fed them to the full] This rendering is supported by many manuscripts and versions (Sept., Vulg., Syriac, Arabic, and Torzum), and is adopted by many Expositors, ancient and modern, Hebrew and Christian. As to the sense, compare v. 26. Deut. xxxii. 15. Neh. ix. 25. Hosea viii. 6.

But the preponderance of existing MSS. is in favour of another meaning, viz. I made them to swear, which is adopted by most recent interpreters, as Neumann, Graf, Nagel. That is, I received them into covenant with Myself: I betrothed Israel to Myself in spiritual wedlock; but Israel was faithless to Me, and committed spiritual fornication.


8. fed horses in the morning] Or, pampered horses in the morning. So Castrici, Munster, Junius, Tremellius, and Gener. p. 822, deriving the last word from shâcan, to rise
neighed after his neighbour's wife. 9 Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

10 Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy; but make not a full end: take away her battlements; for they are not the Lord's. 11 For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the Lord. 12 They have belied the Lord, and said, It is not he; neither shall evil come upon us; neither shall we see sword nor famine: 13 And the prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them: thus shall it be done unto them.

14 Wherefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, 'I behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. 15 Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the Lord: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say. 16 Their quiver is as an open sepulchre, they are all mighty men. 17 And they shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread, which thy sons and thy daughters should eat: they shall eat up thy flocks and thy herds: they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword. 18 Nevertheless in those days, saith the Lord, I will not make a full end with you.

19 And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, 'Wherefore doth the Lord our God all these things unto us? then shalt thou answer them, Like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not yours. 20 Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying, 21 Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not.

22 Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, 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? 23 But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. 21 Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the Lord our God,

early in the morning. Others deduce it from šāḏāḏ (an Arabic root), to rave and rage with lustful passion. Cp. Geen. 821; Fuerst, 1378; and Neumann, Graf, Nügel, here; and see above, ii. 29. Prov. vii. 11.

10. Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy; but make not a full end [God shows His Omniscience, first by sending the mighty power of Babylon as His vassal against Jerusalem (cp. e. 15—17; above, iv. 16); and next, by restraining Babylon from indulging its own vindictive passions, and from utterly destroying her inhabitants. Cp. e. 18. Amos ix. 7, 8, 9; and Rom. vi. 5.]

12. It is not he. Rather, he is not. They who forsook the Everlasting One, and worshipped gods who were nothing, are regarded by God as denying His own existence. These words are remarkable, as showing what disobedience to God's will and word is in His sight. It is Deism, and even Atheism.

13. [Mere wind. They are not moved by the Holy Spirit, as the true prophets are (2 Pet. i. 21).

14. I will make my words in thy mouth fire] See above, i. 10. Isa. i. 31; x. 17. Obad. 18. Mal. iii. 2.

15. I will bring a nation upon you from far [God takes up here the words of Deuteronomy (xxviii. 49). Cp. Isa. v. 26. Hab. i. 6. Amos vi. 14; and Kueper, p. 12.]

16. Their quiver is as an open sepulchre [Being filled with arrows which bring certain death. The opening of their quiver is like the digging of a grave for Jerusalem,—a noble poetical figure, derived from Ps. v. 10: "Their throat is an open sepulchre."]

17. they shall eat up thine harvest] Another reference to Deut. xxviii. 31—33.

19. Like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange gods] Observe here also is a reference to Deut. iv. 28; xxviii. 64; xxix. 21—27.

21. Hear now this, O foolish people] Another adaptation of Deut. xxix. 3, 4; xxxii. 6.

22. which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea] God has placed the light loose sand as a check to the furious waves of the mighty Ocean. Cp. Job xxxviii. 11. Ps. xcv. 9. So He can restrain the rage of the mightiest Nations by the weakness of a faithful remnant; as in the days of Hezekiah He checked and turned back the fury of Sennacherib and his innuerable host by the prayers of the King (2 Kings xix. 14—20).

The sand of the Church of God is a barrier to the waves of the World.

23. a revolting and a rebellious heart] Here is a reference to the Mosaic Law concerning the rebellions son (see Deut. xii. 18); as there was at the beginning of the chapter, and elsewhere (Jer. ii. 19), concerning the faithless wife. Israel is compared to both; and they must expect the punishment of both, unless they repent. Cp. Kueper, 15.
Jerusalem’s sins her rain. JEREMIAH V. 25—31. VI. 1—5. The Chaldaean invasion.

Before CHAP. V. 12.

Ps. 17, 3.

ch. 14, 15.

Acts 14, 17.

Joel 2, 23.

Gen. 6, 22.

ch. 3, 3.

Or, they pray as fowlers lie in wait.

Prov. 1, 11, 17, 18.

Hab. 1, 5.

ch. 10, 12.

Isa. 1, 25.

Zech. 7, 10.

Job 17, 6.

Ps. 73, 12.

ch. 12, 1.

Job 31, 5.

Or, astonishment and frighten.

cf. 25, 14.

Hos. 6, 10.

ch. 11, 11, 25, 23.

Ezek. 1, 6.

Or, take into their hands.

Mal. 3, 11.

and 12th.

a Neh. 3, 11.

b ch. 11, 12.

c 6, 6.

g Or, dwelling at home.

z Kings 25, 14, 1.

ch. 14, 1.

ch. 51, 27.

Joel 1, 2.

e ch. 18, 8.

that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season; he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.

Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. For among my people are found wicked men: they "lay wait, as he that sotteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine: they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not, the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.

Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land: The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

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: for evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction. I have likened the daughter of Zion to a Lady, and delight woman. The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her: they shall pitch their tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place.

Prepare ye war against her: arise, and let us go up at noon. Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out. Arise, and let us go by night, and let us destroy her palaces.

The trumpet is to be blown in Tekoa, in order to gather together the fugitives who were endeavouring to escape from the Chaldaean armies coming down upon them from the North. - Beth-haccerem: House of the vineyard, probably near Tekoa (cp. Neh. iii. 14), supposed by some to have stood on a spot now called Frankenburg (Pococke, Robinson).

I have likened—delicate woman. This sentence, obscure in itself, becomes clear, when we refer to the passage of Deuteronomy where the same words occur, and which the Prophet had in his mind, but which was too terrible to quote: he contents himself therefore with a passing allusion to it. See Deut. xxviii. 45—50, 'such tender and delicate woman;' (observe the words adopted here), "her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, and toward her young one." Zion herself is that woman! Cp. Zepher 17.

The objection made by some to the rendering I have likened (which is adopted by Tylor, and in substance Syriac, Kisch, Abarbanel, Pagnini, Tremellius, Piscator, Nilgai, and others), is, that in the original there is no preposition equivalent to the English to. - In the midst of Jerusalem is armed, though usual, is not indispensable. Cp. Isaiah xxxviii. 13. Ezek. xxxii. 2. See Nilgai, here, and Ezech., 331.

The shepherds. The Chaldaean armies are compared to armed nomad shepherds invading another country with their cattle (like the Midianites in Judges vi. 3—6), and devouring every thing before them like locusts. Cp. Num. xxii. 4. Isa. viii. 27— every one in his place. Literally, every one his hand, namely, whatever comes in his way, he consumes it all.

Prepare ye war. Literally, conserorate war. War is here called a holy work, because it is done by the retributive justice of God, using the Chaldaeans as His instruments to punish Jerusalem for her sins. Cp. below, ii. 27, 28. Prepare ye (literally, conserorate me) "nations against her," and Isa. xii. 3. I have commanded my sanctified ones: where the same verb is used as here, "Sanctificata bellum; Dominiu eiunim imperium cat" (S. Jerome).

at noon. In the heat of the day, without a moment’s delay. Cp. xv. 8.

—the shadows of the evening are stretched out. The Chaldaean invaders are impatient, because they have not yet executed their work of destruction, and daylight is waning;
6 For thus hath the Lord of Hosts said, Hew ye down trees, and cast a mount against Jerusalem: this is the city to be visited in the midst of her. 7 As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness: violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually is grief and wounds. 8 Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited. 9 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall通过gly 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 ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reprobate; they have no delight in it. 11 Therefore I am full of the fury of the Lord; I am weary with holding in: I will pour it out upon the children abroad, and upon the assembly of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with him that is full of days. 12 And their houses shall be turned unto others, with their fields and wives together: for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord. 

13 For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. 14 They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. 15 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the Lord. 16 Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein; and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.

"Et jam suam pucul villarum cultum flumini, Majoresque cadant altis de montibus umbre." (Virg. Elcg. l. 83, quoted by S. Jerome here.)

6. How ye down trees] Here is another reference to Deuteronomy (xx. 20). Jerusalem, the city of God, is become an idolatrous city, and is to be treated as the idolatrous cities of Canaan were treated by her forefathers at His command. — a mount] A rampart made of the trees cut down, and the earth heaped up from the trench around her, from which the besiegers assailed her. Cp. Deut. xx. 20. 2 Kings xix. 32. Below xxxii. 24. This prophecy, like others in the Hebrew Scriptures (see on Isaiah i. 1), not only foretells the siege by the Chaldeans, but reaches forward to the latter destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies. Compare our Blessed Lord's words predicting that catastrophe, Luke xix. 43. — to be visited] To be punished — God's decree has gone out against her. 7. As a fountain casteth out her waters] This seems the right rendering. The objection alleged by some, that the word (b6r), rendered fountain, signifies only a dug cistern or pit, is hardly to be sustained. The word (b6r) is applied to the well at Bethlehem, 2 Sam. xxiii. 15, 16. 1 Chron. xi. 17; and another cognate substantive has often that sense. See Ps. xxxvi. 8; Isaiah viii. 26. Prov. x. 11; xviii. 4. Above, i. 13; ix. 1; xviii. 13. Zech. xiii. 1. Cp. Nigeliobach, p. 57. — before me continually is grief and wounds] Which thou hast inflicted. Mine eye, says God, is ever upon them, though thou thinkest it not.

9. remnant] Heb. sherith. The word which is used by Isaiah for remnant is shear; but later Prophets use shevith. — turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets] God says this to the Chaldeans, and He delivers a prophecy, which was remarkably fulfilled in their numerous successive invasions of Judah, and in the deportations of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, till the City was at last destroyed utterly. The Babylonians were like grape-gatherers, who, when they think they have finished the vintage, afterwards espy more grapes that had escaped their notice, and gather them into their baskets (this seems to be the true rendering of the word, cp. Gen. xlvi. 17. Deut. xxvii. 9) in successive gleanings, and store them there, till eventually they have made a clear riddance.

God in His Law had provided that the gleanings of the vineyard were to be left for the orphan and the widow (Deut. xxiv. 21); but His people have broken the Law, and the enemy will make a clean riddance of the Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts and carry all away.

As to the metaphor, we may compare the words of Naevis (quoted by Serris in Virgil, Georg. i. 266). "Quod tu, mi grato, quasso ut in pectus tuum Demet in tanquam in funere visudem."
17 Also I set "watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken.

18 Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what is among them. 19 *Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.

20 *To what purpose cometh there to me incense 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 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 <a>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: *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, d gird thee with sackcloth, e and wallow thyself in ashes: b make thee mourning, as for an only son, most bitter lamentation: for the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us. 27 I have set thee for a tower and a fortress among my people, that thou mayest know and try their way.

28 k They are all grievous revolters, l walking with slanders: they are m brass and iron; they are all corrupters.

The bells are burned, the lead is these words and applies them to Himself, Matt. xi. 29. "Come unto Me—and ye shall find rest for your souls." ' Per Patriarchas et Prophetas veniamus ad Eum Qui dicit, Ego sum Via, 

(John xiv. 6).  *Stanum est in Prophetis et interregnum de semintibus autibus (quia multorum sanctorum tritus sunt vestigias) quae sit bona Via in Evangelio, et ambulantum in ea" (S. Jerome). 17. watchmen.] Prophets. 18. O congregation! Heb. eddub, a word usually applied in the Hebrew Scriptures to God’s own people Israel; but since they have rejected Him, it is here transferred to the Heathen. God of old gathered Israel together as His congregation (Lev. iv. 13; viii. 3, &c.) to the Tabernacle and the Temple; but now He has disfranchised them; and He gathers together the congregations of the Nations to do His work against them in punishing His rebellious people; He appeals to the Gentiles and to the Earth (v. 19; cp. Deut. iv. 26) as His witnesses and ministers.

20. To what purpose—Sheba] Ye, O house of Israel, suppose yourselves to be My congregation, and boast yourselves as the Temple of the Lord (vii. 4); but since ye have rejected Me, I have disinherit you, and I have summoned the Nations against you: and henceforth all your offerings and sacrifices are but hollow sham oblations in My sight. Cp. 1 Sam. xxv. 22. Isa. i. 11. Amos v. 25. Micah vi. 6, 7.


22—24.] These words are repeated below, chap. i. 41—43, and there are applied to Babylon: see the note on that passage.

25. and—is] These words, not in the original, would be better omitted. "The sword of the enemy (is) terror on every side." The sword, like a terrible wild beast, follows and hunteth you, its prey, wherever you go; it turns on every side, like the flaming sword of the cherubim which kept the entrance of Paradise from our first Parents after the Fall (Gen. iii. 24).

26. I have set thee for a tower and a fortress among my people, that thou mayest know and try their way. 27. They are all grievous revolters, walking with slanders: they are brass and iron; they are all corrupters. The bells are burned, the lead is
consumed of the fire; the founder melteth in vain: for the wicked are not plucked away. 30 a Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them.

VII. 1 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.

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.

4 c Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these.

5 For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye throughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour, 6 if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, 7 then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

8 Behold, b ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit. 9 k Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and 1 walk after other gods whom ye know not; 10 m and come and stand before me in this house, 11 which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? 11 Is this house, which is called by my name, become a 12 den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord.

none effect, and the People are not profited by the teaching of their Preacher, and do not repent of their sins."

— the lead is consumed of the fire] The lead, which was used in the process of liquefaction of silver (S. Jerome, Vatablus, Theodorus Monarchius, Latinus, Luthe), and which is a symbol of other means employed by God in the work of national purification of Israel, is consumed in the fire and lost.


REPROOF OF SPIRITUAL PRIDE AND HYPOCRISY.

Ch. VII. 2. to worship the Lord] To bend before Him. Ye bend your bodies before God, with sanctimonious bowings and lowly prostrations; but where is the worship of your hearts and of your lives? That is what He desires; not to bow your heads as a bairshelf before Him (Isa. viii. 5), but to obey Him.

4. The temple of the Lord] These words are repeated three times, as being the common song-song of the people, which they carolled lightly and joyfully, without any thought of their sins, and of the punishment for them that was hanging over their heads. The temple of the Lord are these (Heb. kenesseth, the third person plural, pronoun masculine). Is not the Lord among us? No evil can come upon us.

A similar feeling animated the disciples of Christ, when they pointed the blame to our Lord on the Mount of Olives, at the Passover, in the splendour of solidarity of the Temple at Jerusalem, and the vast number of worshipers flocking into it (Matt. xxiv. 1). But that leafy fig-tree, which made so fair a show, but bore no fruit, was soon to be withered for its hypocrisy and barrenness by the breath of Christ. So it was in the days of Jeremiah. These words may be applied, with an ancient Father, to Christian times. "The Prophet here warns all who are in the Church, not to place their confidence in the splendour of sacred edifices, or in gilded roofs and in pavements inlaid with marble, and not to say, 'The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord' (are these).' The true temple of the Lord is that in which the true Faith dwells, and holy conversation, and the quire of Christian Virtues. If ye put away evil deeds and false doctrines, I will dwell with you, saith the Lord" (S. Jerome).
12 But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel. 13 And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not; 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 *Shiloh. 15 And I will cast you out of my sight, *as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim.

16 Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to Me for I will not hear thee (Jerem. ch. vii.). Compare ch. xxxvi.

Jeremiah was sent to stand in the gate of the Temple, and there proclaim, in the concourse of public resort, to the worshipers who entered, its approaching desolation. The energy and pathos of the moral lesson which is incorporated with this prediction render it one of the most instructive parts of the book of prophecy. For when those worshippers looked to that place as their protecting sanctuary, wherein they could preserve their life and the peace of the land, to which they came and stood before God, with the pollution of every broken commandment upon them, and confiding in the externals of religion and the privileges annexed to that seat of worship, cried, “The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Most High,”—then was the time that their false religion was exposed; then came the denunciation of prophecy levelled at the fortress of their trust, that holy place which their pollutions had desecrated from its service. “I will do to 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 Shiloh.”

On account of this prediction, Jeremiah was questioned and arraigned before the Priests, the Prophets, and all the Princes of the land (ch. xxvii.).

The public place where it is said to have been uttered (viz., the Gate of the Temple), and the commotion which it excited, verify the fact that it was so spoken. v. 18. Also the language of Ch. xxvii. 2. is frequently quoted. The prediction of the Temple was thus foretold by Jeremiah. But the subsequent rebuilding of it had been previously foreshown by Isaiah, as a part of the restoration appointed to come by the hand of Cyrus. That saith of Cyrus, He is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built, and to the Temple: Thy foundation shall be laid” (Isa. xlv. 28). And as Jeremiah’s clear and open prediction announced the ruin of the First Temple, so the prediction of Christ, spoken equally in sight of the place, announced in a similar manner the desolation of the Second.

From all which particulars put together, we deduce this fact—that every part of the history of the Temple was made a subject of Prophecy. For it was God’s own institution, at its first building. Hence the fitness why its fall should be solemnly and publicly foretold. Its restoration was by His command. Hence the equal fitness of this second prediction of a future restoration.

And in neither case was the event foreshown by allusion or by obscure, remote intimation; but in each the prophecy was open, and delivered within view of the devoted place (Dauben on Prophecy, p. 162).

APPEAL TO THE HISTORY OF SHILOH.

12. *go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh,*] Go ye to Shiloh, where God’s Tabernacle and Ark once were; and take warning from it, and learn that no religious privileges can save a Nation from ruin, unless it obeys God’s Law. The Ark and Tabernacle were placed in Shiloh, in the Tribe of Ephraim (about twelve miles south of Sichem, and twenty north of Jerusalem, now Selsa), by Joshua, when Israel took possession of the Land of Promise; and there they remained, till, in the evil days of Eli the Priest, the people, preposterously relying on the Ark, as a pledge of God’s presence and protection (as, in the days of Jeremiah, they trusted in the Temple of the Lord), carried it with them to battle against the Philistines, by whom it was taken, and Hopnii and Phinehas the Priests, Eli’s sons, were slain; and Eli the Priest, hearing of the capture of the Ark, fell backward and died; and the wife of Phinehas the Priest cried Ithabod, and expired; and Shiloh was destroyed, and the Tabernacle was separated from the Ark; and during all the times of Samuel and David, the Ark remained separated from the Tabernacle. See the summary of the history in these notes above on Josh. xviii. 1, and I Chron. v. 1. Sam. 10. 11. 12. 2 Sam. vi. 1–17, and 1 Chron. xvi. 39. 2 Chron. i. 3, and Ps. xcviii. 60–68; xxvi. xix.

15. the whole seed of Ephraim] The Ten Tribes of Israel (2 Kings xvii. 26), called Ephraim from their head (Isa. vii. 2. Hos. iv. 17. v. 9; 11. 2). For make to cakes to the queen of heaven] The Phoenician Ashtarte. See 2 Kings xxiii. 5; xxiv. 13; and below, xix. 13. and on xiv. 19, the Moon goddess (Herod. iii. 8. Jerome here).

*cakes*] Heb. carahim, made for her, as offerings; they were of a lunar form, and called mooses (Graff), and seem to have been similar to the Egyptian naheka made for the goddess Neith. Op. Efftier, Dubois. 324. Fuerst, 615. Gesen. 387. Graf, 119. Nigell. 68.

8. Epiphanius (Hist. Har. 79) tells us that the Collyridian heretics were so called because they made little round cakes (colliridus) as offerings to the Blessed Virgin Mary; who is even now adored by some as the “Queen of God,” or “Queen of Heaven,” in their hymns. *Damaunt ipeh Collyridianorum idolatriae* (says A Lopite here).

18. 19. that they may provoke me to anger] Rather, that they may grieve me. See what follows. Do they not grieve
I spake not to your fathers—Jeremiah VII. 19—23.

Concerning sacrifices.

21. Put your burnt offerings I will not accept them. Take away your burnt-offerings which ye are about to lay upon Mine altar as a whole burnt sacrifice to Me. I will have none of them (Deut. vii. 20); put them on your altars, lit like as the true sacrifices. They are not burnt-offerings, holy to God, but they are mere flesh, to be eaten by man. So our Lord says to the Jews concerning the Temple, “your house” (it is no longer God’s, for ye have profaned it) “is left unto you desolate” (Matt. xxiii. 35).

“I SPOKE NOT CONCERNING SACRIFICES.”

22. I spake not—concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices! Leitovical Sacrifices, Rites, and Ceremonies are not the principal things in God’s sight, but obedience holds the first place. This is evident from the fact, that in the day when God led His people out of Egypt, He said nothing concerning sacrifice, but commanded them to obey His voice. There is a special reference here to the words of God to Moses before the Levitical Law was given (Exod. xix. 4—9). “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself.” Now therefore, “if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people:... and ye shall be a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” The national priesthood of Israel consisted in obedience to God.

The Levitical Law was not given from Mount Sinai as the Decalogue was; and it was not given till a year and more after the Exodus (see above, on Lev. i. 1); and it was not given in order to be observed in the wilderness, but to be complied with when the Israelis should have come into Canaan. See above, on Num. xvi. 2. Deut. xi. 1.

Do not imagine (says God by the Prophet) that when I gave to your fathers the Levitical Law, I commanded them to bring burnt offerings and sacrifices as such; as if sacrifices themselves were what I desired. Do not suppose that I “eat bull’s flesh, or drink the blood of goats” (Ps. i. 3). No. I insisted on them to be tests and exponents of your obedience, and obedience to Me; and without the inward sacrifice of yourselves—of your own hearts and wills—all sacrifices are vain, yea, they are loathsome and abominable. Cp. 1 Sam. xv. 22. Ps. xi. 8. li. 17. Prov. xxii. 21. Isa. xvi. 11; ivliii. 3; lxvi. 3. Mic. vi. 6—8. Hos. vi. 6. Matt. ix. 18. The true sacrifice which I require is Obedience to My will and word; if that is absent, ye cease to be My people, your Temple and City will be a desolation, and ye will be outcasts from My presence.

The much-quoted passage of the Rabbis respecting their notions of the doctrine of the Law (Ubbilighty, and love, and obedience to Me;) and without the inward sacrifice of yourselves—the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Still more may such criticism be instructed by the ancient Fathers of the Christian Church, S. Barnabas, Ep. 5. 2. S. Justin Martyr, c. Tryphon, § 22, and especially S. Irenaeus, iv. 32 (ed. Grabbe), where is an excellent comment on this passage. The Christian Fathers argue also from such words as these (showing that there was no essential virtue or moral efficacy in these sacrifices, in the sight of God) that the sacrifice offered them to the transmigration, and that they have now been fulfilled in Christianity.

We may cite here also the judicious remarks of an English Theologian on this passage (Dr. Waterland, Scripture Vindication, 1701. p. 6. c. 6.)—“The thing which God required and insisted upon was obedience to His voice in every thing; and He laid no stress upon sacrifices any further than as considered as parts of true obedience. Sacrifices, separate from true holiness, or from a sincere love to God, were holy services which He required; for hypocrirical services are no services, but abominations in His sight. He expected, He demanded, religious, devout, sacrifices, while His people brought Him only outside compliments to flatter Him, empty forms to do, and to adorn Him. These were not the things which God spake of or enjoined, but the sacrifices He spake of were pure sacrifices, to be offered up with a clean and upright heart. These He required, and those only He would accept of, as real duty and service. The mere outward operations in outward services, from a corrupt heart, was no sacrificing to God, any more than the fasting for strife and debate was fasting to God (see Zech. vii. 5. Is. ivlii. 4—7). Such sacrifices God detested, being a counterfeit of duty, an empty piece of holy vanity and profanation of a holy rite, rather than a just and proper conformity to it. Sacrifices so profaned carried more of human corruption than of Divine institution in them, being a kind of mere contrivance, to cover and contrive, and not the true worship which God had enjoined. The

“Enough, I presume, hath been said to take off the Objetor’s cavils against the text. But for the further preventing some mistakes which others have fallen into, in relation to the same words, I may just observe,—

1. That such as have drawn an argument from this text to prove that sacrifices have been owing to human invention, not to Divine appointment, have missed the point. Sacrifices were not devised by man, but were ordained by God; nor the obedience towards God. If men be tempted in diet, choose in their conversation, just in their dealings, or the like, only for worldly views, for health, or safety, or out of estimation and vain-glory, or for fear of human laws, such morality, being all outside show or secular convenience, is not to be esteemed; nor the obedience towards God. If men give alms, and are strict observers of some moral precepts, in hopes thereby to compound with God, to be excused from other duties, and to procure, as it were, a licence to sin, such moral performances are nothing worth; they are not the true services which God requires, but are as empty and superficial as the opus operatur in positive duties. On the other hand, it
Sinfulness of will-worship. JEREMIAH VII. 24—31. Mourn, O Zion.

Before CHRIST about 600 B.C.

Note.—(1) When, to put a man under a duty, God, as in the case of Moses, says, "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." But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but "walked in the counsel and in the inward parts of their heart, and went backward, and not forward." 24 Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: 26 yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers. Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call them unto this, but they will not answer thee. 25 But thou shalt say unto them, This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord their God, nor receiveth correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.

26 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. For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord: 27 they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. 28 And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; 29 which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart.

must be owned, that whenever positive duties are so performed as to become true obedience, they are as valuable in God's sight as any moral performances whatever, because obeying God's voice is all in all. Obedience was the thing insisted upon with Adam, with Abraham, with Saul, and with many others, in positive instances; and God laid as great a stress upon obedience there, as in any moral instances whatsoever. To conclude, then, moral performances, without the obedience of the heart, are nothing; and positive performances, without the like obedience, are nothing; but the sincere obeying of God's voice in both is true religion and true morality (Dr. Waterland, Works, vol. vi. p. 238). Compare Négelshach here, pp. 69, 70.

This passage of Jeremiah affords also a strong argument against another strange theory of modern days, viz., that the Book of Deuteronomy is forged by the Prophet Jeremiah (see above, Intro. to Deuteronomy, pp. 195—203). If Jeremiah had fabricated Deuteronomy in the name of Moses, in order to magnify the Levitical Ritual, he would not have spoken of that Ritual in such terms as are here.


29. Cut off thine hair] In lamentation for thy sin and suffering.

31. And they have built the high places of Tophet!] In the valley of Hinnom, on the south of Jerusalem, to worship Molech. See above, on 2 Kings xxii. 10. Isa. xxii. 17.

SINFULNESS OF WILL-WORSHIP.

— which I commanded them not] Hence it is justly concluded that—

(1) To add any thing to God's Word (as of necessity to salvation), and to enforce it as an article of saving faith; and
(2) To propose any thing as an object of worship, which God had not directed,—is hateful in His sight.

The excellent remarks of Hooker, Eccl. Pol. ii. 32, and v. 1, may be cited here. "Since the Sacred Scriptures themselves afford oftentimes such arguments as are taken from Divine Authority both one way and other: The Lord hath commanded, therefore it must be;" and again, in like sort, "He hath not, therefore it must not be,"—some certainty concerning this point seemeth requisite to be set down;

* God Himself can neither possibly err, nor lead into error. For this cause His testimonies, whatsoever He affirmeth, are always Truth, and most infallible certainty (1 John i. 5. Heb. vi. 18).

"Yea, further, because the things that proceed from Him are perfect, without any manner of defect or minus, it cannot be but the words of His mouth are absolute, and lack nothing which they should have for performance of that thing whereunto they tend."

"Whereupon it followeth, that, the end being known whereunto He directeth His speech, the argument, even negatively, is evermore strong and forcible, concerning those things that are apparently unlike unto the same end. As, for example, God intending to set down sundry times that which in Angels is most excellent, hath not any where spoken so highly of them as He hath of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; therefore, Angels are not in dignity equal unto Him. It is the Apostle St. Paul's argument (Rom. ii. 5—15; ii. 5—8).

"The purpose of God was to teach His people both unto whom they should offer sacrifice, and what sacrifice was to be offered. To burn their sons in fire unto Baal He did not command them. He spake no such thing, neither cause it to His mind; therefore this they ought not to have done."

"Which argument the Prophet Jeremy useth more than once, as being so effectual and strong, that although the things he reproved were not only not commanded, but forbidden them, and that expressly (Lev. xvii. 21; xx. 3. Deut. xviii. 10), yet the Prophet chooseth rather to charge them with the fault of making a law unto themselves, than with the crime of the suppression of Law by God and His ministers. For when the Lord hath once Himself precisely set down a form of executing that wherein we are to serve Him, the fault appeareth greater to do that which we are not, than not to do that which we are commanded. In this, we seem to charge the Law of God with lasciness only; in that, with foolishness; in this, we allow ourselves weak and unapt to be doers of His will; in that, we take upon us to be controllers of His wisdom; in this, we fail to perform the thing which God seeth meet, convenient, and good; in that, we presume to see what is most, convenient, and good better than God Himself. In these actions, therefore, the whole form whereof God hath of purpose set down to be observed, we may not otherwise do than exactly as He hath prescribed."

Hooker also,

How solemn a protest the words of Jeremiah, thus admirably expounded by our great theologian, supply against the worship of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Invocation of Saints and Angels, and other acts of will-worship (see Col. ii. 20),
They shall bury in Tophet. JEREMIAH VII. 32—34. VIII. 1—7. The dead disinterred.

32 Therefore, behold, 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: for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place. And the 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 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 the land shall be desolate.

VIII. 1 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 prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves: and they shall spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have sought, and whom they have worshipped: they shall not be gathered, nor be buried; they shall be for dung upon the face of the earth. And 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? Why then is this people of Jerusalem slipped back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return. 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, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.

which are now too prevalent in Christendom, need not be pointed out to the thoughtful and reverent reader of Holy Scripture.

Particularly, these important principles may be applied to the question concerning Prayers for the Dead.

We are not here speaking of Prayers for the consummation of the bliss of the faithful departed, by the resurrection of their bodies; see on Rev. vi. 10, and the conclusion of the Prayer for the Church Militant on earth, and the collect in the Burial Office, "Almighty God, with Whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord." Such Prayers are authorized and commanded. But we speak of prayers for individuals who are dead, and whose condition it is hoped to alter after death by the prayers of the living.

If to pray for the dead, in this sense, were a duty to be done by Christians, then, when we consider the great efficacy of prayer and the great value of an immortal soul, we may fairly conclude that we should have some command, either expressed or implied, from God Himself in Holy Scripture, to pray for the souls of the departed. But inasmuch as no such thing is commanded there, it is to be concluded, on the principles now stated, that Prayers for the Dead are forbidden in Scripture; and that to pray for the dead is an act of will-worship, which Scripture condemns. And, further, since the Church of England affirms, in her Sixth Article, that Holy Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation, and that nothing is to be required of any man to be received, as an Article of Faith, which is not read therein, or cannot be proved thereby, it may be inferred that (whatever may have been said by some who have sat as judges in Ecclesiastical Courts) to pray for the dead, in the sense here specified, is forbidden by the Church of England.

32. they shall bury in Tophet] Where many died in the siege of Jerusalem, and in the famine. Cp. vii. 2; ix. 6; and Ezek. vi. 5: "I will lay the dead carcases of the children of Israel before their idols."

34. the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride] Words adopted in the Apocalypse (xviii. 23) to describe the future desolation of a corrupt Church, the mystical Babylon.

Cn. VIII. 1. At that time] At the time of the siege of Jerusalem. Not only will they bury in Tophet, till there be no more room, such will be the carnage (vii. 32); but they who bury there will also open the graves of those who are buried, the kings and princes of Judah, and expose them to public contumely and shame in the eye of day. Perhaps the corpse of King Jehoiachim was then disinterred, and exposed to contempt. See below, xxix. 10.

2. they shall not be gathered] They shall not be gathered in peace to their forefathers. On the word aspeh (to gather), here used, see above, on Isa. lxi. 1, compared with 2 Kings xxii. 20; and below, xxxv. 33.


7. Yea, the stork] Even the stork. The Prophet upbraids God's people for their disobedience, by appealing to the animals of brute creation obeying the law of their being. Cp. Isa. i. 3. Prov. vi. 6, the instruction from the ant; and on Gen. vii. 8, 9, the reproof administered to the Antediluvians by the obedience of the animals going into the Ark; and on 1 Kings xvii. 4—6, the obedience of the ravens feeding Elijah,—a rebuke to Abah, Jezebel, and others, seeking to destroy the Prophet; and note on Matt. vi. 25, our Lord's appeal to the ravens and fishes as an argument for trust in God. Cp. the noble passage in Hooker, 1. iii. 2 (grounded on one in Aretiochus, Adv. Gent. i. 2), summed up by the words, "See we not plainly that obedience of creatures unto the law of nature is the stay of the whole world?"

— the crane and the swallow] So Syr. The swallow and crane (Vital), the swallow of the field, and sparrow (Sept).
The false pen of the scribes. JEREMIAH VIII. 8—19. Peace is looked for in vain.

8 How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly || in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain. 9 || The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and || what wisdom is in them? 10 Therefore || will I give their wires unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. 11 For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, || Peace, peace; when there is no peace. 12 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the Lord. 13 || I will surely consume them, saith the Lord: there shall be no grapes || on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree, and the leaf shall fade; and the things that I have given them shall pass away from them. 14 Why do we sit still? || assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defended cities, and let us be silent there: for the Lord our God hath put us to silence, and given us water of || gall to drink, because we have sinned against the Lord. 15 We || looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble! 16 The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan: the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land, and || all that is in it, the city, and the those that dwell therein. 17 For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the Lord. 18 When I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart is faint || in me. 19 Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people || because of them that dwell in a far country:

where ἄγων is a corruption of ἐγών. The two words occur only here, and Isa. xxxviii. 14, where see the note.

8. Lo, certainly—|| in vain] Rather, certainly, lo! || the writing of the scribes hath laboured only for lies. Instead of touching the Truth out of God's Law (as the scribe ought to do; cp. Ezra vii. 6. Neh. viii. 9. 13), the pen of the scribes has worked against it, and in the cause of falsehood. This was true in Jeremiah's time; and in our blessed Lord's day (Matt. xxiii. 13—15. 23—25, 27—29); and is true, whenever those who ought to be Preachers of God's Word either hide it from the people, or pervert it to the cause of error, or abuse their sacred office, in the dissemination of fables instead of truth.


10—12.] See vi. 12—15.

15. I will—consume them] Literally, I will thoroughly gather them, and take them away; as grapes are gathered and taken away in the vintage. Cp. vi. 9; and below, x. 16.

— there shall be no grapes] The Vineyard of the Lord (the House of Israel, Isa. v. 7) shall be utterly stripped and wasted by the enemy.

— the things that I have given them shall pass away from them] Rather, I have given them up to them who overthem; that is, into the hands of their enemies, who will despoil them. So Venema, Rosen, Maurer, Hitzig, and Gray.

Jerusalem will be destroyed for its sins; and its destruction will be wrought by Babylon, empowered and commissioned by God to execute His judgment upon her. See above, and what follows here: "The Lord our God hath given usesta of gall to drink, because we have sinned against the Lord" (iv. 4—6; v. 10; 29; vi. 4. 6).

14. || let us enter into the defenced cities, and let us be silent] We trusted in our fenced cities for refuge; || let us enter them now, in order (not to be ravelled, but) to be destroyed there; for the Lord God hath destroyed us. On the verb here used, damaq, to make desolate, see Gesen. 202; and cp. xxxvii. 37; xlix. 26; l. 30.

— water of gall] A poisonous plant (Hebr. ῥόδος). See above, on Deut. xxii. 18; xxxii. 33. Hos. x. 4, where it is rendered henlock.


— strong ones] War horses. Cp. xlviii. 3; l. 11.

17. I will send] Here the Lord Himself speaks. The rapid alternations of successive interlocutors in this passage (vv. 13—22) where sometimes God speaks (v. 13), sometimes the people (v. 14), and then the Lord again (v. 17), then the Prophet (v. 18, 19), then the people again (v. 20), then the Prophet,—afford a specimen of that deep feeling, lively emotion, and loving sympathy, which are characteristic of Jeremiah, and make his prophecies to be a most sublime and beautiful portrayal of the passions of the human heart. Cp. below, on xvii. 1; and on xxii. 14; xxix. 19.

— cockatrices] Basiliakas (Isa. xi. 8).


18. When I would comfort myself] Or rather, My comfort is become an anguish (cp. v. 19): that is, where I looked for comfort, I find only sorrow: my heart in me is faint. The Prophet speaks in deep sympathy for his people. On the word rendered comfort, see Gesen. 446.

19. Behold the voice of the cry—far country] Rather, Behold! the sound of the cry of the daughter of my people from a far country. The Prophet already beholds the carrying away of some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem with Daniel and Ezekiel as captives into a far-off land, and he hears their voice saying, "Is not the Lord in Zion? has He forsaken her? Yes; because she has provoked Him by her idolatry."
No balm in Gilead. JEREMIAH VIII. 20—22. IX. 1—11. Mine head was waters!

Is not the Lord in Zion? is not her king in her? Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, and with strange vanities?  
20 The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.  
21 For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me.  
22 Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?  
IX. 1 ♦ Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slaughter of the daughter of my people!  
2 Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men.  
3 And 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 know not me, saith the Lord.  
4 Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders.  
5 And they will 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.

Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, I will melt them, and try them; ♦ for how shall I do for the daughter of my people? ♦ Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but ♦ in heart he layeth his wait.  
9 ♦ 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 ♦ for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are burned up, so that none can pass through them; neither can men hear the voice of the cattle; ♦ ♦ both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled; they are gone.  
11 And I will make Jerusalem heaps, and ♦ ♦ a den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant.

20. The harvest is past—we are not saved! Here the Prophet returns to the remnant still left in Jerusalem; they are not in a better condition than the exiles, and they say, "We looked to Egypt for help to save us from the Chaldeans, we have waited long, and now the summer season, when Kings go forth to war" (2 Sam. xi. 1), is past, and no succour has come to us!  
21. hurt! Or, wounded.  
— I am black! In sackcloth, mourning. Cp. Job v. 11; xxx. 28. Ps. xcviii. 6; xlix. 9; xlii. 2, where it is translated by mourning.  
So most modern Expositors here. But the Prophet seems to be describing a sudden inner emotion, producing an entire change in the countenance, rather than a deliberate act like that of putting on mourning apparel; and the word may be illustrated by Joel ii. 9. Nahum ii. 10, "All faces blacken."  
— why—not the health—recovered! Rather, Why is not the healing of the daughter of my people effected?  
Ct. IX. 1. Oh that my head were waters—that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Lit. Who will give to my head waters? Who will give a lodging-place? &c. Observe the connection with what goes before. In viii. 19, the Prophet had said, "Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people!" And v. 21, For the hurt of the daughter of my people I am hurt;' and v. 22, "Why is not the healing of the daughter of my people effected?" And now he bursts forth in an exclamation of tender and passionate sympathy, "Oh 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!" Cp. c. vii.

3. They bend their tongues! They bend their tongues, their lie-bows (the conjunction as would be better omitted). Cp. Ps. xi. 2; lixiv. 3, 4.  
7. I will not bless them! As a refuser of silver. See vi. 29, 30. Isa. i. 25.  
— how shall I do for the daughter of my people? Literally, How can I do from the face of the daughter of my people? That is, is an account of the boldness with which she declares her love by her face, defying me with godless effrontery; how can I do otherwise than visit her with severe retribution? See v. 9.  
8. an arrow shot out! Rather, a deadly arrow, causing a mortal wound. Cp. Isa. xxii. 13, where the same verb is used.  
10. the habitations! Rather, the pastures with homesteads. Cp. Ps. xcviii. 2, where the same word occurs; the green pastures of Judah are laid waste by the ravages of the enemy. Cp. on vi. 3. Joel i. 19; ii. 22, — burned up! Made bare and empty. Cp. ii. 15.  
— both the fowl! Lit. from the fowl of heaven even to the cattle are fled—have vanished—such is the desolation.  
11. dragons! Jackals. Cp. Isa. xlii. 22; xxxiv. 13; xxxvii. 7; below, x. 22; xlix. 33.
12  a Who 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?  b And the Lord saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein;  c but have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, *which their fathers taught them:  d therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, *with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.  e I will *scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known:  f and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them.

17  Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider ye, and call for  
* the mourning women, that they may come; and send for cunning *women, that they may come:  g and let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that *our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters.  h 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  i our dwellings have cast us out.  j 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.  k For death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off  l the children from with us, and the young men from the streets.  m Speak, Thus saith the Lord, Even the carcases of men shall fall  n as dung upon the open field, and as the handfull after the harvestman, and none shall gather them.

23  Thus saith the Lord, *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man glory in his might, let not the rich man *glory in his riches:  o but let 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:  p for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

25  Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that  q I will punish all them  
* Nation, and to every individual in every age; and therefore part of these words are adopted by the Apostle of Christ (1 Cor. i. 31. 2 Cor. x. 17), *H e that glorifieth let him glory in the Lord.” Cp. St Augustine, De Bono Pers., c. 14, and Serm. 45, c. 30, vol. v. p. 345, where he applies the words to Christian Pastors, whose duty it is not to trust in themselves, or to seek their own glory or profit, but to glory in the Lord. Cp. Bp. Bull’s two sermons on this text, Works, i. 429, 450.

“THE DAYS COME.”

The Prophet, as if with a foresight of this general application to the days of the Messia h, proceeds to speak of them in what follows, with the usual introductory preamble, Behold, the days come; on which phrase, familiar to Jeremiah, compare xvi. 14; xxii. 6. 7; xxx. 3; xxxi. 27. 31. 38; xxxii. 14; in all which places this formula introduces an announcement of divine blessings, or divine judgments, consequent on the Advent of Christ.

True and False Circumcision.

25. I will punish all—circumcised with the uncircumcised] I will punish the Circumcision, that is, the Jews, who are circumcised only in the flesh, but not in the heart (Lv. 4; cp. Lev. xxvi. 41, 42. Dent. x. 16; xxx. 6), as St. Stephen said (Acts vii. 51), *Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.” They gloried in their Circumcision (that is, in the letter of the Law), but did not remember that the true Circumcision which the Lord requires, is the circumcision of the heart. See Rom. ii. 25—29. Gal. v. 6. Col. ii. 11, which are the best comments on this passage. Therefore they are regarded as uncircumcised.
The house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart, *which are circumcised with the uncircumcised; 26 Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that are † in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart.

X. 1 Hear ye the word which the Lord spake unto you, O house of Israel:

the Interpreter, who they suppose to have lived among the exile Jews in Chaldea, as a protest and warning against the seductive influence of idolatry and the spirit of the heathen.

The theory which ascribes this section to a supposed "second Isaiah," has been combated on grounds of language by Graf, p. 171; cp. Vögeler, p. 89, who however agree in regarding it as an interpolation. Another view is taken by Eisfeld and Umbreit, who suppose that the "second Isaiah" imitated this passage.

Its genuineness has been defended by Kueper, Jeremias, pp. 134. 175; Einl. 255; Umbreit, p. 83; Häuser, Einl. pp. 822.

The theory of the objects to its genuineness seems to be based on a want of attention to the peculiar manner and style of the Hebrew Prophets, which is also characteristic of Christian Apostles, especially St. Paul. What has been noted that "he goes off at a word" (see the note below, on the remarkable example in Heb. vi. 20), and then, after a digression, returns to the main drift of his argument, is true also of the Prophets (as will be presently shown), particularly of Jeremiah.

The reason of this is obvious. The Prophet, being transported by the ecstasy of divine inspiration, imagines himself at a particular place. He is there; he speaks to those who are there; he sympathizes with them in their trials and difficulties; he, or rather the Holy Spirit by him, gives them counsels and warnings; and having performed this prophetical function, he returns to the course of his argument.

So it is here.

In the foregoing chapter, he had uttered the Divine sentence to Judah: "I will scatter them among the heathen" (ix. 16); and he had said that all the heathen are uncircumcised (ix. 26; see note there); and with these words he had closed the chapter.

What, therefore, could be more natural, than that having his prophetic eye fixed upon Judah, scattered among the heathen, and mingled with the heathen who are uncircumcised, Jeremiah, whose heart was united with his people in loving and suffering, should fear that they would be familiarized with heathen usages, and be fascinated and overawed by heathen enchantments and idolatries, and would sink hopelessly into heathen debauchery and demoralization? What more reasonable, than that he should break through his prophetic silences, and address them, by the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed by them? For the customs of the people (rather, of the peoples) "are vanity" to him. He should endeavour to comfort and support them with the assurance, that although they were scattered among the heathen for their sins, yet this was a merciful discipline, designed for their correction, and improvement, and future restoration; and that it was a dispensation of the Love of God, the Creator of all things, the God of all the Nations (v. 10); and that He still regarded Israel with special affection; that "the portion of Jacob" is not like that of the heathen; that God is "the former of all things, who has created all things; the Lord of Hosts is His Name" (v. 16).

They who revere the authority of the Holy Spirit, speaking in the New Testament, and who accept the testimony of the ancient Hebrew and Christian Churches, and believe that the whole of the prophecies generally assigned to Jeremiah were written by him, and who reject the notion of a "second Isaiah" as a visionary figment of an arbitrary neologism (see above, Intro. to Isaiah, ch. vi.), will enjoy great spiritual delight in observing that in this mode of handling his subject, Jeremiah treads in the footsteps of his great precursor, Isaiah; and, to speak more correctly, the Holy Spirit, Who had spoken by Isaiah, shows in this passage the same prophetic design and work, by reciting the same method in the prophecies of Jeremiah, as He had previously adopted in those of Isaiah.

Isaiah had foreseen and foretold the deportation of Judah to Babylon. In his prophetic vision he beheld his people there;
2 Thus saith the Lord, *Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.

3 For the customs of the people are vain;—for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good.

4 Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, 0 Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. *Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee. But they are altogether brutish and foolish: the stock is a doctrine of vanities.

9 Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz, the work of the workman, and of the hands of the cunning: blue and purple is their clothing: they are all the work of cunning men. 10 But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at whose wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

11 Thus shall ye say unto them, *The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. 12 He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established

he saw the temptations to which they would be exposed by their admixture with heathen idolatries; he contemplated them as dazzled with the splendour, and awe-struck with the grandeur of the heathen temples of Babylon, and with the strange and gorgeous magnificence of the deities who were there worshipped, and as liable to be beguiled by the voluptuous and sensual allurements, the music, the revelries, and the orgies of Chaldean festivals; he endeavoured to provide a remedy against these evils by reiterated prophetic episodes on the vanity of idols, and on the majesty of the Lord. He appeals to the consciences of His own chosen People, even in their captivity; and he foretold the overthrow of Babylon, and of all its false gods, and the restoration of Israel by Cyrus to their own land, and the future glory of Israel in Christ. See Isa. xi. 20—24; vii. 25—26; xliv. 20—25; xlvi. 1—13; xlix. 13—17.

Thus Isaiah had discharged the duty of a true Prophet, in providing instruction, warning, and comfort for future generations.

Isaiah's mantle fell on Jeremiah; and a similar work is done by Jeremiah here. Thus one portion of Holy Scripture supports or illustrates another. Isaiah protests Jeremiah against the evils of that people which Isaiah which has been impeached by the same scepticism. Both these two Proverbs are seen jointed together (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Who enlightened their eyes to behold distant events), in affording preventual consolations to Israel in their future captivity, and in teaching a lesson of faith, hope, and obedience to all nations and individuals in times of public and private distress.

2. signs of heaven] Observed by Chaldean astrology. Cp. Ps. xlvi. 5; 95; 119. 12.

3. the customs of the people] Rather, the statutes (contrasted with God's statutes) of the peoples (contrasted with God's people) are vanity, contrasted with God's Truth.

3. with the axe] Heb. ma'atsad. This word occurs only here, and in Isa. xlvii. 12. See the note there, where that the axe is describing the fabrication of an idol (and where it is rendered fongs in our Version). Here is additional evidence that Jeremiah is imitating Isaiah. Cp. Keverp, p. 134.

3. cutteth a tree] They fasten it with nails— that it
God's Omnipotence.

Jeremiah X. 13—25. Israel is His inheritance.

the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. 13 When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures. 14 Every man is brutish in his knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image, for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, and all the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish. 16 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.'

17 Gather up thy wares out of the land, O inhabitant of the fortress. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will sling out the inhabitants of the land at this once, and will distress them, that they may find it so.

18 Woe is me for my hurt! my wound is grievous: but I said, 'Truly this is a grief, and I must bear it.' 20 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 of the flock are brutish and have not sought the Lord: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered. 22 Behold, the noise of the bruit is come, and a great commotion out of the north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, and a den of dragons.

23 O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man, that walketh to direct his steps. 24 O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.

13. his treasures] The chambers where He keeps the wind and storm, as treasures locked up in a storehouse. Cp. Job xxxviii. 22. Ps. cxxxv. 7, the author of which has adopted these words of Jeremiah. The word dearer is rendered storehouse in Mal. iii. 10.

14. Every man is brutish in his knowledge] Or, by his knowledge (Sept., Vulg.), as contrasted with God's wisdom. That this statement is not to be taken literally (rendered 'by the rendering of some recent interpreters, without knowledge'), appears from the parallel clause, 'every founder is confounded by his graven image.' In both clauses the same preposition is used in the original for by. All the result of their knowledge and art is, that they are confounded and perish. (See the note on Jer. ch. 10.) The Prophet contrasts the future destiny of Israel with that of Babylon.

Here is another reference to Deut. xxvii. 9.

15. Gather up thy wares—O inhabitant of the fortress] Rather, Take up thy bundle from the earth, that thou sittest in thy distress, caused by the siege (Vulg., Syriac). Take it up, and go forth as a captive exile from Jerusalem into a foreign land.

The Prophet returns from his digression, and resumes the thread of his prophecy, and addresses the inhabitants of Jerusalem, whom he had warned of the coming siege and captivity in the foregoing chapter (lx. 16—19). There is another reference here to Deuteronomy (Deut. xxviii. 52, 53). Cp. below, 1v. 18: 'I will distress them.'

16. I will look to them as one same as in Isa. xxvi. 17, 18.

— at this once] At this time. I. Who have spared Jerusalem so often, and have rescued her from her enemies, especially in the days of Ahaz and Hezekiah (2 Kings xvi. 5; xviii. 13), will now deliver her into their hands. Since mercy has availed nothing for her correction, I will now resort to judgment.

— that they may find?] Their punishment is a visitation of love. They will not lose by it, but find; they will find in their affliction what they have lost in their prosperity; they will cast away their pride and vain glory, and will find repentance and faith; they will throw away their idols, and will find Me, the only true God. The meaning is explained by Jeremiah himself in xix. 10—14, speaking of the captives at Babylon, turning to God: 'Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, and I will be found of you, saith the Lord; and I will turn away your captivity.' Here, again, Jeremiah adopts the words of Deuteronomy (see Deut. iv. 29, 31): 'Therefore shall ye seek the Lord, thou shalt seek Him, the Lord, thou shalt find Him. When thou art in tribulation, if thou return to the Lord thy God, He will not forsake thee.' And Ps. xxxviii. 34: 'When He slew them, they sought Him;' and Hosea iii. 5: 'The children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days.'

This prophecy will be fully accomplished, when the veil will be taken from the eyes of the Jews, and they shall turn to the Lord (2 Cor. iii. 14—16), and shall look on Him Whom they have pierced (Zech. xii. 10).

19. Woe is me] Jerusalem speaks, and acknowledges that all this has come upon her for the sins of her rulers. She owns the punishment to be just; she bows her head in patient resignation, and says, 'Truly, this is my grief' (the grief which is due to me), 'and I will bear it.'

20. My tabernacle] My pastoral tent, to which Jerusalem, the Church of God, is compared by the Prophets (Isa. liv. 2), where the word used is rendered tent, as it is in the latter part of the verse. Cp. Lam. ii. 4.


23. O Lord, I know] The Prophet speaks in the name of the Nation, and prays for it, and thus shows that his denunciations of God's judgments upon it are not uttered in a spirit of sternness, but of love.

It is not in me] Here is a strong testimony to the absolute necessity of divine grace, and the utter helplessness of man without it: 'CERTUM est nos velle cum volumus, sed Deus facit ut velimus bonum. Certum est nos facere cum facimus, sed et ille facit ut facimus' (S. August., De Gratia, c. 16, quoted by Nigell). And this assertion of Jeremiah is coupled with prayer to God, where the human will and divine grace work together. 25. Pour out thy fury—name] Words adopted from the
Jeremiah. Xl. 1—10. in the cities of Judah.

The Breach of the Covenant by Judah.

Ch. XI.] The prophecies of Jeremiah are not arranged in the order of time, but they have an inner coherence and organization which is far nobler than that of mere chronological sequence. This inner connexion is generally marked (as in the Psalms, and as in Isaiah) by catchwords, expressive of leading ideas and dominant truths, which link one prophecy to another.

What, it may be asked, is the connexion here? In the foregoing prophecies we heard the alarm of the noise, and of the great commotion out of the north country, to make the cities of Judah desolation. The Prophet now proceeds to declare the cause of this desolation. It is due, not to the failure of God's love, and not to any power of God's enemies to hurt God's people, as long as they are faithful to Him, but to the disorderliness of God's people, and to the breach of their covenant with Him. Therefore, "The cities of Judah shall be made desolate" (v. 22); "his habitation, or pasture, will be made desolate" (v. 25).

Observe how the word Judah is taken up and repeated in this prophecy. "Speak unto the men of Judah" (v. 2). "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah" (v. 6). "A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah" (v. 9). "The house of Judah have broken My covenant" (v. 10). "The cities of Judah shall cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense; for according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah" (v. 12, 13). "The Lord of hosts that planted them, hath pronounced evil against them, for the evil of the house of Judah" (v. 17).

The connexion, therefore, of this prophecy with the foregoing is obvious; and here is one specimen among many of the harmonious symmetry in which the prophecies of Jeremiah are woven together, which have been described by some in modern times, as a mere incoherent congeries of materials, loosely thrown together at random without any method or system, because their order is not the mechanical order of an Almanack.

2. "Hear ye the words of this covenant!" This covenant which I made with your fathers, and which was renewed by Judah in Jeremiah's days, under King Josiah, in his eighteenth year, when the Book of the Law was found in the Temple; see 2 Kings xxiii. 1—3, where the language is the same as here. "The King stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this Book; and the people stood to the covenant." See Lightfoot, Graf, and others.

A great part of this chapter consists of an appeal to the Mosaic Law, particularly to Deuteronomy (see the references in the margin, especially to Deut. xxvii., and see Deut. xxviii. 29); and the Prophet shows that God had there given solemn warnings of the punishments which they were incurring, by the breach of the covenant with Him.

3. Cursed be the man. He adopts the words of Deuteronomy (xxvii. 15—20).

4. the iron furnace. Another reference to Deuteronomy (Deut. iv. 20), where Egypt, in which God's people were tried with sore affliction (Isa. xlvi. 10), is compared to a furnace in which iron is melted. Cp. 1 Kings vii. 51. Ezek. xxiii. 18.

5. So be it. Hebr. Amen. Another reference to Deuteronomy (xxvii. 15—20), "All the people shall say, Amen." Jeremiah is their representative.

8. I will bring. Rather, I brought (Yulg., Targum, and the modern interpreters). The sense is, I brought upon your fathers the punishment which I had denounced against them for disobedience; and yet ye have not profited by the warning, but have increased the sins of your fathers (v. 10).

9. A conspiracy! Literally, a binding together (Gesen. 747). I made a covenant with them whereby they bound themselves to Me, and I bound Myself to them; but they have bound themselves together against Me. On the word kephah, here used, cp. 2 Kings xi. 14. 1 Sam. viii. 12. Ezek. xxvii. 25.
The prophet like a lamb  JEREMIAH XI. 11—19. brought to the slaughter.

The house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers.

Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them. Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense, but they shall not save them at all in the time of their trouble. For according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal. Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble.

‡ What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing he hath wrought lewdness with many, and the holy flesh is passed from thee? || when thou dost evil, then thou rejoicest. The Lord called thy name, 'A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken. For the Lord of hosts, that 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.

And the Lord hath given me knowledge of it, and I know it: then thou shewedst me their doings. But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off.


with anger, and the holy flesh is passed from thee when thou dost evil, then thou rejoicest] Rather (according to the sense offered by the Sept., Vulg., Arabic; cp. Buxtorf, Mynzer, Graf), will thy cries (or prayers), and the holy flesh (offered by thee, cp. vili. 21, on the word flesh), take away from thy wickedness, that thou art so joyous? Will the offerings of prayers with a hypocritical lip-service, and the oblivion of flesh on the altar, without any self-devotion of the heart, be able to take away thy sin? No, it will not. Cp. Eccles. xi. 10. Josii, iii. 6. The Sept. had in their MSS. the word raamim, cries (or prayers) for rabbim; and that seems to be the true reading. And the words melechic, which are thus disjointed in the Masoretic text, are to be joined as one word, and signify from thee (Sept., Ewald, Meier, Graf, Nöl). 16. The Lord called thy name, A green olive tree—fruit] A name adopted by the Holy Spirit, speaking by St. Paul (Rom. xi. 16: Cp. Ps. iii. 9. Isa. xvii. 6; xxiv. 13. Hos. xiv. 6). —a great tumult] Or storm.

Jeremiah a type of Christ. All Christian Churches are agreed, that under the person of Jeremiah, we are to understand things to be said by Christ, to whom the Father showed what He ought to speak, and to Whom He declared the designs of the Jews; and who, when He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, did not open His mouth " (Isa. iii. 7. S. Jerome.)

Observe, therefore, the progress of the prophecy. God reveals by Jeremiah that the punishment of Jerusalem at the hands of the Chaldaeans is due to their breach of the covenant with Him; and the prophecy reaches onward to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans for the rejection of Christ. We shall have frequent occasion to remark this typical character of Jeremiah. See what follows in this chapter; and cp. xxvii. 16; xxxviii. 6—13, and especially in the "Lamentations," which have ever been connected by the Christian Church with the Passion of Christ. See below, Introduction to Lamentations.

18. the Lord hath given me knowledge] The Lord taught me, and I learnt it. As Jeremiah was informed by God of the sufferings that awaited him from his own people at Anathoth, so Christ was foretold in Jer. viii. 17, 21, as the Prophecy of His Father from eternity (John i. 15), and to Whom the Father showed all things (John v. 20, when "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" (John i. 11), knew all things that would befall Him (John xviii. 4).

19. a lamb or an ox] Rather, a tame sheep brought to the slaughter, to which Christ Himself is compared by Isaiah (lii. 7). — I was like a lamb—brought to the slaughter] Remarkable words, representing Jeremiah as a figure of Christ concerning Whom it is said, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter" (Isa. lii. 7). See Justin Martyr, c. Trphym. p. 232. Tertullian, c. Jud. c. 107; c. Marcion, lii. 19; iv. 4. S. Cyprian, c. Jud. lii. 15. I knew not! I wist not, and I did not observe, did not take heed. Being himself without guile, he did not suspect their guile. Cp. note on Acts xxiii. 5. Let us destroy the tree with the fruit] Literally, with the bread; he's produce for food (cp. v. 17. Isa. xxviii. 28). Let us destroy him root and branch.

In a secondary and spiritual sense, these words also may be applied to those who conspired against Christ, Whom Jeremiah typified in His sufferings from His own people, and to the Jews who conspired to destroy together with His doctrine (cp. Luke xx. 14), that heavenly fruit which grew on the tree of the Cross. Christ Himself, on His way to His crucifixion, speaking of the Jews, eager to destroy Him, describes Himself as a green tree, and compares them to a dry tree, ready for the fire. Cp. Luke xxii. 31.

— let us cut him off from the land of the living] So of Christ it is said by Isaiah, "He was cut off out of the land of the
from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered. 20 But, O Lord of hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I revealed my cause. 21 Therefore thus saith the Lord of the men of Anathoth, that seek thy life, saying, Prophesy not in the name of the Lord, that thou die not by our hand: 22 Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, I will punish them: the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine: 23 And there shall be no remnant of them: for I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, even the year of their visitation.

XII. 1 Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? 2 Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root: they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins. 3 But thou, O Lord, knowest: thou hast seen me, and tried mine heart toward thee; pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter. 4 How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? 5 the beasts are consumed, and the birds; because they said, He shall not see our last end. 6 If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustest, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan? 7 For even thy brethren, and the house of thy father, even they have dealt not deserveth the persecutions that I suffer at the hands of the wicked, who prosper, and persecute thy servants.

Living* (Isa. liii. 8). All that happened to the Prophet Jeremiah, who was specially the suffering Prophet, was a foreshadowing of what would happen to the Great Prophet of Whom Moses spake, the Man of sorrows; and we should read these narratives concerning Jeremiah with comparatively little profit, unless we saw here a prophetic adumbration of Christ. 2 Let us look with care at this rule, in interpreting these prophecies (see & Jerome here); Almost all things that the Prophets did and suffered were figurative of Christ; and whatever was fulfilled in Jeremiah, was a prophecy concerning the Lord Himself:—that his name may be no more remembered] Words derived from the Psalms (Ps. lxxiii. 4).

19. Let me see thy vengeance] Jeremiah, the human type, fails in some things where Christ, the Divine Antitype, excels. Jeremiah impregnates his vengeance on his enemies, Christ prays for them (Luke xxii. 34).

20. Prophesy not—that thou die not by our hand] The men of Anathoth quote Deuteronomy against Jeremiah (Deut. xiii. 1—11), which the Jews thought they were obeying, when they killed Christ (see the note on that passage: cp. Deut. xviii. 20—22). Cp. below, xii. 6, "Even thy brethren, and the house of thy father, have dealt treacherously with thee;" words very applicable to the treatment received from His own people, by Jeremiah's Divine Antitype, Jesus Christ.

23. Even the year] Or, in the year.

The Wicked, though prosperous for a time, will not go unpunished.—Application to Jerusalem.

Ch. XII. 1. Righteous art thou—when I plead with thee] If I enter into an argument with Thee, O God, concerning Thy providential dispensations, Thou wilt prove Thyself to be righteous. This I own; nevertheless, suffer me to engage in a discussion with Thee concerning them. Why dost Thou allow the wicked to prosper, and to oppress the godly? On this question, see above, on Job xxi. 7—17. Ps. xxxvii. 1—35; lxxiii. 3, 5, 7; xcvii. 11. Habak. i. 13, and Dr. G. Fothergill's Sermons on this text, i. 465—444.

3. But thou, O Lord, knowest me] Thou knowest that I do not deserve the persecutions that I suffer at the hands of the wicked, who prosper, and persecute Thy servants.
treacherously with thee; yea, || they have called a multitude after thee:
8 believe them not, though they speak || fair words unto thee.
9 I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage; I have given || the
10 dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies. Mine heritage is
unto me as a lion in the forest; it || || crieth out against me: therefore have
I hated it. Mine heritage is unto me as a || speckled bird, the birds round
about are against her; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, || ||
come to devour. Many || pastors have destroyed my vineyard, 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; the whole land is made desolate, because || no man layeth it to heart.
12 The spoilers are come upon all high places in 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. || || They have sown wheat, but
shall reap thorns: they have put themselves to pain, || but shall not profit: and
|| || they shall be ashamed of their revenues because of the fierce anger of the Lord.
14 Thus saith the Lord against all mine evil neighbours, that || touch the
inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit: Behold, I will
15 pluck them out of their land, and pluck out the house of Judah from among
them. And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I
will return, and have compassion on them, and will bring them again, every
man to his heritage, and every man to his land. And it shall come

6. they have called a multitude after thee] Rather, they have
cried after thee with a full mouth, plena voce, cp. iv. 5, where
the word here used, the Hebrew midle, ful, is applied to the
wind; and see Nah. i. 10, where it is used adverbially, as here.
The metaphor is continued. The stream of persecution will rise
and overflow upon thee with a full tide, and will war against
thee with all the force of its waves.
7. I have forsaken mine house] Here is God’s answer to the
Prophet’s question. The punishment of the wicked may be slow in coming, for God is very merciful, and it will come at last.
Jerusalem may seem to be prosperous now, but I will send her enemies, the Chaldeans, against her.
This was realized to the full in the time of Jeremiah’s Divine Antitype, Jesus Christ. Then Jerusalem, like the lofty fig-tree, else fruitful and green, was brought to
flourish in prosperity and power. And it persecuted Christ, as it had persecuted Jeremiah. But this was of short duration.
It was withered like the barren fig-tree, and Christ said, “Your house is left unto you desolate” (Matt. xxiii. 39), as here.
8. Mine heritage—as a lion—it crieth] Jerusalem, the royal
city, the city of the Temple, and the Afar (airil, the Lion of
God; see on Isa. xxxix. 2), and its Sacrifices, is become a Lion
unto Me, against Me; a savage beast of prey, and it roars
against Me, its Maker, and its God.
9. Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird] Jerusalem is like
a parti-coloured bird (cp. Judg. v. 30, on the word here
used), differing in plumage from other birds, which congregate
against it and seek it, and hunt it to death. Jerusalem, which
roars against Me in its proud liberty, will be reduced to the
miserable condition of a speckled bird, and be surrounded and
destroyed by the armies of Chaldean invaders, flocking together,
with their flapping wings, against it. See i. 15; xxv. 9; and see what follows here.
— come to devour || Bring them to devour. Cp. Isa. ivii.
10. Many pastors || The Chaldean invaders, who will devour
God’s vineyard, Jerusalem (Isa. v. 7. Ps. lxxv. 15), as hordes of
nomad shepherds consume all the pastures of the land which
they overrun with their flocks and herds. Cp. vi. 3.
12. through the wilderness] Rather, in the wilderness, the
pasture-land, Hebr. midbar.
[the sword of the Lord] Babylon is God’s sword, and it is
He Who draws it against Jerusalem. 31
13. they shall be ashamed of their revenues] This change of
the pronoun from the third to the second person, is common
with Jeremiah, and gives great force to his language (see xvii.
1, 2). There is a bitter irony in “your revenues,” those reve-

14. against all mine evil neighbours] Especially the Edomites,
Moabites, and Ammonites, which were akin in origin to Israel,
and neighbours to Jerusalem, but which exulted in her fall.
See above, on Ps. xxxvii. 7. Isa. xxxiv. 5, 6; lxiii. 1; below, Ezek.
xxv. 5—12. Obad. 1—15. Let not the Moabites imagine, that because God has punished Jerusalem for her sins, therefore they are justified in invading His inheritance, and taking possession of it. No; if this is their temper toward Israel and Israel’s God, they also will be punished.

RESTORATION OF ISRAEL.
15. I—will bring them again, every man to his heritage] A
remarkable passage, as showing what the true character of the
restoration of Israel and of all other Nations is to be. It is
spiritual; it is to be consummated in Christ and in His Church.
All Nations will find their fatherland there. God’s promise is
not, that Edomites shall actually return to Edom, and that
Moabites shall actually return to their Mecca or Mecca of Ammonites shall return to the land of Ammon, and all Israel
to the land of Israel, and every man to his own heritage, in a literal
sense. No; but the promise is, that Jerusalem will extend
herself into all the world by the preaching of the Gospel, and
that all Nations, Jew and Gentile, will be invited to turn to
God, to His reconciled Father, in their common home in Christ
and His Church. See above, on Ps. lxxvii. 17. Isa. ii. 2; lit.
20, and chap. ix.—xii.; lv. 10; lv. 12; and below, on Ezek.
xxiii. 21—29; xiv. 15—28; xvi. 15—21. Ps. lxxvii. 19, “Ye are come to
Mount Sion,” and Rev. xiv. 1, where all true believers are repre-
sented as standing on Mount Sion.

Thus the prophecy is fulfilled. Israel has been plucked up
on account of its sins, from its place among the Nations, literally,
from the midst of the Nations (v. 14). But by God’s mercy in Christ, Israel is restored, and all the Nations of the
world are planted in the midst of God’s People Israel (v. 16),
because Christ came of Israel, and the Law went forth from Sion, and the Gospel was preached by the Apostles, who were
Jerusalem, and were inspired by the Holy Ghost given at Sion; whence they went forth to baptize all nations; and thus Jerusalem is universalized in the Catholic Church of Christ.

Prophecy of Judgment on Jerusalem, to be Carried Away to Babylon.

Ch. XIII.] Here follow two prophecies of judgment: one, on the Hebrew Nation in its corporate character, represented by a girdle; the other, in a larger sense, represented by earthen bottles, filled with wine, the emblem of God's wrath.

Judgment on Jerusalem, Represented by a Linen Girdle.

1. a linen girdle The symbol of the Hebrew Nation, bound like a girdle for an ornament, and in closest intimacy, near the very heart of God. See p. 11. It is represented as of linen (not leather, 2 Kings i. 8), on account of its sacred character. The vestments of Priests were of linen (Exod. xxviii. 39. Lev. xvi. 4; cp. note on Josh. i. 3; xiv. 17); and Israel was by its calling and profession a "a holy nation," "a kingdom of priests." See Exod. xix. 6.

The girdle, which is joined to the loins of God Himself, is the People of Israel, which was taken up by Him as linen, when yet unbleached, from the earth, and had neither softness nor whiteness in itself, and yet, by God's mercy, was made to cleave to Him; and when it had sinned, it was carried to the Expiaries (as in the prophecy here), and hidden there, and seemed to be lost for a time (S. Jerome).

— put it not in water] Lost it may be thought that the girdle has been made damp, and marred, and spoilt by thee, and by Me, Who have chosen thee to be My minister. For another reason also the girdle was not to be put in water, in order to show that it was not for any merit of their own, but of God's mere grace and favour, that He chose Israel, and united it to Himself, when Israel was as yet unclean, and not washed from sin. See Deut. ix. 4—6; and S. Jerome, quoted in the foregoing note.

4. arise, go to Euphrates] Literally (as Cyril and Theodoret rightly affirm), not in a vision, as many Expositors have thought. Cp. above, on Isa. lxxvii. 8. (See xlv. 1; xlix. 23; below, to God, says the Psalmist (Ps. lxxiii. 27. S. Jerome). When we sin, the girdle is cast away by God from His loins, and is hidden in the Expiaries, where are the enemies of Israel, and is marred (Origen, Hom. xi. 1). In another, and still larger sense (says Origen), the girdle made of flax, which is dark, and coaxes to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, The Lord liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be built in the midst of my people. But if they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the Lord.

XIII. 1 Thus saith the Lord unto me, Go and get thee a linen girdle, and put it upon thy loins, and put it not in water. So I got a girdle according to the word of the Lord, and put it on my loins. And the word of the Lord came unto me the second time, saying, 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. So I went, and hid it by Euphrates, as the Lord commanded me. And it came to pass after many days, that the Lord said unto me, Arise, go to Euphrates, and take the girdle from thence, which I commanded thee to hide there. 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. Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

9. Thus saith the Lord, After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem. This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing. 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.
of Judah, saith the Lord; that they might be unto me for a people, and 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?

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, with drunkenness.

14 And I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the Lord: I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them.

15 Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken.

16 a Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. b But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord's flock is carried away captive.

18 Say unto m the king and to the queen, Humble yourselves, sit down: for your principalities shall come down, even the crown of your glory. 19 The cities of the south shall be shut up, and none shall open them: Judah shall be carried away captive all of it, as it was wholly carried away captive.

20 Lift up your eyes, and behold them that come from the north: where is he that brought them? Can they restore them? he will carry them away captive as the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock? 21 What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee? for thou hast taught them to be captains, and as chief over thee: shall not sorrows take thee, as a woman in travail?

22 And if thou say in thine heart, Wherefore come these things upon me? for the greatness of thine iniquity are thy skirts discovered, and thy heels made bare.

23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil.

from the earth, and unwashed, may be regarded as a symbol of the Church, taken in all its sinfulness by God's mercy from the Heathen World.

— for a praise, and for a glory! As the girdle of Aaron was to him. See Exod. xxviii. 2, where the same word is used for glory, as here.

Judgment on Individuals. Represented by Earthen Bottles.

12. Every bottle shall be filled with wine] Every earthen flagon (cp. xviii. 12)—the inhabitants of Jerusalem, her kings, her priests and prophets—will be filled with the wine of the intoxicating beverage of God's wrath (see xxv. 15. Isa. xxviii. 7; ii. 17. Ezek. xxiii. 31. Ps. ix. 3; lxv. 8), given them as a punishment for the pride, and cruelty, and impiety, which they drank greedily as wine. cp. Rev. xvi.; xviii. 3, where the Harlot drinks the wine of her own fornication, and gives it to others, and intoxicates herself and them with it (xvii. 2; xviii. 6); and therefore God gives her the cup of His wrath, and she reeds it under. cp. Rev. xiv. 10; xvi. 19; xix. 12.

14. I will dash them one against another] And shatter them to atoms, like a potter's vessel (Ps. ii. 9; cp. xix. 11; xviii. 12). a gross darkness] A reference to the denunciations of Deuteronomy against Israel (xxviii. 29).

17. mine eye shall weep sore] Another proof that though Jeremiah's language might seem stern and severe, it was uttered with the tenderest emotions of sympathy and love.

Vol. V. Part II.—32. Before CHRIST about 530. e Exod. 19. 5. & ch. 33. 9. e Isa. 51. 17, 21, & c. ch. 25, 27, & 51. 7. f Ps. 2. 9. f Heb. a man against his brother. f Heb. from destroy ing them. g Josh. 7. 19. h 1. 19. 35. & 8. 22. Amos. 8. 9. I Ps. 50. 9. l ch. 4. 19. m See 2 Kings. 24. 12. e ch. 22. 26. & 2. 18. 1. 9, 1. & 14. 17. Lam. 1. 2. 16 &. 2. 18.

18. the queen] The queen mother. The Hebrew kings generally married women who were not of royal race, but were subjects; and had many wives. Hence the position of a Queen Consort was an inferior one, but that of a Queen Mother was of considerable influence. See above, on 1 Kings xv. 19. 2 Kings x. 1. 2 Chron. xv. 16. Cp. 1 Kings ii. 19. Below, xxix. 2; the reference is to King Jehoashan (Coniah) and his mother. See xxii. 26. 2 Kings xxiv. 12. cp. Pasey on Daniel, p. 266. — your principalities] Rather, your head-gear, your head-tires, as in the margin.

19. The cities of the south shall be shut up] Even the cities to the south of Jerusalem shall be strictly besieged. Cp. Josh. vi. 1. Since the army of the Chaldeans came from the north, this prophecy concerning the cities of the south implies that Jerusalem was either already in their hands, or unable to make any resistance.

20. Where is the flock? Where, O Sion, is thy flock? Jerusalem, the capital city; the head of the Hebrew Church, is personified as a Shepherdess; and God asks her, Where is the flock, the beautiful flock, which He had committed to her charge? Is it ravaged by robbers, and devoured by wild beasts (the Chaldeans coming from the north), by reason of her sins.

21. thou hast taught them to be captains—as chief over them] Thou, the head of Judah, O Sion, by thy sins, hast armed and equipped the Chaldeans as captains and governors (Hebr. allaphim: cp. Zech. ix. 7; xii. 5, 6) against coming to be head over thee. If thou hadst been true to God, they would have had no power against thee. Cp. Lam. i. 5.

23. Can the Ethiopian change his skin?] It is not meant that
Dearth is sent  

JEREMIAH XIII. 24—27. XIV. 1—12.  as a judgment for sin.

Before CHRIST about 607.  
 Heb. taught. r Ps. 1. 4.  
 Hos. 2. 9.  
 s Job 20. 20.  
 Ps. 11. 6.  
 t ch. 10. 14.  
 u ver. 22.  
 Lmn. 1. 8.  
 Ezek. 16. 37 & 23. 29.  
 Hos. 2. 10.  
 x ch. 5. 8.  
 y Isa. 55. 7.  
 z ch. 2. 20. & 3. 6.  
 Ezek. 6. 13.  
 t Heb. after when ye get about 607.  
 t Heb. the words of the dears, or, restraints.  
 a Isa. 3. 26.  
 b ch. 5. 21.  
 c see 1 Sam. 5. 12.  
 d Ps. 40. 14.  
 e 2 Sam. 15. 30.  
 f ch. 2. 21.  

ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil. 24 Therefore will I scatter them thus as the stubble that passeth away by the wind of the wilderness. 25 Thus is thy lot, the portion of thy measures from me, saith the Lord; because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood. 26 Therefore will I discover thy skirts upon thy face, that thy shame may appear. 27 I have seen thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, and thine abominations on the hills in the fields. Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? shall it ever be?  

XIV. 1 The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah concerning the death.  

Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish; they are black unto the ground; and 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 ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads. 4 Because the ground is chapped, for there was no rain in the earth, the plowmen were ashamed, they covered their heads. 5 Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook it, because there was no grass. 6 And the wild ass did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind like dragons; their eyes did fail, because there was no grass.  

O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee. 8 O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that tarryneth aside to tarry for a night? 9 Why shouldst thou be as a man astonied, as a mighty man that cannot save? 10 Yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not. 11 Thus saith the Lord unto this people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not restrained their feet, therefore the Lord doth not accept them; he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. 12 Then said the Lord unto me, Pray not for this people for their good. 13 When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them; but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.  

Israel cannot repent, and be converted, (for what then would be the sense and purpose of Jeremiah's mission, and of that of other Prophets, calling them to repentance, and promising them pardon from God if they repented?) but that it is necessary for them to resort to God for grace, which can overcome natural hardness. Compare our Lord's words (Matt. xix. 24—26).  

28. Therefore will I. Literally, Therefore will I also. Thou hast been covered by others in spiritual hardness (cp. Isa. lvii. 8): therefore I, also, in my turn, will discover thee in shame, as harlots are exposed to ignominy. Cp. Ezek. xxxvi. 30; xxxix. 20.  

29. They neigh beside Thee are black unto the ground] The gates of Judah, that is, all who enter into them and go out of them, are clothed in mourning; and they sit down on the ground in sorrow. Cp. Job ii. 13. Isa. iii. 20; xv. 3; above, viii. 21; xiii. 18. Ps. xxxiv. 14.  

30. Their little ones] Their inferior (cp. xviii. 4. Ps. lxvii. 27), as Dives would have sent Lazarus for water to cool his tongue (Luke xvi. 24). — covered their heads] In sorrow and shame (2 Sam. xx. 30; xix. 4. Esther vi. 13).  

31. clothed] Literally, broken (Genes. 316. Graf, 210).  

32. the hind—calved] Even the hind, that specially loves its offspring (Bochart) which it brings forth with difficulty (Job xxxix. 1. Ps. xxxix. 9) even she forsakes her fawns, because there is no grass.  

33. Jackals, which belong to the wolf tribe, and are very venomous (cp. ix. 11; x. 22). Others (as Lalegul, Lothen, Hitzig, Graf) suppose the word here used to signify crocodiles, or rather, sea monsters, which raise their heads out of the water, panting for air; and this seems the true sense. Cp. Job vii. 12. Isa. lvii. 1; li. 9. Lam. iv. 3. Ezek. xxix. 3; xxxii. 2.  

34. turneth aside] So Genes., Hitzig, Ewald, Graf; and this seems a preferable rendering to that of some interpreters translating it stretcheth out his tent (in order to pitch it for a night's lodging); a solitary wanderer would not carry a tent with him.
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 a assured peace in this place. Then the Lord said unto me, 'The prophet's prophecy lies in my name: '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.' Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, 'yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed.' And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; 'and they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them.' Therefore shalt thou say this word unto them: 'Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: 'for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow. If I go forth into 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 go about into a land that they know not.

Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? we looked for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble! We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers: we have sinned against thee. Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us. Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art thou he, O Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.

Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth. 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: 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. And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the Lord: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy. And I will cause

18. go about] Literally, as itinerant merchants, travelling for the sake of trade (Green. 553). The result of their covetousness and apostasy (by which they sought to enrich themselves, see xii. 13), will be this, that they will be obliged to wander to and fro, as pedlars and hucksters, in a strange land, which they knew not, and which will not deign to know them.

20. We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness] The happy results of the Captivity and wanderings of Judah in a strange land are here anticipated. They are humbled by their sorrow, and turn with penitential self-abasement to the Lord, and pray to Him for pardon and peace. Compare above, on Isa. xiv. 7—11; and below, xvi. 19, 20.

22. can the heavens give showers?] Of their own will, without God's command. No. Here is an answer to the Fanaticists, who identifies Nature with God.

art not thou he? That givest rain? See Nigel. 117.

Moses and Samuel.

Ch. XV. 1. Though Moses and Samuel] God had said before to Jeremiah, "Pray not for this people" (xiv. 11), and now He says, that even though Moses and Samuel, who had prevailed most powerfully with Him by their prayers (Exod. xvii. 11; xxiii. 11. Num. xiv. 13, Ps. cvi. 23, 1 Sam. vii. 8; viii. 6; xii. 16—23; xv. 11. Ps. xcix. 6, Eccles. xiii. 10), stood together before Him and prayed for Jerusalem, He would not hearken to them; cp. Ezek. xiv. 14, where Noah, Daniel, and Job are joined together in a similar manner, as intercessors with God.

cast them out of my sight! Drive them forth from My Temple and from My City (see v. 2). I will not accept the offerings of this people.

2. to death] Penitence (cp. xiv. 19. Ezek. xiv. 21; xxiii. 27. Rev. ii. 23; vi. 8). So the plague was called the "black death" in the middle ages (Graft).

4. I will cause them to be removed] Rather, I will make them to be a horror to all kingdoms; an object of shuddering and dread (see the use of the word, xxiv. 9; xxv. 18; xxiv. 17), so that everyone who sees them shall shudder (Jarchi).
The prophet's expostulation

JEREMIAH XV. 5—15.

with God.

Before CHRIST about 601.

g Deut. 26, 25, ch. 24, 5.
Ezek. 23, 46, h 2 Kings 21,
1, 1. &c. 22, 26, v 5, 3, 4.
† Isa. 51, 19.
† Heb. to ask of thee.
† k ch. 2, 13.
Lam. 7, 25.
mos 13, 14.
¶ Or, whatsoever is dear.
n Isa. 9, 13.
ch. 1.
Amos 4, 10, 11.
¶ Or, against the mother.
¶ c & & against the young man speaking, &c. or, against the mother and the young man.
o 1 Sam. 2, 5, p Amos 3, 9.

— because of the son of Hezekiah] The impious son of a good father, and therefore more culpable. The sins of Manasseh (2 Kings xxvii. 21; xxvii. 26; xxviii. 6), being imitated by his successors (see xvi. 12), will bring down God's wrath upon Judah and Jerusalem.

5. to ask how thou dost?] To inspire of thy welfare.

7. I will fell them.] And scatter them as chaff swept by the wind from the threshing-floor. Cp. Isa. xxx. 24; xii. 16.

Ezek. v. 12.

8. against the mother of the young men?] Jerusalem, which was proud of her offspring (cp. 1 Sam. ii. 5), is confounded (cp. Lam. i. 1).

10. Woe 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. The Lord said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily I will cause 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? Thy substance and thy treasures will I give to the spoil without price, and that for all thy sins, even in all thy borders. And I will make thee to pass with thine enemies 'into a land which thou knowest not: for a fire is kindled in mine anger, which shall burn upon you.

15. O Lord, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me captives received from their conquerors, even Nebuchadnezzar in the case of Daniel and the three children; and of Belshazzar, and of Cyrus, Darius, Alexander, and Artaxerxes, in succession, after the days of Nebuchadnezzar (see above, Intro. to Ezra and Nehemiah, and to Esther). Even the captive King of Judah, Jehoachin, was treated kindly by Babylon by Evil-Merodach. See 2 Kings xxv. 27—30; below, ii. 31—34.

The Prophet answers, Can this be true? Can iron break the northern iron and steel? Can the Hebrew Nation have any power against the mighty power of the northern realm of Chaldea? See 1:15; xlii. 20 and 26; the hardness of northern iron from the Chalybes, who were connected with Chaldaea. See Strabo, xii. 826: Winler, R. W. B. ii. 512; Wright, in Dr. Smith’s B. D. ii. 1376.

No; answers the Lord, this will not be done by their own power. The iron of Jerusalem will not break the iron and steel of Babylon. On the contrary, turning to Jerusalem, He says, I will give thy substance to the spoil for thy sins, and will make thee to pass into a land which thou knowest not. But yet, I who scatter thee for thy sins in My wrath, will chasten thee for thy good (cp. 11). Thus God always tempered judgment with mercy in His dealings with His People.

14. I will make thee to pass with thine enemies into a land] Or (with a slight variation in the Hebrew text, as read in some MSS., and as authorized by Sept., Syriac, Arabic, Targum), I will make thee (Jerusalem) to serve thine enemies in a land which thou knowest not (and so Eichkorn, Dahler, Ewald, Hitzig, Gesenius, cp. xxvii. 18; xvi. 19).

15. O Lord, thou knowest! Be it so, says the Prophet; but, he adds, in a spirit of impatience, if Thou art kind to Thy people, do not forget me, but revenge me of my adversaries. Jeremiah, like Jonah, is sometimes betrayed into a spirit of murmuring against God for His kindness to the wicked against whom he himself has been commissioned by God to prophecy; and he imagines himself to be overlooked and slighted by Him Who sent him to prophecy, and in Whose service he has encountered danger and suffered privation; and to be gratuitously exposed to contumely from some who taunted him on the supposed failure of his prophecies.

36

God comforts him.

of my persecutors; take me not away in thy long-suffering: know that thy sake I have suffered rebuke. 16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts. 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.

18 Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? wilt thou be altogether unto me as a har, and as waters that *fail ?

19 Therefore thus saith the Lord, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt b stand before me: and if thou take 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 k wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the Lord. 21 And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

XVI. 1 The 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; 4 they shall die of grievous deaths; they shall not be lamented; neither shall they be buried; but they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their carcasses shall be

In the character of Jeremiah, as represented by himself (candidly and ingeniously displaying his own infirmities, and gaining credence thereby), there is a struggle of conflicting passions; of tender love for his country, mingled with indignant zeal for God, and for His offended Majesty, and also with personal consciousness of the wrongs suffered by himself at the hands of his countrymen, for the faithful and courageous discharge of his prophetic functions; and with apprehension of the bitter sarcasms to which he will be exposed, if the prophecies which he has uttered in the Lord's Name, of impending ruin to Jerusalem, should not be fulfilled.

All this is perfectly true to nature, while it gives a special interest, such as does not belong to any other writings, to the prophecies of Jeremiah, and it will account for the sudden transitions and abrupt changes of passionate vehemence, which are characteristic of these prophecies.

18. will thou be—wuto me as a har. A deceitful k brook, which is full in winter, and dried up in summer. See on Job vi. 15—19.


Jeremiah complains that God had sent him to prophesy, and had assured him that he would be protected, and that his prophecies would soon be verified. How then was it to be explained, that they to whom he had prophesied were still prosperous, and had power to persecute him, the messenger of God? Cp. xvii. 15. The stream of God's favour, which had flowed in a full current of love toward him, seemed suddenly to have been dried up, and he was left to perish with thirst. God, Why had warned him that he must expect to be persecuted, even by his own kindred (xii. 5, 6), but that he would be impenetrable (f. 18), answers this question in what follows; and Jeremiah himself acknowledges that the man who trusts in God is "like a tree planted by the water side, whose leaf is ever green." See the beautiful description below, xvii. 6—8; and he calls Him "the fountain of living waters" (xvii. 13).

On Tidéal's objections to this passage, see Waterland, "Scripture Vindicated," p. 245.

God's Remonstrance, Exhortation, and Promise to Jeremiah.

10. If thou return] It is not I (says God) Who fail thee, but thou failest in thy duty to Me; thou stravest from the path of faith and patience, and art betrayed into passionate murmurings against Me. But if thou return to the right way, then thou shalt stand (as My Prophet) in trust and steadfastness before Me, and I will defend thee.

—if thou take forth the precious from the vile. If thou art a refiner of thyself, andallest off the dross of thine own human passion from the ore of the Divine Word, thou shalt be as My mouth. Thou shalt not be thine own mouth, sending forth the rash utterance of ill-considered speeches, flowing from the turbulent source of human emotions; but thou, the Prophet of God, shalt speak the Word of God—thou shalt be the mouth of God.

Here is the clue to the interpretation of many of the speeches that are uttered by Jeremiah in this Book. Some of them are the result of the passion (see especially xvi. 14—18), and are to be corrected by reference to the infallible standard of God's own Word.

—let them return wuto thee; but return not thou wuto them. Let thine adversaries give up their error for thy truth; but do not thou give up thy truth to their error.

Here is an important warning and exhortation to all who are called upon to discharge a prophetic office in a corrupt age. Let them not surrender unpopular truths to popular fancies. Let them buy the truth at any cost, and not sell it at any price. See Prov. xxii. 23.

20. I will make thee unto this people a braced wall. Then, but not till then, thou wilt be proof against all their assaults. God repeats the promise of i. 18, 19, the performance of which is conditional on the Prophet's faith and obedience to Him. The Roman Poet felt something of the great truth contained in these Divine words, when he said "Hec maurus aequus esto, Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa" (Horat. i. Epist. i. 60).

Ch. XVI. 2. Thou shalt not take thee a wife. Thou complainest that thy prophecies of impending ruin to those who persecute thee in thine own land, are not verified. I command thee to show thine own faith in them, by abstaining from marriage; because the sons and daughters that are born in this place shall die grievous deaths (vv. 2—4).
Jeremiah may not marry, Jeremiah XVI. 5—18. nor mourn with others.

Before CHRIST about 601. e Ezek. 24. 17. 22. 23. f Or, mourning feast.

1. For thus saith the Lord; enter not into the house of 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.

6. Both the great and the small shall die in this land: they shall not be buried; neither shall men lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them: neither shall men give them the cup of consolation to 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. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, 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, 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, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the Lord, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshiped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law; and ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me: therefore will I cast you out of this land 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.

14. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; 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 I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

16. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish among them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

17. For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes. And first will I recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they

5. Enter not into the house of mourning] God here anticipates the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecies, and tells him how to demean himself when they should have been accomplished. The Lord shall not enter the house of mourning; the sin of the people is such as to exclude thee from sympathy in their sorrow.

6. 7. neither shall men cut themselves— for them] These heathenish customs were interdicted to Israel by the Law (Lev. xix. 28, Deut. xiv. 1), but they seem to have slighted that prohibition, and to have conformed to the heathen in this, as well as in other matters. Cp. xii. 5. Isa. xxii. 12. Ezek. vii. 18. Amos viii. 10. Micah i. 16.

13. shall ye serve other gods] Sin is visited by withdrawal of grace; and God gives up the sinner to a reprobate mind, and punishes him by his sin. Cp. Acts vii. 42. After the idolatry of Israel at Horeb, God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven. Cp. Deut. iv. 28; xxviii. 64. Ezek. xx. 25, 39. Rom. i. 21, 24. 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11.

14. Therefore, behold, the days come] The sufferings of Judah in the Babylonish captivity will be so great, that the deliverance from them will be more joyous than even their Exodus from Egypt. Cp. xxiii. 7, 8.

15. I will send for many fishers—sprinters] Not only will Jerusalem be taken and destroyed, but the enemy will pursue the fugitives from it, and catch them as fishers catch fish in a net, and as hunters take wild beasts in the woods and mountains, in their lairs, or in a pit. Cp. Amos iv. 2. Hab. i. 14. Ezek. xii. 13.

18. And first] Before I bring them back to their own land (v. 15), they must undergo the salutary discipline of suffering.
have filled mine inheritance with the carcases of their detestable and abominable things.

19 O Lord, * my strength, and my fortress, and * 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 wherein there is no profit. 20 Shall a man make gods unto himself, and * 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 * my name is || The Lord.

XVII. 1 The sin of Judah is written with a * pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: * it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars; 2 whilst their children remember their altars and their groves by the green trees upon the high hills. 3 O my mountain in the field, * I will give thy substance and all thy treasures to the spoil, and thy high places for sin, throughout all thy borders. 4 And thou, even * thyself, shalt discontinue from thine heritage that I gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in * the land which thou knowest not: for * ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, which shall burn for ever.

5 Thus saith the Lord; * Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh * flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. 6 For he shall be * like the heath in the desert, and * shall not see when good cometh; yet shall he dwell amongst the parched places in the wilderness, * in a salt land and not inhabited. 7 * Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. 8 For he shall be * 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 drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can

— the carcases] Idols, dead things, preferred by them to the living God. Cp. Ezek. xliii. 7. 9.

Conversion of the Gentiles.

19. the Gentiles shall come] The scattering of the Jews for their sins will be followed by the conversion of the Gentiles, who will cast off their idols, and thus reprieve Israel for its idolatry.

This passage (xvi. 19—xvii. 14), is appointed as the Haphtarrah, or Proper Prophetic Lesson, to Lev. xxvi. 8—xxvii. 34, where God declares the vanity of idols, and the blessings of faith, repentance, and obedience.

21. this once] This time. By this act of retributive justice on Israel. Cp. x. 18. The conversion of the heathen was a consequence of the dispersion of Israel among all Nations, which received from them the Hebrew Scriptures, read in the synagogues of the Jews, scattered throughout the World. See below, Introd. to Acts, pp. 8—10; and on Acts ii. 9—11.

CH. XVII. 1. pen of iron] See on Job xix. 24. — upon the table of their heart] Which has departed from God (r. 5), and is devoted to idols. Cp. vp. y. 10, where the word heart is repeated. — your altars] The Altar of Jerusalem is no longer My altar; she has multiplied altars, and they are altars dedicated to idols. See ii. 25; xi. 13. Compare our Blessed Lord's words to the Jews, "Your house" no (no longer God's Temple) is left unto you, desolate (Matt. xxiii. 38. Luke xxi. 37). There is great force and vehemence of passion in the sudden changes of person here. See above, on v. 17.

2. their children remember] Their children (whose lives were in danger of being sacrificed by their parents to Moloch) remember with horror their altars and their groves, or rather, their pillars and statues, dedicated to idols. See on Exod. xxiv. 13. Dent. vii. 5; xvi. 21. Judg. iii. 7. 1 Kings xvii. 33. Isai. xvii. 8; xxvii. 9. Micah v. 14, where the word (rendered groves, in our Version) has this sense. The Sept. omits ve. 1—4. "Forsooth peperceraunt populo suum," says S. Jerome, to explain that omission by Jewish Translators.

3. O my mountain in the field] God apostrophizes Zion; she is God's mountain, the favoured hill of His presence and glory. See Ps. xliv. 2; xxiv. 3; lxxxvii. 1. Isa. ii. 3. Zech. iii. 1. God's mountain is in the field, in the open daylight (cp. xxx. 13), and is accessible to all, and so is contrasted with the high places of idols, mentioned in the foregoing verse, planted with trees, shrouding the heathen mysteries and dark orgies of cruelty and shame which were celebrated there.

4. discontinue] Loose thy hold. There seems to be a reference to the law of release here; the word shimit, which signifies release, being here used in bitter irony. Cp. Deut. xx. 3. I will make thee release the whole of this own territory, which I had given thee, and will drive thee from it.

5. Cursed be the man that trusteth in man] As Judah trusted in Egypt and Assyria for help, instead of relying on God. Cp. ii. 18. 30; iv. 30; xxii. 20; on xxiii. 1.

6. the heath] So Sept., Vulg., Arabic, and others; a dry bush, or bare tree (Ewalt, Umbreit); and there seems to be a contrast between some bare shrub and a flourishing tree (see v. 8); and though the word does not occur elsewhere as that of a name, naked, helpless, desolate, Gesen. 655), yet this rendering of the ancient Versions ought not lightly to be abandoned. — a salt land and not inhabited] Another reference to Deut. xix. 22.

8. shall not see when heat cometh] Shall not heed its coming, because she will not be affected by it.

9. 10. The heart is deceitful above all things—The Lord search the heart—to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doing{s) There is no sure reliance to be placed in the feelings of the heart, nor in the dictates of
Go stand in the gate.

JEREMIAH XVII. 10—19. The law of the Sabbath.

Conscience (which is called the heart in the Hebrew Scriptures: cp. below, on 1 John iii. 20), unless the Conscience be informed and regulated by the Will and Word of God. Cp. Prov. xiv. 12; xvi. 25; xxx. 12. And the proof of the rightness of the heart is seen in the Proverbs (chap. iii. 5), and in the fruit of his doings. Cp. below, the notes on Acts xxiii. 1. 1 Cor. ii. 11. Rom. iii. 14—16; vii. 17; xii. 4—13.

The application of this and what follows is—Jerusalem may be clayed by confident inward assurance of God's favour. But if her ways are not right in His eyes, what will this assurance profit her? See what follows. Her kings may have gathered wealth, and be proud of their magnificent palaces (see xxii. 14, 15); but what will these things avail them, if they have been obtained by crookedness and wrong?

11. As the partridge] Rather, as the partridge gathereth a brood which she hath not hatched (and they forsake her), so he that gathereth riches not by right shall leave them to others. The partridge (says Olympiodorus, in Winer, R. W. B. ii. 300) "gathers the young of other birds by calling them, which afterwards desert her. So Alcibiades, who refers to S. Augustine and S. Ambrose; and Theodoric the King of the Goths, in his letter quoted by Cassiodorus (Var. Epist. i. 14), refers to the popular belief, that young birds brought up by partridges, fly away to their own parents. See A. Lapide here. What the bird is which is here rendered partridge, is not accurately known (Bockhart).


15. I have not hastened from being a pastor to follow thee] Rather, I have not hastened backward from being a shepherd (a prophet) after thee. When I was called by Thee, I did not withdraw myself hastily from Thy service (see Gen. xxxii. 23), but I obeyed Thy call without delay: and I did not desire the morning day. I had no wish to be a prophet of evil, to gratify any vindictive feelings on my part: but what came forth out of my lips was spoken in Thy sight, in a full consciousness that Thine eye was upon me. Cp. Prov. v. 21.


Commission to Jeremiah.—Go and stand in the gate. It has been alleged by some modern Expositors (as Graf), that there is no connexon between this section (vv. 19—27) and that which goes before or follows after it, and that it is an incoherent interpolation.

But the allegation is groundless.

The Prophet had just affirmed that he had not withdrawn himself through fear from speaking in God's name, and that he had uttered boldly what God put into his mouth, and he had prayed to God to visit them for their sins.

Therefore God now puts his courage to the test. He orders him to go forth into the public place of the city, and to command the princes and people openly to show their reverence for God, and to display their separation from all heathen nations among them; to make a public sacrifice of their secular gains, by abstaining from traffic on the Sabbath. And he is commissioned to assure them that if they will thus publicly surrender themselves in faith and obedience to God's commands, he will bless them; but if not, he will destroy the gates of Jerusalem by fire, and burn up the palaces of Jerusalem.

This command to Jeremiah is the first of a continuous series, which now follows, of prophetical commissions:

1. To go to the Gate of the City, and command the Kings and People to hallow the Sabbath. 2. To go to the potter's house, and declare God's power over all Nations (chap. xxviii.). 3. To procure a potter's earthen vessel, and to go to the valley of Hinnom, and break it (chap. xix.). 4. To prophesy the impending ruin of Jerusalem to King Zedekiah (chap. xxxi.). 5. To promise pardon to Judah, if they will repent: to denounce judgments on the three Kings before Zedekiah, viz. Shallum (Jehohia), Jehoakim, and Jeconiah (chap. xxii.). 6. To proclaim the future Coming of the True King of Judah (chap. xxiii.). 7. To pronounce judgment on false Prophets (chap. xxiv. 9—40). 8. To declare the interpretation of the vision of the two baskets of figs,—the restoration of the captives, and the desolation of Zedekiah and Jerusalem (xiv.). 9. To announce the duration of the Captivity, seventy years, —the destruction of Babylon, the punishment of the Nations which rebel against God (chap. xxv.).

The order of these chapters is not chronological; but it is regulated by an inner principle of arrangement, which is designed to display the justice, power, and wisdom of God in a clear light.

PUBLIC COMMAND TO HALLOW THE SABBATH.

10. Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people] The most public gate of the city. Its precise site has not been determined.
20. ye kings] Therefore this message was to be repeated in several successive reigns. Cp. xiii. 13.

21. bear no burden on the sabbath day] Now that the people of Judah were about to be dispersed among the heathen, and would have no Temple or sacrifice, the enforcement of the duty of observing the Sabbath, as the characteristic badge of Israel, as distinguished from other nations, was specially seasonable and requisite. And when they returned from the Captivity, and were in danger of lapsing into heathenism, the duty was inculcated by holy men as of paramount importance. See Neb. xiii. 15, 19, where is a reference to this passage of Jeremiah.

This prophecy is applicable to all times. See the note above, on Is. liv. 2, on the spiritual observance of a Sabbath in the Christian Church.

26. cities of Judah—the plain—south] The principal regions of the Holy Land are comprised under these names:—the plain between Joppa and Gaza; the south, the region south of Judah; the mountaons, on the north of Judah. See Jos. ix. 1; xv. 21. 33. 61; xxii. 21. Cp. below, xxxii. 43.

—bringing burnt offerings—sacrifices of praise] Peace-offerings (Lev. vii. 15, 16). The due observance of the Sabbath by the Princes and People will bring down God’s blessing on the Nation, and will secure a ready supply of sacrifices from all parts of Judah.

On the other hand, the offering of sacrifices, without obedience to God, in the discharge of this duty, will be offensive to Him; and it will be followed by general desolation.

May not Christian Nations see here a warning to themselves, in regard to the due observance of the Lord’s Day? See above, on Gen. ii. 2, 3; and on Exod. xx. 8—11.

Vol. V. Part II. 41.
6. O house of Israel, * cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord Behold, * as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. 7. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to ° pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; ° if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, ° I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. ° And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; ° if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then will I repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them. 11. Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: 'return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good. ° And they said, ° There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart. 13. Therefore thus saith the Lord; ° Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done ° a very horrible thing. 14. Will a man leave ° the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? ° or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken? ° Because my people hath forgotten ° me, they have burned incense to ° vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways ° from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, ° in a way not cast up; ° to make their land ° desolate, ° and a perpetual ° hissing; ° every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head. ° ° I will scatter them ° as with an east wind before the enemy; ° 'I will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity. ° ° Then said they, ° Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; ° for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. ° Come, and let us smite him ° with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words. ° ° Give heed to me, O Lord, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me. ° ° Shall evil be recompensed for good? ° for ° they have dug a pit for my soul. Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, ° Me, and burnt incense to vanity. ° S. Jerome here quotes two passages of Virgil, Eclog. i. 60—61:—

[**Ante leves ergo pascentur in aethere cervi,**

Quam nostris illius habatur pectore vulnus,°

et Virg. i. 607—609:—

In frete dum flavii current,°°

Semper honos, nomenque tumum, laudesque maenubt;°'°

by which he happily illustrates this passage. As the snow never falls from the summit of Lebanon, and is never melted there by the sun; and as the streams, flowing from the mountains, are not dried up in their sources, so (says God) My Name is everlasting and unchangeable; and yet, while the elements of Nature keep their wonted course, My People forget Me.

15. a way not cast up.] See above, on Ps. xxviii. 4. Prov. xv. 15. Isa. xvi. 14; xlv. 10, where the same verb (ståel) is used to describe the raising up of a broad, straight causeway, on which a traveller may pass with security.

16. raising up.] See Gen. xxv. 30.

17. As an east wind.] As an east wind. I will be an east wind to them, instead of breathing on them with the soft breezes of My love.

18. the love shall not perish.] As Jeremiah says that it has done. Cp. ii. 8; v. 13. 31; vi. 19; xili. 13.

— let us smite him with the tongue.] Compare ix. 3. 8. Jeremiah’s enemies began with words of calumny, but soon proceeded to acts of violence against him. See xx. 2. Pashur, the Priest, smote Jeremiah, the Prophet. So it was in the conduct of their successors to Jeremiah’s Divine Antitype, Jesus Christ.
and to turn away thy wrath from them. 21 Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and pour out their blood by the force of the sword; and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and be widows; and let their men be put to death; let their young men be slain by the sword in battle. 22 Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them: for they have digged a pit to take me, and hid snares for my feet. 23 Yet, Lord, thou knowest all their counsel against me; 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.

XIX. 1 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; 2 and go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee, 3 and say, Hear ye the word of the Lord, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle. 4 Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents; 5 they have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which 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 the valley of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter. 7 And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place; and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives: and their carcases 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 desolate, and an hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof. 9 And I will cause them to eat the 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.

21. deliver up their children—widows] Compare above, on Ps. cix. 9, 10, “Let his children be vagabonds, and his wife a widow.” These words of humiliation, regarded as utterances of personal feeling, are not exempt from the taint and stain of human infirmity and passion. See above, on xv. 19. But, in a secondary sense, considered as prophetic of the judgments pronounced by Jeremiah’s Divine Antitype, the Messiah, against the Jewish Nation, for their rejection of God’s messages of love, they are like judicial verdicts uttered by His authority. See above, on Ps. cix. Prelim. Note, and on Ps. xxxv. 4; lxix. 22–28.

Go and get a Potter’s Earthen Vessel, to be broken PUBLICLY in the Vale of Hinnom.

Cr. XIX. 1. a potter’s earthen bottle] A bottle (or jar) of a potter of earthenware (Genen. 300).
— the ancients of the people, and—of the priests] Members of the Sanhedrim. See 2 Kings xix. 2; xxiii. 1. 1 Chron. xxiv. 4; below, xxvii. 17.
2. the east gate] Rendered by some the sun gate (Kisochi, Tremell, Pissator, Michaelis, Hitzig), seems to have been on the south-east of the Temple; it led into the King’s Dale, or Valley of Jehoshaphat, and so to the Valley of Hinnom, on the south of the city, where works of pottery in white clay are still carried on (Ramsay, Pal. 306. Nägel. 104); and this may probably have been the site of “the potter’s field” (Matt. xxviii. 57, 7, 8), where, it seems, Judas perished. Cp. Acts i. 18, 19. Nägel. 145. This gate (in Hebr. “gatcu chever”) is rendered here the Pottery Gate by some (see Gesen. 307, 813, and Fuerst, 492. Graf, 571. Nägel. 144, 145), and this is the most probable rendering.
3. kings of Judah] This warning was, therefore, like other warnings of the Prophet, to be repeated to several successive Kings. See xiii. 15; xvii. 19. Here was a proof of God’s purpose.
4. they have—estranged this place] Have alienated it from Me, the Holy One of Israel, and from My sacred service, and have given it up to profane uses, and to the worship of false gods.
— innocents] Their own children (ii. 34; xvii. 2).
5. Baal] Baal and Moloch are remarkable terms, both signifying King. Baal was the general term. Cp. xxxii. 35; and ii. 8, “which I commanded not” See on vii. 21.
7. I will make void] I will empty. Probably these words were accompanied with the symbolic action of pouring out the contents of the earthen vessel, which the Prophet held in his hand. The verb here used is bikkul, to empty; and the word for bottle in ev. 1. 10, is a cognate noun, bakkid. Cp. Graf, 273.
9. I will cause them to eat] For the fulfilment, see Lam. ii. 20; iv. 10.
Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee, and shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter’s vessel, that cannot be made whole again: and they shall bury them in Tophet, till there be no place to bury.

Thus will I do unto this place, saith the Lord, and to the inhabitants thereof, and even make this city as Tophet: and the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods.

Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whither the Lord had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in the court of the Lord's house; and said to all the people, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words.

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 Magor-missabib. 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:

The Potter's Vessel Broken in Tophet, or the Valley of Hin槿.

Judas Iscariot Perishing in the Potter's Field.

Tophet. The scene of their sin will also be the scene of their punishment. We have seen reason for believing that in the time of the good King Hezekiah, Tophet was the place in which the army of Sennacherib perished, when Jerusalem was delivered, in consequence of the faith and prayers of the King. See above, on Isa. xxx. 33; xxxiii. 4; and on xxxv. 36. This place, signalized by that merciful intervention of God in favour of Jerusalem, was afterwards polluted by idolatry. See vili. 31, 32; 2 Kings xxii. 10. The Prophet breaks the earthen vessel (typical of Jerusalem) in Tophet, and declares that Tophet, the place of their idolatry, would be defiled by the carcases of the inhabitants of Jerusalem slain by the Chaldeans, so that there would be no more place for burying. Comp. viii. 32. The traitor Judas was a typical person; he symbolized the Jewish Nation, in its rejection of Christ; and the Psalmist, in his prophecies concerning Judas, extends them to the Jewish Nation typified by him. See above, on Ps. lv. 7; 22; and especially Ps. cix. 8—31. Here is a subject for devout reflection and solemn meditation. Was not the analogy between Judas and the Jews made more vivid by the very place in which he came to his miserable end—the potter's field? Cpt. Acts i. 18, 19 with Matt. xxvii. 7, and Zech. xi. 12. There is reason for thinking that it was near Tophet, or the Valley of Hin槿, which the Prophet connects with the potter's house and the potter's gate (see on v. 2), and the potter's earthen vessel, the type of the Jews, dashed to pieces, by God's command, in that place. Perhaps the pollution of this place by its various defilements may explain the fact which has perplexed the Commentators on Matt. xxvii. 7, that a field near a great city like Jerusalem, should be purchased for so small a sum as thirty pieces of silver, and was given up to bury strangers in. It was, doubtless, regarded by the Jews, in our Lord's age, with abhorrence and execration.

13. the houses of Jerusalem—upon whose roofs they have burned incense. Compare xxxix. 29. The Chaldeans shall set fire to this city, and burn it with the houses upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal (cp. Zeph. i. 5, "I will cut off them that worship the host of heaven upon the house-tops"); the flat roofs on which they erected altars to false gods, in the sight of all the people, and defiled the Lord God of Israel with bold impiety.

15. The court. The outer court in front of the Temple. This is the clue to what follows.

Pashur the Priest, and Jeremiah.

Ch. XX. 1. Pashur. Supposed by some to be the same as Pashur, the father of Gedaliah, xxviii. 1 (not Gedaliah the son of Ahikam): he belonged to that course (among the twenty-four courses of Priests) which was named from Immer. See here and 1 Chron. xxiv. 14.

Chief governor. Superintendent governor; he seems to have been next in rank to the High Priest. (cp. xxix. 25; lii. 24), and to have had the guardianship of the Temple, and the command of its police. Cp. Josephus, Ant. x. 8. 5.

2. Pashur smote Jeremiah—and put him in the stocks. Pashur, the second in authority to the High Priest, smote Jeremiah the Priest and Prophet, and imprisoned him. Here is another foreshadowing of the treatment which Christ, the Great High Priest and Prophet, received from the Jewish Chief Priests, especially Annas and Caiaphas (John xviii. 22—24, Matt. xxvi. 67; xxvii. 2). See S. Jerome here. 2. high gate of Benjamin. Probably the gate on the north of the Temple, which looked toward the gate of Benjamin.

3. Magor-missabib. That is, Terror round about. These words occur vi. 25; xx. 10; xlvii. 5. Lam. ii. 22. Ps. xxxi. 13. The word Pashur seems to mean properly round about (Genesis 694, Nigei'a 147), and this is to be changed to its opposite; for Pashur, who formerly promised prosperity to himself and to his friends, is to become a terror to both. He will himself be panic-struck, and the sight of his misery will fill his associates with alarm. See r. 4.
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 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 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 prophesied lies. 7 O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me. 8 For since I spoke, I cried out; I cried violence and spoil: because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. 9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. 10 For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. 11 All my familiar friends watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him. 12 But the Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten. 13 But, O Lord of hosts, that triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause. 14 Sing unto the Lord, praise ye the Lord: for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evildoers.

14 'Cursed be the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my

5. the strength [The fruit of its labours, especially from the soil. Cp. Prov. xxvii. 23-27.]

— the labours [The produce of its handicraft. Cp. Ezek. xxiii. 20.]

— treasures [Its costliness; all that is precious and beautiful, both silver and golden vessels and jewels. Cp. Job xxviii.]

10. Ezek. xxii. 25.

JEREMIAH'S LAMENTATION.

7. thou hast deceived me [Thou, O God, hast persuaded me. Thou hast drawn me on, and constrained me by irresistible persuasion, to prophesy (see Gesen. 696, and the margin here, and the use of the verb pāthăh), Gr. ἐπιδείκνυν, 1 Kings xxii. 30, 21, 22, where it is rendered by persuade; cp. Ezek. xiv. 9, and Prov. xxvi. 16, where it is also translated persuaded; and for an answer to the objections of Tindal to such language, see Dr. Waterland, "Scripture Vindicated," p. 247.]

— thou art stronger than I [Thou overpowered me, and hast prevailed (cp. 1 Kings xvi. 22. 2 Chron. viii. 9), so that I cannot resist Thee; cp. i. 19; v. 22, and see here v. 9, where the word of God is described as a burning fire, shut up within him, and striving to burst forth.

Here is a proof of inspiration. Jeremiah's prophetic utterances came not from his own heart; no, he was constrained to utter them, against his will, well knowing that they would expose him, as they did, to violent persecution, and to contemptuous scorn. Compare St. Peter's description of Prophecy (2 Pet. i. 21), and the case of Balaam (Num. xix. 28; xxxii. 5; xxiv. 2-9).

9. I was weary with forbearing [Rather, with restraining it.]

10. fear on every side [Hebr. Māger-mēzizāth (see on v. 3), so that I, who denounced this against Pashur, was a Pashur to myself.

— Report—we will report] Denounce him (they say). Yes (answer of others), we will denounce him as a traitor. See this use of the verb nāgād (Prov. xxix. 34. Eccl. x. 20. Job xvii. 5; Gesen. 530). It is illustrated by xxxvi. 16, 20, where this verb is used; and is rendered by tell, "We will surely tell the king;" and they told all the words in the ears of the king. 40 All my familiar friends literally, every man of my peace; every intimate friend.

— watched for my halting [Compare Ps. lvi. 6.]

— he will be enticed [Jeremiah, they think, will be drawn on to say something that they may catch up and make an occasion of accusation against him.

These words were verified in all their bitter fulness in the malignant insinuations of the enemies of Jeremiah's Divine Antitype, Jesus Christ, against Whom they laid wait, and suborned traitorous men "to entangle Him in His talk, that they might accuse Him to the Governor" (Matt. xxii. 15. Luke xx. 20).

JEREMIAH CURSING THE DAY OF HIS BIRTH.

14-18.] In this sudden transition from trust to despair, we see a revelation of the inner workings of Jeremiah's heart, consequent on the treatment he received from his treacherous friends and cruel persecutors, and on the seeming failure of his prophecies, and his own desertion by God, Whose Prophet he was.

It is not to be denied that we have here a passionate outburst of human infirmity; but this display proves that no reserve has been practised by the prophets, and that we see a portraiture of Jeremiah delineated in his true colours by his own hand.

This inspires us with confidence in the truth of the narrative, and also excites our sympathy with Jeremiah in his sufferings, which extorted such utterances from him.

What has been already said on the similar language of the Patriarch Job (Job iii. 3-26) may be applied here. Remark also, as it was with Job, so it was with Jeremiah. Both were purified by suffering. After the passionate utterances in this chapter, we see no more evidence of weakness or impatience in Jeremiah.
mother bare me be blessed. 15 Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee; making him very glad. 16 And let that man be as the cities which the Lord overthrew, and repented not: and let him 1 hear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noon tide; 17 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 Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?

XXI. 1 The word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord, when king Zedekiah sent unto him 2 Pashur the son of Melchiah, and 3 Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, saying, 2 c Inquire, 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.

This collocation may at first create surprise. And some critics have inferred from such phenomena as these (which are presented also by other portions of this Book), that the prophecies of Jeremiah are not put together with any method or plan.

It is true that their order is not chronological. But it is grounded on something more important than mere sequence of time.

The arrangement of these prophecies is a logical one; and it is designed to display God’s attributes of mercy and judgment, and to justify His ways to man.

For example; in the present group of chapters, the prophecy to Zedekiah, the last King of Jerusalem, is placed first. It may seem to have a stern character. “I myself will fight against you,” saith the Lord, “with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath” (v. 5). It denounces woe against the King (v. 7), and against his people (vs. 8–10).

But this sentence, however severe, is justified by what follows.

In the succeeding chapters, it is seen that God had been waiting patiently for many years to be gracious to Jerusalem, and to her princes and people; and that Zedekiah had received solemn warnings from the history of his predecessors.

To say nothing of divine messages delivered by preceding Prophets, this had been shown by the ministry of Jeremiah himself. As he stood in the midst of the fortieeth 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 in the morning, saying, rise up, and say unto the people, and the king, and say, Thus saith the Lord; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear.” And even to Zedekiah himself God promised protection, if he would repent (xxv. 5). But he refused to repent, and perished.

From these chapters we learn that King Zedekiah had before him the prophecies which Jeremiah had delivered to his predecessors, and that Zedekiah had seen the fulfilment of those previous prophecies.

Therefore Zedekiah had the strongest reason to believe that Jeremiah’s prophecies concerning himself would be accomplished also, if he did not repent; and he had the most cogent reason from the future judgments of the people; and the most gracious assurances of deliverance, if he would listen to the Word of God, spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah.

1. Zephaniah | The Priest next in rank to the High Priest (see lii. 21–27, and 2 Kings xxv. 16–21), who is related that he was afterwards carried away captive to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, and executed there.

The esteem in which Jeremiah (who had formerly been derided with scorn) was held at this time by the King and Princes, on account of his prophecies, is evident from the dignity of the persons who were sent to him by Zedekiah. Here, therefore, we have silent testimony and tribute to Jeremiah’s inspiration. Whereas, when the Lord called Jeremiah to his embassy to Jeremiah that which Hezekiah had sent to the Prophet Isaiah, when Jerusalem was threatened by Sennacherib (2 Kings xix. 2. Is. xxxvi. 2), 2. that he may go up from us! That Nebuchadnezzar may withdraw his army, and retire from Jerusalem.
Then said Jeremiah unto them, Thus shall ye say to Zedekiah: 4 Thus saith the Lord God of Israel; Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and against the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and 4 I will assemble them into the midst of this city. 5 And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath. 6 And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence. 7 And afterward, saith the Lord, I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and such as are left in this city 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; 8 he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy. 9 And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death. 10 He that 1 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 9 his life shall be unto him for a prey. 11 And 9 for 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; 9 Execute judgment 9 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, 9 I am against thee, 9 inhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain, saith the Lord; which say, 9 Who shall come down against us? or who shall enter into our habitations? 14 But I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings, saith the Lord: and I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and 9 it shall devour all things round about it.

XXII. 1 Thus saith the Lord; Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, 2 and say, 9 Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, that sitteth upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy
people that enter in by these gates: 3 Thus saith the Lord; 4 Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and 5 do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. 4 For if ye do this thing indeed, 6 then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting 7 upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people. 8 But if ye will not hear these words, 2 myself, saith the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation. 9 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. 10 And I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons: and they shall cut down 8 thy choice cedars, 9 and cast them into the fire. 8 And many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, 8 Wherefore hast the Lord done thus unto this great city? 9 Then they shall answer, 1 Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them. 11 Woe ye not for 8 the dead, neither bemoan him: 2 but weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country. 12 For thus saith the Lord touching 9 Shallum the son of Josiah king of Judah, which reinstated instead of Josiah his father, 9 which went forth out of this place; He shall not return thither any more: 12 but he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more. 13 o Woe unto him that builteth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; 8 that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work; 14 that saith, I will build me a wide house and 7 large chambers, and cutteth him out 8 windows; and it is cieled with cedar,
and painted with vermillion. 15 Shalt thou reign, because thou closest thyself in cedar? 16 did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then 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. 17 But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for || violence, to do it.

18 Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah; 19 They shall not lament for him, saying, "Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory! 19 He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

20 Go up to Lebanon, and cry; and lift thy voice in Bashan, and cry from the passages: for all thy lovers are destroyed. 21 I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear. 3 This hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyest not my voice. 22 The wind shall eat up all thy pastors, and thy lovers shall go into captivity: surely then shall thou be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness.

O inhabitant of Lebanon, that maketh thy nest in the cedars, how gracious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, || the pain of a woman in travail.

23 As I live, saith the Lord, 1 though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah d were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence; ||

But the Prophet is suddenly turning from one person to another, as is usual with him (see above, on viii. 17; xvii. 1; and below, xxiv. 1). and above, ch. 20) and a sense of initiative irony and bitter minimsy, is quoting the very words of the covetous and vain-glorious King, speaking egotistically and saying, "my windows in "my palace; as the purse-proud Nabal speaks of my bread, ["my water," ["my flesh," ["my sheerness (see on I Sam. xxv. 11). So here the King of Jerusalem says, "I will build me a wide house," and he enthrall out what he calls "my windows." On the sudden change of pronouns in Jeremiah, cp. xxix. 19.

15. because thou closest] Rather, because thou wast with thy predecessors and contemporaries, in thy palaces of cedar. Cp. the sense of the verb he used, edach (literally, to be heated, to be fired), in Neh. iii. 20, and above, xii. 5, where it is rendered to contend with, and see Gesen. 303.

16. at thy fathers] Cp. Kings xxii. 33. Observe the striking contrast between Josiah, the father, and Jehoiakim, the son, in their acts and in their end. See below, on xxxiv. 31.

17. thy covetousness—violence] See Jehoiakim's character in Ezek. xix. 6, where he is compared to a ravenous lion.

18. Ah my brother! Ah sister! The Prophet quotes the well-known words of funeral elegies, chanted "by singing men and singing women" at funerals. See 2 Chron. xxxv. 25, and 1 Kings xiii. 30, and above, ix. 17, and below, xxxiv. 5.

19. He shall be buried with the burial of an ass] His dead body shall be dragged along upon the ground and left there, like that of an ass, far from the gates of Jerusalem. Cp. xxxvi. 30. Isa. xiv. 19. And see Josephus, Ant. x. 6, 3, who says that Nebuchadnezzar commanded the body of King Jehoiakim to be cast forth buried out of the city.

It is supposed by some (Pusey on Daniel, 26) that this indignity was perpetrated on the body of the King, when Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, in the days of his son and successor, Jeconiah. Compare above, on viii. 1, which throws some light on this question.

The objections alleged against this prophecy, as if it were inconsistent with the history where it is said "that he slept with his fathers," and that Nebuchadnezzar "bound him in fetters to carry him to Babylon," have been considered above in the note on 2 Kings xxiv. 6, and on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6. See also Geof. p. 296, and Nibegel, p. 160.

20. Go up to Lebanon] O Jerusalem, go up to Lebanon (the highest hill on the north of Palestine), and to Bashan (the loftiest mountain on the other side of Jordan), lift up thy voice and cry from the passages, or rather, cry from Maron, cry from Mount Hermon in Bashan, on the south, whence Moses beheld the promised land (Num. xxvii. 12. Deut. xxxii. 49). Let the voice of thy distress and thy cry for help sound aloud on the loftiest hills of thy territory, from one end of it to the other.

— all thy lovers The foreign kings in whom thou trustedst for help, especially Egypt (ii. 36, and others, xxviii. 14), instead of relying on the Lord.

21. in thy prosperity] In Health and wealth—plural.

—from thy youth] Even from the Exodus out of Egypt (ii. 7; iii. 25).

22. thy pastors] Thy rulers, civil and ecclesiastical (ii. 8).

23. O inhabitant of Lebanon] O Jerusalem, thou that art lifted up on high like Lebanon, and that maketh thy nest in its stately cedars; that thinkest thyself secure, like an eagle which has built its nest in the loftiest trees of the highest mountain. Cp. Num. xxiv. 21. Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thou pourest thy nest in a rock. And below, xiv. 16: "O thou that holdest the height of the hill, though thou shouldst make thy nest on high, as the eagle, I will bring to thee thence, saith the Lord;" and Obad. iv.: "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou settest thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down."

Some suppose that there is a reference here to the cedar palaces of Jerusalem, especially to the house of the forest of Lebanon. Cp. v. 14. 1 Kings x. 17.

— how gracious shalt thou be] Rather, how wilt thou grow (Sept., 'Veg., Syriac, Arabic). The word here used is not from chasan, to be gracious, but from Isanach, to groan (Genus. 64).

Woe to Coniah.

24. Coniah, or Jehonadab; the abbreviation Coniah seems to have been studiously adopted to show that he was rejected by Jehovah. By his bold rebellion against Him, he had disfranchised and dishonored himself. See the note above, on 2 Kings xxiv. 8. It has been supposed by some (Kingsley) that the initial god (the sign of the end) of the phrase Jeho- niah's name, is taken away because his posterity would be cut off. But the former seems to be the true reason of the curtailing, the Hebrew letters god and he mark a relation to Jehovah. See above, on Gen. v. 5. Num. xiii. 16, the signet: or seal-ring on my right hand. The King of Judah wore a seal-ring on his right hand, and by sealing letters and other documents with it, he manifested his power, his will, and his law. Cp. Hag. ii. 20, I will be a signet, My servant, saith the Lord, I will make thee as a signet, for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts." Cp. Gen. xli. 42. 1 Kings xxi. 11.
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. 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. But to the land wheretounto they □ desire to return, thither shall they not return. Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he □ 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? h O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. 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, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

XXIII. △ Woe △ be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of the pastures which was to follow (Micah iv. 10. Isa. xi. sqq. Jer. xii. 15; xv; xvi. 1—8; xxiv. 5—7; xxvii. 22; xxix. 10—14; xxx., xxxi., xxxii.). The Prophets foretold both with equal confidence, the fulfilment of the prophecy of the captivity was to be the earnest of the fulfilment of the prophecy of the restoration. And during the long respite, which men abused to discredit the truth of the Prophet Jeremiah, God munificently bestowed upon his Church many favors.

a) The people looked to the restoration of Jehoahaz, the Prince of their own choice—(2 Kings xxiii. 30. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1. He is ranked the fourth of the sons of Josiah, being also named Shallum, 1 Chron. iii. 15. Jer. xxii. 11. He was younger than his brother Jehoahaz, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 2. 5. 11.)—from Egypt. Jeremiah foretold his death in his exile (xxii. 11, 12), he shall see this land no more. And he died in Egypt.

b) The next foretold that Jehoachin and his mother (xxii. 18) should lose their crown; they were carried captive (2 Kings xxi. 12).

“To Jehoiakim he prophesied disgrace; that, after death, his corpse should be (Jer. xxii. 19; and xxxvi. 30) dragged along, like that of a malefactor, and cast forth beyond the gate of Jerusalem. The capture of Jerusalem, ending the three months” (2 Kings xxiv. 8) reign of his son, gave opportunity for this; and the contumely to the rebellions vassal would be in captivity would soon have been accounted for. But he would prophesy more generally (viii. 1, 2). He alone of the four last wretched Kings of Judah, rebel though he was, did not die in captivity. The political circumstances of Nebuchadnezzar, which detained him elsewhere, and his prophetic word against Jehoiakim (Jer. xxii. 11), XXIII. 1) (2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2), with auxiliaries of Ammonites, Tyrians, Moabites, were shaped so as to leave room for the fulfilment of the words of Jeremiah.

He then follow the signal prophecies as to Zedekiah; first, when the King inquired of God by him, defeat, capture by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. xxxi. 7. 8, and xxvii. 5) then, when the last siege set in, Jeremiah promised, that it should be well with him if he should return; else he foretold the mockery of his hopes (xxvii. 22), that he should speak to the King of Babylon mouth to mouth, see him eye to eye, be led to Babylon” (xxiii. 4; 5; xxxiv. 3). All these prophecies were fulfilled. See Dr. Pusey on Daniel, p. 265.

Contrast of False Shepherds with the True Shepherd, Who is Very Man from the Seed of David, and Who is the King, and Judge, and the Lord (Jehovah) Our Righteousness, the Messiah.

Ch. XXXIII.] After his reprovs of evil Kings, the Prophet proceeds to console Israel with the hope of the Advent and reign of the true King of Judah. The connexion between the present chapter and the foregoing, is marked by the word Pastors (see xxii. 22, “the wind shall eat up all thy Pastors”), which word is taken up here (xxvi. 1, 2). “Woe be unto the Pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep. Thus saith the Lord God, the Pastors that feed my people.” The word Pastors signifies here civil Rulers. Examples of the sins and punishments of secular rulers have been given in the foregoing chapter, concerning Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Jeremiah, Kings of Judah.
my pasture! saith the Lord. 2 Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: 3 behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord. 4 And 5 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. 6 And I will set up 7 shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord.

Behold, 8 the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and flourish, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. 9 In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

The Prophet now generalizes, and proceeds, by a natural transition, to vindicate God’s ways, and to console His People, by a promise of the True Pastor, Very Man, and Very God, the King and Judge of all true Israelites—JESUS CHRIST.

A similar method is pursued by his brother-Prophet, Ezekiel (see Exx. xxxiv. 11, 12).

In order that this resemblance might be more clear, it might have been wished that our Translators should have used the same English word for Shepherds or Pastors throughout, where the same Hebrew word (raith) is used. In our Version of Jeremiah that word is rendered Pastors in ii. 8; iii. 15; x. 29; xii. 10; xxii. 12; xxiii. 1, 2; but after that verse, it is rendered always Shepherds unto the end of the book (xxv. 34, 35, 56; xi. 16); and it is always rendered Shepherds in Ezekiel (xxiv. 2, 5, 7, 9, 10. 12. 23; cp. xxxvii. 24); and it is never rendered Pastors in the Authorized Version of any of the Minor Prophets, but always Shepherds.

1. Woé be unto the pastors! Rather, Woé be unto pastors. There is no article in the original. This is a general denunciation, which assumes a specific form in the next verse, “Woé against the pastors!” of Israel (Vesania, Hengst.).

2. ye—have not visited! Therefore I will visit you; the same word is repeated.

3. And I will gather! See v. 8; below, on Exx. xxxiv. 11. 13. 22—31, which foretells the restoration of Israel in Christ, and is an enlargement of the prophetic prophecy of Jeremiah, and is the best commentary upon it.

4. And I will set up shepherds over them! The faithless shepherds of Israel shall be removed, and true shepherds shall be raised up in their place. This was verified in part in the days of Zerubbabel and Joshua, Ezra and Nehemiah, and is completely fulfilled in the Christian Church. The evil rulers of the Jewish Nation, and of the Jewish Synagogue (such as the Chief Priests and Pharisees) have been taken away, and faithful Pastors (commissioned by Christ, the Chief Shepherd), such as the Apostles (Lapite), and apostolic men in succession, have been raised up in their room (Acts xx. 28. 1 Pet. v. 2. 4. S. Jerome, Theodorat. Cp. A Lapide here).

From the plural number used here, some have inferred that what follows does not apply to one individual (the Messiah), but to a plurality of persons (see Greek, and others). But this opinion is groundless. God says by the Prophet, I will raise up for you shepherds, especially One Shepherd, the Messiah (C. B. Michaelis). The Prophet had been describing bad shepherds (pleror); he is naturally led to use the plural as a contrast to them (Hengst.). And see what follows, which cannot be applied to a plurality of persons without violence to the text.

—neither shall they be lacking! None shall be missing. Cp. 1 Sam. xx. 11.

5. Behold, the days come! On this phrase, announcing the d. days of the Messiah, see ix. 25; xxx. 3.

The following section (vv. 5—8) is appointed by the Church to be read in the Priest Zone, Advent Sunday. That appointment is a very appropriate and happy one; for thus are we invited to read what follows as a prophecy of Christ. And we shall find, on examination, that Jeremiah’s words here are like a Christian Creed—declaring the Manhood of the Messiah, His Royalty, Judicial Majesty, and His Saving Power and Love as our Redeemer, Justifier, and God.

The ancient Fathers were agreed, that this prophecy was not fulfilled in the return of the Jews under Zerubbabel, but is accomplished by the restoration of all true Israelites in Christ; see S. Jerome, Theodoret, and the excellent exposition of Calvinus (Bibl. Illust. p. 424), “He promittitur spiritualis reductio per Christum qui venit, ut Sacerdos Eternus, ad Tempel Sacerdotum Saumum (Ps. 109. ii.), in civitatem Regiam, ut Rex Eternus, ut Zacharias praeixerat, Dicte filia Sion, Ecce Rex tuus venit, et inepti ibi regnum Sacerdotale, et sacerdotii regale, in Spiritu Eterni, quod est regnum cælorum, regnum Dei, populos sanctos justitias in pace coronavit Deum Regem.”

Hoc regnum resurgens Christus a mortuis dilatatit per bonos Pastores per totam mundum. — I will raise unto David a righteous Branch! Here Christ’s Manhood is declared. It is foretold that He would sprout forth as a Branch from the root of David. Jeremiah adopts the imagery and language of Isaiah (see Isa. iv. 2), where the Messiah is called “the Branch.” (Hebr. tsemach, the same word as here) “of the Lord.” Cp. Isa. xi. 1, “There shall be forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch (neuter, a sucker) ‘shall grow up out of his roots;’ and see Isa. lii. 2, ‘He shall grow up as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground.’

Against those who allege that the word branch (tsemach) is here used in a collective sense, and signifies the Hebrew People, and not an individual person, it is enough to quote Zechariad’s language, which is a comment on this prophecy. Using the same word for the Branch of Christ, he says, “We will bring forth My servant the Branch” (see Zech. iii. 8), and designates Him as “the Man, whose name is the Branch” (Zech. vi. 12). Cp. Calvinius, Bibl. Illust. p. 426. By. Pearson on the Creed, Art. ii. p. 148.

6. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely! It is objected by the Jews that this prophecy cannot be applied to Jesus of Nazareth, because in His days Judah was not saved, and Israel did not dwell safely, but the Jewish Nation was delivered into the hands of the Romans. See Rosenmuller, Pagio Fidelis, Pt. ii. cap. 11.

This objection would have great weight, if, in interpreting the prophecies of the Old Testament, we were the slaves of the letter, and if we applied them to the literal Jews; and this Jewish allegation cannot be refuted by the literal interpreters of Divine Prophecy.

But we know that the Christian Church, which came forth from Jerusalem, is the true Zion (see below, Heb. xii. 22; Rev. xvi. and above, on Isa. v. 1—8, and lx. — —Ixxv. 10; lxvi. 10; and Ps. lxxxvii. 5), and that they who believe in Christ, are “children of faithful Abraham,” and “the true Israel of God” (Gal. vi. 16; Rom. ix. 6). And this is his abode wherein he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS! Here is a clear assertion that He Who has been just pre-anounced as Very Man of the Seed of David, and as an Eternal King and Righteous Judge, and as
Jeremiah xxiii. 7. of the Gospel.

Therefore, behold, 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

a Mighty Saviour and Deliverer, is also the Lord, Jehovah, Very God; and being Very God as well as Very Man, is our righteousness, in Hebrew Jehovah Tzidkenu (2Ki 23:19), a string sounding rendering of Jehovah (i. e. righteousness of Jehovah), under whom Jerusalem was destroyed.

That these words are to be applied to the Messiah, and that "the Lord our righteousness" is His Name, "is," (says Bp. Pearson) "the constant interpretation of the Jews, who attribute the name Jehovah to the Messiah from this text." See the Jewish authorities quoted by him, and in Puli Synopsis here, and the Targum here, and Cotelari p. 497, which "ut de auctoritate veterum aliquum diciamus, Patres unauniter de Christo loco oraculum accepte, et constanti Ecclesiæ sensus et consensum firum aet Christo unic intelligendum esse; et Judæi vetustiores de Messia locuta sanctissima esse agueruo.

An objection has been raised here by the Socinians, that an altar was called "Jehovah-nissi (Exod. xvii. 15), and "Jehovah-shalom" (Judg. vi. 24); and as those names meant that the "Lord is my banner," "the Lord is Peace," they would be of no avail if Jehovah were not the Lord, if Jehovah be not the name of Him who is there, so the words here used, Jehovah-Tzidkenu, may signify "the Lord is our righteousness." To this it may be replied—

"(1) That to speak of an altar and say that its name is "Jehovah-nissi" or "Jehovah-shalom," or to speak of a city and say that its name would be Jehovah-shammeah, could not by any possibility seem to imply, that the altar's name, or the city's name was Jehovah, and could not produce any ambiguity.

But to speak of a Person, and say that his name was to be called Jehovah, would be very dangerous, unless his name really was Jehovah.

(2) According to the whole teaching of the Christian Scriptures, it cannot be predicated of Jehovah, regarded as a name of God the Father, that He is our righteousness. On the contrary, the Father is our righteous Judge, and we are liable to Him for punishment on account of our sins; but—

(3) "Our righteousness." (As Bp. Pearson says, Art. ii. p. 148 note) "may be undoubtedly predicated of Him Who is here called the Lord, our righteousness;" for the Apostle (who seems to have had this passage of Jeremian in his view) hath expressly taught us that "Christ is made unto us righteousness" (1Cor. i. 30). Christ, as Very Man, was able to suffer for us; as God, He was able to reconcile the Father to us, and to satisfy for our sins; and as He rose from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and is now in God His Father, and is accepted by God in Him (Eph. i. 6), and receive the grace of adoption and sanctification in Him (John i. 16. 1 Cor. i. 30)." See below, on Romas iii. 21—29, and on 1 John iv. 4. "Thus, our righteousness, do not only truly belong to Christ, but it is in Christ, and is bound up with Christ, so that in so much as they belong to no other person called Jehovah, but to Christ alone. For He alone is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth (Rom. x. 4). Am I to believe, then, that Name is our righteousness (1Cor. i. 30), He is thereby distinguished from God the Father. Since, then, Christ is thus peculiarly called our righteousness under the Gospel—since this place of the Prophet speaketh of this as a name to be used under the Gospel—since no other person called Jehovah is ever expressly called our righteousness in the Gospel—it followeth, not only that Christ may be so called, but that the prophecy cannot otherwise be fulfilled, than by acknowledging that Christ is the Lord our righteousness, and, consequently, that is His Name, not by way of proposition, but of apposition and appropriation; so that, being both Jehovah and our righteousness, He is as truly Jehovah as our righteousness" (By Pearson).

(4) "They who judge without prejudice see that this Name (the Lord our righteousness) belongs to Christ, in so far as He is God, as the Name Son of David belongs to Him in his human nature. The Prophet Annuncieth Him to us in the glory of His Godhead, and in the glory of His Redeemer, and He is our righteousness, because He communiqueth righteousness to us." (Calvin).


(6) The Hebrew phrase, His Name shall be called; or (as it is literally), which they shall call Him by, signifies that He shall be called; not that Name is our righteousness. See on Isai. vii. 14, "She shall call His Name Immanuel."
land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.

9 Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones see and shiver: 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 the land is full of adulterers; for because of || swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and their force is not right. 11 For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house I have found their wickedness, saith the Lord.

12 Wherefore their way shall be unto them slippery in the darkness, which they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation, saith the Lord.

13 And I have seen || † folly in the prophets of Samaria; † they prophesied in Baal, and † caused my people Israel to err. 14 I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem || an horrible thing: † they commit adultery, and † walk in lies: they † strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as † Sodom, and the inhabi-
tants thereof as Gomorrha.

15 Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink of the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is || profaneness gone forth into all the land.

16 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: || they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. 17 They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, || Ye shall have peace; and they

only righteousness, but ours too, we have our desires: verily, this possessive word of application is all in all.

To which comfort may be added for a conclusion of this part, no less effectual than any of the former, that it is justitia nostra in the abstract, and not in the concrete justificare, or justifica-
tor noster: || our justice or righteousness itself, not || our Justifier or Maker of us righteous.

For thus delivered, I make no doubt it hath much more efficacy in it; and more significant it is by far to say, † Jehovah our justice; than † Jehovah our justifier. || I know St. Paul saith much;—that our Saviour Christ shed his blood † to show his righteousness, that He might not only be just, but a Justifier of those which are of His faith (Rom. iii. 26). And much more, again, in that, when he should have so said, || To him that believeth in God, || he chooseth ths to set it down, || To him that believeth in Him that justifieth the ungodly (Rom. iv. 5), making these two to be all one—God, and the Justifier of sinners. Though this be very much, yet certainly this is most forcible—that † He is made unto us by God, very righteousness itself (1 Cor. i. 30).

And that yet more—that He is made || righteousness to us, that we be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. v. 21). Which place St. Chrysostom well weighing, this very word δικαιοσύνη, saith he, the Apostle useth, δικαιοσύνη το δραματη της δαιμων, † to express the unspeakable bounty of that gift, † that He hath not given us the operation or effect of His righteousness, but His very righteousness, || you, † his very self unto us. || Mark, † saith he, || how every thing is lively, and as full as can be imagined. Christ, one not only that had done no sin, but † that had not so much as known any sin, hath God made (not a sinner, but) † sin' itself; as, in another place (not accursed, but) || a curse itself; † sin' in respect of the guilt,—'a curse' in respect of the punishment (Gal. iii. 13. 2 Cor. v. 21). And why this? To the end that the right might be made (not your righteous persons, but) † righteousness' itself; and there he stays not yet, and not every righteousness, but the very 'righteousness of God.' Himself. What can be further said, what can be conceived more comfortable? || To have Him ours, not to make us righteous, but to make us || 'righteousness,' and that not any other, but the 'righteousness of God.' The wit of man can devise no more. And all to this end, that we might see there belongeth an Ezech. 34: "See this name; that there is more than ordinary comfort in it; that, therefore, we should be careful to honour Him with it, and so call Him by it,— † Jehovah our righteousness' (Bp. Andrews).

7, 8. Therefore, behold, the days come So wonderful will be the manifestation of the Divine power and love in the re-

Diction of all God's faithful People in Christ, that the marvels of the Exodus from Egypt (which was a type of that Restoration: see above, on Exod. xii., Prefim. Note; and on Exod. xiv., Prefim. Note; and Ps. cxxv.) will not be remembered in comparison with it.

The deliveries of the Hebrew Nation from Egypt and from Babylon all culminate in the World's Exodus in Christ. See note above, to the Songs of Degrees or Upgoings, Ps. cxxv., Prefim. Note; and on Isa. xli., Prefim. Note, p. 113—116.

That the deliverance here described is only in a subordinate sense the deliverance from Babylon, and that in its full meaning it is the deliverance of the World, both Jew and Gentile, by Christ, and their restoration to God's favour, and to their heavenly home in Him, is clear from the contrast, and from parallel passages in the Prophets. See above, on Isa. xiv. 1; xiii. 5, 6; xlii. 1—12; xlv. 17—25; xlv. 7—14. 18—23; below, on Ezek. xxiv. 11—31; xxvi. 21—38; xxvii. 5—29; Amos iv. 14. Zeph. iii. 20. Zech. xiv. 16—21.

Woe to False Prophets.

10. because of swearing the land mouseth] Or rather, on account of (literally from the face of), cursing. See Ps. x. 7; ix. 12. Others render it because of the curse (Hebr. בקאה) which God hath pronounced upon it. Cp. ch. xlix. 21; xlv. 12. Deut. xxx. 19—21. Dan. ix. 13. 16. Zech. v. 3, where the same word is used.

13. I have seen folly! I saw unseaworness. See Job vi. 6. — in Baal' in Baal's name.
True prophets speak the word of the Lord. False prophets, however, are those who declare things that are not the Lord's will. They may use impressive language and claim to have visions, but their messages are not to be trusted. They are like chaff in the wheat fields, rejected by the master of the wheat (18:17). The book of Jeremiah, written by the prophet Jeremiah, contains a warning against false prophets and a call to repentance, urging people to seek the Lord and his forgiveness (Jeremiah xxiii. 18—33).

The passage highlights the contrast between true and false prophets. True prophets speak the word of the Lord, while false prophets use their words for personal gain or to sway hearts away from the Lord. In the book of Jeremiah, false prophets are described as flatterers and liars, who seek to profit from the people's fear and ignorance (Jeremiah xxiii. 16). The true prophet, on the other hand, speaks the word of the Lord, calling for repentance and a return to the Lord (Jeremiah xxiii. 8).

18. For who hath stood—heard it—Rather, For he who stood in the counsel of the Lord (he who is a true Prophet, admitted to his secret counsels), he perceives, and hearkens to His Word (does not despise and disobey it, as the false prophets do). Who hath marked My Word, let him make others hear it. The latter word is to be punctuated in the hiphil jussive. See Graf, Nikkel, and cp. ix. 12; and below, v. 22, which are the best comments on this passage.

This test may be applied to Churches. C.p. above, on Isa. viii. 20.

21. Have I not sent these prophets, yet they ran? See above, xiv. 14; and the note below, on our Lord's words, "All that ever came (not being sent) before Me, were thieves and robbers" (John x. 8).

23. Am I a God at hand? The false Prophets imagine that because I dwell in my house, I cannot see their doings on earth. See on Ps. x. 5; xcv. 7.

25. I have dreamed! Though it pleased God to reveal Himself sometimes in dreams to His faithful people of old (Gen. xx. 3; xxxi. 24; 1 Kings iii. 5), yet when false Prophets arose, who opposed the true, such revelations were rare. We have no instance of them in Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Ezekiel, or other Prophets who were opposed by false Prophets. But the false Prophets pretended to dreams, well knowing that no one could prove that they had not had the dreams which they pretended to have. C.p. Deut. xiii. 1, where the false Prophet is described as a "dreamer of dreams;" and see Zech. x. 2.

30. Therefore, behold, I am against the Prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbour. Behold, I am against the Prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. 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 their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord.

33. And when this people, or the Prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What is the burden of the Lord? thou shalt say unto them, What is the burden of the Lord? Thou shalt say, It is the word of the Lord that goeth forth upon the earth. It shall not return unto me, until it have accomplished that which it lieth thereon. Forasmuch as my word shall not return unto me void, saith the Lord. But the vision is for an appointed time, and it will drop down like rain, as the new wine which is drawn out of the wineskin, and as the showers that water the earth. The burden of the Lord.
burden? 1 I will even forsake you, saith the Lord. 34 And as for the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of the Lord, I will even 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; 39 therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence: 40 and I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

XXIV. 1 The Lord shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the Lord, after that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jehoahaz the son of Jehoaikim king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon. 2 One basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe: and the other basket had very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad. 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 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. 6 For I will set mine eyes upon them beneficent results, even to a joyful restoration to their own land, and to all those glories which were afterwards to be revealed in Christ, coming to the Temple to be rebuilt by their hands.

This is what is now revealed by the Prophet in the Vision which he here declares of the two baskets of figs set before the Temple of the Lord.

1. set before the temple of the Lord] The basket of good figs, representing the Hebrew captives at Babylon, was set before the Temple of the Lord (the word here used for “set before,” has a religious character, from yadd, to appoint, as a sacred time, or to assemble, as a religious congregation), as well as the other basket of bad figs, which symbolized those who remained at Jerusalem.

Thus it was shown that the exiles at a distance in Babylon were equally present to God’s eye with those who were at Jerusalem; and it was also shown that they were far more pleasing in His sight than those who dwelt in the city, and worshipped in the Temple, and relied on that privilege and said, “the Temple of the Lord are these” (vii. 4); and who contemned the exiles as outcasts from God’s presence. Those who were really outcasts were they who dwelt at Jerusalem, and who trod the courts of the Temple; but the exiles, by faith and obedience, had a sanctuary in Him, in all countries where they were driven. See Ezek. xi. 15, 16. They who were worst thought themselves best, and they who were best were despised as worst.

The meaning of the Hebrew word here used, meassag (which occurs only here and v. 2, and 2 Kings xxiv. 14. 16) is doubtfull; it seems to be derived from šagh, to shat up, Gean. 485, Parat. 885, and to signify one who closes up or fastens, by fixing metal plates in armour, or by making bolts and locks for gates and doors. Other less probable etymologies may be seen in Graf. 319.

5. for their good] “Whom the Lord loveth, He chastenth.” Cp. above, on xv. 11, and Lam. iii. 26, 27.

55
for good, and 4 I will bring them again to this land: and 5 I will build them, and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. 7 And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.

3 And as the evil 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 8 them that dwell in the land of Egypt: 9 and I will deliver them 10 to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, 11 to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt 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.

XXV. 1 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; 2 the which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, 3 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; 4 but ye have not hearkened. 5 And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, 6 rising early and sending them: but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear. 7 They said, 4 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: 6 and go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship

9. for their hurt] Literally for evil; opposed to for good in vv. 5, 6; and not to be expunged from the text with some modern Expositors (Hitzig, Ewald, Umbreit, Graf). Cp. xi. 12, 14, and li. 2, where the word is rendered trouble, xxviii. 4, where it is contrasted with welfare.

The Supremacy of Babylon, God's Instrument against Judah and other Nations—her Fall.

Ch. XXV.] This chapter contains a sublime declaration of the Divine Majesty and Omnipotence of the Lord God of Israel, whose Prophet Jeremiah was, the Supreme Governor of the World, the Arbiter of the Destinies of all Nations.

1. in the fourth year of Jehoiakim—the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon] B.C. 606. Jehoiakim had been set on the throne by Pharaoh Nechoh, King of Egypt, who had released his younger brother and predecessor, Jeconiah (2 Kings xxiii. 34).

Pharaoh Nechoh, in his march against Assyria, had conquered and slain their father Josiah (2 Kings xxvii. 20), and had established his own authority between Egypt and the Emperors. Cp. 2 Kings xxiv. 7, and Berossos, Frag. 14, and Rawlinson, ii. 487. And now that Nineveh had been taken, and the Assyrian Empire had fallen, and Nabopolassar, King of Babylon, was the great and furious, it seemed probable that Egypt would become the supreme power of the world.

But God ordered it otherwise.

In the mysterious counsels of His Divine Omnipotence, He was raising up a Person, whom the Prophet here calls His servant (v. 9), and who was about to exercise a dominant influence over the mighty realm of Egypt, and over the destinies of God's own People, and over all neighbouring Nations.

That Person was Nebuchadrezzar, or Nebuchadnazar, King of Babylon, the son and successor of Nabopolassar. Concerning his name, see the note on 2 Kings xxiv. 1; and below, on xlv. 1—3.

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadrezzar, as Viceroy of his father, marched against Pharaoh Nechoh, and routed the mighty forces of Egypt in the decisive battle of Carchemish, on the Euphrates (see below xlv. 1—5, and above, on 2 Kings xxiv. 1. Rawlinson, iii. 488. Dr. Pusey, on Daniel, p. 3, supra.) And in that year Nebuchadrezzar, his son, succeeded to the throne, and began a brilliant career of victories, which have placed him in the highest rank among the greatest potentates of the earth. Therefore, the fourth year of Jehoiakim, was an era in the history of Judah, Babylon, and the World.

This is the era from which Jeremiah's prophetic period of seventy years begins. See below, on v. 11.

In the prophetic career of the era of this period cannot be determined. Dr. Pusey (p. 309) supposes that Josiah died in the spring of B.C. 609. Jehoahaz, or Shallum, reigned three months. Then Jehoiakim's reign would have begun in the summer of 608, and his fourth year would have begun in the summer of B.C. 606.

2. Jeremiah the prophet! This is the first place in this book where Jeremiah says, "Jeremiah the prophet spake!" and this is also the first place where a definite date is specified in his prophecies. The first year of Nebuchadrezzar formed a remarkable era in the predictions of Jeremiah the Prophet. In i. 5 God says, "I ordained thee a prophet!" and in xx. 1, we read, "That shal not smote Jeremiah the prophet!" but henceforward we have the phrase repeated "the prophet Jeremiah said!" (xxviii. 5, 6, 15; xxxiv. 6; xiv. 1).

He had been exercising his prophetic ministry for twenty-three years (v. 3), not without many internal struggles. See xv. 15—17; xx. 14—18. But he was now firmly established according to God's promise, and had become "unto that people a fenced brazen wall!" (xx. 20. Cp. i. 18; vi. 27).

3. three and twentieth year! Nineteen years under Josiah; three months under Jehoahaz, or Shallum; four years under Jehoiakim.

—rising early! The reading in the text asheemim is supposed to be an aramaism; but perhaps that in the Keri (hasheenim, the high/infinitive used adverbially) is to be preferred. Cp. vii. 13; xi. 7; xxvi. 5; xxix. 10. and other places.
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 'provok my anger with the works of your hands to your own
hurt.
8 Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Because ye have not heard my
words, 9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the
Lord, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, 10 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 ' make them an
astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. 10 Moreover I will
take from them the ' voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice
of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, 11 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, 13 when seventy years are accomplished,
that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for
their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, 14 and will make it perpetual
desolations. 15 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

9. and Nebuchadrezzar'] Rather, you, even to Nebuchadrezzar. God says three things here, viz.
(1) That He will send and bring all the families of the north together.
(2) That He will gather them even to Nebuchadrezzar, a youthful Sovereign, who had hitherto been unknown to them. And
(3) That He will bring them against His own land—Judah. See l. 15. The other rendering, and Nebuchadrezzar whom
He has far less authority in its favour) would introduce a bathos into the sentence.

"Nebuchadrezzar My Servant."

It is remarkable that the Holy Spirit gives to Nebuchadrezzar, by Jeremiah (xxvi. 9; xxvii. 8; xlii. 10), the same title as Isaiah gives even to the Messiah Himself; namely, "My Ser-
vant." See on Isa. lii. 13; lxi. 11. And inasmuch as the Chaldean King was appointed and empowered by God to con-
quer the Nations, such as Ammon, Edom, Moab (which were types of the enemies of Christ and His Church (see on Isaiah, Predim. Note to chap. xlii.), we need not scruple to say that in
those victories he foreshadowed the conquests of Christ, Who made Himself a Servant, to do in the Father's Will (cp. below, xlix. 1.

10. the millstones, and the light of the candle] The one the sound of those who prepare daily food by grinding the hand-
mill (see above, Exod. xi. 5; below, Matt. xxiv. 41); the other the evidence of domestic habitation. Both emblems are

SEVENTY YEARS.

These seventy years begin with b.c. 606, the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and the first year of Nebuchadrezzar, when he
made his first attack on Jerusalem (cp. on Dan. 1. 1—9; lx. 2), and end with the capture of Babylon in the first year of Cyrus,
and the restoration of the Jews, b.c. 536. See above, on 2 Chron. xxxv. 21, 22, and Davison on Prophecy, p. 225; Pusey, on
Daniel, p. 267, who justly condemns the theory of some, who allege that seventy years is here either a mere approximate
number, or a symbolical one, signifying a long time.

This fourth year of Jehoiakim and first of Nebuchadrezzar, is the great prophetic era of Jeremiah. See above, on
xvi. 11—14. and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years—hands! It is not meant that all nations should be
subject to Babylon for seventy years; but that the period of seventy years, dating from the fourth year of Jehoiakim and the
first of Nebuchadrezzar, was to be the term of Babylonian supremacy. It has been alleged by some modern critics (Hitzig,
De Wette, Graf) that these verses, in whole or in part, have

been interpolated here from xxix. 10, and belong to a prophecy dating from the reign of Zedekiah, and not from the earlier period
with which this prophecy is connected. But see Hitzi-

256.

The fourth year of Jehoiakim, the date of the battle of Carenehim, is the critical era in the world's history, and in Jeremiah's prophecies. And in the later prophecy, xxix. 10, he falls back on that era as the basis of his predictions concerning Babylon, in its relation to Judah and other nations.

That a precise term, seventy years, should be assigned to the domination of Babylon, in the revelations of Divine pro-
phesy, may be a cause of offence to some sceptical Criticism; but the devout reader of Holy Scripture will wonder at the
reason for this pre-announcement in the fact, that thus it was shown that the mighty monarchy of Chaldea was under the
control of the God of Israel, and that He it was Who made it flow like a stormy Ocean, and overwhelm the Nations with its
flood, and that He would say to its proud waves, "Hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther."

Thus a safeguard was provided against the dangers to which God's captive People, Israel, were exposed in Babylonia, from
the seductions of Chaldaean idolatry; and a hope of resto-
ration to their own land was cherished in their heart till the
time of their chastisement was past. See Daniel's reference to the
precise number of years in this prophecy (ix. 1, 5), and Ezra's reference also (i. 1). There was the same reason for speci-
fying the seventy years by Jeremiah as there was for expressing the name of Cyrus, the conqueror of Babylon and the deliverer
of Israel, by Isaiah (see above, on Isa. xiv. 28; xlv. 1). The Omnipotence and Omniscience of the Lord God of Israel, and the
Divine Inspiration of His prophecies, have thus been manifested
to the world.

13. all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations] The pronoun this often
represents what is present to the writer's mind, and not to the reader's eye. See the remarkable example in Exod. xii. 12,
which has been misrepresented, and has been made the occasion of erroneous allegations.

The words "this book" here signify the book which God had in His own Divine eye, when He uttered these words, namely, the Book of Jeremiah's prophecies concerning foreign Nations, which are contained in chapters xvi.—xxi., and which are enclosed as in a separate Sepher, or Book, on account of their
contents.

In the same way Isaiah's burdens or prophecies concerning foreign Nations are placed together (Isa. xiii.—xxvii.), and Eze-
kiel's (xxv.—xxviii.). The framers of the Septuagint Version
have transferred these prophecies of Jeremiah concerning foreign
Nations to this place. But they have not arranged them in

Vol. V. Part II.—57
hath prophesied against all the nations. 14 o For many nations p

and great kings shall *serve themselves of them also: '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 *wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. 16 And *they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them.

17 Then took I the cup at the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the Lord had sent me: 18 to wit, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them "a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and *a curse; as it is this day; 19 *Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people; 20 and all *the mingled people, and all the kings of *the land of Uz, b and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Azjah, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod, 21 d Edom, and *Moab, and the children of *Ammon, 22 and all the kings of *Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the jiles which are beyond the *sea, 23 *Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all † that are in the utmost corners, 24 and *all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the mingled people that dwell in the desert, 25 and all the kings of Zimri, and all the kings of *a Elam, and all the kings of the Medes, 26 e 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.

the order of the Hebrew. A reason for the arrangement adopted by the Septuagint has been suggested elsewhere (see Introd.). The Arabic Version follows the Sept.; but the Syriac, Targum, and Targum coincides with the Hebrew.

The Sept. after r. 13 here inserts lxxii. 24—29. Then it goes back to chapter xlvi., then forward to chapters 1. and li.; then goes back to xvii., then onward to xlviii., in which it changes the order of verses; then goes back to xviii., then returns to xlv. 15, according to the following Table:

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<tr>
<th>Septuagint.</th>
<th>Hebrew Text.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chap.</td>
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<tr>
<td>xxxv. 14, &amp;c.</td>
<td>xxxiv. 31—39.</td>
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<td>xxxvi. 1—11</td>
<td>xlv. 2—12.</td>
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<td>xlvii. xxvii.</td>
<td>xlvii. 23—28.</td>
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<td>li.</td>
</tr>
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<td>7—22</td>
<td>xvii. 1—7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xlviii. 1—6</td>
<td>xvii. 8—13.</td>
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<td>6—11</td>
<td>xlv. 23—33.</td>
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<td>xxvii. 23—27.</td>
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14. many nations and great kings] Cyrus and his confederates.

15. Take the wine cup of this fury] Or rather, the cup of the wine of fury. This is to be carefully noted, for it is not a literal cup of real wine that the Prophet is invited to take. The whole action is symbolic. Op. A Lapide here. The cup is a cup of the wine of God's wrath. Op. Ps. lxxv. 8. Isa. li. 17; 22; below, xlii. 19. Ezek. xlii. 16, and especially the words in the Apocalypse, xiv. 10; xvi. 19; xix. 15, where the Harlot Church is constrained to drink the cup of the fury of God's anger, because she made the Nations to drink of the cup of her own abominations (xiv. 4; xlv. 6). The statement is said to take the cup at the Lord's hand, and to give it to the Nations to drink, because he is commissioned to declare the pouring forth of God's judgments upon them.

27 Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; 

Drink ye, and 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, I will begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts.

30 Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth.

31 A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath 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.

32 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

33 And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground. 

34 Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, ye principal of the flock: for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel. 

35 And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape. 

36 A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and 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 his covert, as the lion: for their land is desolate because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of his fierce anger.

XXVI. 1 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king
of Judah came this word from the Lord, saying, 2 Thus saith the Lord; Stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the Lord's house, 3 all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; 4 if so be they will hearken, and turn every man of his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil, which I have said to do unto them because of the evil of their doings. 4 And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord; 5 If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you, 6 to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising early, and sending them, but ye have not hearkened; 7 then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.

7 So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord. 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 in the entry of the new gate of the Lord's house.

11 Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is worthy to die; 12 for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.

13 Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. 14 Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God; and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you. 15 As for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you. 16 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.

17 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 that king's reign, in order to suggest to his readers an evidence, à fortiori, of God's mercy and forbearance to Jerusalem. God gave solemn denunciations to Jehezekiel and Jeremiah in Jehezekiel's fourth year. But He did more than this: He had sent a prophetic message of warning to him even at the beginning of his reign.

Such considerations as these will suggest the reasons for which Jeremiah's prophecies are not placed in chronological order. See above, on chap. xxi., Prelim. Note.

2. speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship] At one of the three great yearly festivals, perhaps the greatest, 1 of Tabernacles (Ushers), when the Jews from all cities came up to worship at Jerusalem, then Jeremiah was commanded to stand in the Court of the Temple, the great Court of Israel (Lightfoot). 6. why Shiloh] In which the Ark and Tabernacle formerly were, and which was destroyed for the sins of Israel. See above, on vii. 12. 14. — a curse See xxxix. 22. 8. the priests and the prophets] The Priests and Prophets 60 were more bitter against Jeremiah, a Priest and a Prophet, than the princes were. See e. 16. The princes were those of the king's household, and are distinguished from the elders, the rulers of the whole land (v. 17: cp. xxxvii. 15; xxxviii. 5. 25). Observe Jeremiah's candour and discrimination. He does not exaggerate his own sufferings, or the sins of his Nation; he is careful to record the acts of kindness he received from the princes, and also from the elders of the land (v. 16, 17).

So St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, records the wise and merciful counsel of Gamaliel (v. 34), as a contrast to the cruel and unjust acts of other members of the Sanhedrin.

9. This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant] They take up Jeremiah's words in vii. 12. 14; and ix. 11.

10. new gate] The east gate (Targum).

11. This man is worthy to die] Literally, a sentence of death (is) for this man; and they demand that it should be executed.

name of the Lord our God. 17 "Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spake to all the assembly of the people, saying, 18 p Micah 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; a Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest. 19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? b did he fear the Lord, and besought the Lord, and the Lord repented of the evil which he had pronounced against them? c Thus might we procure great evil against our souls.

20 And there was also a man that prophesied in the name of the Lord, Urijah the son of Shemaiah of Kirjath-jearim, who prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah: 21 and when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men, and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death: but when Urijah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and went into Egypt; 22 and Jehoiakim the king sent men into Egypt, namely, Elnathan the son of Achbor, and certain men with him into Egypt. 23 And they fetched forth Urijah out of Egypt, and brought him unto Jehoiakim the king; who slew him with the sword, and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people. 24 Nevertheless the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

XXVII. 1 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,
Thus saith the Lord to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck; 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; and command them to say unto their masters, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say unto your masters; 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 have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.

"This is another text, which the objector (Tward) finds fault with, as making the Prophets act like madmen or idiots. But his censure is without foundation. As to the nature of the command here given by God to the Prophet, I take it to be in part theoretical, and in part a revelation of the Lord’s purpose; showing in a lively way what should be the fate of Zedekiah, and of the other kings in league with him. Jeremiah is commanded in another place to take the wine cup of God’s fury, and to cause all the nations whom he should be sent to to drink it; and it follows, ‘Then took I the wine cup in my hand, and made all the nations to drink,—which means only that he prophesied against them, and pronounced their doom. In like manner, his sending the yokes and bonds to the princes mentioned, seems to mean nothing more than his declaring from God the fate of those princes, by the token and under the metaphor of yokes and bonds, to enliven the idea, and to make the prophecy more solemn and emphatical. The words of our learned John Smith of Chippenham (vol. vii. pp. 229, 230), ‘The Prophet’s purpose, are here worth inserting: ‘Just in the same mode with this (of the Rechabites) we have another story told’ (xxv. 15. 17, &c.) of his taking a wine-cup from God, and his carrying it up and down, far and near Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings and princes thereof; to Pharaoh, King of Egypt, and his servants, princes, and people; to all the Arabians, and kings of the land of Uz; to the kings of the land of the Philistines; Edom, Moab, Ammon, the kings of Tyre, and Sidon, and of the isles beyond the sea, Dodan, Teman, Hur, the kings of Zimri, of the Medes, and Persians, and all the kings of the North; and all these he made to drink of the cup. And in this fashion (chap. xxvii.), he is sent up and down with yokes to those kings whom he is to prophesy against (xxvii. 1—24). He had some confirmation and comfort from above. The present vision gave him what he required. It afforded him an assurance that God had indeed spoken to him, and that God would be with His Prophet and protect him. He was sent to edify the godly, and to comfort them in the days of their adversity. It was a word of comfort, a word of assurance, that the true Church had an indissoluble bond of union with the Lord, a bond which the Lord himself strengthened and enriched. A king came to the throne of Judah, whose original name was Mattaniah, but was changed by Nebuchadnezzar to Zedekiah (2 Kings xxiv. 17). Here was one evidence of the reality of the communication from God and of Jeremiah’s divine commission. And this evidence was further confirmed by the arrival of certain ambassadors at Jerusalem from those very countries which God had specified to Jeremiah. As is well said by Calisi here, ‘Prophets have, like the prophets of old, ventured against theراحة סִכָּאָנוֹן שִׁילְכָה, data tanen anta eret, et dia depara in sin Prophetes, ut cum certo sicret id quod incrediblem aliis erat, felicitatem loco vaticino, nec in cursu suo defeceret.’ The Prophet was sent to the throne, and those ambassadors had arrived, in the fourth year of his reign (see xxviii. I compared with xxvii. 12), then Jeremiah, being assured by the events that had now taken place, went boldly to the King and delivered his message. As he says, v. 12, ‘I spake also to Zede- kiah king of Judah, according to all the words that were come. Bring your necks under the yoke of the King of Babylon.’

In the New Testament we have a similar instance of a vision revealed by God many years before it was declared to the world by the person to whom it was revealed. See below, on 2 Cor. xii. 2.

2. Make thee bonds and yokes? It seems that only one yoke was made (signifying the one yoke of Babylon to be put on those nations, v. 15), and that Jeremiah put this on his own neck, and wore it (xxvii. 10).

6. The words of Dr. Waterland on this passage deserve insertion here:—

7 h And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son’s son, until the very time of his land come: k and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. 8 And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand.

9 Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your enchanter, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon: l 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. 10 But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke 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 necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live. 13 n 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 a lie unto you.

15 For I have not sent them, saith the Lord, yet they prophesy a lie in my name; that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you.

16 Also I spake to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus saith the Lord; Hearken 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. 17 Hearken not unto them; serve the king of Babylon, and live: wherefore should this city be laid waste? 18 But if they be prophets, and if the word of the Lord be with them, let them now make intercession to the Lord of hosts, that the 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 the bases, and concerning the residue of the vessels that remain in this city, 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; 21 yea, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain in the house of the Lord, and in the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem; 22 they shall be r carried to Babylon, and there shall they be until the day that I s visit them, saith the Lord; then s will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.

7. his son, and his son’s son] Evil Merodach, his son, and Nabonuus, with whom Belshazzar was associated as regent. See on Dan. v. 2. 11; and Pusey on Daniel, p. 402; and W. Lowth here.

12. Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon] The conduct of Jeremiah, counselling Zedekiah and Jerusalem to submit to Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, has been represented as an act of political prudence, to be imitated by Statesmen and Ecclesiastics, who are thereby justified in making large concessions of public rights and national independence in times of public emergency (Stanley, Lect. 534).

But was it not rather one of religious duty? God had revealed to the Prophet that he had given the Nation into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. “His servant,” on account of their sins, and they must submit to him as the Minister and Viceregent of God. 16. the vessels] Taken away by Nebuchadnezzar in the days of Jehoiakim and Jeconiah (2 Kings xxiv. 13. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7. 10. Dan. i. 2). On the genuineness of these verses, 16—21, see Keil, 327.

22. then will I bring them up] Fulfilled by Cyrus. See on Ezra i. 7; v. 13, 14.
Jeremiah foretells

XXVIII. 1 And 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, spoke unto me in the house of the Lord, in the presence of the priests and of all the people, saying, 2 Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. 3 Within 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: and I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the 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, even the prophet Jeremiah said, 6 Amen: the Lord do so; the Lord perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring and I affirm that the yoke of the King of Babylon is taken off, and will be broken by the Lord in two years, as I take and break the yoke which thou hearest on thy neck (vv. 10, 11, 12); and I assert that the yoke will be broken in the second full year. And yet more, I affirm that another King of Jerusalem, now a captive at Babylon, Jeconiah, will be restored also (vv. 4); and I challenge thee publicly, in the Court of the Temple, in the presence of the Priests and People, to contradict me.

The confidence of Hananiah in making these assertions may seem surprising. It is probably to be explained by the fact mentioned in the foregoing chapter, that a powerful league had just been formed by the neighbouring nations of Palestine on the south of the kingdom of Judah, and the End time, as every prophet foresaw, was at hand, and the prophecies were intended to stimulate Ahaz and Jehoshaphat to go up together against Ramoth Gilead (1 Kings xxii. 10–12). Jeremiah was the Maccabaeus of this crisis. Jeremiah's courage did not fail him; he had been strengthened by the fulfilment of the vision which he had seen about fourteen years before. See xxvii. 1. He allowed Hananiah to take the yoke off his neck, and to break it (vv. 10, 12); and he said to Hananiah, "Thou hast broken the yokes of wood" (i.e. the yoke on my neck, representing the many yokes on the necks of the nations); "but thou shalt make them yokes of iron," that is, "the wooden yoke has disappeared; but the reason is, because the harder yoke,—one of iron,—which that yoke symbolized, remains, which thou canst not break, but which thou makest by inspiring Zedekiah and his allied nations with vain hopes, and by encouraging them to revolt, and thus teaching them rebellion against the Lord (v. 16), whose servant Nebuchadnezzar is (xxvii. 6), and to whom Zedekiah has taken an oath of allegiance (2 Kings xxiv. 17, 2 Chron. xxviii. 13, Ezek. xviii. 15, 18): so that in rebelling against him, they rebel against God, whose Prophet thou pretendest to be. And since thou hast spoken twice concerning "two years," within which thou sayest the things thou hast prophesied will come to pass, I am sent by the Lord to prophesy to thee, and say that within one year, even in this year, thou shalt die, because thou maketh God's people to trust in a lie (v. 15), and teachest rebellion against the Lord (v. 16)."

So it came to pass. The false Prophet, who had said that the things he had foretold would come to pass within two years, died within two months of his own prophecy (v. 17: cp. 2 Chron. xxiv. 4).

Thus Jeremiah received another assurance of his own divine mission, and a fresh encouragement to execute his work with boldness as a Prophet of the Lord. And here was a public proof to the King, the Priests, and the People, that Hananiah was a false prophet, and that Jeremiah was a true one; and here was a practical exhortation, given by God's mercy to them, to listen to Jeremiah, the Prophet of the Lord, who foretold destruction to Jerusalem, if they did not repent; and not to be deceived by false prophets, who promised peace and safety, and thus hindered the work of Repentance and Reformation, and hurried their country to destruction.
again the vessels of the Lord's house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place. 7 Nevertheless hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people; 8 the prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. 9 The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him.

10 Then Hananiah the prophet took the 'yoke 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 from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

12 Then the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah the prophet, after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying, 13 Go and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord; Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron. 14 For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and I have given him the beasts of the field also.

15 Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The Lord hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. 16 Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord. 17 So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

XXIX. 1 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; 2 (after that Jecomeniah the king, and the queen, and the 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; 5 Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; 6 take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons

Jeremiah's Letter to the Captive Exiles in Babylonia.

Ch. XXIX. 1. the residue of the elders] That is, those who still survived, and who are mentioned by Ezekiel (vii. 1; xiv. 1; xx. 1). Many probably had died by the sword, or by the hardships of the captivity. 2. the prophets] Among whom was Ezekiel (6.3) and Daniel (l. 6); but perhaps the reference here is to false prophets also (v. 8).

2. the queen] The queen mother of Jehoiachin (2 Kings xxiv. 12. 15; above, viii. 19). — and the eunuchs] Not in apposition with the princes, but a different class; though some of the princes may have been reduced to that condition by the conqueror; cp. 2 Kings xx. 18. Isa. xxxix. 7, which prophetic passages were perhaps in Jeremiah's mind.

— the smiths] See xxiv. 1. 3. whom Zedekiah—sent unto Babylon] Cp. ii. 59. Perhaps Zedekiah sent these ambassadors to Babylon with the tribute he was bound to pay as a subject of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. Ezek. xvii. 15—19), and to delude him by promises of obedience, when he was perfidiously conspiring against Nebuchadnezzar, and was forming a league with other Nations, in order that he might rebel against him (cp. xxvii. 3). For such conduct as this Zedekiah had been condemned to infancy by Ezekiel (xvii. 16—19; cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19).
The captivity will last seventy years.

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, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.

9 For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the Lord. For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. 11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. 12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. 13 And ye shall seek for me, with all your heart. 14 And I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

15 Because ye have said, The Lord hath raised us up prophets in Babylon; 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 sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil. 18 And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, 19 to a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them: because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the Lord, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets.
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 of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you in my name; Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall slay them before your eyes; 22 and of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Judah which are in Babylon, saying, The Lord make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, 23 whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire; 24 because 'they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded them; even I know, and am a witness, saith the Lord.

25 Thus shalt thou also speak to Shemaiah the Nehelamite, saying, 26 Thus spakest thou the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, Because thou hast sent letters in thy name unto all the people that are at Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the priests, saying, The Lord hath made thee priest in the stead of Jehoiada the priest, that ye should be officers in the house of the Lord, for every man that is mad, and maketh himself a prophet, that thou shouldest put him in prison, and in the stocks.

27 Now therefore why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a prophet to you? 28 For therefore he sent unto us in Babylon, saying, This captivity is long: build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them. 29 And Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the ears of Jeremiah the prophet.

30 Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah, saying, 31 Send to all of them of the captivity, saying, Thus saith the Lord concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite; Because that Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, and he caused you to trust in a lie: therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed; he shall not have a man to dwell among this people; neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith the Lord; because he hath taught rebellion against the Lord.

XXX. 1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying,
of judgment and captivity for sin are here succeeded by promises of mercy and restoration to Jerusalem—promises to be fulfilled in the bringing back of all true Israelites to God by the Divine Deliverer and Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

This joyful transition is marked by a sudden change from grave and mournful accents in solemn prose, to a jubilant outburst of poetic ecstasy.


This prophecy was not only a book, but to be written in a book, because it was addressed not only to Judah but to Israel, scattered abroad in all regions of the East; and because the prophecy could not reach them, unless copies of it were transcribed and disseminated in all those different countries where they were dispersed; and because it was addressed to all true Israelites—all children of Abraham's faith—in every age and nation, even until the end of the World.

3. I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Juda] The Ten Tribes, as well as the Two, will be restored to the favour of God, and be reconciled in Christ. See Ezek. xx. 40; xxviii. 25, 26; xxxvii. 6, 21, 22.

This prophecy foretells the return of Israel and Judah in the Gospel. That it relates to Christ, is evident from the glorious promises which are contained in it, and which cannot be said to have been fulfilled in the return of the comparatively scanty band of exiles from Babylon, but which was fulfilled in part on the Day of Pentecost, and will be wholly accomplished when the Jews, together with the fulness of the Gentiles, are brought into the heavenly "Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all" (Gal. iv. 26). Cp. above, on Ps. lxxxvii.

6. Ask ye now] The distress and anguish of Jerusalem is described as that of a woman in travail (cp. iv. 31; vi. 24; xiii. 21; xiii. 23; xlix. 24; l. 43. Is. xiii. 7, 8; xii. 3. Hosen xiii. 12, 13); and this is a day of trouble for Israel also, because by the destruction of Jerusalem all their hopes of restoration seem to be extinguished.

8. in that day] The day of restoration is contrasted with the day of destruction. In that day, the yoke of Babylon, which Jeremiah had symbolized by his own act, at God's command (xxvii. 2. 12), will be broken from the neck of Judah; and this phrase, that day, doubtless is to be extended in a larger sense "to the day of Christ's Coming," when all Israel would be delivered from a worse yoke than that of Babylon. Cp. Is. x. 27. Ezek. xxxiv. 27.

9. they shall serve the Lord—and David their king] This must be applied to Christ, and to Israel's restoration in Him. For, at the return of Judah, under Zerubbabel, the Hebrew Monarchy was not restored, and they did not serve "David their King," and therefore the Targum has here, "They shall obey the Messiah, the Son of David, Whom I will raise up to them;" and so Kimchi, Aben Ezra, Abarbenel. Compare below, on the prophecies of Jeremiah's contemporary, Ezek. xxiv. 23; xxvii. 24, 25. Isa. iv. 3. Hos. iii. 5; and By. Pearson on the Creed (Art. v. p. 280). "Christ, in respect of His Kingdom, is often called David;" Efracher, Dubia, p. 400; Nagel, 200.

10. fear thou not, O my servant Jacob] He takes up the words of Isaiah, and reminds them of God's promises by him (xlii. 8; xliii. 5; xlii. 2).
Neither be dismayed, O Israel:
For, lo, I will save thee from afar,
And thy seed from the land of their captivity;
And Jacob shall return,
And shall be in rest, and be quiet,
And none shall make him afraid.

For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee:

For I will make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee,
Yet will I not make a full end of thee:
But I will correct thee in measure,
And will not leave thee altogether unpunished.

For thus saith the Lord,
Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous.
There is none to plead thy cause, † that thou mayest be bound up:
Thou hast no healing medicines.
All thy lovers have forgotten thee;
They seek thee not;
For I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy,
With the chastisement of a cruel one,
For the multitude of thine iniquity;
Because thy sins were increased.

Why 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.
Therefore all they that devour thee shall be devoured;
And all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity;
And they that spoil thee shall be a spoil,
And all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey,

For I will restore health unto thee,
And I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord;
Because they called thee an Outcast, saying,
This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.

Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents,
And have mercy on his dwelling places;
And the city shall be built up upon her own heap,
And the palace shall remain after the manner thereof.

And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving,
call thee an outcast, and because no human help can restore thee, therefore I will heal thee, and consume thine enemies.

I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents] Cp. Amos ix. 11, 12 quoted by St. James, at the Council of Jerusalem, as a prophecy concerning the restoration of the Tabernacle of David, and the reception of the Gentiles into it, in the Church of Christ (Acts xv. 16, 17).

— and the city — manner thereof] Rather, and city (there is no article in the original) will be built again on its own hill (Heb. tel), where its ruins lie (cp. Dnt. xiii. 16; Josh. vii. 28; below, xlix. 2) and palace after its former right manner (Gesen. 520).

The Royalty and Priesthood of Christ.

Out of the midst of the restored cities and palaces of Israel.
And the voice of them that make merry:

But I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.

Their children also shall be as of time, and their congregation shall be established before me. And I will punish all that oppress them.

And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their Governor shall proceed from the midst of them. And I will 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.

And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

Behold, the whirlwind of the Lord goeth forth with fury, a continuing whirlwind:

It shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked.

The fierce anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have done it, and until he have performed the intents of his heart:

In the latter days ye shall consider it.

22 xxxi. 1 At the same time, saith the Lord, Will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.

2 Thus saith the Lord, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; Even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest.

3 The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love:

21. their nobles shall be of themselves] Rather, their mighty One (the Messiah) shall spring forth from him (i.e. from Israel); as the Chaldee Targum paraphrases it, "Their King shall be appointed from among them, and the Messiah shall be revealed from the midst of them." The Mighty One here promised was to be of Israel's flesh and blood. Cp. Gen. xlix. 10; Deut. xxxii. 18. Israel shall no more be ruled by foreigners, but by their own Mighty One (Hebr. Addir), the epiteth given to the Name of God Himself in the Psalm which foreshadows the Incarnation of Christ (Ps. vii. 1. 9; cp. Ps. xxii. 4. Isa. xxxiii. 21.)

— And I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me] That is, He shall draw near to Me, as My Priest, to minister unto Me. Both the verbs here used (kôrêb and nîqûgh) are specially employed to designate the drawing near of a Priest to the Sanctuary and Altar, to offer sacrifice before the Lord (Gesen. Lev. xxii. 22. Lev. xii. 17. Num. xvi. 40; xvii. 13. Exod. xxviii. 43; xxx. 20.

— For he is this—approach unto me] I will call Him to be My Priest, and I will cause Him to draw near to me to offer sacrifice. Such a call is necessary. For who among the sons of men, without such a call, hath engag'd his heart, that is, hath ventured his life, i.e. will dare (see Gen. 651) to draw near unto Me as My Priest, and to offer oblations before Me? Will he not be deterred from such rashness and presumption by the solemn warning which God has given in the awful death of Korah and his company? Cp. Num. iv. 15; 20; viii. 10; xvi. 5. 17. 28.

As the Apostle says (Heb. v. 4–6), "No man taketh this honour upon himself, but he is called of God, even as Aaron. So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest, but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee (Ps. ii. 7). As He saith also in another place, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Ps. c.).

Compare also the remarkable words concerning Christ, the Prophet, Priest, and King of all true Israelites, in that mysterious prophecy below, chap. xlix. 19.

22. ye shall be my people, and I will be your God] This has now been fulfilled in Christ. See Heb. viii. 10. Rev. xxi. 3.


Continuation and enlargement of the Prophecy of Israel's Restoration in Christ.

Ch. xxxi.] The Church has taught us to recognize the Evangelical character of this prophecy, by appointing it to be read as a Proper Lesson on the Thursday before Easter.

1. At the same time] In the latter days, the days of the Messiah (xxx. 24).

3. In the latter days] When I went to bring Israel to rest, out of Egypt, the land of bondage. This gracious dispensation of rest, contrasted with the servile labour of Egypt, is made a ground for the observance of the Sabbath, the weekly day of rest, which has its consummation in Christ. See above, on Deut. v. 15.

For an excellent exposition of this chapter in a Christian sense, see Calvina, Bibl. illust., pp. 440–455.

3. The Lord hath appeared of old] Or rather, from afar. Israel in his dispersion among the heathen, at a distance from his home, here speaks; his heart, like that of the Prodigal in the Parable, is touched with a feeling of his Father's love, and with penitential sorrow for his own sins, and with earnest longing to return to his Father's home (Luke xv. 17–19).

— saying] This word, not in the original, would be better omitted. The desire of penitent Israel receives an immediate response of love from God, as the yearning of the Prodigal is met by the gracious acts of the Father, running towards him when yet a great way off, and falling on his neck and kissing him (Luke xvi. 20).
Therefore || with lovingkindness have I framed thee.

4 Again "I will build thee, And thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: Thou shalt again be adorned with thy || tabrets, And shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry.

5 Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: The planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things.

6 For there shall be a day, That the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion Unto the Lord our God.

7 For thus saith the Lord; 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.

8 Behold, I will bring them in from the north country, And will 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.

— Therefore with lovingkindness] Rather, therefore I draw out, I prolong, or extend, perpetual longsuffering and love they then, (Ps. xxvii. 10;) lxxxv. 6; Isaiah lv. 8, 10; Gesen. 516, and see the margin.

4. I will build thee—O virgin] This metaphor, which may appear harsh in English, is to be explained from the use of the Hebrew verb banah, to build, as applied to the building up a family of sons (banim) and daughters (banoth), who are like living stones of the household, built up from the mother, wedded as a Virgin Bride to her husband. This promise is more graciously, when given to one who had been long barren, (like Sarah, Cp. Gen. xvi. 2; xxx. 3, margin; and see Gen. ii. 22.)

Well and truly may it be said that Jerusalem and Samaria were built up again in Christ. He restored the ancient Church of God, which had well-nigh fallen into ruins in Judaea and Samaria, and adorned them with spiritual grace and heavenly beauty in the Gospel (A Lopide).

— tabrets, timbrels, covered with membrane, and hung with brass bells (Exod. xx. 20; Judg. xi. 34; Gesen. 871).

5. Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: This was fulfilled literally in part, in the restoration under Zerubbabel. Spiritually, it was accomplished in the planting of the Vineyards of Christian Churches in Samaria by the hand of Christ Himself (John iv. 19—45); and of Evangelical Teachers, such as Philip the Deacon, and of the Apostles St. Peter and St. John (Acts viii. 5; 6; 14; ix. 31). Compare the similar language in Isa. lxv. 21; and the note there; and see Ezek. xx. 44—41; and xxxiv. 29—31. "Hoc intelligimus de Ecclesia," says S. Jerome; and see A Lopide here.

With regard to the Evangelical character of these prophecies generally, we may cite the words of S. Jerome, on chap. xxx., expressing the judgment of the Ancient Church of Christ upon them. "Who," he says, "following the authority of Apostles and Evangelists, especially of St. Paul, affirm that whatever was promised to Israel according to the flesh, has been fulfilled, and is in course of fulfilment in us, who are Christians."

Jeremiah here expounds and develops the prophecies of Isaiah (chap. lixvi.), and prepares the way for Ezekiel. See below, on Ezek. xxxiv., xxxvii., xxxix.

— shall eat them as common things] Shall enjoy them as their own; of Ps. xcv. shall profane them. Here is an allusion to the Levitical Law (Lev. xix. 23—26; Dent. xx. 6; xxviii. 30); according to which the first three years produce of a newly-planted vine or other fruit tree was not to be eaten, but to be regarded as "unclean and unceremonised;" that of the fourth was to be dedicated as a holy offering to the Lord; that of the fifth might be applied to common uses. See Ainsworth on Lev. xix. 25.

6. Ephraim and Zion] The envy of Ephraim (Israel) and Judah shall cease in those happy times. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim (Isa. xi. 13). The schism of Jeroboam shall have been healed in the Captivity. See Intro. to Kings and Chronicles, p. xviii; and to Ezra, p. 290. No longer, then, did Israel endeavour to draw away worshippers from Sion; they themselves went up to Jerusalem to worship with their brethren of Judah there, and they exhorted others to do so.

The prophecy will receive its full accomplishment, when Israel and Judah are joined together in one stick in Christ, as the Prophet Ezekiel represents them (see below, on Ezek. xxvii. 16—19; cp. above, ill. 18; xxx. 3; and below, Ezek. xxxvi. 6. 22. Hos. i. 11), in the Church of Christ, which, going forth from Sion, unfolders the World. "Hoc intelligimus in Sion, hoc est in Ecclesiis," says S. Jerome. According to this view, the watchmen here mentioned are the Preachers of the Gospel.

7. shout among the chief of the nations] Rather, shout upon, that is, rejoice, because Jacob, which had been made to be the lowest of the nations in its captivity, is now become the chief of the Nations in Christ, Who springs from it. Cp. Amos vi. 1.

— save thy people] Hosea. See Ps. cxviii. 25—words adopted by the people at the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem (Matt. xxvi. 9).

8. I will bring them from the north country—thither] This promise, which received its primary fulfilment in the return of Judah, under Zerubbabel, will have its perfect accomplishment in the return of Israel to God in the true Spiritual Sion, the Church of Christ, which, having gone forth from Sion, in the days of the Apostles, will at length embrace the World. See above, on Isa. lii. 1—4; lux. 20; lx. —lixii.; lxv. 18; lxvi. 7—10; below, on Ezek. xx. 34—41; xxxiv. 13.

The residue of Israel is gathered together by means of Apostles and Apostolic men, whom the Prophecy has just described as watchmen crying from the hill, and to whom a commission is given to shout among the nations, that the remnant of Israel may be saved. And the Lord here promises that He will bring them from the North (a word expressive of the captivity, and misery at Babylon: cp. iv. 6; vi. 22); and they who were before blind in unbelief, and halting in the faith, will see Christ, and exult in Christ; and they will be accompanied by others, who, by preaching of the Gospel, are ready to bring forth spiritual children to Christ. See Gal. iv. 10. Philm. 10. Cp. S. Jerome here.
Jeremiah XXXI. 9—15. Rachel, weeping, is comforted.

9. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications: Israel shall come with tears of repentance for their sins in having rebelled against God, and in having rejected His merciful offers, especially in Christ and the Gospel, and with supplications for pardon and grace through Him. See below, Zech. xii. 10. There ought to be a stop after "supplications." The words, "I will lead them," begin a new sentence.

— Ephraim is my firstborn] Ephraim was the representative of Israel, and of Joseph, who succeeded to the right of primogeniture, forfeited by Reuben. See Gen. xlix. 22. 1 Chron. v. 2.

These words have also a spiritual sense, and signify that Israel, formerly separated from God by Schism and Idolatry, will be reconciled to Him, and be dear to Him as a firstborn in Christ.

 Cp. Exod. iv. 22; below, v. 20; and the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke xv. 11—32), where Israel is represented as the firstborn son, and the Gentile world as the younger.

10. Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations—declare it in the isles.] "Perspicuit vocatio gentium hic demonstratur" (S. Jerome).

12. of Zion] See above, v. 6. "Lovehaut Liberatorum suorum deponent Sion, hoc est in Ecclesiâ et confidunt ab hostibus Donini, sellicit ad Verbum Eius et Sacramenta" (see S. Jerome).


Rachel weeping for her Children.

15—17. A voice was heard in Ramah—border.] The Prophet has been speaking of the sorrow of Ephraim, who sprang from Rachel through Joseph. He now looks forward to the siege of Jerusalem, and represents Rachel as weeping for her children, about to be slain by the Chaldean invaders, when they would destroy Jerusalem, which was situated partly in the tribe of Benjamin, the son of Rachel (who died in giving him birth), and when they would ravage its neighbourhood (see the Chaldean Targum here). Jeremiah, the Prophet of Anathoth in Benjamin, might justly be moved in the prospect of such a calamity.

The Holy Spirit, speaking by St. Matthew, informs us, that when He (the same spirit who inspired that Evangelist) uttered these words through (δι' αυτοῦ) the Prophet Jeremiah, He had also in His Divine mind the massacre of the Innocents by Herod at Bethlehem, and in the neighbourhood of it. And He teaches us that the prophecy, which had a primary fulfilment in the murder of the children of Rachel by the Chaldeans, received its complete accomplishment in the murder of the Innocents by Herod at Bethlehem, and was exhausted by it (Matt. ii. 17, 18). "Quia Rachel in Ephrathâ, hoc est in Bethlehem, condita est, sicut et Scriptura Sancta (Gen. xxxv. 18—20) et titulus sepulchri ejus hodiéque testatur" (says S. Jerome, who dwelt there), "hunc dictur puerus, qui justa se et in suis regionibus interfecit sunt." Some Jews in S. Jerome's time (as he informs us), applied this prophecy to the massacre of the Jews at Jerusalem, and to the south of it, under Titus, and afterwards under Hadrian. Cp. Caloghis, Bibl. Illust. p. 448. And this interpretation has its uses, as showing that they did not connect it with Ramah, to the north of Jerusalem, as has been done by many modern critics, who have excepted against St. Matthew's application of this prophecy. They allege, that the place where Rachel was buried was not near Bethlehem, to the south of Jerusalem (notwithstanding the assertion in Gen. xxxv. 19), but at the Ramah of Samuel, about five miles to the north of Jerusalem.

This affirmation is made on the authority of 1 Sam. x. 2, where Rachel's tomb (it is asserted) is placed in the neighbourhood of Samuel's city, which was Ramah, or Ramathaim Zophim, to the north of Jerusalem (Theneus, Bertheau, Knobel, Graf, Négel, and others); and it is asserted by these critics, that Jeremiah is here speaking of that Ramah. But the grounds of these asseverations are very precarious. It is not said in 1 Sam. x. 2, that the city, where Samuel was at the time to which that narrative refers, was Ramah, to the north of Jerusalem. And inasmuch as Ramah, which signifies high place, was a common name in Palestine (cp. Thomas, "The Land and the Book," p. 615; and the Vulgate here
Lamentation, and bitter weeping;
Rachel weeping for her children.
Refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.

Thus saith the Lord;
Refrain thy voice from weeping,
And thine eyes from tears:
For thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord;
And they shall come again from the land of the enemy.
And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord,
That thy children shall come again to their own border.

I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus;
Thou hast chastised me,
And I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke:

has "Vox in excelsa audita est") and the Targum has "Vox in excelsa mundi," there seems no valid reason for doubting that there was a Ramah near Bethlehem, and near Rachel's tomb, the site of which is still marked by local tradition in that neighbourhood. See above note on Gen. xxxv. 19. Cp. Grose, B. D. ii. p. 999. "Rachel refused to be comforted for her children, because they are not." But the Holy Spirit, who foresees the Birth of Christ at Bethlehem, near the place where Rachel was buried, comforts her with the glorious assurance, that her children, especially those Innocents whose death was consequent on Christ's Birth, and who were unconscious martyrs to Him, will "come again from the land of the enemy" (especially the last enemy, Death) to their own home, and will be restored to her arms by Him Who is "the Resurrection and the Life" (John xi. 25); and that her childhbrd thres and maternal anguish for them will be rewarded. Therefore there is hope for her own future lot and theirs, whatever may be the sufferings and sorrows of the present time. Cp. below, on Matt. ii. 17.

"We understand these words thus" (says an Ancient Father): "The Innocents, who shed their blood for Christ, will hereafter receive their reward, and will come to the Kingdom of Heaven, a better country than the land of Herod; and they will return to their own border, when, instead of a body of dishonour, they will receive a body of glory. This is that last hope to be realized at the Great Day, when the righteous will shine as the sun, and when infants can laugh and sucklings will come to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of Christ, without any addition to their earthly age, and without any toil or pain to their bodies." (S. Jerome). Compare note above, on Isa. lv. 20.

The Church has taught us to acknowledge the evangelical meaning of this prophecy (1—18), by appointing it to be read on the Festival of the Holy Innocents.

The following exposition is from one of the soundest divines of the present generation, Dr. W. H. Mill:

"I will first consider the citation of Jeremiah's prophecy concerning Rachel deploring her lost children, as referring to the infant massacre in the environs of Bethlehem. There can be little doubt of the occasion and immediate reference of that prophecy, that being what the modern Critics allege, as does the ancient Targum; viz., the assemblage at Ramah of Benjamin, by the captain of the Chaldean guard, of the unfortunate captives whom he was carrying away from their country to Babylon, for her children. Such are the poetical ascription to Rachel, the mother of Benjamin, who had died in labour of that youngest patriarch of Israel, while journeying with Jacob from Bethel through Ramah to Bethlehem Ephrata, and whose tomb was conspicuous in the close vicinity of the last-named city. It was to be the border of his tribe (Gen. xxxi. 17—20; xlviii. 7, and 1 Sam. x. 2)."

"It is true also, that the consolation offered to her, on account of her children's exile ('that they are not') is, that they shall be restored from the hand of the enemy; and be 'reconciled to their own border': a promise connected apparently with those later-verse,s with similar hopes respecting her first-born, Joseph, the father of Ephraim, whose previous more hopeless captivity should be terminated at some future time by his sharing with his brother Benjamin the blessings of restored Judah.

"Shall we, then, call this an application or accommodation of the Old Testament passage to things beyond its immediate visible occasion? There would be no need to scruple the term, if it were not meant (by the critics who use it) to imply that this accommodation was arbitrary on the part of the Evangelist (St. Matthew, ii. 17, 18), or that the mind of the Spirit, that spoke by Jeremiah, does not most fully include this application.

"But, this being meant, we are concerned to repudiate the proposition, and to appeal to the ample range of the prophecy itself, as forbidding this restriction of its import. Since the restoration enlarged on from the 16th to the 26th verses has circumstances in it never realized at the return from Babylon, since, in the 31st and following verses, it stretches onward to a New Covenant made with Israel and Judah, which should supersede even the Mosaic Covenant of old—a Covenant that was to confer internal righteousness and the forgiveness of sins, and such as none claimed to establish with the nation, beside Him Whose wonderful Birth is understood to be implied in the 22nd verse—we think it most reasonable to believe that the distress of the 16th verse is not necessarily confined to the case of these deported captives of Benjamin, among whom the Prophet of Nathaniel had lived.

"And as the Coming of the Great Deliverer is the principal end to which all Prophecy is directed, the only procuring cause of those ampler blessings, with the hope of which Jeremiah is throughout sustaining his suffering countrymen, the people of God, we hold that the afflictions which more immediately preceded Christ's Mediation and its results, those especially by which His first Manifestation to mankind was signalized, lay entirely within the scope of the Divine Spirit in making these consolations. Rachel was not more stirred from her grave, near Bethlehem Ephrata, by the tearing of her children from their natal soil, in the distant days of Jeremiah, than by the calamity which, at an age not much more distant, filled with sharper anguish all the mothers of Benjamin and of Judah in the immediate neighbourhood of her tomb; and the comfort for the earlier sorrow, which, as representing the mother of Israel, she receives from the Prophet, in the assurance that her children, now lost, should return to her bosom (a promise personally fulfilled but not to few, if any, of those exiles), is applicable in a higher sense to the representative Mother, with respect to children taken out of this world by tyrannic power, but for whom a redemption from death and the grave, a return from worse chains than those of Babylon, had been purchased by the Saviour on Whose account they died.

"By the exegesis which recognizes nothing beyond human authorship in the construal of these Divine oracles, such inclusion of remote particulars under the same category will be pronounced unscriptural, or even absurd; but it will not, I trust, so appear to those who reverently mark the progress of the Divine economy and the development of the mystery of Redemption. There are other matters necessary to the right understanding of sacred prophecies beside the bare rules (which no sane man despises) of grammatical interpretation" (Dr. W. H. Mill on the application of Pantheistic Principles to the Text and Historic Criticism of the Gospel, Part II. chap. iii. P. 402).

18. I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself.] After declaring God's grace to Israel, the Prophet foretells that Israel will repent; first, in the Babylonish Captivity, which humbled and tuned him who was before like an unruly heifer; and, secondly, and more fully, that Israel will turn to God in Christ. In both cases, he is to be restored on his penitence and supplication for pardon and grace.
Israel, repenting, is pardoned. JEREMIAH XXXI. 19—22. A woman shall compass a man.

19. after that I was turned. By Thee; for I cannot turn myself by my own strength. Some render this, After I turned away from Thee (Ps. i. 12; viii. 4; xiv. 22 (Hitzig, Graf, Nögel). But the other sense seems preferable. There is a reference here to Deuteronomy xxxi. 2.

19. I smote upon my thigh. In penitential sorrow, remorse, and shame. Cp. Ex. xxv. 17. — the reproach of my youth. The burden of punishment and shame due to the sins of my youth, my former estate, even since the Exodus from Egypt (iii. 25; xxii. 21).

20. Is Ephraim my dear son? Yes, surely, he is; do not doubt it, although he is punished; this is the chastisement of love, that he may repent and be saved.

21. waymarks — high heaps. The first were stone pillars and other similar tokens. Cp. 2 Kings xxii. 17; Isa. i. 14; lii. 10. Ezek. xxxix. 15. The second were heaps of stones, raised up on the way side, to show to dispersed Israel the way back to Zion and to God.

22. How long wilt thou go about, O thou low backsliding daughter? For the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man.

A WOMAN SHALL COMPASS A MAN.

— the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man. Israel, which is compared to a backsliding daughter—an incessant wife—is exalted to return with repentance and with faith to God in Christ (as the whole drift of the prophecy shows), and is encouraged to do so by a gracious and wondrous token of God's love, which the Holy Spirit here reveals as already present to His divine eye, viz. The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man.

The thing here specified is declared to be a new thing—a thing hitherto unprecedented—a thing to be created by the Lord, and not devised by man's intelligence, or executed by his power—and to be created in the earth; that is, to have been planned by the Lord in heaven, but executed on earth, for the benefit of Israel, and of all who dwell on the whole face of the earth. And this new thing is declared to be this:—"A woman shall compass a man."

This consideration at once excludes all such interpretations as the following, which have been assigned to the words, a woman shall compass a man. These words have been supposed by some to signify, that a woman shall court a man; or, in a spiritual sense, that the Church of Israel shall woo the Lord (as some Jewish interpreters understand it, and Castalio, Clericus, Hitzig, and others); or that a woman shall protect a man (Schurver, Rosenmüller, Maurer, De Wette, Genesius, Umbreit); or that a woman shall change herself into a man; that is, become valiant as a man (Ewald); or that a weak woman (namely, Israel) shall resort again to the strong man (the Lord) for help and support (Hengst.).

To all these reasons it may be justly objected, that they do not satisfy the conditions required by the text. They do not imply a new thing, a thing without precedent on the earth; a new thing created by the Lord. All such interpretations as these are the offspring of a larking scepticism, and frigid rationalism, which is both to recognize the presence and power of the Holy Spirit moving in the Hebrew Prophets, and impelling them to utter dark mysterious sayings, of which they themselves probably did not understand the full import, but which were afterwards to be cleared up in the Gospel.

Let us examine the words of the original, and consider their connexion with the context, and inquire what their real meaning is.

The Prophet says that a woman will compass a man.

(1) The word here used for woman in the original is נָכַּת (nachat), which signifies a female, as contradistinguished from the male, and is generally rendered female in our Version. See Gen. i. 27; v. 2; vi. 19; vili. 9, 16. Levit. ii. 16; iv. 28; v. 6. Num. v. 3. Deut. iv. 16. It occurs only in the Pentateuch, and in this single passage of Jeremiah.

(2) The word here translated man is גַּבֵּר (gavor), in vurtute פָּנָי (panim, in his manhood, as distinguished from woman (Deut. xvii. 5). Job iii. 3; above, xxx. 6. Prov. vi. 34), and as endowed with masculine qualities of strength, courage, wisdom. See Genesis 156. Hence it is applied as a name to the Messiah Himself in Zech. xiii. 7. Cp. note on Prov. xxx. 19, where we have seen reason to recognize a prophecy of the Incarnation. And the name of Christ in Isaiah is El Gibbor (Is. 6. Cp. Ps. lxix. 19; below, xxii. 18). Christ is the Geber, whose Adven- tent was announced both in the Old Testament and the New, by Gabriel, the Archangel, the Strong Man of God (see Dan. ix. 21—25. Luke i. 26—35), who said to the Blessed Virgin, "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son. He shall be great!" and to whom she said, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"

(3) The word in the original here, which is rendered compass in our Version, "a woman shall compass a man," is שָׁפָה (shaphah), which is applied to a river girding a land (Gen. xii. 11, 13); to a line encircling a pillar of the temple, and to a line girdling the molten sea (1 Kings vii. 15, 23); to the love of God compassing His servants (Ps. lxxi. 1). Cp. xxiii. 7, 10); to the floods compassing about Jonah in the sea (Jonah ii. 5), to precious

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;
"The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and "mountain of holiness.

24 And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all the cities thereof together,
Husbmanden, and they that go forth with flocks.

25 For I have sated the weary soul,
And I have replenished every sorrowful soul.

26 Upon this I awaked, and beheld;
And my sleep was sweet unto me.

jewels enclosed and set inouches of gold (Exod. xxvii. 11; xxxix. 6, 13).

Hence we are led to the conclusion, that the meaning of the words, "the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man," is this. Let Israel return with faith and repentance, yea, with confident hope, assurance, love, thankfulness, and joy to the Lord; because the Lord hath given to Israel (the Prophet sees the future as present), a new and unexpected gift, a new creation, a new thing in the earth; it is a new and glorious creation, not only for Israel, but for all the earth, a woman (the female alone, without the male) shall compass, shall conceive and embrace in her womb a man; she shall compass in her womb (as a ring entereth into its set, in gold) to be honoured above all men for His Manhood, and for all the many virtues of strength, courage, and wisdom — "the Man Christ Jesus."

Thus, then, we see that the Holy Spirit here, speaking by Jeremiah, and also with reference to the restoration of Israel, lays open the words of comfort uttered by God to Adam, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head" (Gen. iii. 15), and with a new declaration of the promise to the House of David, "the virgin shall conceive" (or, as St. Matthew has it, "shall bear a son") and shall call his name Emmanuel" (Isa. vii. 14. Matt. i. 23).

This interpretation is in perfect harmony with the context. For what greater proof of God's love to Israel, what more gracious encouragement, could be given to the House of the Redeemer, "God manifest in the flesh"? And how happily is it here combined with the mention of the tears of Rachel, buried near Bethlem. All these tears will be wiped away. All tears will be wiped away from all faces; all children will be restored to mourning mothers; and there is hope for their return to each other for ever, through the Birth of Him Who was brought forth an Infant from the womb of the Virgin Mary at Bethlehem, and through the Resurrection of Him Who is the beginning of the new creation, and Whose mysterious and marvellous Incarnation is promised by the Holy Ghost, The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man.

This interpretation is confirmed also by the authority of the most ancient Hebrew Expositors, who applied this prophecy to the Messiah; and by the concurrent consent of the ancient Christian Church. See S. Jerome here, who says excellently, "Respice quod dicturus sit, et unde tibi tanta beatitudin exspectanda sit, diligenter sedule unde. Audii quidnam nuncupaverunt, Novum rem creatum Dominus super terram. Abieci vari se-minem, abeque tulo eoque atque conceptum, femina circumdare viro uteri suii." Similarly S. Justin Martyr, S. Cyrilian, S. Augustine, and others speak, as quoted by Calovinus and others, who says, "Est communis hae Patrum interpretation, et see also the excellent exposition of Aquinas, here cited by Dr. Mill with commendation, p. 405., and of many learned later Divines, as Luther, Geomapadins, Chemnitz, Galatius, Croce, Zephyrinus, etc. See also, C. Pfieffner, Dubia, 401, 402, Dr. Poecoe on Mainitius, 314. Dean Jackson on the Creed, Book vii. Vol. vi. p. 195, where is a Discourse on this text, in which he says, "In this new Creation" (in Christ the Second Adam, the Author of the new Creation, and the root out of Jacob, Man inclosed not zavor, ish, or adam, non masculus only, but Geber, i.e. vir fortis, the valiant strong Man, the grand Hero of the World, in the female or weaker vessel, without the help of the male." As the Gospel says, "Fear not, Mary; behold, than shall conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shall call His Name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. And the Angel said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i. 31—35).

Let me add the following from our English Expositor of the Apostles' Creed, Art. iii. p. 171:—

According to the first evangelical promise (Gen. iii. 15), followed that prophecied of by Isaiah (Isa. vii. 14), The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man (Jer. xxxi. 22). That new creation of a man is therefore new, and therefore a creation, because wrought in a woman only, without a man, compassing a man. Which interpretation of the prophet is the more correct, interior or exterior, is denied that the proper signification of the Hebrew verb sabaah is circumdare or circumvallare. R. Judah has observed but one interpretation of this verb; and Kimchi testifieth that all words which come from the root sabaah signify encompassing or circuitual.

Therefore these words of Jeremiah must literally import no less than a woman shall encompass, or enclose a man, which, with the addition of a new creation, may well bear the interpretation of a miraculous conception. Especially considering that the ancient Jews believed that God did apply it determinately to the Messias: as appeareth in Bereshit Raba, Parash. 89; where, showing that God doth heal with that which He wondeth, he saith, As He punished Israel in a virgin, so also He also heal them with a virgin, according to the prophet, The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man. By the testimony of R. Huna in the name of R. Ili, and R. Joshua the son of Levi, This is Messiah the King, of whom it is written (Ps. ii. 7), This day have I begotten Thee. And again in Midrash Tannith, upon the Second Psalm [vol. 3, col 4], R. Huna in the name of R. Ili, speaking of the sufferings of the Messias, saith, That when He is come, God shall say, I must create Him with a new creation. And by (virtue of that new creation) He saith, This day have I begotten Thee. From which it appeareth that this sense is of itself literally clear, and that the ancient Rabbins did understand it of the Messias; whence it followeth that the later interpretations are but to avoid the truth which we profess, that Jesus was born of a virgin, and therefore is the Christ; and whatsoever the Jews have invented to include it, is frivolous and forced. For while they force the phrase of compassing a man, in the latter part of the prediction, to say thing else than a conception, they do not only wrest the Scripture, but contradict the former part of the promise, making the new creation neither new, as being often done, nor a creation, as being easy to perform " (Br. Pearson).

24 O habitation of justice] Zion, the mountain of the Lord, for "there shall no murderer be found therein" (Isa. xxxvi. 7). The reason of the sacrifice of "That Only Just One," "Jesus Christ the righteous," offered there as a satisfaction for sin; and of His Resurrection for the justification of all the faithful. And Zion shall become also the mountain of not to be denied that the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost on the Apostles at Jerusalem; and by reason of the going forth of the Gospel of Truth from Zion to sanctify the World.

25 Husbmanden—with flocks] Apostles and Apostolic Teachers of the Church, the Lord's husbandry (1 Cor. iii. 9), who will feed the flock of Christ. See above, on Isa. lxxv. 20—25; below, Ezek. xxiii. 31—33; xxxvi. 35.

26 Upon this I awaked—to me] The Prophet, having had a glorious vision of the Birth of Christ, and of its blessed sequences to Israel and the World, awakes from his slumber, and is refreshed by the sweet sleep that he has enjoyed (cp. Ps. xvii. 15; xxxix. 18, and see Targum here, and Yemea, Eichhorn, Dahlber, and W. Louthe).
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.

And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, 
'To pluck up, and to break down, 
And to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; 
So will I watch over them, 'to build, and to plant, saith the Lord.

In those days they shall say no more, 
The fathers have eaten a sour grape, 
And the children's teeth are set on edge.

But every one shall die for his own iniquity: 
Every man that eateth the sour grape, 
His teeth shall be set on edge.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, 
That I will make a new covenant 
With the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers 
In the day that I took them by the hand 
To bring them out of the land of Egypt; 
Which my covenant they broke,

But this shall be the covenant 
That I will make with the house of Israel; 
After those days, saith the Lord, 
I will put my law in their inward parts, 
And write it in their hearts; 
And they shall be my people.

Every man his neighbour, and every man his brother,
Saying, Know the Lord: 
For they shall all know me, 
From the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: 
For I will forgive their iniquity, 
And I will remember their sin no more.

Thus saith the Lord,
Which giveth the sun for a light by day, 
And the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, 
Which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar;
The Lord of hosts is his name:

If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, 
The seed of Israel also shall cease 
From being a nation before me for ever.

Thus saith the Lord;
If heaven above can be measured, 
And the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, 
I will also cast all off the seed of Israel 
For all that they have done, saith the Lord.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, 
That the city shall be built to the Lord 
From the tower of Hanaanee unto the gate of the corner.

And the measuring line shall yet go forth 
Over against it upon the hill Gareb, 
And shall compass about to Goath.

own independent intelligence, without reference to the Holy Spirit.

But in the Church of God every true teacher teaches and every true learner learns by the help of God, given in prayer and in the other means of grace. The work of teaching and learning is God's work.

The human intelligence is absorbed, as it were, into God's inspiration. This is what the Prophet says: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." (Isa. vii. 15.)—A scripture adopted by our Lord, and applied to His disciples. And this is what the Apostle says: "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things, and have no need that any one teach you." (1 John ii. 20, 27.)

Cp. Hengstenberg, Christol. ii. 441 (Eng. Trans.) and the present writer may perhaps be allowed to refer here to one of his "Occasional Sermons," "The Office of the Holy Spirit in Education," No. 20.

35—37. Thus saith the Lord] The perpetual continuance of the seed of Israel in the line of David, from whom Christ came according to the flesh, had been already guaranteed to David by God in language similar to the present. See the Prelim. Note, above, to the great Psalm for Christmas Day (Ps. lxxxix.; and vv. 9—12), where God's works in Creation are commemorated, as here, by way of introduction to the greater work of Redemption and Grace; and where the perpetuity of David's seed in Christ is also compared to the permanence of God's ordinances in the natural world (vv. 19—29. 35. 37). Cp. below, xxiii. 17—22, where that prophecy is combined with the present.

God says by the Prophet, that The seed of Israel shall never cease from being a nation. How can this be? The answer is, that, "As long as the world lasts, the seed of Israel will not perish, not in those Jews who are unbelieving, but in those who, with the Apostles, and through the Apostles, believe in Christ." (S. Jerome.)

38. the days come] See v. 27.

The Rebuilding of Jerusalem both Literally and Spiritually.

38. 39. the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hanaanee unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. Observe, the city is said here to be built to the Lord. It is dedicated to Him. The Church (sacraed) is the House of the Lord. It is called by His Name, consecrated to His Glory and Service. Its name is Jehovah Shammah, "the Lord is there" (Ezek. xlii. 55).

This prophecy of Jeremiah, taken in a literal sense, foretells that Jerusalem shall be rebuilt in all its extent, from the tower of Hanaanee, on the north-east (see Neh. iii. 1; xii. 20.), to the gate of the corner, on the north-west (2 Kings xiv. 13; 2 Chron. xxvi. 9). Cp. Zech. xiv. 10; and on Neh. iii. 1. 11.

This was fulfilled at the return of the Jews, in the days of Nehemiah. See above, on Neh. iii., Prelim. Note.

But, as has been already observed in the notes on that Book, the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem by Nehemiah was figurative of a far greater and more enduring work, begun by the Divine Nehemiah, Jesus Christ, at His Incarnation, when He built up the ruins of our fallen Nature, and raised up the walls of the spiritual Jerusalem, His Universal Church, which, having had its centre and origin in Sion, is designed to enclose the world. See above, on Neh. iii. 1; and on Neh. xii. 43., concerning the joy of Jerusalem, when the walls were built. The notes on those passages may serve as a comment on the present prophecy.

HANANEE, GAREB, AND GOATH.

The names Hanaanee, and Gate of the Corner, specified in this prophecy, have a symbolical sense, suited to this fulfilment. Hanaanee means graciously given by God. The building of the Spiritual Jerusalem, the Universal Church (as S. Jerome observes here), begins with the grace of God in Christ's Incarnation (see on Titus ii. 11—14; and iii. 4—8., a lesson appointed for Christmas Day), and extends to the Gate of the Corner. Christ is the elect Corner Stone. He is the Corner in which the walls of both Peoples, Jew, and Gentile meet in one, being cemented together in Him. See Ps. cvii. v. 22. Isa. xxviii. 16. Matt. xxvi. 42. 1 Pet. iii. 6. Cp. Zechariah's similar prophecy (xiv. 10) : "The land shall be inhabited from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner-gate, and from the tower of Hanaanee unto the King's wine-presses."

Similarly the names "hill Gareb and Goath," have also a symbolical significance. These sites are not mentioned by any writer of Scripture, in connexion with the topography of Jerusalem, nor in any place of Scripture but the present. It is to be regretted that the names Gareb and Goath should have
And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, And all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate eastward, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, Nor thrown down any more for ever.

XXXII. The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord* in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar.

For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and 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, been admitted into maps and charts of Jerusalem, as if they had a real existence.

The words Garab and Goath are to be compared with many similar words occurring in the Song of Solomon, some of which had no local existence, but which, taken symbolically, represent the characteristics of the Christian Church. Such are Bether, Bathrabbim, Bouthannah. See above, Intro. to Canticles, viii. 1, and note on Cant. vii. 11.

The reason of the choice of such names as these was doubtless that we should not look to the letter of the prophecy, but to the spirit.

Church; however, we have symbolic names in the prophecies of Jeremiah's contemporary, Ezekiel, e.g. Pekod, Shoo, and Ko'a (see below, on Ezek. xxiii. 20), and Gog and Magog, in Ezek. xxxix., and Jerah in Hos. v. 13; x: 6. See the notes there. Jeremiah uses other symbolic names, such as Shechanae (see above, 28; lii. 41). Pekod (visitlation), and Merathain (double rebellion). See below, 1. 21.

The word Garab, here used, signifies a leper (from garab, to scrape off, and the substantive, garab, scabies, scurvy, S. Jones, 268; Gesen. 163; Fuerst, 274).

As to the former word, Garab, be it remembered that leprosy was a type of sin; and the leper was shut out from the camp under the Levitical Law as unclean (see above, on Lev. xiii. 49, 54, 55, 48; Note, and on that chapter generally and Num. v. 3); and Death is also the image of sin (Eph. ii. 1), and the wages of sin (Rom. vi. 23).

With respect to the latter word, Goath, let us bear in mind that Man's condition by nature is, that he is spiritually dead, and is liable to God's wrath, and to the punishment of Death. But in Christ, the Holy One, Who by his Death destroyed him that had the power of it, even the Devil (Heb. ii. 14), and Who is the Resurrection and the Life;—"a fountain is opened for sin and for uncleaness" (Zech. xiii. 1). And the Christian Church has a commission to preach repentance and remission of sins to all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem (Luke xxiv. 27. Acts ii. 29), and to offer Life Eternal, through Christ, to all who arealive in darkness and the shadow of death.

Thus the Christian Church, which has its origin and centre in Sion, extends its walls with a living and gracious energy to enfold the hill Garab, and even Goath itself.

This extension of the Church to neutralize the evil effects of the Fall of Man, and to make Death itself to be like a mother of Life in Christ, is symbolized by Jeremiah's brother Prophet Ezekiel, in the Vision of the Temple (the figure of the Church), where he describes the Waters of Life in the Gospel of Christ, flowing out of the Temple (symbolizing the Christian Church), from beside the Altar (the figure of Christ's Cross), and cleansing and healing the waters of the Dead Sea,—the type of the world lying in wickedness. See below, on Ezek. xl. 12, and the next verse, at the end of this Volume.

There was a remarkable exemplification of this prophecy in our Blessed Lord's ministry. No soooner had He preached the Sermon on the Mount, than He touched and healed the blind, and made full of Lozar, the type of sin; and the next day He raised the widow's son from death (Matt. vii. 14. Luke vii. 11—17). These were symbolical acts, showing that He had come to cleanse the leprosy of sin, and to overcome Death. Thus the hill Garab and Goath were (if we may so say) taken by Him into the precincts of the Jerusalem of His Church,

We thus see what is the meaning of the phrase, to "include the Hill of the Lepers (Garab), and of Death (Goath), in the Holy City." That which was unclean by Nature, and under the Levitical Law, becomes clean in the Evangelical Dispensation by the purifying efficacy of the Blood of Christ. Cp. Hengst., Christol. ii. p. 459.

And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes. Even the Valley of Hinnom—once the scene of idolatrous worship and the receptacle of dead bodies, and the place of burning (cp. vii. 32), and of ashes of idolatrous sacrifices, and all the fields (Hebr. shelahmuth, as in some MSS., or (according to other MSS.) all the places that were once cut off (Hebr. sholah : see Hengst, and Graf) as unclean, even unto the brook of Kidron, to which the abominations of idolatry were carried and buried (2 Kings xxiii. 4—6), that is, all things most unclean by nature and by human corruption, will be purged from the earth, and burned with fire, and be cleansed by the Blood of Christ, and by the outpouring of the Spirit of Holiness in the Christian Church, and so be made holy to the Lord. Cp. Zech. xiv. 20, 21. Joel iii. 17. Isa. li. 1; lx. 21; and Ezek. xlvii. 1—10.

This has been fulfilled, and is in course of fulfilment, not only by the transformation of heathen temples and basilicas (such as the Pantheon at Rome, and the Pantheon and Temple of The- seus at Athens) into Christian Churches, but by the conversion of heathen Cities and Nations unto Christ. Ephesus, once famous for its idolatry, sorcery, and impurity, is now called by the name of St. John the Evangelist. The Cross of Christ stands in the Colosseum, where Christian martyrs were formerly cast to the lions, and it surmounts the obelisks of Egypt; and Human Nature, once the stronghold of Satan, has now become the shrine of the Deity by the Incarnation of the Son of God.

**Jeremiah, Just Before the Capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, is Excommunicated by God to Buy Hanamel's Field at Anathoth in Benjamin.**

Ct. XXXII.] In the tenth year of the reign of Zedekiah, the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, which had been commenced in the ninth year of Zedekiah (xxxix. 1; lii. 4; and had been interrupted for a short time by the arrival of the succour of the Egyptian forces at Jerusalem (xxvii. 5—15), was recommenced and prosecuted with increased vigour.

Jehoiakim, from the beginning of the siege, had foretold that all resistance to the Chaldean invaders would be ineffectual, and had advised submission to them.

He was put into prison on the charge of falling away to the Chaldeans, as is demonstarted by God to buy Hanamel's Field at Anathoth in Benjamin. (Ct. XXXIII.)
saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord, 
Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and 
shall take it; 4 and Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand 
of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king 
of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold 
his eyes; 5 and he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be 
until I visit him, saith the Lord: 6 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 8 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 b weighed him the money, even || seventeen shekels 
of silver. 10 And I subscribed the evidence, and sealed it, and took witnesses, 
and weighed him the money in the balances. 11 So I took the evidence of the 
purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that 
which was open: 12 and I gave the evidence of the purchase unto 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.

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 || shall be 
possessed again in this land.

16 Now when I had delivered the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the 
son of Neriah, I prayed unto the Lord, saying, 17 Ah Lord God! behold, 
though thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched 
out arm, and 8 there is nothing || too hard for thee: 18 thou shewest o loving 
kindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the 
bosom of their children after them: the Great, 8 the Mighty God, 8 the Lord

7. Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle] The word uncle is in apposition with Shallum, not with Hanameel. Hanameel was the cousin of Jeremiah. See vs. 8, 9.

8. Buy my field] Hanameel being Jeremiah's cousin, and therefore most probably a Levite, this field could not have been a Levitical inheritance, which was inalienable (Lev. xxv. 34); but perhaps it had come into his possession by marriage or purchase (Deut. xviii. 8).

— the redemption is thine] By right of kindred. See Lev. xxv. 25. Ruth iv.

9. I bought the field] When the Chaldeans were besieging Jerusalem, and occupying the territory of Benjamin, in which the field was situated.

When Hannibal laid siege to Rome, the site on which he pitched his camp was put up to auction, and found a purchaser in the besieged city (Livy, Hist. xxiv. i. Florus ii. 6.)

— seventeen shekels] Literally seven shekels and ten of silver; about 40 shillings (Bauckh). The smallness of the price is to be accounted for by the insecurity of the property, on account of the Chaldean invasion, and shows that the vendor had lost all hope.

10. And I subscribed the evidence] Rather, I wrote (the transaction) in the book—in the deed of purchase.

11. So I took—open] Rather, and I took the deed of purchase that was sealed up—the covenant and the tokens (or stipulations) of sale, and the open copy, i.e. the duplicate copy of that which was sealed up. Two copies of the deed were executed; one of which was sealed up, so that it might not be tampered with, the other was open, so as to be easy of access, and that all might see what the conditions of sale were. See v. 14.

12. unto Baruch the son of Neriah] Who was of a noble family (compare ii. 59), and skilled in his native tongue (Joseph, Ant. x. 9, 1), and a faithful friend and fellow-labourer of Jeremiah. He seems to have had hopes of honourable promotion in the days of Jehoiakim, and to have aspired to it; and suffered privation and encountered danger in the service of God and the Prophet; see below, xxxvi. 26, and the interesting record of his personal feelings and struggles in xlv. 5, and compare note on xlili. 3.


Behold, they are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: 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 a name, as at this day; and 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; and hast given them this land, which thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey; and they came in, and possessed it; but 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: behold the mountains, they are come unto the city to take it; and the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans, that fight against it, because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence: and what thou hast spoken is come to pass; and, behold, thou seest it. And thou hast said unto me, O Lord God, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses; for the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah, saying, Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me? Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he shall take it: and the Chaldeans, that fight against this city, shall come and set fire on this city, and burn it with the houses, upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal, and poured out drink offerings unto other gods, to provoke me to anger. For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth: for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands, saith the Lord. For this city hath been to me as a provocation of mine anger and of my fury from the day that they built it even unto this day; that I should remove it from before my face, because of all the evil of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke me to anger, they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction. But they set their abominations in the house, which is called by my name, to defile it. And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin. And now therefore thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning
Promise of restoration. JEREMIAH XXXIII. 37—44. XXXIII. 1—4. Evangelical glory.

this city, whereof ye say, 'It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; 37 but he will 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 to dwell safely: 38 and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: 39 and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me, that they shall not depart from me. 40 Ye, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land, assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.

42 For thus saith the Lord; '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. 43 And fields shall be bought in this land, 'whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldians. 44 Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in 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 I will cause their captivity to return, saith the Lord.

XXXIII. 1 Moreover the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah the second time, while he was yet 'shut up in the court of the prison, saying,

2 Thus saith the Lord the maker thereof, The Lord that formed it, to establish it; || The Lord is his name;

3 Call unto me, and I will answer thee, And shew thee great and mighty things, Which thou knowest not.

4 For thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah,

CONTINUATION OF THE EVANGELICAL PROMISES TO ISRAEL.

Ch. XXXIII. 1. the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah (the prison) The most gracious and glorious promises of the Messiah were given to Jeremiah when a prisoner, and were revealed by him to the faithful in Judah in the days of Zedekiah, when the temple and city of Jerusalem were just about to be burnt by the armies of Babylon. See xxxii. 11.

2. the maker thereof He that doeth it. He Who will bring to pass what He has promised—the Restoration of Israel.

5. mighty things Literally, things shut up—in the mysterious counsels of God.

37, 38. I will gather them] On their repentance in their captivity. See xxxi. 8, 9, 18—20, 33.

40. an everlasting covenant] In Christ. See l.5. Ps. lxxvii. 34, 35. Is. iv. 3. Heb. viii. 10.

44. fields shall be bought in this land] At the return of the Jews from Babylon after the seventy years' captivity (xxv. 11), a pledge and figure of the restoration of all Israel in Christ. See Prelin. Note to Is. xxv. The New Testament mentions the sale of fields in Judea in Apostolic times, when Jerusalem was about to be destroyed, and the Church was to be planted in all the world (Acts iv. 32; v. 4).

44. the valley] Heb. shephelah, the lowland on the west coast. This word is translated plains in xvi. 26, and vale in xxxii. 13. — the south] Heb. negeh, the region on the south of Judah, bordering on the wilderness. For the spiritual interpretation of this prophecy we may refer to an Ancient Father, who says, "According to the letter, this prophecy had its primary fulfilment in the return of the Jews from Babylon, in consequence of the edict of Cyrus; but this was a typical event, and spiritually the prophecy is accomplished more fully in Christ and His Apostles. Under the Gospel there is a great restoration. Men buy fields for money when they gain to themselves an eternal habitation with the mammon of iniquity; and they have an inheritance in the heavenly Jerusalem, where is the Vision of Peace. When all these things are fulfilled, then it may be truly said, I will cause their captivity to return; and this will be done by Him Who, "when He ascended up on high, had captivity captive, and gave gifts to men" (Eph. iv. 8. S. Jerome).

VOL. V. PART II.—51.
Which are thrown down by the mount, and by the sword;

5 They come to fight with the Chaldeans,
But it is to fill them with the dead bodies of men,
Whom I have slain in mine anger and in my fury,
And for all whose wickedness
I have hid my face from this city.

6 Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them,
And will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth.

7 And I will cause the captivity of Judah
And the captivity of Israel to return,
And will build them, as at the first.

8 And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity,
Whereby they have sinned against me;
And I will pardon all their iniquities,
Whereby they have sinned, and
And whereby they have transgressed against me.

9 And it shall be to me a name of joy,
A praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth,
Which shall hear all the good that I do unto them:
And they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness
And for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.

10 Thus saith the Lord;
Again shall there be heard in this place,
Which ye say shall be desolate without man and without beast,
Even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem,
That are desolate, without man,
And without inhabitant, and without beast,
The 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, Praise the Lord of hosts:
For the Lord is good;
For his mercy endureth for ever:
And of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord.

For I will cause to return the captivity of the land,
As at the first, saith the Lord.

12 Thus saith the Lord of hosts;
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.

13 "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 pass again under the hands of him that telleth them, 
Saith the Lord.

14 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, 
That I will perform that good thing which I have promised 
Unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.

15 In those days, and at that time, 
Will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; 
And he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

16 In those days shall Judah be saved, 
And Jerusalem shall dwell safely: 
And this is the name wherewith she shall be called, 
† The Lord our righteousness.

17 For thus saith the Lord; 
† David shall never cease to be a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel;

18 Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me

He; she is clothed with Christ the Sun of righteousness (see Rev. xii. 1), and is accepted in the Beloved (Eph. i. 6).

† David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne: The Throne of David is perpetuated in Christ, the Son of David, according to God's promise to David. See above, on 2 Sam. vii. Prelin. Note, and on Jacob's prophecy concerning Shiloh, Gen. xlix. 10, and on Ps. lxxxix. 29, 35-37; and Isa. lx. 7; and Luke i. 32.

Perpetuity of the Priests the Levites.

18—22.] This promise—that the Priests the Levites will never cease to offer holy offerings before God, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually; and that God will multiply the Levites that minister unto Him—has caused much controversy:

(1) By some (as Graft) it has been supposed to be tantamount to a divine pledge, that the Aaronic Priesthood and Levitical ministry, in its literal sense, should never cease.

This opinion is refuted by Jeremiah himself, who says that the days will come when there will be no more mention made of the Ark of the Covenant, the centre of the Levitical economy. See above, iii. 16.

(2) By others (as Hengst), it has been alleged that these words are to be applied to all Christians indiscriminately, who are called a royal priesthood, a nation of Priests. See below, on 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9, and on Rev. i. 6; v. 10; xx. 6.

But though, doubtless, in a certain sense (declared in the notes on those passages) all Christians are Priests, and all are bound to offer and present themselves, their souls and bodies, a living sacrifice to God (Rom. xii. 1), and to offer the spiritual sacrifice of prayer, and praise, and aims continually toward God (Phil. ii. 17; iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. ii. 5), yet the context of the present passage shows that the Prophet is speaking of a special class, or family, distinct from the rest of the Israel of God.

For the explanation of these words, it is to be remembered that the Hebrew Prophets adopt the imagery derived from the Tabernacle and the Temple, to describe the characteristics of the Church of Christ.

For example, Isaiah says, speaking of the Christian Church, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before the Lord. That is to say, the essence of the blessings foreShadowed by the new
To offer burnt offerings, And to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually. And the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord; If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, And that there should not be day and night in their season; Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, That he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; And with the Levites the priests, my ministers.

Moreover the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The 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. Thus saith the Lord; If my covenant be not with day and night, And if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, So that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers Over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:

For I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.

The word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the earth of his dominion] That is, of the land of his realm. Cp. II. 28. Isa. xiii. 1.
of the earth †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, 1 I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and 4 he shall burn it with fire: 3 and 5 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 † he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon.

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: 5 but thou shalt die in peace: and with † the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, so shalt they burn odours for thee; and 6 they will lament thee, saying, Ah lord! for I have pronounced the word, saith the Lord.

6 Then Jeremiah the prophet spake all these words unto Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem, 7 when the king of Babylon’s army fought against Jeru- salem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish, and against Azekah: for 1 these defenced cities remained of the cities of Judah.

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 Jeru- salem, to proclaim 4 liberty unto them; 9 1 that every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, being an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; 10 that none should serve himself of them, to wit, of a Jew his brother.

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 4 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.

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

4, 5. Yet hear the word of the Lord] The statements here, as represented in our Authorized Version, that Zedekiah should die in peace, and have a royal funeral, and be buried with honour and lamentation, seem to be at variance with the history and with the context.

In vv. 2, 3 it is said that Zedekiah shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon and be carried captive to Babylon. And it is recorded in the Sacred History, that his sons were slain before his eyes, and that his eyes were put out, and that he was bound in fetters of brass and carried to Babylon (2 Kings xxv. 6, 7). It was also foretold by Ezekiel, that he should die at Babylon (Ezek. xii. 13; xvi. 20).

How, then, could it be true, that Zedekiah, an exile and a captive, should die in peace and be buried with a royal funeral, at the burnings of his fathers (see note on 2 Chron. xvi. 14; xxi. 19), and be lamented with dirges of honour? Op. above, xxii. 26.

And could it be right and just, that Zedekiah, who had hardened his heart against all divine warnings—continued during a reign of eleven years—and did not profit by the punishment of his predecessors for their sins, should have a happier end than that of those predecessors, Jehoikim and Jeconiah?

These objections may at first sight seem to be formidable; but they vanish when the words of the prophet are rightly rendered and understood. Their true sense is as follows.

Yet hear the word of the Lord. Or rather, Only hearken to the word of the Lord. Obey it; repent of thy sins, O King, especially of thy perjury to the King of Babylon; pray to God, humble thyself before Him; submit to the King whose sworn subject thou art, and who is God’s servant, to execute His will. In that case,—thus saith the Lord, thou shalt not die by the sword, but die in peace at Jerusalem, and be buried with royal honours in the sepulchre of David thy father. Do this; listen to me: for I have pronounced this word, saith the Lord.

This appears to be the correct exposition of Jeremiah’s words. See Veritas, C. B. Michaelis, Hildeg., Graf, Nigel. Compare the similar promise in xxxviii. 17, 20; the performance of which was contingent on the King’s obedience to the word of the Lord.

7. Lachish and—Azekah] In the lowlands of Judah to the E.W. of Jerusalem. See on Josh. x. 11, 12. 2 Kings xiv. 10; xviii. 14. 2 Chron. xi. 9.

9. go free] In the Sabbatical year, or year of release. See Lev. xxv. 4. Tent. xv. 9, 12. Zedekiah was the prince having had their attention drawn to the Book of the Law, which was found in the Temple in the days of Josiah his father, and having pledged themselves to obey it, made some movements toward repentance (like those of Pharoah, smarting under the plagues) were only transitory, and produced no good fruit. See what follows.

11. afterward they turned] When the danger seemed to have passed away, on the temporary retirement of the Chal- dæans from before Jerusalem, at the approach of Pharaoh Hophra and his army from Egypt to relieve and succour Jeru- salem. See ve. 21, 22; and xxxvii. 5.

12. the word of the Lord came—from the Lord] This phrase has been rightly supposed to imply the doctrine of a plu- rality of Persons in the Godhead. Op. on Gen. xix. 24, and on 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3.
in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondmen, saying, 14 At the end of seven years let ye go every man his brother an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee; and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear. 15 And ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name: but ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids.

17 Therefore thus saith the Lord; Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: 'behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. 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 they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof, the princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf; I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth. 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, which are gone up from you. Behold, I will command, saith the Lord, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire: and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant.

XXXV. 1 The word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying, 2 Go unto the house of the Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the Lord, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.


17. I proclaim a liberty for you—to the sword] Ye are my servants, bound by ties of duty and obedience to Me (Levit. xxxv. 43, 55; 1 Kings viii. 32, 39). Whose service is perfect freedom; and if ye are faithful to Me, ye will be safe under My protection. But ye have broken loose from those bands of duty to Me; therefore I make you free (mineral liberty) to the ravages of the sword. Ye have broken My Law, and have enslaved those servants whom ye had set free in obedience to Me. Therefore I make you free to slavery and exile.

18. The words of the covenant—twain] Literally, the words of the covenant which they made (literally, they cut) before My face, viz. the calf which they cut in two. The words covenant and cut are put in apposition. In making a covenant for the inannilation of their Hebrew servants, the men of Jerusalem had passed through the pieces of a calf (either really or figuratively) which they had cut in twain, and said, If we do not keep the covenant, may God cut us in twain as this calf is cut in twain. God now takes them at their word, and will execute their own imprecation on their own heads. On this ancient rite (whence the phrases Spqrα ruιρας, "fascus lectoris," "ferire," "percutere," &c.) are derived; see above, Gen. xv. 10.
Jerusalem reproved  

JEREMIAH XXXV. 3—17. by the example of the Rechabites.

3 Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habaziniah, 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 Maaseiah the son of Shallum, 5 the keeper of the door: 6 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 4 Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever: 7 neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; 8 that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers. 9 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; 10 nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed: 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 receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith the Lord. 14 The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father’s commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me. 15 I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me. 16 Because the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them; but this people hath not hearkened unto me: therefore have been celebrated for his sanctity and prophetic office (cp. Dent. xxxiill. 1. Isa. xiv. 6); and this circumstance added another inducement to the Rechabites to comply with the invitation of the prophet of the Lord in His Temple. But they resisted all solicitation, and adhered faithfully to their father’s injunctions.

— Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the door] The threshold of the Temple; they were three in number. See 2 Kings xxv. 18. 2 Chron. xxxi. 14.

This Maaseiah was next in rank to the High Priest, and his deputy (cp. ii. 24; 2 Kings xv. 18), and was probably the same whose son Zephaniah, after the deportation of Maaseiah with Jehoiachin (xxix. 1), held one of the chief priestly offices under Zedekiah (xxi. 1; xxix. 25; xxxvii. 3). 5. pots—and cups] Bowls and goblets. 6. when Nebuchadrezzar—Syrians—Jerusalem] They explain the fact that they do not now dwell in tents according to their father’s injunction (v. 7), because they have been forced to take refuge in Jerusalem. But in all things that are possible (and abstinence from wine was one) they will cleave to their father’s injunctions.

The Syrians were first reduced to subjection by Assyria (Isa. ix. 11), and after the fall of Nineveh they passed under the yoke of Babylon, cp. 2 Kings xxiv. 2; and Josephus c. Apon. p. 1014b, who speaks of them as conquered by Nebuchadrezzar.

thus saith the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered.

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: therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; *Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.

XXXVI. And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of

S. Augustinus comments here on the name Jonadab, which signifies one whom Jehovah excites to offer freely (see above Domini opus manus; and he observes that this name presents a striking contrast to God's own people at Jerusalem, who did not offer themselves freely to the Lord, but disobeyed Him, and were therefore carried captive to Babylon. Augustinus proceeds to exhort us all to be true Christian Jonadabs, and to offer ourselves and all things freely to God. He says

"Si cino disciplina apostolica servum monet ut hominii, domino suo, non tuncum ex necessitate, sed ex voluntate servavit (Eph. vii. 5. Col. iii. 22); et liberenter se in corde liberum, non tuncum ex quolibet coniectura que subjiciatur, sed Deo voluntate serviendum est, Qui videt ipsum voluntatem tuam? Nam si servus tibi non ex anno servavit, munus ejus, facie suo, presentum ejus potes videre; cor ejus non potes: et tamen ait illis Apostolus, non ad oculum serviret. Quis est id quod, Non ad oculum serviret? Alius: quod eorum voluntates in servitute sunt. Non ad oculum serviret, ut dicis minis: Non ad oculum serviretis!" (Eph. vi. 6. S. Augustini).

18. Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father* God does not here praise Jonadab for imposing these commands on his posterity.

Whether or not any one is justified in obliging himself, and much more in obliging another, by a vow to abstain from any of God's good creatures which He has made to be received with thankfulness by man. See notes below on 1 Cor. vii. 18. ch. 11. 13.

But what God here praises by the Prophet, is the faithful and unswerving obedience of the Rechabites to the commands of Jonadab their father, who had been dead about 800 years. This obedience was more exemplary than that of other nations, for it was unwilling and, besides, the thing commanded was not wrong to be done (for if it had been, they ought not to have obeyed the command), yet the command itself ought not to have been given, and because therefore the temptation, which they resisted, the more their father was even greater on that account. As S. Augustine says (c. Faustum, xxxii. 75), "It is the duty of an inferior to obey lawful Authority even in things which it may not have been expedient for the superior to command, and where he gives the command may be amiable."

"Superiorum fovere non quinquas imperandi, innocuam suam subditum ostendit ordo servendi."

This is a doctrine too often forgotten in our days, when the very fact that a thing is ordered by lawful Authority, Civil or Ecclesiastical, seems to create in some minds a prejudice against it, and to excite them to cavil at it, and to disobey it.

What God blesses and rewards here, is the affectionate reverence of the Rechabites for their father's memory, and their dutiful compliance with his will and word. God did not command them to abstain from wine—He did not justify their father's injunction of such abstinence on his posterity; but God has commanded all men to honour their parents, and to obey all lawful authority, civil and ecclesiastical, in all things that are in point of duty or good. Almighty God commands us to obey all lawful authorities; and in obeying them we obey God, Who commands us to obey them (S. Augustine); and we shall receive a blessing from Him for our obedience, and He will pardon all who disobey, as being guilty of disobedience to Himself. Who commands us to honour Parents, and to obey all lawful superiors who derive their commission from Him, and are His Deputies and Representatives (see below on Rom. xiii. 1—4). Titus iii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 13. We may here again cite S. Augustine (in Ps. Ixx), commenting on this history in words which are very reasonable and salutary for the present times—

"Jonadab commendatur nobis ex prophetia Jeremia, qui filius sui praeceperat ut vinum non libenter; neque in domibus, sed in tabernaculis, habitarenter. Præceptum autem patris filii teneuntur et servarentur, et ex hoc beneficii a Domino merunce." (Jer. xxxv. 6—10). Dominus autem hoc non præceperat; sed pater ipse. Sic autem, hoc acciperem, tuncquam præceptum a Domino Deo suco; et si non, rei Maximi Dives absque iniquitate, ut in tabernaculis habitarent, præceptum tamen Dominus ut filii patris obedient. Nemo ergo re solus filius non debet obediere patro suo, si aliquem patru ipsum iussuerit contra Dominum Deum iusserit. Neeque enim debet iracundus pater, quondam ei praescripserit Deus. Utib autem hoc jubeat pater, quod contra Deum non sit, sic audientiis est quamodo Deus; quia obedienti patri iussit Deus.

However, in the usage of the Hebrews, the son of Jonadab profers obdictiones, because objecti inebriati populo suo, exprobrarium quin cum filii Jonadab obidissent essent patris sui, illi non obedient Deo suo. Cum autem aeger ista Jeremiae, id aeger cum populo Israel, ut parvum se ad captivitatem ducendo esse, et in Babyloniam, et non residentem voluntati Dei, nec speramentum aliud, nis quin futuri essent captivi."
Baruch writes the roll.  

JEREMIAH XXXVI. 2—11. Reads it in the Lord's house.

Josiah king of Judah, that this word came unto Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, 2 Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. 3 It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book. 5 And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I am shut up; I cannot go into the house of the Lord: 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 the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities. 7 It may be 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.

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. 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. 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 entry 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

amansesis; and, being shut up, or restrained from going forth in person to the Temple, he commanded Baruch to read it publicly in the Lord's house on a fasting day, when the people came up from the cities to Jerusalem.

If so happened that in the following year such a fast was proclaimed, and Baruch read and read in the ears of the people, in the Lord's house, on the fast day which had been appointed in order to appease God's wrath, and to procure His favour in that time of national distress (see on v. 9), and when the mind of the nation might therefore be supposed to be more ready to receive a warning and exhortation from God, and when inhabitants of all the cities of Judah were gathered together at Jerusalem to worship (v. 9).

Among the prophecies delivered orally by Jeremiah before this period, we have those which are contained in chap. ii., iii.—vi., vii.—x., xi.—xiii., xiv.—xvii., xviii., xix., xx., xxii. 1—23, xxiii., xxv., xxvi., xlv. 1—12, lv. 1—xix. 33. Chapters xxx., xxxi. also belong to that period, and they were written in a separate book, in order to be a manual of comfort to the exiles at Babylon, and to all true Israelites of every age and country in the world. See xxx. 2. The prophecies in the chapters above specified had probably been committed to writing before this time, but were not as yet collected in a volume, and publicly read to the people.

2 a roll] Heb. meqillath. This is the earliest passage, except Ps. xi. 7, in which this word occurs; and it is only found in the places, where it occurs thirteen times; and in Ezek. ii. 9; ii. 1, 2, 3; and Zech. vi. 1, 2, and in Ezra vi. 1. 3. will hear all the evil] Will hearken to it, and lay it to heart. From such expressions as these, in which God speaks after the manner of men, as to what might be, and ought to be (cp. p. r. 7; xxvi. 3. Ezek. xiii. 8. Amos vi. 10. Zeph. ii. 3), it is clear, that God, who foresees all things, forces nothing; and His presence does not interfere with the exercise of man's free will (Origins, Philocal. c. 23; W. Lightfoot here).

4. Baruch the son of Neriah] Jeremiah's faithful friend and minister, whose name signifies blessed. See above, xxiii. 12, 13. 16; xxxiii. 3. 6; xliv. 1. 2.

5. I am shut up] Literally, restrained, from going to the Temple. The cause of this restraint is not known; but it was providential, like St. Paul's two imprisonments at Rome, which gave him leisure to write, and caused him, when unable to preach with his lips to his contemporaries in particular places, to preach with his pen in Epistles written from the place of his confinement to all Churches of every age. The restraint of Jeremiah gave freedom to his prophecies. The prison of St. Paul was a pulpit for the World.

6. upon the fasting day] Literally, on a fast day: not one of the regular fast days, for this was in the ninth month (v. 22), our December, in which there was no regular yearly fast day; but it was a fast specially appointed by authority, on account of the danger impending over Jerusalem.

That such appointments as these may be mere empty forms, and be neither profitable to those who appoint them nor to those for whom they are appointed, and that they are only hypocritical abominations in God's sight, if not accompanied with hearty repentance and practical amendment of life, is evident from the present history. Cp. Isa. lviii. 4.

7. It may be—Lord] Literally, who knows whether their supplication may not fail before the Lord in lowly self-abasement, and appease Him? On the formula rendered perhaps (literally, whether not), see Gesen. 29; and on the phrase the supplication may fall, see xxxvii. 20. xliv. 2 (whapet). 8. And it came to pass] This is a recapitulation, for the sake of explaining more fully the circumstances and the occasion on which the roll was read.

10. Gemariah the son of Shaphan] Gemariah was of a noble family, well attuned to Jeremiah (v. 25), and was probably the brother of the Alkian who was favourite to Jeremiah (see xxvi. 24), and whose son Gedaliah, afterwards appointed governor of Judah by the Chaldeans (xl. 7), was also well-disposed to Jeremiah (xxix. 11—14). Probably he was impressed with the fearful fulfilment of some of his prophecies.

—higher court] The inner court.
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. 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 the winterhouse in the ninth month: and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him. 23 And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth. 24 Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the courtiers that were with him, nor the princes; neither the priests, nor the Levites, nor the people, nor the king’s officers.

12. The scribe’s chamber] Or secretary’s office, or chancery. — Elishama the scribe] Or secretary. Perhaps the same as mentioned in xli. 1; 2 Kings xxv. 25 : a prince of the Court. — Elnathan the son of Achbor] Who enjoyed the King’s confidence, and had been employed as his emissary against the Prophet Urijah (xxvi. 22).

16. They were afraid both one and other] They turned with looks of fear toward the other. — see ch. xxii. 28.

18. I wrote them with ink] Baruch, like a faithful minister, does not assume to himself any of the functions of his master Jeremiah. Jeremiah is the Prophet, Baruch the Prophet’s amanuensis; he was to Jeremiah what Tertius was to St. Paul (Rom. xvi. 22). The work of the one was mechanical, with paper, pen, and ink, used in obedience to an earthly superior; the work of the other was by inspiration of God.

22. The winterhouse] Compare Amos iii. 15. In the dwellings of Palestine at the present day the lower apartments are commonly called el beit, or the house; the upper is the alliyeh, which is the summer-house. Every respectable habitation has both, and they are familiarly termed beit she‘onyi, or winter-house, and beit se′gyi, or summer-house. If they are on the same storey, the external apartments are called the summer-houses, and the internal the winter-house (Dr. Thompson, “The Land and the Book,” 309).

23. Three or four leaves] Literally, doors, i.e. columns. The roll was written from right to left, in a consecutive series of parallel columns (Buxlo). — he cut it with the penknife] Literally, with the secretary’s knife, with which he sharpened the reed with which he wrote. Probably the secretary (Elishama, v. 12) had such a knife in his girdle; and the exasperated King seized it in his hand, and cut off from the roll some of the parallel columns, and threw the strips into the fire (vv. 27, 28); and this action was repeated from time to time, as appears from the use of the imperfect tense in the original. If a thick, large parchment roll had been cast into the charcoal fire at once, it would not have burnt easily. The wilful recklessness and bold impolicy of the intemperate King was shown in this—that he heard the roll read, column after column, and in his rage he cut off portion after portion, probably with words of execration and insult, and made the successive shreds to blaze in the fire till the whole was consumed. — the hearth] The charcoal vessel before him (v. 22).

24. Yet they were not afraid] or rent their garments] A striking contrast to the good King Josiah, the father of Jeremiah. He heard the words read from the Book of the Law, found in the Temple (2 Kings xxii. 11). Observe the difference between the father and the son in their acts and in their end. Compare 2 Kings xxii. 18–20, with the fearful denunciation on Jehochain, above, xxii. 18, 19; below, v. 30;
A second roll. JEREMIAH XXXVI. 25—32. XXXVII. 1—4. Many like words.

king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words. 25 Nevertheless Elathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll: but he would not hear them. 26 But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son || of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of || Or, of the king, Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremia the prophet: but the Lord hid them.

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?

30 Therefore thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim king of Judah; a He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost. 31 And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not.

32 Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many † like words.

XXXVII. 1 And king a Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah. 2 b But neither he, nor his servants, nor the people of the land, did hearken unto the words of the Lord, which he spake † by the prophet Jeremiah.

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. 4 Now Jeremiah came in and went out among the manner, as has been shown in the note on that text. See also the beginning of the next chapter.

and consider the aggravation of Jehoiakim’s guilt by reason of his good father’s example. 28. the son of Hammelech] Rather, the King’s son, one of the blood royal. Cp. xxxvii. 6. 1 Kings xxii. 29. 2 Kings xi. 1. 2. Zeph. i. 8.

27. Then the word of the Lord came] Though the Prophet Jeremiah was under restraint (v. 5), yet “the Word of the Lord was not bound,” but went forth from the Prophet’s confinement to preach to the people in the Temple: and, though Jeremiah’s roll was burnt, yet the Word of the Lord was not burned, but blazed forth from the ashes with fresh force and indignation against the unhappy king. Jeremiah took another roll, and gave it to Baruch, who wrote in it from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the former roll, and there were added many like words.

Here is a sublime specimen of the triumph of God’s Word, when repressed by the power, and burnt by the rage of this world, whether it be in the suppression of the Scriptures, or in preventing their circulation, or in casting copies of them into the fire, or in the imprisonment and martyrdom of God’s preachers. That Word rises more glorious than all its persecutions.

30. He shall have none to sit upon the throne] His son Jehoiachin did not sit on the throne, that is, was never settled upon it; his reign being one of dependence on Babylon, and only for three months. See above, on xxii. 30; and on 2 Kings xxiv. 6. Objections have been alleged against the prophecy in this passage, as if it was not fulfilled. But the truth is, the prophecy was fulfilled in a very remarkable

Jeremiah’s Prophecy to Zedekiah, when the Chaldeans raised the Siege of Jerusalem, through Fear of the Egyptians.

CH. XXXVII. 1. Instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim] Thus the beginning of this chapter is connected with the close of the former. Jeremiah there prophesied that Jehoiakim would have no son to sit (that is, be settled) on the throne of David. His son Coniah (i.e. Jeconiah, or Jehoiachin) was taken captive to Babylon, after a short reign of three months; and Zedekiah, his uncle, was set up by Nebuchadrezzar in his place, and bound himself by a solemn oath of allegiance to the King of Babylon, which, after three years’ service he violated, and rebelled against him, in hope of aid from Egypt; but he was punished by God for his perfidy, and taken prisoner, and carried to Babylon. See 2 Kings xxiv. 1—20. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. Ezek. xlvii. 12—15.

3—5. Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal—and Zephaniah] Two of his principal men (see xxi. 1; xxix. 25; xxxvii. 1; lii. 24), hoping thereby to induce Jeremiah to change the tone of his prophecies, and to excite him to encourage the King in his rebellion against Babylon, especially since the army of the Chaldaeans had retired from before Jerusalem, through fear of Pharaoh Hophra, King of Egypt, and his army, which had come to the succour of Jerusalem. See v. 5. Cp. xliv. 30. Ezek. xlvii. 15.
The Chaldeans retire. JEREMIAH XXXVII. 5—16.

people: for they had not put him into prison. Then Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt: and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they departed from Jerusalem.

Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: Thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, that sent you unto me to inquire of me; Behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land.

And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire. Thus saith the Lord; Deceive not + yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart. For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but + wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire.

And it came to pass, that when the army of the Chaldeans was + broken up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army, then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin, to separate himself thence in the midst of the people. 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, Thon failest away to the Chaldeans. Then said Jeremiah, It is + false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans. But he heartenked not to him: so Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes. Wherefore the princes were wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe: for they had made that the prison.

When Jeremiah was entered into the dungeon, and into the \[...\]

5. Pharaoh] Hophra (see xlv. 30), the Apries of Herodotus, the successor of Psammctis on the throne of Egypt, B.C. 588. Seventeen years after the battle of Carchemish, in which the power of Egypt had been humiliated by Babylon, he engaged in the expedition into Palestine, to assist Zedekiah (Ezek. xvii. 15—17), but was defeated by the Chaldeans, and Egypt was subdued by them. Cp. 2 Kings xxiv. 7. Ezek. xxix. 1—16; xxx. 19—21; below, xlii. 9—14.

12. Jeremiah went—(to separate himself thence in the midst of the people) Jeremiah went out of Jerusalem to his native place, Anathoth, of Benjamin, where he afterwards purchased an estate from his cousin Hanameel (i.1.; xxix. 27; xxxii. 7).

But what is the meaning of the words to separate himself thence in the midst of the people? The difficulty of the passage consists in the word chaitik, which is rendered by some, to divide a possession, Cp. Vyl., Syria, Syriac, Targum, Fuerst, 433, and many recent Expositors. But chaitik is the hiphil of chalat; and in all cases where it occurs it means to make smooth, and thence flatter (see Isa. xli. 7. Ps. v. 9.; Prov. xxviii. 29; xxi. 5. the only places where it occurs); and therefore the sense seems to be (as in margin), to slip away from thence (i. e. from Jerusalem), in the midst of the people (i. e. of his own people, Benjamin). See xxix. 14. So Kinschi, Tremellius, Placator, Rosenm, Gese- nitz, Graf.

Jeremiah does not deny that he left Jerusalem. He had good reason to do so; he had faith in the revelation that he received from God, that the succour from Egypt would be unavailing, and that the Chaldeans would return and destroy the city (cp. 9, 10). This act of Jeremiah quitting Jerusalem was like that of the primitive Christians, who left Jerusalem for Pella, because they believed our Lord's prophecies that it would be destroyed. See Matt. xxiv. 16. Mark xii. 14. Luke xxi. 21.

13. the gate of Benjamin] The northern gate of Jerusalem, called the Gate of Ephraim (2 Kings xiv. 13. Neh. viii. 16); it led to Anathoth and other towns of Benjamin.

— Hananiah] Perhaps the false prophet mentioned in xxviii. 1—17.

14. the princes] Whose names are given in xxxviii. 1. Among them are none of the princes who had been favourable to Jeremia-
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? 20 Therefore hear now, I pray thee, O my lord the king: † let my supplication, I pray thee, be accepted before thee; that thou cause me not to return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there. 21 Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah “into the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread out of the bakers’ street,” until all the bread in the city were spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

XXXVIII. 1 Then Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashur, and Joaah the son of Shelemiah, and Pashur the son of Malchiah, heard the words that Jeremiah had spoken unto all the people, saying, 2 Thus saith the Lord, He that remaineth in 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, This city shall surely be given into the hand of the king of Babylon’s army, which shall take it. 4 Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakened 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 † welfare of this people, but the 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. 6 Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah, who was in the court of the prison: and they let him down with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire.

suggestive of the typical analogies between Joseph, Jeremiah, and Christ. See further, below, xxxviii. 6, 10.

17. Then Zedekiah—sent] After the many days mentioned in the foregoing verse, during which we are to suppose that the Chaldeans had returned to Jerusalem with reinforcements, and had repulsed the Egyptians, and were now besieging the city (see v. 19); so that Jeremiah’s imprisonment detained him at Jerusalem to see the fulfillment of his own prophecy, and to receive a supplicatory message from Zedekiah the king, who recognized the truth of his predictions when it was too late. Cp. xxxviii. 14—24, 28; xxxix. 14.

21. the court of the prison] Where he would be in frer custody.

The bakers’ street] That quarter of the city where the bakers’ shops were; the different trades, in Eastern cities, being ranged in different streets. Cp. Win. R. W. B. 1. 462. 3. Lane, Mod. Epyt. 313, who says, “Commonly in Cairo a portion of a street, or a whole street, consists chiefly or solely of houses appropriate to one trade, and is called the ‘Soek’ of that trade.”

Ch. XXXVIII. 1. Gedaliah the son of Pashur] Probably of that Pashur who had put Jeremiah into the prison of the Temple, and whose unhappy fate had been foretold by the Prophet (xx. 1—6).

Joah the son of Shelemiah, and Pashur the son of Malchiah] They had been sent on a former occasion by Zedekiah to Jeremiah, when the Prophet had foretold that the Egyptians would retreat to their own land, and that the Chaldeans would fight against the city and take it.

4. let this man be put to death; for—he weakeneth] Literally, let some one put this man to death, for he maketh the hands of the man of war to be light (Isa. xi. 17).

5. the king is not he that can do any thing against you] The king is not (of any account) that he can do ought against you. Zedekiah in his pusillanimity gives up Jeremiah to the princes, as Plato gave up Christ to the Chief Priests.

On the weakness of Zedekiah’s character and the fatal consequences of that weakness, see below, v. 22.

JEREMIAH IN THE PIT, AND IN THE MIRE.

6. dungeon] A cistern, Heb. bôr (see above, xxxviii. 16), dug in the ground to preserve rain-water; but now it had no water in it (probably there had been a larger consumption of water from it than usual, by reason of the siege), but only mire.

—so Jeremiah sunk in the mire] “It is difficult not to imagine a connexion” (says Stanley, Lect. 547) “between this incident and the 69th Psalm, ‘I sink in the mire where there is no bottom. Deliver me out of the mire, that I sink not; let not the pit shut her mouth upon me’” (v. 15). The reason of this
is, because the words of the inspired Psalmist were a prophecy, and the sufferings of the Prophet were a type, of Him Who unites them both in Himself—the Messiah. Cp. below, v. 13.

EBED-MELECH THE ETHIOPIAN.


The history of the pious and generous Ebed-melech, like that of the devout Ethiopian enunuch in the Acts of the Apostles, has a special interest, as connected with the gracious promises in Isa. lvi. 3, 4, which may be extended to those who are spoken of by our Blessed Lord Himself, in Matt. xix. 12, and who may seem to be alone in the world, without congenial or parental ties and companionship. God gives to such an eternal inheritance, "better than of sons and daughters." See above, on Isa. lvi. 3—5.

Concerning the typical and prophetic character of this history of Ebed-melech, see below, on v. 13.

— the gate of Benjamin] The king had quitted the palace, and had gone to the northern gate of the city (see xxxvii. 18), perhaps to reconnoitre the forces of the Chaldeans, who had come in that direction.

9. he is like to die for hunger] Literally, he is dead in his place (Gesen. See Nægeli, 298) for hunger; that is, as far as man is concerned, Jeremiah is already dead, for there is no bread in the city. As long as Jeremiah was in free custody in the court of the prison, he had a daily allowance of bread, by the king's command (xxxvii. 21). But this had now ceased; he had been cast into the dungeon, the pit of Malchiah; no one fed him there, and he was left to starve, for there was "no more bread in the city," so that he could not look for a supply of food from friends among the people. See lvi. 6.

10. Take from hence thirty men with thee] A sufficient force to show that what then done is done by my command, and to counteract the opposition of the princes. Probably the king was now surrounded by a body-guard to protect him, at the northern gate of the city (v. 7), and he gave a detachment of thirty men from that body-guard to escort and help Ebed-melech.

There is no reason to suppose a corruption of the text here, and to alter thirty into three (with Hitzig, Ewald, Graf). Meier).

On these cast clouts and old rotten rags,—things despised and thrown aside as refuse,—may represent "the despised and base things," which, as the Apostle says, God has chosen in preference to things which the world holds in honour, for the furtherance of the Gospel and the edification of the body of Christ, and for lifting it up by faith, as it were, from the mire of sin, and from its dark spiritual prison-house, "that no flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Cor. i. 25—31).

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 he is like to die for hunger in the place where there is no more bread in the city.

Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die.

So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah. 12 And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armboles under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. 13 So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained k in the court of the prison.

7. 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 he is like to die for hunger in the place where there is no more bread in the city.

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14. Third entry that is in the house of the Lord] The King led the Prophet into the third (probably the innermost) entrance from the Palace into the Temple, for the sake of secrecy, in order to converse with him privately there. Zedekiah was too timid to profess his faith in God's Word; he was an example of that moral cowardice which is the bane and destruction of many, especially in Courts.

15. As the Lord liveth, that made us this soul] If I endanger thy life, may the living Lord, Who gave us our lives, take away mine! (Ch. xxv. 14, 15.)

22. Thy friends have set thee on] Literally, the men of thy peace (thy counsellors and friends, O King, who professed to be desirous of thy welfare, and ought to have advised thee so as to secure it) have overpersuaded thee. See the use of this verb, in highfit (1 Chron. xxi. 1. 2 Chron. xxxii. 15; below, xiii. 9), and have prevailed against thee. The words here used occur also in Obadiah, v. 7; whether they are derived from Obadiah, or Obadiah adopted them from Jeremiah, is a question which depends on the date assigned to that Prophet. See below, Introduction to Obadiah.

Zedekiah, the last King of Judah, is a remarkable instance of the wickedness of weakness. As the history of Jeremiah shows (xxxvii. 21; xxxviii. 5, 10, 16), he had good intentions, and made some movements towards what he knew to be right; but he allowed himself to be swayed from his purpose by courtly flatterers, who pretended to advise what was for his welfare, and wrought his ruin and their own. With woman-hearted pusillanimity, he feared men rather than God (v. 19), and thus he incurred the taunts of the women of his own Court. See v. 23.

23. Thou shalt cause—fire] Literally, thou wilt burn this city with fire; a strong expression, which has been avoided (Sept., Syriac, Targum, followed by Ilitig, Ewald, Graf) by means of a change of Hebrew punctuation (tisireph for tisireph), so that the sense would be, and the city will be burnt by fire. But as the danger became more near, the language of the Prophet became more strong. It is not the Lord God of Israel, it is not the army of Babylon, no, it is thou, O Zedekiah, thou, the King of Jerusalem, who seest thine own city on fire by thy sins. Compare the similar words in xlv. 7.

24. Then said Zedekiah unto Jeremiah, Let no man know of these words, and thou shalt not die. But if the princes hear that I have talked with

Before CHRIST 585.

s ch. 37 20.
t ch. 37 12.
\[\text{Hab.} \text{they were silent from him.}\]

Also and Riblah and through xlix.

In and and and and through ch. 52.

21. fortifications were taken.

23. So "Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken: and he was there when Jerusalem was taken.

XXXIX. 1 In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jeru-
salem, and they besieged it. 2 And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, the city was broken up. 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.

\[\text{took Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he gave judgment upon him.}\]

\[\text{Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah.}\]

\[\text{Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon.}\]

\[\text{And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem.}\]

been accused of "gleesood" by some (see Stanley, "Jewish Church," p. 554), for what he did. But it does not appear that he said what was untrue; and no one is bound to reveal all that he knows to enemies who seek his life.

Jerusalem taken.

Ch. XXXIX. 1. In the ninth year.) See above, 2 Kings xix.

3. all the princes of the king of Babylon came in) After his expedition to Jerusalem, Nebuchadrezzar himself seems to have retired to Riblah in the land of Hamath, to the north of Palestine, on the right bank of the river Orontes, about thirty-five miles n.e. of Baalbek, on the great road between Palestine and Babylonia. See v. 6; xlix. 23; and 2 Kings xxiv. 6, 20, 21.

— the middle gate] Which led from the lower city to the upper; through the wall which began near the Valley gate on the west of the city, and ran across to the city to the western fortifications of the Temple, and united it to the Upper City. The middle gate was in a dominant position, which commanded a view of the City (Themis).

— Nergal-sharezer, Sarsechim) Nergal was the name of the Assyrian god of war (Gen. 567; Fuerst, 951); and Sharezer signifies prince (Gen. Fuerst), and Nergal Sharezer may mean prince favoured by the god of war.

Some suppose that Sarsechim, which signifies cup-holder, is an official title of Nergal Sharezer; and is equivalent to Rab-shakeh (2 Kings xviii. 17. Isa. xxvii. 2).

— Sarsechim) Prince of the eunuchs (see Dan. i. 3, 7), and equivalent to Rabsharia. Cp. v. 13. 2 Kings xvii. 17.

— Nergalsharezer, Rab-mag) This second Nergal-shar-ezer had the official title of Rab-mag, chief of the magicians, the


4. the king's garden] On the s.w. of Zion.

— by the gate betwixt the two walls) The gate which led through the two walls, or double-wall, which ran from the south of Zion, and closed up the passage between Zion on the West and Ophel on the East (Themis). Cp. plate xi. in the Bible Atlas, by the Rev. Samuel Clark, 1868.

5. overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho) The plains of Jericho—a remarkable spot. Jericho (as Stealey well observes) had seen the first triumph of Joshua, and of Israel under him, when brought by God into the Promised Land, and locking with Faith to God for succour; and Jericho also saw the fall of the Hebrew Monarchy for its sins.

Riblah.—Zedekiah's Eyes put out.

5. Riblah) See on v. 3. Riblah was the regular outpost of great armies, whether from Egypt or Babylon, during the whole of the period. It is situated on the banks of a mountain stream, in the midst of a wide fertile plain, at a central point, where across the desert the roads diverge to the Euphrates, or along the coast, or through the vale of Coeles Syria to Palestine and the South (Stanley, 528). In 2 Kings xxv. 4, 5, it is stated that the Chaldees were against the City round about, and that "all his army were scattered from Zedekiah."

It is evident, from a comparison of the narrative here and in 2 Kings xxv., that Jeremiah does not strain any thing in order to show the complete coincidence of the facts with his own prophecies, but leaves us to gather many of the particulars of their fulfilment from the Sacred History.

— gave judgment upon him) For his perjury (2 Chron. xxxvii. 10, 13. Ezek. xviil. 16, 18).

8. The Chaldeans burned] On the tenth day of the fifth
Then Nebuzar-adan the 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. 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 "at the same time.

Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard, saying, "Take him, and lo! look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee." So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard sent, and Nebushashban, Hanan-sar, and Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, and all the king of Babylon's princes; even they sent, and took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and committed him unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people.

Now the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying, Go and speak to Ebed-melech the "

month, a day made memorable afterwards by the capture of Jerusalem on it by the armies of Rome under Titus. See on lii. 41.

Nebuzar-adan The prince or lord, favoured by Nebu, the greatest of the Chaldean gods (Enerat, 895. Cp. Rawilisou, Ancient Monarchies," ii. 527—531, on the meaning of Babylonian names.

Nebuzar-adan was the captain of the royal body-guard. Hevr. rab-babbachein, or chief of executioners (2 Kings xxv. 8: cp. Gen. xxxvi. 36; xxxix. 1. Gesen. 317; Enerat, 510, 895), corresponding to the Persian Nebuzakhash Bashi (Morier) and to the Turkish Copi Agossi, or Kapitishi Bashi (Enerat). Nebuzar-adan is not mentioned in v. 3 among the princes who sat in the gate; and here he suddenly appears as a well-known person. Evidently, Jeremiah supposes his readers to be acquainted with the history in 2 Kings xxv. 8, which supplies the clue to these statements.

Observe the sequence of events:

First, Nebuchadnezzar came in person with his army in the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah, and besieged the city of Judah.

In the fourth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the city was broken up; and Nebuchadnezzar's princes took up their position in the middle gate. Then the King Zedekiah fled and was brought to Nebuchadnezzar, who had then gone back to Babylon (v. 6).

Then, in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, came Nebuzaradan to Jerusalem (doubtless being sent as Generalissimo by Nebuchadnezzar, and as his representative), and on the tenth day he entered the city, and he burnt the Temple and the King's Palace, and all the principal houses, and brake down the walls of the city. See below on lii. 12. 2 Kings xxv. 8—10.

Here we see the reason why Nebuzar-adan's name was not mentioned in v. 3 with those of the princes of Babylon, and also why after, in v. 13, it is specified, and is placed before all the names of the princes who have been mentioned in v. 3.

These minute incidents, which appear from a comparison of the history in 2 Kings xxv. with the narrative of Jeremiah, show the agreement and accuracy of both. Cp. below, v. 14.

13. So Nebuzar-adan Rather, and Nebuzaradan; see the following note. Nebuzaradan did not fully execute the commission of Nebuchadnezzar till he had taken Jeremiah with other captives to Ramah. Perhaps Nebuzaradan wished first to examine and prove Jeremiah, whether an exception ought to be made in his favour, and whether he was entitled to his protection.

14. committed him unto Gedaliah Here is another coincidence between the history here and that in 2 Kings xxv. Gedaliah's name (like that of Nebuzar-adan in v. 9) appears suddenly before us, and for a similar reason; because Jeremiah supposes us to be acquainted with the 2 Kings xxv. 22, 23, where it is expressly stated that "Nebuchadnezzar made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ruler over the Jews who were left in the land.

That statement supplies the clue to what is related here, viz., that Nebuzaradan took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and committed him eventually to the charge of Gedaliah.

It has been objected by many recent critics, that the present statement is at variance with the narrative in xli. 1—4, where it is said that Nebuzaradan took Jeremiah to Ramah with other captives in chains, who were carried away captive from Jerusalem and Judah, and then loosed him. But the two statements are in perfect harmony:

The narrative in xli. 1—6 is supplementary to the verse before us.

In the first instance, Nebuzaradan took Jeremiah out of the court of the princes in chains (xl. 1, 2) to take him with the other captives from Jerusalem to Babylon, as Ezekiel the Prophet had been taken in the reign of Jehoiachin (Ezek. i. 1—3).

This was quite consistent with the orders of Nebuchadnezzar (in v. 11), because it was Nebuzaradan's intention to lock well to him "at Babylon, and to provide for him there (xl. 4).

But in course of time Nebuzaradan recognized the prophetic character of Jeremiah, and he had also received a special charge concerning him from Nebuchadnezzar to take him "by the hand", and to inform the Prophet of the advice which the Prophet had given to Zedekiah and the people (xxvii. 12; xxxvii. 17, 18), and of his prophecies, which had now been fulfilled.

Therefore Nebuzaradan kissed Jeremiah from his chains (xl. 1—4).

Then it was that "he committed him to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam." Cp. xl. 5, 6, — he dwelt among the people That were left in the land (xl. 6). Observe—the siege and capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans were the cause of the liberation of Jeremiah.

So it often is in the history of the Church. The shocks of Dynasties and overthrows of Thrones have often been overruled by God to occasions for the liberation and free circulation of His Word. How much has the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures been recently facilitated by God, working even amid the storms of revolutions, in Italy and Spain! How much may the Church of God be extended and purified by His Power and Love amid the coming conflicts and sufferings of the Latter Days!

God's Message to Ebed-melech.

16. Go and speak to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian Alas! He was a man of kindness, Ebed-melech the Ethiopian shows how sincere He was chosen by God to be a type of the Prince, Priests, and People of His own favored City Jerusalem, if they had obeyed His voice speaking by Jeremiah. We are not to think of Him as a type of the Prince, Priests, and People, but as a type of the whole Church, which is His Body. This act of Divine remembrance and tender regard for one who was despised by the nobles of Jerusalem (Isa. lvi. 3, 4), presents a beautiful and affecting contrast to the terrible judgments which God executed by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar on the guilty King and People; and while, on the one hand, the re-
JEREMIAH XXXIX. 17, 18. XL. 1—7.

Jeremiah goes to Gedaliah.

Before CHRIST 358.
1 Jer. 19: 9. 12.

Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, 
I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and they 
shall be accomplished in that day before thee. 17 But I will deliver thee in 
that day, saith the Lord: and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the 
men of whom thou art afraid. 18 For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt 
not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because 
thy hand put trust in me, saith the Lord.

XL. 1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, after that Nebuzar-
adan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken 
him being bound in || chains among all that were carried away captive of 
Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon.

|| Or, musician.

b ch. 50. 7.

e Deut. 29. 24, 25.

Dan. 9. 11.

2 And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said unto him, The 
Lord thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place. 3 Now the Lord 
hath brought it, and done according as he hath said: because ye have sinned 
against the Lord, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come 
upon you. 4 And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which 
|| were upon thine hand. 5 If it seem good unto thee to come with me into 
Babylon, come; and I will look well unto thee: but if it seem ill unto thee 
to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, 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, Go back also to Gedaliah the son 
of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon had made governor 
over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people: or go where-
soever it seemeth convenient unto thee to go.

So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go.

Then went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to || Mizpah; and 
dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

g ch. 39. 14.
h Judg. 20. 1.

|| Kings 25.

22, 26.

f Ch. 39. 14.

2 Kings 25.

22, 26.

7 Now when all the captains of the forces which were in the fields, even they 
encourage all, whatever their station, to rely on His protection 
and favour, if they are not led away by the example of those 
above them, and main steadfast in their trust in Him and in 
obedience to His will, by acts of pieté and love.

The prophetical and typical meaning of this history, in its 
relation to the Jewish and Gentile World respectively, has been 
already considered above (xxxviii. 19).

18. thy life shall be for a prey || When others are destroyed.

Cr. on xxl. 9.

Ch. XL. 1—4.] See above, xxxix. 14. Why are the details 
added which are inserted in this and following chapters? For 
an answer to this question, see on xli. 9, and on xliii. and xlv.

1. Ramah] In Benjamin, about six miles north of Jerusalem, 
on the road to Babylon.

2. The Lord thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this 
place] Here is a remarkable confession from the General of Nebuchadnezzar's 
forces, that the capture of Jerusalem was not 
due to the power of Babylon, but to God Himself, punishing her 
by means of that Power for her sins against Him.

5. Now while he was not yet gone back, he said, Go back also to 
Gedaliah] After all that has been written on this obscure 
passage, the rendering in the text seems the best.

Some translate it, And while he (Jeremiah) made no reply, he 
(Nebuzaradan) said, Go back to Gedaliah (so J. D. Michaelis, 
Kochler, Umbrein). The word "made no reply" is the 
verb here employed (shab) in this sense, but always in the sense of 
returning. See in this chapter v. 12, and xli. 14; xlv. 14; 
28: xlv. 16. The meaning appears to be this: Nebuzaradan had just 
said to Jeremiah, "The land is before thee; go wherever thou 
will." But Jeremiah hesitated; perhaps being willing to go 
with his fellow-countrymen into exile, or shrinking from the 
monstrous spectacle of the desolations of Jerusalem and Judah, 
perhaps also fearing such baseless miscreants as Ishmael and other 
princes of the seed royal, who were still left in the land, 
and whose cruel perfidy he is about to relate (see v. 13; xli. 
1: 28; and xliı. 5—9. Gross, B. D. ii. 338.

The word Mizpah, or Metepeh and Mitspah, signifies a 
watch-tower (from tsaphah, to watch), and therefore we need not 
be surprised that several towns in Palestine, situated on lofty 
eminences, bore this name. See Gen. 502.

This "watch-tower," or "watch-place," was an union of 
a sanctuary and a fortress, on the ridge immediately overlooking 
Jerusalem from the N.E., which had been fortified by Has 
as an outpost of his capital against the northern kingdom of 
Israel. From this point, Sennacherib in earlier, and Titus in 
later days caught their first glimpse of the Holy City. 
From these heights, Jeremiah descended to pour forth his Lamenta-
tions, now that for the first time he beheld the desolations of 
Jerusalem. On the summit of the hill was Asa's fortress, with 
a deep well within a high enclosed courtyard, dug by him for 
the garrison. Here Gedaliah took up his residence, "the 
throne," as it was called, of the governor on this side the 
southern boundary. See Neh. iii. 7. Stanley, Lect. p. 559.
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 the poor of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to Babylon; then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even 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.

And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan swarre unto them and to their men, saying, Fear not + to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah to serve the Chaldeans, which will come unto us: but ye, gather ye wine, and summer fruits, and oil, and put them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that ye have taken.

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; 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.

Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were in the fields, came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, and said unto him, Dost thou certainly know that + Baalis the king of the Ammonites hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah + to slay thee? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not. 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? 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.

Now it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son (see above, on xii. 14, and below, xviii., xlix.), are continually represented in Scripture as taking advantage of her distress to serve her and vex her. This spirit now actuated the King of Ammon against the virtuous Gedaliah, the governor of Judah, and stimulated him to employ the envious and treacherous Ishmael against him.

This malignant temper of the Ammonites towards God's People brought down His judgments denounced upon them by Jeremiah (xlix. 1—7), and by other prophets (Ezek. xxv. 2. Zeph. ii. 9. Amos i. 13). Such incidents as are here recorded show the justice of God in executing those judgments upon Ammon.


8. Ishmael the son of Nethaniah] Ishmael was "of the seed royal," being the son of Nethaniah the son of Elisham. See below, xii. 1. 2 Kings xxv. 25. This was perhaps, the same Elisham who had been King Jehoiakin's secretary (xxvi. 12. 21), and who bore a name continued for many generations in the royal house of Judah and David.

Ishmael appears to have been envious of the position of Gedaliah, which probably he thought to belong rather to himself, as a representative of the exiled royal family of Judah; and he rose up against Gedaliah for reasons similar to those which instigated Dathan and Abiram (descendants of Reuben, Israel's first-born) to lead a rebellion against Moses in the wilderness. See above, on Num. xvi. 1. — the Netophathite] Near Bethlehem, the city of David, in Judah (1 Chron. ii. 54. Ezra ii. 22. Neh. vii. 26). Perhaps they were associated with Ishmael, as being also of Judah, the royal tribe.

— Maachathite] From the region on Maachah, near Angob and Bashan, on the north-eastern side of Jordan, and on the N.E. of Palestine. See Deut. iii. 14. Josh. xii. 6; xiii. 11. 2 Sam. x. 6.

10. to serve the Chaldeans] Literally, to stand at the face of the Chaldeans: to be their representative, and to do their will, and also to mediate with them in your behalf (Hitizig).

+ that ye have taken] That ye occupy: he suggests to them that the removal of many of the inhabitants of these cities by the Chaldeans has been indirectly a benefit to those who remain.

11. Baalis the king of the Ammonites] The Ammonites, like the Edomites and Moabites, "evil neighbours" of Jerusalem (see above, on xii. 14, and below, xlviii., xlix.), are continually represented in Scripture as taking advantage of her distress to serve her and vex her. This spirit now actuated the King of Ammon against the virtuous Gedaliah, the governor of Judah, and stimulated him to employ the envious and treacherous Ishmael against him.

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Ishmael's hypocrisy

JEREMIAH XLII. 2—9.

and cruelty.

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 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. 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.

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, having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to bring them to the house of the Lord. 6 And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, weeping all along as he went: and it came to pass, as he met them, he said unto them, Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. 7 And it was so, when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them, and cast them into the midst of the pit, he, and the men that were with him. 8 But ten men were found among them that said unto Ishmael, Slay us not: for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey. So he forbade, 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 || because rendering in the text is that which is supported by all the MSS. of the original, and by Targum, Vulgate, and Syriac.

Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam! There was a bitter irony in these words, for Ishmael was about to put them to the same death as that which he had inflicted on Gedaliah; and to cast their bodies into the pit, where probably his body was. See on p. 4 and on v. 7 and v. 9, and on the words "because of Gedaliah."

7. slew them, and cast them into the pit || Literally, slew them into the midst of the pit. This "constructio praegnans" shows the rapidity by which the massacre was effected. Cp. Ps. lxxxix. 36. 2 Kings x. 14. 1 Mc. vii. 19.

8. we have treasures || Subterranean storerooms for keeping grain safe from robbers. See Gesen. 323. 367. Cp. Jdg. vi. 11. Nk., lxxxix. 13. Then last spoiled our companions, but thou canst not discover our secret deposits of corn and other produce, which we will disclose to thee, if thou wilt spare our lives.

9. Now the pit—made for fear of Banash || Literally, from the face of Banash. The pit was a cistern (Hebr. bôr, see xxxvii. 16; xxxviii. 6), which Asa, King of Judah, had constructed inside the city of Mizpah, in order to provide for the garrison with which he fortified that town against Banash, King of Israel. See 1 Kings xxv. 22. 2 Kings x. 14.

A subterranean cistern made by a good King of Judah, for the preservation of the life of his subjects, was used by Ishmael, one of his posterity, for the grave of his brethren of Israel, whom he treacherously and cruelly murdered, when they were going up to worship at Jerusalem on a religious festival. This pit at Mizpah has been aptly compared to the well at Cawpole.

Such was the moral infamy to which the "seed royal" of Judah was now reduced, after all its warnings from God, and while the ruins of Jerusalem were still smouldering with the fire with which He consumed her, for the sins of her Princes and her People.

The terrible tragedies of this chapter are, doubtless, detailed by the Prophet in order to vindicate God's justice in punishing the royal house of Judah; and in order to show that there was no hope left for it, except in the discipline of chastisement. God punished it in mercy; and when it had been purified by the furnace of affliction at Babylon, then He brought it back in Zerubbabel, and raised it up again to glory in Christ.

— because of Gedaliah || Hebr. bôr yâd Gedalîyâh; literally, at the hand of Gedaliah. The Sept. renders this, the cistern is...
of Gedaliah, was it 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.

Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, even the king’s daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, 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 the Ammonites.

But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done, then they took all the men, and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by the great waters that are in Gibeon.

Now it came to pass, that when all the people which were with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, then they were glad. So all the people that Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah cast about and returned, and went unto Johanan the son of Kareah. But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites.

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: and they departed, and dwelt in the habitation of Chimham, which is by Beth-lehem, to go to enter into Egypt, because of the Chaldeans: for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon made governor in the land.

XLII. Then all the captains of the forces, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least even unto the greatest, came near, and said unto Jeremiah the prophet, Let us beseech thee, our supplcation be accepted before thee, and pray for us unto the Lord thy God, even for all this remnant; (for we are left but a few.)

great. The framers of that Version seem to have read the text thus, “bor haggaddi hu”; and this rendering is preferred by some modern critics (Dahler, Moere, Illeig, Graf).

But the reading of the Hebrew is preferable, and the meaning of the words, whom he slew at the hand of Gedaliah, appears to be, whom he slew upon, or after, Gedaliah, or by his side. See the Syriac here, and so De Dieu, Schleusner, Rosenm., Ewald.

Perhaps the body of Gedaliah, the Governor, was first cast into this pit at Mizpah, and then the other bodies, slain after him, were cast upon his body. Compare the use of the Hebrew b’yad, in xxxviii. 10, 11 (see margin), and cp. xxxix. 11; xlvi. 6 (margin), and 2 Sam. xvii. 2. We may compare the expression in Acts xi. 10, “the persecution that arose upon Stephen.”


12. the great waters that are in Gibeon] The pool of Gibeon, about five miles N.N.W. of Jerusalem. See above, note on 2 Sam. ii. 13. Gibeon was the place where Joab treacherously killed Amasa (2 Sam. xx. 8, 10), and where Joab himself was slain (1 Kings ii. 28). Cp. 1 Chron. xvi. 30.

17. the habitation] Or sojourning-place, diversorum (Genesis i. 163, 179). Perhaps it was a khan, erected by Chimham for travellers.

— Chimham] According to the reading of the Keri, the son of Barzilai. See 2 Sam. xix. 38, 40. The Chetib has Chimham.

Ch. XLII.] The history of the base perfidy and malignant envy and savage cruelty of Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, in the foregoing chapter, has displayed the moral corruption to which the royal seed” of Judah was degraded.

The following chapter reveals the obstinacy, infatuation, and idolatry of “the People from the least to the greatest” that had escaped the sword of the Chaldeans when they destroyed Jerusalem, and were left in the land.

Neither “the seed royal” nor the rest of the People of the Jews had as yet been brought to repentance by the warnings of God’s Prophets and the terrible judgments which God had inflicted on their nation.

By such recitals as these, Jeremiah vindicates the ways of God. He shows that the destruction of Jerusalem was necessitated by the sins of the Princes and the People; and that the afflictions of the Captivity were absolutely required for their moral Restoration.

God in His mercy still left them a Jeremiah. He had given to the captive exiles an Ezekiel and a Daniel. Thus His love for His people was working by the prophetic Word, amid the desolations of Jerusalem, and in the palace of Babylon, and by the waters of Chebar.

1. Johanan] See xlii. 11.


— from the least—unto the greatest] So that all were implicated in the act of hypocrisy and perversity which he is about to describe.

2. Let—our supplication be accepted before thee] Literally, let it fall before thee (cp. xxxvi. 7; xxxvii. 20). They profess great reverence for Jeremiah, as for God; but will not hearken to the one or the other, but prefer their own wilfulness to both.
a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us;) 3 that the Lord thy God may shew us 4 the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.

4 Then Jeremiah the prophet said unto them, I have heard you; behold, I will pray unto the Lord your God according to your words; and it shall come to pass, that whatsoever thing the Lord shall answer you, I will declare it unto you; I will keep nothing back from you.

5 Then they said to Jeremiah, 6 The Lord be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not even according to all things for which the Lord thy God shall send thee to us. 6 Whether it be good, or whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of the Lord our God, to whom we send thee; 7 that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the Lord our God.

7 And it came to pass after ten days, that the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah. 8 Then called he Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces which were with him, and all the people from the least even to the greatest, 9 and said unto them, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to present your supplication before him;

10 If ye will still abide in this land, then 1 I will build you, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up: for I 2 will repent me of the evil that I have done unto you. 11 Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the Lord: 3 for I am with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand. 12 And 4 I will shew mercies unto you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land.

13 But if 5 ye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of the Lord your God, 14 saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread; and there will we dwell: 15 and now therefore hear the word of the Lord, ye remnant of Judah; Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; If ye 6 wholly set 7 your faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there; 16 then it shall come to pass, that the sword, 8 which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there ye shall die. 17 9 So shall it be with all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there; they shall die 10 by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: and 11 none of them shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them.

For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; As mine anger and
my fury hath been poured forth upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt: and ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more.

19 The Lord hath said concerning you, O ye remnant of Judah; Go ye not into Egypt: know certainly that I have spoken unto you this day. For ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto the Lord your God, saying, Pray for us unto the Lord our God; and according unto all that the Lord our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do it. And now therefore know certainly that ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire || to go and to sojourn.

XLIII. 1 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. 2 Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying, Thou speakest falsely: the Lord our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there; but Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldaeans, 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 all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations, whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah; even men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah. So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the Lord: thus came they even to Tahpanhes. 8 Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying, Take great stones in thine hand, and hide them in the clay in the brickkiln, Baruch, who had been employed by him to read his prophecies to the people (xxvi. 4—18), and who had acted with great courage on that occasion, and who was suspected by them of partiality for the Chaldaeans, because he had been spared by them (v. 6). And they impiously ascribe to the dictation of Baruch, the command which Jeremiah had received by inspiration of God (xlii. 7, 19). Baruch was a man of noble family (see on xxxii. 12), and at one time he seems to have been ambitious. See Jeremiah's reproof to him, "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not" (xlv. 5). This may have given occasion to the allegation here made. 5. whither they had been driven] See v. 12. 7. Tahpanhes] In the northern frontier of Egypt, on the Pelusiac arm of the Nile. Cpi. ii. 16; xlv. 14. Ezek. xxx. 18. Hanes, mentioned by Isaiah, xxx. 4 (the reader is requested to expunge the word Tahpanhes in the note there), has been identified with Tahpanhes by some (as by W. Lowth here); but it was probably a different place, more to the south. 9. clay in the brickkiln] Soft clay or loam in the brick-kiln. Heb. melēth, from lebab, brick (Gesen. 475). There seems no reason to question the accuracy of this translation with some modern critics (Eichhorn, Hitzig, Graf), who express surprise that there should be a brick-kiln near the palace.
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, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them. 11 And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver such as are for death to death; and such as are for captivity to captivity; and such as are for the sword to the sword. 12 And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment; and he shall go forth from thence in peace. 13 He shall break also the images of Bethshemesh, that is in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire.

XLIV. 1 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, which dwell at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Noph, and in the country of Patiros, saying, 2 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein, because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense, and to serve other gods, whom they knew not, neither they, ye, nor Kir-cheres, or On; see Gen. xli. 45. Isa. xix. 18, a prophecy to which Jeremiah seems to refer here. It was to the s.w. of Tahpanhes, and a little north of Noph, or Memphis.

— that is in the land of Egypt? These words have been supposed by some to be an interpolated gloss, designed to mark the distinction between the Bethshemesh in Egypt and the Bethshemesh in Southern Palestine, near Kirjath-jeum (Jos. xv. 10. Judg. i. 33. 1 Sam. iv. 21).

But it is probable that the words in the original ought to be rendered, that are in the land of Egypt, and that they refer to the idolatrous images (statues, pillars, obelisks) in the land of Egypt (and so Vulg.); and this is confirmed by the repetition of the word Egypt in the following clause:—" He will break the idols that are in the land of Egypt, and will burn the temples in Egypt." He will destroy the idols, that is, and temples of the gods who are adored by that land which ye prefer to your own land, where the true God is worshipped, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, according to His promise, where He executed His judgments on the gods of Egypt (Exod. xii. 12), and planted you in the land promised to your fathers. Cp. Ezek. xxx. 13.

THE FULFILLMENT OF THIS PROPHESY.

The fulfilment of this prophecy concerning the conquest of Nebuchadrezzar in Egypt—a prophecy echoed by Ezekiel from the banks of the river Chersus (Ezek. xxix.—xxxvii., is confirmed by the narrative of Josephus (Ant. x. 9, 7), who says, that five years after the capture of Jerusalem, Nebuchadrezzar marched his victorious army through Syria and the land of Ammon and Moab, and invaded Egypt.

It is also probable, that during the thirteen years in which some of Nebuchadrezzar's forces were engaged in the blockade of Tyre, he extended his campaign southward into Egypt; and there is a confirmation of this contention in the narrative of Magashkenes, in Strabo, vi. 687. Joseph. Ant. x. 11, 1; c. Apion. i. 20. Abinsida, Hist. Ante-islam. p. 102.

Cf. XLIV. 1. Migdol] Watch-tower, on the north-east frontier of Egypt (Ezek. xxxix. 10; xxx. 6), near Syene. In the Itinerary of Antoninus (ed. Parthey, p. 16), Magdolus (which seems to be the same as Migdol) is marked as twelve Roman miles south of Pelusium. Migdol, Tahpanhes, and Noph (Memphis) are described as lying together, below, xlv. 14.

— Tahpanhes] ii. 16; xiii. 8.

— Noph] The ancient capital of Lower Egypt (ii. 16).

your fathers. 4 Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. 5 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods. 6 Wherefore my 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.

7 Therefore now thus saith the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; Wherefore commit ye this great evil against your souls, to cut off from your man and woman, child and suckling, † out of Judah, to leave you none to remain; 8 in that ye 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 † a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth? 9 Have ye forgotten the † 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? 10 They are not † humbled even unto this day, neither have they † feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers.

11 Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, † I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah. 12 And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and † 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 † they shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach. 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: 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 † have a desire to return to dwell there: for † none shall return but such as shall escape.

15 Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying,

16 As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. 17 But we will certainly do † whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the † 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 † victuals, and were well, and † Hebr. bread, saw no evil. 18 But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven,
and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. 19 And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men?

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, 20 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? 21 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 a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day. 22 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; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day.

Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, Hear the word of the Lord, all Judah that are in the land of Egypt: 24 thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saying; 25 Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her: ye will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows. 26 Therefore hear ye the word of the Lord, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the Lord, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord God liveth. 27 Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. 28 Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or theirs.

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 surely stand against you for evil: 30 Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will give Pharaoh-hophra king

The Queen of heaven.

JEREMIAH XLIV. 19—30.

Sinful vows.

d Gen. 22. 16.
c Ezek. 20. 39.
f ch. 1. 10. & 31. 75.
Ezek. 7. 6.
g ver. 12.
h ver. 14.
Jas. 27. 13.

19. cakes] Cp. vii. 18; and the next note but one.
— to worship her] So Vulg. and Geneva, 646. But there is no reason to depart from the common sense of the verb here used, adorabat, to form, to fashion: — Did we make her cakes, to fashion her? i.e. to make her image on these sacrificial cakes, called mosaer, as sacred to the moon-goddess, the Queen of Heaven, and moulded in her image. So Jarchi, Doehler, Rosen, Maurer, Graf, Nagel, Fuerst, 1729. Cp. vii. 18.
— without our men] Here is another reference to the Levitical Law. Since our husbands did not disallow our vow—which, if it had been an unlawful one, they were by the Law of God bound to do (Num. xxx. 6), and would have done—therefore our vow stands good, and we are bound to perform it. We have vowed a vow to burn incense to the Queen of Heaven (see v. 25), and we must fulfill it.

This speech exhibits in a marvellous manner the insidious subtlety and mysterious power of self-delusion in spiritual things. These idolatrous women, when burning incense to the Queen of heaven, appeal to the Law of Conscience, and to the Law of God, and plead that they are obliged, in obedience to both, to commit idolatry, which is condemned by that Law! They show their knowledge of God's Law, and thus they condemn themselves out of their own mouth. Such is the deceitfulness and infatuation of false worship. Here is another warning for our own times. Cp. below, on 2 Thess. ii. 3—12.

25. We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed] See above, on v. 17.
26, 27. Behold, I have sworn—all the men of Judah—shall be consumed] God sets His own oath against their rash vow. They had vowed that they would serve idols. He affirms with an oath that they should not serve Him; for they would be destroyed. When this destruction took place, history does not inform us. Probably they were punished by Nebuchadnezzar as rebels, when he invaded Egypt. See above, on xiii. 13.

This prophecy does not say that there should be no more Jews in later days in Egypt; but that those Jews, who were guilty of the sins here condemned, would be consumed.

Pharaoh-hophra.

30. Pharaoh-hophra] To whom ye looked for succour against Babylon (xxxvii. 5—11), will be given up by God into the hand of his enemies; even as Zedekiah, your king, has been given up into the hand of the Chaldaeans his enemies.

This prophecy was fulfilled by the miserable death of
of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life; as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life.

XLV. 1 The 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 Jere-

Pharaoh-hophra, or Apries, who for a time flourished in great prosperity (as Herodotus relates), and arrogantly presumed upon his own power, the Lord sent against him the gods of Egypt, to overthrow it, but was defeated by Amasis, who had rebelled against him, and was strangled by his own subjects (Herodotus, i. 161–169).

The intense hatred of the Egyptians towards Apries is expressed in the title of "hated," attached to his name in Egyptian on his monuments (Rosellini, Monum. Stor. i. 275; Winet. R. W. B., v. Hophra). This national hatred, according to Herodotus (ii. 169), was satiated only by his blood, when Amasis unwillingly clave him into their hands, being, as they complained, "the bitterest of enemies to them, and to him." (Pusey, Daniel, p. 275).

The death of Apries took place in the year B.C. 570 (Niebuhr, Assur u. Babylon, p. 217), when Jeremiah, who had become the oracle of Amasis and of Josiah and was then a young man (i. 2. 6), would have been about eighty years of age, and sixteen years after the burning of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans and the delivery of Zedekiah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar, King of Babylon.

Therefore, the wretched end of Pharaoh-hophra, or Apries, King of Egypt, might well be pre-anounced by the Prophet as a sign to the Jews who were in Egypt. Many of them would be spectors of it.

This was a terrible grandeur and awful solemnity in this prophecy, and there was an adequate reason for it. Apries, King of Egypt, as Herodotus relates, was celebrated for the length, splendour, and prosperity of his reign; he was elated by his power and glory, and he uttered arrogant vauntlings against Herodotus. The prophecy of Jeremiah sounds almost like a reply from the God of Israel to the impious boastings of the Egyptian king. "No god," he said, "has power to dechore me." He was like the Pharaoh of the Exodus; and Jeremiah was a second Moses. Each of the two, Moses and Jeremiah, de-

nounced God's judgments against two Pharaohs respectively. Moses foretold that the Lord would execute His judgments on Pharaoh, and would be magnified above all the gods of Egypt (Exod. i. 21; xl. 12), and Jeremiah predicted that God would send His servant Nebuchadrezzar to erect his throne in Egypt, and to plant his royal pavilion there, and would give up Pharaoh-hophra into the hand of his enemies.

Modern critics (such as HITZIG and ORT), who would expunge this prophecy from the Book of Jeremiah, as a sub-

sequent interpolation (a "vaticanum post eventum"), ought, in order to be consistent, to treat the prophecies of Moses to the Pharaoh of the Exodus in the same reckless and arbitrary way. In both cases the reason of the prophecy was the same, Moses and Jeremiah were prophets of the Lord God of Israel. Their public prophecies in Egypt concerning the destinies of Egypt, and the destruction of its King by the hand of the Lord of Hosts, were manifest assertions of the Divine Supremacy of the Lord God of Israel over all Nations; and the formu-

latum of those prophecies was a sign to Egypt and to Israel that the Lord God of Israel is the King Omnipotent of all the earth; and was like a merciful exhortation to Egypt, as well as to Israel, that they should repent and turn from idols to the One true God.

Baruch comforted by Jeremiah.

Ch. XLV. 1. These words] The words in the roll which Baruch wrote at the dictation of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim (see xxvi. 1–32), and which filled him with sorrow and fear by their sad and terrible announcements, and which was in peril for having written and read them (xxvi. 20). The fourth year of Jehoiakim was the first of Nebuchadnezzar (see above, xxv. 1), whose conquests are foretold here in the two foregoing chapters (allil., alil.) and it was the year of his earlier victory over Egypt at Carchemish, which is foretold in the next narration (xlvii.).

This seems to be the reason for the position of this narrative concerning Baruch here.

3. the Lord doth add to my sorrow] The Lord adds private griefs (on account of my own personal peril and priva-
tions) to my sorrow for my country's sins, and for my country's doom, which thou hast foretold. Baruch, who was of a noble family (see on xxxiii. 12), had incurred the wrath of the King and the Princes of Jerusalem, and sees himself cast off from all hopes of honourable preferment and promotion, to which, it seems, he aspired (v. 5); and he finds himself exposed to loss of property and danger of death (xxvi. 20), by the con-

sequences he had received from the Lord by Jeremiah, and he writes the prophetic roll announcing the woes of Jerusalem, and to read it in the ears of the people in the Temple, and also to re-

write it, when it had been burnt by the King (xxvi. 1–32). Here was a severe trial of his faith, courage, and self-devotion to God.

4. even this whole land] Literally, the whole land—this land of my own people. When such are thy country's griefs, think not any more of thy own: they ought to be absorbed in sympathy with her.

5. And seest thou great things for thyself? seek them not] Baruch, who (as before observed in v. 3) was of a noble house in Jerusalem, and whose brother Seraih was advanced to high place in the Court of Judah (li. 59), felt, it seems, some disapp-

pointment in seeing that the avenues to the promotion and preferment of which he had a reasonable expectation, and to which he aspired, were closed by his call to the service of God, and of God's Prophet Jeremiah, and that he was exposed to obloquy, per-

secution, and molestation by his commission to write and read the prophetic roll of God's denunciations against the King, Princes, and People of Jerusalem, for their rebellion against Him, and to declare openly in God's House the destruction which would overtake them unless they humbled themselves before Him, and repented of their sins.

God chastened Baruch's aspiring thoughts by the words of Jeremiah, who had encountered greater dangers in the cause of truth; and He assured him, that in the general overthrow he would be safe (v. 5; Cp. xxxi. 9; xxxvii. 2; xxxix. 19), if he put his trust in God and obeyed Him.

This history is therefore full of instruction to those who forego earthly hopes of advancement, and encounter danger, and suffer loss, for their loyal testimony to the True Faith, in evil days.

It is also fraught with comfort and encouragement, as shew-

ing that Jeremiah himself, who, at the beginning of his pro-

phetic career, had indulged in more vehement and impatient expressions of sorrow and disconsolate than even Baruch himself,—("Woe is me for my hurt! my wound is grievous" (x. 19), "Woe is me, my mother" (xv. 10), "Why is my pain perpetual?" (xv. 18), "Cursed be the day wherein I was born" (xxx. 14),—was disciplined and sanctified by suffering, and was invigorated and cheered by God's grace, so as to become a minister of consolation and courage to others. "When thou
not: for, behold, "I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the Lord: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

XLVI. 1 The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Gentiles; 2 against Egypt, 3 against the army of Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah.

3 3 Order ye the buckler and shield, And draw near to battle.
4 Harness the horses; and get up, ye horsemen, And stand forth with your helmets; Furnish the spears, and put on the brigandines.
5 Wherefore have I seen them dismayed and turned away back? And their mighty ones are beaten down, And are fled apace, and look not back: For fear was round about, saith the Lord.

6 Let not the swift flee away, Nor the mighty man escape; They shall stumble, and fall toward the north By the river Euphrates.
7 Who is this that cometh up as a flood, Whose waters are moved as the rivers?
8 Egypt riseth up like a flood, And his waters are moved like the rivers;

Besides, these prophecies concerning God's judgments on heathen nations (Egypt, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Babylon) have a special interest for us in these latter days, because these nations are types of the enemies of God's Church; and the judgments on them prefigure her future victory. See above, Prop. Note on Isa. xiii.

PROPHECY AGAINST EGYPT.

1. against the Gentiles. See Prop. Note.
2. against the army of Pharaoh-nechoh—in Carchemish—in the fourth year of Jehoiakim] The first year of Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 606. On this critical era in the history of Egypt, Babylon, Judah, and the World, see note above, on xxv. 1.
3. About four years before the present campaign, Pharaoh Necho, in his march toward Carchemish, had defeated and slain King Josiah at Megido; and afterwards he took his son Jehoahaz (Shaltahn) into Egypt, and set up his brother Jeohoiakim as a vassal of Egypt (2 Kings xxiii. 29—35).

The then reigning monarch of Babylon, Nabopolassar (the father of Nebuchadnezzar), was aged and infirm; and Pharaoh Necho established his own dominion over the whole country between Egypt and Euphrates (Hawdinson, iii. 487). Little reason, therefore, was there then to anticipate such a humiliation for Egypt as is here revealed to Jeremiah by God.

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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; And let the mighty men come forth; † The Ethiopians and † the Libyans, that handle the shield; And the Lydians, ‡ that handle and bend the bow.

10 For this is ™ the day of the Lord God of hosts, A day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: And ™ the sword shall devour, And it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: For the Lord God of hosts ℓ hath a sacrifice In the north country by the river Euphrates.

11 ™ Go up into Gilead, and take balm, ™ O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: In vain shalt thou use many medicines; ™ For † 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 Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon should come and ° smite the land of Egypt.

14 Declare ye in Egypt, and publish in Migdol, And publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes: Say ye, ℃ Stand fast, and prepare thee; ℃ For ‡ the sword shall devour round about thee.

15 Why are thy valiant men swept away? They stood not, because the Lord did drive them.

16 He † made many to fall, Yea, ™ one fell upon another: And they said, Arise, and let us go again to our own people, And to the land of our nativity, From the oppressing sword.

PROPHECY CONCERNING NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S INVASION OF EGYPT.

13. Nebuchadrezzar—should come? Perhaps to make re- pribals on Pharaoh for marching toward Babylon (v, 2), if this invasion followed soon after the battle of Carchemish. But history has preserved no record of such an invasion at that time; and it seems more probable that Jeremiah is here resuming and enlarging his prophecy concerning the humiliation of Egypt by the power of Babylon, which he had already pre-announced in his revelations to the Jews in Egypt (xxiii. 10—13; xlv. 29, 30). He had then addressed himself to his own countrymen in Egypt; here he is speaking to the Egyptians themselves. Compare with this prophecy that of Ezekiel concerning Egypt (xxix. 19), "Son of man, behold I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadrezzar, King of Babylon."


15. Why are thy valiant men swept away?] Why are thy valiantly laid prostrate?] This rendering is adopted by the Syriac, Targum, and many Expositors. The word abhir, rendered valiant, has this sense (vii. 16; xlvii. 3. Lam. i. 15. Judg. v. 22. Job xxxii. 22; xxxiv. 20. Isa. x. 13). But this word has also the sense of oz or bolt (Ps. 1. 13; lviii. 30. Isa. xxxiv. 7; and below, 1.11). Therefore the rendering is entitled to consideration, which is here suggested by the Septuagint, and adopted by Ritzeig, Ewald, Graf, Nitzel. Why is thy ox (thy god Apis, worshipped in Egypt in that form. See above, on Exod. xxxii. 4. Herodotus, ii. 153) laid low? The verb (laid low) is in the singular, and favours this interpretation, and then it follows thus—he could not stand, because the Lord overthrew him, and he was laid low, as Dagon fell prostrate before the Ark (1 Sam. v. 3).

16. Arise—let us go again to our own people] This is said by the allies of Egypt (v, 9).


17. They did cry there (Hebr. shām). Pharaoh king of Egypt is but a noise; he hath passed the time appointed.

18. As I live, saith the King, Whose name is the Lord of hosts, Surely as Tabor is among the mountains, And as Carmel by the sea, so shall he come.

19. O thou daughter dwelling in Egypt, Furnish thyself  to go into captivity: For Noph shall be waste And desolate without an inhabitant.

20. Egypt is like a very fair heifer, But destruction cometh; It cometh  out of the north.

21. Also her hired men are in the midst of her like  fatted bullocks; For they also are turned back, And are fled away together, they did not stand, Because  the day of their calamity was come upon them, And the time of their visitation.

22. The voice thereof shall go like a serpent; For they shall march with an army, And come against her with axes, As hewers of wood;

23. They shall cut down her forest, saith the Lord, Though it cannot be searched;

24. Because they are more than the grasshoppers, And are innumerable.

25. The daughter of Egypt shall be confounded; She shall be delivered into the hand of the people of the north.

and the legend of Jo, changed into a heifer, vexed by the gadfly and fleeing into Egypt, where she became Isis, and was worshipped.

Egypt is the fair heifer, but she is stung by the gadflies from the North—the army of Nebuchadnezzar.

21. are] This word, not in the original, would be better omitted. Her mercenary troops in the midst of her; that is, those which do not go forth on foreign expeditions, but remain at home to protect her, like fattened bullocks (fit for slaughter), even they are turned back before the enemy, and are slain like cattle for the shambles.

22. The voice thereof shall go like a serpent] Egypt, formerly powerful and terrible, like a crocodile, to which it is compared by the prophets (see on Isa. xxvii. 1; li. 9. Ezek. xxix. 3), shall be humbled, and shall eat dust like the serpent, which himself, but crawls on the ground (cp. Isa. xxxix. 4. Micah vii. 16), instead of marching in its might, as Egypt once did, across Palestine and Syria, to the Ephrathites; its voice (it has nothing left but voice) will go forth in murrinings from the earth; while its enemies will march with an army tolew down and uproot the forest of its power. Cp. Isa. x. 23; iv. 8; xxxvii. 24.

23. Though it cannot be searched] Rather, For it (the army of the invaders) cannot be searched out; cannot be counted, it is so numerous. See what follows: the verb is in the singular number, for the enemies are regarded as coming in a body as one man, and therefore the verb may be referred to them; and this verb chāker is used to describe what cannot be counted and found out. Cp. 1 Kings vii. 47. 2 Chron. iv. 18, and the substantive chēker is used for number. Job xxxiv. 24.

— grasshoppers] Locusts.
Judgments on Egypt

BEFORE CHRIST


and Philistia.

Behold, I will punish the multitude of No, And Pharaoh, and Egypt, With their gods, and their kings; Even Pharaoh, and all them that trust in him:

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 afterward it shall be inhabited, As in the days of old, saith the Lord.

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.

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 a full end of thee, But correct thee in measure; Yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.

The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Philistines, before that Pharaoh smote Gaza.

Thus saith the Lord; Behold, waters rise up out of the north, And shall be an overflowing flood, And shall overflow the land, and all that is therein, The city, and them that dwell therein: Then the men shall cry, And all the inhabitants of the land shall howl; At the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his strong horses, At the rushing of his chariots, And at the rumbling of his wheels, The fathers shall not look back to their children For feebleness of hands; Because of the day that cometh To spoil all the Philistines;

Before CHRIST

Throughout about 600.

or, noverisher.

Heb. Amon.

Ezek. 30. 14, 15, 16.

Nahum ii. 8.

ch. 42. 12, 13.

Ezek. 30. 15.

ch. 41. 20.

Ezek. 32. 11.

Ezek. 29. 11, 13, 14.

Isa. 41. 13, 14.

& 43. 5, 6 & 44. 2.

ch. 36. 10, 11.

Or, not utterly cut thee off.

a ch. 25. 20.

Ezek. 25. 15, 16.

Zeph. 2, 3, 5.

b Amos 1. 6, 7, 8.

Heb. Azazzab.

c Isa. 8. 7.

ch. 46. 7, 8.

d ch. 1. 14, & 18.

46. 29.

Heb. the fulness thereof.

k ch. 10. 24, & 50. 11.


26. it shall be inhabited] It shall dwell and be dwelt in peaceably, and without hostile invasions. Cp. xvii. 6. 25. Isa. xiii. 20.

This prophecy seems to point forward to the happy time when Egypt would receive the true faith. Cp. the similar promises to other nations, xlvii. 47; xlvi. 6. 39, and the consolatory language of Isaiah concerning Egypt, xix. 1—25, and the notes on that chapter.

27. fear not thou, O my servant Jacob] The Prophet takes up the joyful words of Isaiah to Israel (xli. 13; xlii. 1), and looks forward to the Restoration of Israel from Babylon by Cyrus; and, far beyond that, to that glorious consummation of which the restoration from Babylon was a figure and a pledge—its Restoration to God in Uranst.

28. in measure] Rather, with righteousness. See on xxx. 11. 111.

Prophecy against Philistia.

Ch. XLVII. 1. before that Pharaoh smote Gaza] Perhaps after his victory over Josiah at Megiddo, 2 Kings xxiii. 29, 2 Chron. xxxv. 30. Cp. Herod. ii. 150, Candelus ("a great city of Syria," which Pharaoh Necho is related by Herodotus to have taken) is thought by some (M. Niebuhr, Graf, Nügget, and others) to be Gaza; by others it is supposed to mean Jerusalem. See note above, on 2 Kings xxiii. 33.

This date is here mentioned by Jeremiah, in order to show that the judgment foretold by the Prophet could not have been anticipated by human foresight. Philistia was then in its full vigour; not as yet humbled by the King of Egypt in the South, and it is not Egypt (which might then be supposed to have hostile designs on Philistia) that is specified as the author of its calamity, but a power from the North (e. 2), i.e. Babylon. Cp. Knepper's Jeremiah, p. 82.

3. the rushing] The rattling of his ears. — rumbling] The din, the clashing and clashing of the wheels.
And to cut off from 'Tyrus and Zidon

Every person that remaineth:

For the Lord will spoil the Philistines,

The remnant of the country of 'Caphtor.

Baldness is come upon Gaza;

Ashkelon is cut off with the remnant of their valley:

How long wilt thou cut thyself?

O thou 'sword of the Lord,

How long wilt it be ere thou be quiet?

Put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still.

How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Ashkelon, And against the sea shore?

There hath he appointed it.

XLVIII. 1 Against Moab thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel;

Woe unto Nebo! for it is spoiled:

Kiriathaim is confounded and taken:

There shall be no more praise of Moab:

In Heshbon they have devised evil against it;

Come, and let us cut it off from being a nation.

Also thou shalt be cut down, O Madmen;

The sword shall pursue thee.

A voice of crying shall be from Horonaim, Spoliating and great destruction.

4. Tuyrus and Zidon'] Of the same Canaanitish family with Philistica and its allies. This judgment on Philistica was probably inflicted at the time when Nebuchadnezzar blockaded Tyre, which he took, b.c. 585, the year after the fall of Jerusalem. See Joseph. c. Apton. i. 21. Rawinson, iii. 494, who quotes Berosus, saying that Nebuchadnezzar subdued Syria and all Phœnicia.


5. Ashkelon is cut off with the remnant of their valley: how long wilt thou cut thyself? Rather, Ashkelon is cut off; thou residue of the deep land (the inland valley of Philistica, as distinguished from the great maritime fortresses, Gaza and Ashkelon), how long wilt thou cut thyself in thy mourning? See vii. 26; xlvi. 6; xlvii. 37. (Gaza is bald, has shorn her head for sorrow; and the inland of Philistica cut itself with gashes in grief. Cp. 1 Kings xviii. 28.

The Sept. seems to have read Anakim (giants) here, for inland of their valley; and this reading has been preferred by some (Genes. 640, Hitzig, Graf), and then the sense would be, O remnant of the Anakim, how long wilt thou cut thyself? But this reading has no sufficient ground to rest upon.

As in the former prophecy Jeremiah adopted the imagery and language of Isaiah (see on xlvi. 10), so he does here (see Isa. xiv. 28—32). The words of Isaiah, 'Thou whole Palestine art dissolved,' are echoed by Jeremiah, 'The day cometh to spoil all the Philistines.'

PROPHETCY AGAINST MOAB.

Cp. XLVIII.] The ancient hostility of the Moabites against Israel was the neighbour (see Judg. iii. 22—29; 1 Sam. xiv. 47. 2 Sam. vii. 2. 2 Kings 1. 1; iii. 4—27; xiii. 20; above, xii. 14) came to its climax in the days of Jehoiakim, when Moabish troops were united with the Chaldeans against Judah (2 Kings xxiv. 2).

This prophecy seems to belong to that period. In it Jeremiah adopts and reproduces the predictions of former Prophets against Moab, especially of Isa. xv. and xvi., as will be seen in the following notes: also of Balaam; Num. xxi. 28, 29; xxiv. 17; cp. re. 45, 46 and Amos ii. 2; see below, re. 24, 41 and Zeph. ii. 8, 9; see re. 26, 42. He also unites with his contemporary Prophets Ezekiel in his utterances against Moab; see Ezek. xxv. 8—11.

This is a specimen, among many, of Jeremiah's special office, in authenticating and retelling the oracles of former generations, and echoing those of his own time. See above, Introduction.

The following prophecy concerning Moab was fulfilled in the first instance in the invasion and subjugation of Moab by Nebuchadnezzar (Joseph. Ant. x. 9. 7). Isaiah's prophecy concerning the spoilment of Moab by the Assyrians is taken up by Jeremiah here, and its imagery and language are applied to describe the devastation of Moab by the Chaldeans. And as the prophecies of Isaiah against Moab and other heathen nations reached forward to the latter days, so this prediction of Jeremiah has a spiritual significance, and foretells the conquests of Christ over those enemies, of which the Moabites were a type. See above, on Isa. xiii., Prelim. Note, p. 57.


—Misgab] Rather, the fortress (the high citadel). Probably the celebrated fortress of Moab, Ker-shees. See Isa. xiv. 16; xvi. 7, 11. See below, p. 51.

2. Heshbon] Twenty miles east of Jordan, the south-west of the passage to Jericho (Num. xxi. 24). Its ruins are described by Seetzen, i. 407; Barkhordati, 301.

There is a play upon the word Heshbon in the original here. Heshbon signifies cowshed. Cp. Cant. vii. 4. Heshbon, the strong city of Moab, has fallen into the hands of the enemy, and there they are consoiling evil against her.

—thou shalt be cut down, O Madmen] Or, Thou shalt be made dumb, O Madmen. There is another play upon the words here in the original; Madmen, which is there connected with the verb đâmân, to be dumb, or madam, in nînâl, to be laid waste (Genes. 203). On Madmen, see Isa. xxiv. 10.

Moab is destroyed;  
Her little ones have caused a cry to be heard.

For in the going up of Luhith  
† Continual weeping shall go up;  
For in the going down of Horonaim  
The enemies have heard a cry of destruction.

Flee, save your lives,  
And be like || the  i heath in the wilderness.

For because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures,  
Thou shalt also be taken:  
And Chemosh shall go forth into captivity,  
With his priests and his princes together.

And 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.

Give wings unto Moab,  
The cities thereof shall be desolate,  
Without any to dwell therein.

Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord  || deceitfully,  
And cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.

Moab hath been at ease from his youth,  
And he hath settled on his lees,  
And hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel,  
Neither hath he gone into captivity:  
Therefore his taste † remained in him,  
And his scent is not changed.

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.

And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh,  
As the house of Israel  † was ashamed of Beth-el their confidence.

How say ye, We are mighty  
And strong men for the war?
15 a Moab is spoiled, and gone up out of her cities,  
And † his chosen young men are † gone down to the slaughter,  
Saith † the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts.  
16 The calamity of Moab is near to come,  
And his affliction hasteth fast.  
17 All ye that are about him, bemoan him;  
And all ye that know his name, say,  
* How is the strong staff broken,  
And the beautiful rod!

18 a Thou daughter that dost inhabit b Dibon,  
Come down from thy glory, and sit in thirst;  
For † the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee,  
And he shall destroy thy strong holds.  
19 O † inhabitant of d Aroer,  
† Stand by the way, and espy;  
Ask him that fleeth, and her that escapeth,  
And say, What is done?  
20 Moab is confounded; for it is broken down:  
† Howl and cry;  
Tell ye it in † Arnon, that Moab is spoiled,  
And judgment is come upon b the plain country;  
Upon Holon, and upon Jahazah, and upon Mephaath,  
And upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim,  
And upon Kiriathaim, and upon Beth-gamul, and upon Beth-meon,  
And upon † Kerioth, and upon Bozrah,  
And upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far or near.

21 k The horn of Moab is cut off,  
And his † arm is broken, saith the Lord.  
22 * Make ye him drunken:  
For he magnified himself against the Lord:  
Moab also shall wallow in his vomit,  
And he also shall be in derision.  
23 For † was not Israel a derision unto thee?  
* Was he found among thieves?  
For since thou spakest of him, thou † skippest for joy.  
24 O ye that dwell in Moab,  
Leave the cities, and † dwell in the rock,  
And be like † the dove

(Deut. iv. 43. Josh. xx. 8 (Graf); but it is more probably the celebrated Bozrah of Edom, on the south of Moab. The tidings and the ravages of the Chaldaean invasion of Moab, would reach from the northern extremity to the south. Cp. Nögel. 321. Genesis. 134.

Cp. xiii. 13; xxv. 15.

27. For was not Israel a derision unto thee?] This was the climax of Moab's guilt. He insulted and harassed the people of God in their calamity (as Edom did, Ps. cxxxvii. 7), when Jerusalem was burnt by the Chaldaans. Cp. xii. 14. Ezek. xxv. 8. Zeph. ii. 8.

28. Was he found among thieves?] Cp. vii. 26. Didst thou find Israel robbing thee, that whenever thou spakest of him thou skippest for joy? No; Israel did not rob thee, but thou hast taken advantage of his misery to spoil him. See xii. 14.)
That maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth.

29. We have heard the pride 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; ||His lies shall not so effect it.

31. Therefore will I howl for Moab, And I will cry out for all Moab; Mine heart shall mourn for the men of Kir-heres.

32. "O 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 *joy 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. From the cry of Heshbon even unto Elealeh, And even unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice, From Zoar even unto Horonaim, As an heifer of three years old:
For the waters also of Nimrim shall be †desolate.

35. Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, saith the Lord, the day that he is got up from the north; And him that burneth incense to his gods.

36. Therefore mine heart shall sound for Moab like pipes, And mine heart shall sound like pipes for the men of Kir-heres: Because the riches that he hath gotten are perished.

37. For every head shall be bald, And every beard ‡clipped: Upon all the hands shall be cuttings, And upon the loins sackcloth.

38. There shall be lamentation generally upon all the housetops of Moab, And in the streets thereof:


29. We have heard the pride of Moab] Compare again Isa. xvi. 6.


32. O vine of Sibmah—Jazer] From the weeping of Jazer I will weep for thee, O vine of Sibmah; that is, my tears, shed over Jazer, shall flow to thee, O Sibmah. Cp. the note on Isa. xvi. 9 for an exposition of this verse. Sibmah was about fifteen miles from Heshbon, about ten miles west of Habbath Ammon (Onoam), probably in Wady Sir (Seetzen, Barckh.). Jazer was near Ramoth, now called Salt, famous for its vineyards; and there is a large lake there, called here a sea, "the sea of Jazer" (Seetzen, Rauwer.).

33. the sea] The Dead Sea.
the sea of Jazer] The lake of Jazer. See on Isa. xvi. 8.
34. Elealeh] One mile from Heshbon (Onomast), now El-al, on a hill north-east of Heshbon (Seetzen), c. 21.
35. an heifer of three years old] This seems to be the true rendering. Cp. note above, on Isa. xv. 6, 6, whence these words are adopted.
36. waters—of Nimrim] Perhaps at Moel Nimmery, on the south of the Dead Sea. Some place it at Nemris, in Wady Scoeh, a well-watered valley, on the plain of the Jordan, nearly opposite Jericho.
37. every head—bald] Cp. xlvii. 5. Isa. xv. 2.
For I have broken Moab
Like a vessel wherein is no pleasure, saith the Lord.

They shall howl, saying, How is it broken down!
How hath Moab turned the † back with shame!
So shall Moab be a derision
And a dismaying to all them about him.

For thus saith the Lord;
Behold, † he shall fly as an eagle,
And shall † spread his wings over Moab.

Kerioth is taken, and the strong holds are surprised,
And † the mighty men's hearts in Moab at that day shall be
As the heart of a woman in her pangs.

And Moab shall be destroyed † from being a people,
Because he hath magnified himself against the Lord.

Fear, and the pit, and the snare, shall be upon thee,
O inhabitant of Moab, saith the Lord.

He that fleeth from the fear shall fall into the pit;
And he that getteth up out of the pit shall be taken in the snare:
For † I will bring upon it, even upon Moab,
The year of their visitation, saith the Lord.

They that fled
Stood under the shadow of Heshbon because of the force:
But † a fire shall come forth out of Heshbon,
And a flame from the midst of Sihon,
And † shall devour the corner of Moab,
And the crown of the head of the † tumultuous ones.

Woe be unto thee, O Moab!
The people of Chemosh perisheth:
For thy sons are taken † captives,
And thy daughters captives.
Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab
In the latter days, saith the Lord. Thus far is the judgment of Moab.
Hath Israel no sons?
Hath he no heir?

Why then doth || their king inherit b Gad,
And his people dwell in his cities?

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.

How! O Heshbon, for Ai is spoiled:
Cry, ye daughters of Rabbah,
a Gird you with sackcloth;
Lament, and run to and fro by the hedges;
For || their king shall go into captivity,
And his priests and his princes together.

Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys,
|| Thy flowing valley, O 6 backsliding daughter?
That trusted in her treasures, & saying, Who shall come unto me?

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.

And 6 afterward I will bring again the captivity
Of the children of Ammon, saith the Lord.

Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of hosts;
Is wisdom no more in Teman?
Is counsel perished from the prudent?
Is their wisdom vanished?

Flee ye, || turn back, dwell deep, O inhabitants of 6 Dedan;
For I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him,
The time that I will visit him.

If 6 grapegatherers come to thee,
Would they not leave some gleanings of grapes?
If thieves by night, they will destroy ✦ till they have enough.

1. their king] Rather, Melcom, the false god of Ammon (1 Kings xi. 5, 32. 2 Kings xxii. 13). Why has he seized on the land of Israel, the people of Jehovah?
2. Rabbah] The chief city of Ammon. See Dent. i. 11. 2 Sam. xii. 26; above, on xxxix. 5.
— her daughters] Her dependent towns (Gesen. 148), will be burned. Cp. Amos i. 14.
— shall Israel be heir] Cp. Ezek. xxv. 14, and 1 Maccebes v. 6, 7.
3. A 6] Supposed by some to have been in Ammon; but the site is unknown, and it seems that the Prophet is still speaking of Rabbah. The word A 6 signifies a heap, especially of ruins (Gesen. 621), and there is good reason for thinking that there is a reference here to this meaning, and to the words in Josh. viii. 28, where it is said that A 6 will become a desolate heap (the words used here by Jeremiah), and that the sense is Rabbah (so called from its greatness) will become another A 6, and be spoiled. Cp. Yehez, Kueper.
— their king] Rather, Melcom, the false god of Ammon. See r. 1.
4. thy flowing valley] The abundance of thy valley (Eomai, Graf).

5. 6] Afterward I will bring again the captivity] Cp. xlviii. 47.

Against Edom.

7. Edom] Edom, from Esau, incurred God’s wrath by his unbrotherly conduct to Israel. Cp. Ps. cxxxvii. 7; and on Isa. lxiii. 1; and below, Ezek. xxv. 12—14. Obad. 8. It has been supposed by some critics (as Berkholtz, Credner, Hitzig) that the Prophet Obadiah imitates Jeremiah; but the more probable opinion is, that Jeremiah here followed Obadiah (Eichhorn, Schurmann, Jager, Kueper, Noseimüller, Caspari). See further, below, on Obadiah.
— Teman] In Edom. See on Job ii. 11. Amos i. 12. Obad. 9. Hab. iii. 3.
9. 6] If grapegatherers] If grape-gatherers come to thee, they will not leave any gleaning of grapes; if thieves by night, they will destroy thee to satisify. Thy enemies will not desist till they have utterly destroyed thee. Cp. Obad. vv. 5, 6, where a somewhat different turn is given to the thought here expressed.

6. I will bring again the captivity] Cp. xlviii. 47.
10. 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 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, 'they whose judgment was not to drink of the cup,  
Have assuredly drunken;  
And art thou that shall altogether go unpunished?  
Thou shalt not go unpunished,  
But thou shalt surely drink of it.

13. For 'I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord,  
That 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 rumour from the Lord,  
And an ambassador is sent unto the heathen, saying,  
Gather ye together, and come against her,  
And rise up to the battle.

15. For, lo, I will make thee small among the heathen,  
And despised among men.

16. Thy terribleness hath deceived thee,  
And the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock,  
That holdest the height of the hill:  

*x* Though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle,  

*a* I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord.

Also Edom shall be a desolation:

*b* Every one that goeth by it shall be astonished,  
And shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.

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.

Behold, he shall come up,  
Like a lion from the swelling of Jordan,  
Against the habitation of the strong:  
But I will suddenly make him run away from her:

19. a lion] Nebuchadnezzar; compared also to an eagle (v. 22). Cp. Dan. vii. 4, who combines both comparisons.
20. from the swelling of Jordan] Where the lion has his lair, and whence he is driven forth by the overflowing of the river (Josh. iii. 15). Cp. Zech. xi. 3.
21. Against the habitation of the strong] Rather, against the evergreen pasture, where the herd is grazing, to which Edom is compared; and the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar ravaging Edom, is compared to the rushing forth of a lion from its thicket in the jungle of Jordan, to tear the flock, quietly grazing in its green inland pasture.
22. But I will suddenly] Or, for in the twinkling of an eye, I will drive him (Edom) hence.
Christ's mission and office.  JEREMIAH XLIX. 20—27.  Damascus threatened.

And who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her?  For who is like me? and who will appoint me the time?  And who is that shepherd that will stand before me?

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.

The earth is moved at the noise of their fall, At the cry the noise thereof was heard in the Red sea.

Behold, 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.

Concerning Damascus.

Hamath is confounded, and Arpad: For they have heard evil tidings: They are faint-hearted; There is sorrow on the sea; It cannot be quiet.

Damascus is waxed feeble, And turneth herself to flee, And fear hath seized on her: Anguish and sorrows have taken her, As a woman in travail.

How is the city of praise not left, The city of my joy!

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.

And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, And it shall consume the palaces of Ben-hadad.

The Mission of Christ, the Priest, Prophet, and King.

—who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her?  Or, who is a chosen one, that I may set him over it (the pasture), for who is like Me? and who will challenge Me, to meet Him in judgment (cp. Job ix. 3), and who is the Shepherd that will stand before Me?

These words ask a remarkable question, fraught with a deep meaning, and only to be answered by God's chosen One, Who is the Shepherd set over His pasture, the Divine Mediator and Intercessor, the Great Shepherd of the sheep—Jesus Christ. With these words is to be compared the mysterious prophecy concerning Christ, which we have read in xxx. 21, "I will cause Him to draw near, and He shall approach unto Me; for Who is He that engaged His heart to approach unto Me, saith the Lord?"  See the notes there.

We need not be surprised by such a searching question as that in the present passage, concerning Christ, when we remember that Edom is the prophetical type of Christ's enemies (see on Isa. xxxiv. 6; ch. xlii. 1), and that the victory of God's servant, Nebuchadnezzar, coming forth like a lion from the swelling of Jordan, to ravage Edom, is a figure of Him Who is the Great King, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, whose Mission began at Jordan, and Who went forth from His Baptism in Jordan, to overthrow all the spiritual Edoms of Satan and the World, and Who was then publicly inaugurated by the Voice from heaven, and by the anointing of the Holy Ghost, to be God's chosen Priest, appointed by Him, and to be the Shepherd, the King and Prophet of His People.

Surely—[with them?] Rather, surely they (the invaders) will draw out (for slaughter) the little ones of the flock (of Edom) and their pasture itself will be desolate (or astounded) because of them.

This prophecy, in a spiritual sense, foretells the complete destruction of all cruel, treacherous, and unbrotherly enemies (symbolized by Edom) of Christ and His Church.

As the eagle [Nebuchadnezzar.  Cps. xlviii. 40; above, v. 19.]

Against Damascus, the Capital of Syria.

Josephus says (x. 9. 6) that Nebuchadnezzar subdued Syria, as well as Moab and Ammon, and Egypt, after the fall of Jerusalem. The Syrians are enumerated among the Chaldaean mercenary troops in xxxv. 11. 2 Kings xxiv. 2.


25.  How is the city of praise not left?  Not spared (Jarchi, Dahler, Maurer); but this rendering is doubtful. It is better to render it—Why was it not left (evacuated) by its inhabitants?  Then her young men would not have fallen in her streets (v. 26).

Ben-hadad] The official name of the Kings of Syria (1 Kings xv. 18. 2 Kings xiii. 9).
Concerning Kedar.


—Hazor] Probably in the S.E. angle of the Zedahul, the coast-land of Ladiha, formed by the southern part of the Euphrates and the Persian Gulf (M. v. Niebuhr). Some suppose that Hazor is a generic word, describing the inhabitants of towns, as distinguished from the Kedardites, dwellers in tents.

30. dwell deep] In caves of the earth (July, Syrian).


Against Elam.

34. Elam] Now Chasistan and Livistan, to the east of the Tigris; it was under the dominion of Babylon in the days of Belshazzar (Dan. viii. 1, 2). Jeremiah had already foretold its subjugation by Nebuchadnezzar (xxv. 25). Cp. M. v. Niebuhr, Assur, p. 212, and below, on Habak. ii. 8.

38. I will set my throne in Elam] Cp. xxiii. 10. Nebuchadnezzar's throne is called God's throne, and his victories are God's victory; because Nebuchadnezzar was God's servant in executing His judgments on the nations. And here again we have a vision of Christ, whom God calls "My Servant." See above, on xxv. 9; and this view is further illustrated by what follows.

39. in the latter days—I will bring again the captivity of Elam] In the latter days, that is, in the Gospel dispensation (see xlviii. 47), Elam will be rescued from captivity, the spiritual captivity of Sin and Satan, and will return to God in Christ.
Prophecy of judgment

JEREMIAH L. 1—4.

Before CHRIST

on Babylon.

L. 1 The word that the Lord spake against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet.

2 Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not:

Say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces;

Her idols are confounded, Her images are broken in pieces.

3 For out of the north there cometh a nation against her, Which shall make her land desolate, And none shall dwell therein:

They shall remove, they shall depart, Both man and beast.

4 In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord,
The children of Israel shall come,

The fulfilment of this prophecy was seen, in part, when the Magi came to our Lord at Bethlehem; and still more on the Day of Pentecost, when "Parthians, Medes, and Elamites" listened to the preaching of St. Peter at Jerusalem, and were received into the Christian Church (Acts ii. 9, 43). In hæ profecto they fulfilled their Prophecy, and became Chrestians.

Against Babylon.

Ch. L.] Having in the foregoing chapters (xiv., xlv.,—xlix.) displayed the Omnipotence, Omnipresence, and Omniscience of the Lord God of Israel, by foretelling how He would punish Heathen Nations (Egypt, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar, and Elam), by the instrumentality of the great King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, His servant, the Prophet now proceeds to exhibit His foreknowledge and supremacy, by foretelling in some circumstances of that retribution with which He would visit Babylon itself for its sin; and of the wonderful deliverance by which He would restore His People Israel to their own land.

The Holy Spirit, speaking by the Prophet Jeremiah, adopts here, and enlarges upon, the prophecies He had already delivered on the same subject, by the ministry of Isaiah (Isa. xiii., xxi., xlvii., xlviii., xlviiii.). He thus authenticates those prophecies, and gives them fresh life and light.

These prophecies have a special interest for Christendom in these later days, because the Holy Spirit Who uttered them doubtless foresaw and prepared the way for His own subsequent adoption of their language by St. John in the Apocalypse, and for their application, in that divine book, to the fall of that great mystical Empire, the Church of Rome, typified by Babylon. See above, notes on Isa. xiii. 2; xiv. 1; xlvii. 3, 4, xlviiii. 5, 8, 11. 14; and below, the notes on the Book of Revelation, chap. xiii., xlvii., xlviiii., and the summary of their contents, in the present writer's "Union with Rome, the Babylon of the Apocalypse" (Rivingtons, 1868).

On the genuineness of these prophecies, see Kueper, Jeremiah, pp. 106—121; Umbreit, Heddernheim, Einleitung, ii. 2, 235; Keil, 258; Graf, 560—569; Nägeli, Jeremiah and Babylon, 60, 124.

The following remarks on the objections of some recent critics to the genuineness of the two following chapters, are from Dr. Fritschy's "Lectures on Daniel," p. 271, note—"The prophecies of Jeremiah (ch. li., lii.) bear, even to an English reader, so evidently the impress of his style, that to attempt to convince one who did not see it, would be to try to give sight to the blind. Here, however, another antidogmatic prejudice came in. Jeremiah, in those chapters, as was especially his wont, embodies language of earlier prophets. But among those, he used that of the latter chapters of Isaiah. The whole boasted theory, then, as to the 'Psuedo-Isaiah,' was at stake, and, with it, the whole underlying of prophecy. Genius satisfied himself that Jeremiah did not employ those chapters, and that what he there foretold in ch. li., lii., he could have foreseen by human sagacity; so he had no doubts as to the genuineness of ch. l., li. (Isa. Einl. ii. 26), nor at that time De Wette (Einl. ed. 1822). In 1839 De Wette still said only, 'ch. 1., li., lii. are from later hands, at least, the false addition li. 59, sqq.' (p. 277). Those who, on antidogmatic grounds, deny the chapters to be Jeremiahs, are forced to concede the like of the style. This was shown by Kueper (Jer. Libr. Sacr. Int. p. 106). They have had recourse to the expeditious (1) that the chapters are 'a learned imitation of Jeremiah, in order to make them pass for his; (2) that 'they were written by Jeremiah, but re cast by the Pseude-Isaiah' (Moreau, De utr. recens. Jer. ind. ed. 1837, De Wette, Einl. 1852, § 417. a.); (3) that a prophecy of Jeremiah was really taken by Senniah to Babylon (Jer. li. 59); and, when the fall of the Chaldean power was confidently expected, was published, interpolated out of other Prophets, and out of Jeremiah himself, to gain it the more credit (Stähelis. Einl. p. 278; (4) that the chapters were written by some unknown Prophet about 556 (Mau er, ad loc.), 550 (Knobel, Proph. li. 355), perhaps Baruch (Id. 353); Brunsw. Gott in d. Gesch. i. 437; while a defender of their genuineness maintains conversely that they were imitated by the author of the latter chapters of Isaiah (Graf, Jeremiah, p. 581). So do they show, in attack or defence, where the real pressure is. Yet the words of one of the extreme writers are virtually the confession of all, as to these chapters of Jeremiah. 'In truth, this section yields many proofs of its genuineness. Language (I. 16; I. 3. 7. 14. 45. 55), imagery (Ii. 7. 8. 34. 37), style (I. 2. 3. 7. 10), especially in turns (as II. 26), the subscription (Ii. 64), the announced dialogues (II. 51), indicate Jeremiah unmistakably. And chronological data confirm this. Assyria is fallen (I. 18), &c. (Hitzig, Jeremiah, p. 201). Of the rest it may suffice to add, that Nebuchadnezzar is spoken of as the reigning King of Babylon (and last, this Nebuchadnezzar, I. 17); and that, in contrast with an unnamed King of Babylon, upon whom the punishment should fall (I. 18) ' (Peney).

The time of the delivery of these prophecies was the fourth year of Zedekiah (li. 59); that is, B.C. 593, when Babylon was in the acme of her glory, and when no human foresight could have discovered what is here clearly revealed—her fall and desolation.

2. set up a standard The Prophet begins with a reference to Isaiah's prophecy against Babylon (xiii. 2, 3). Cp. below, lii. 27, 28.

"Babylon is taken?" Cp. Rev. xiv. 8, "Babylon is fallen," and Rev. xviii. 6, 10. 21.


4. The children of Israel shall come Being restored to Jerusalem by Cyrus, the Conqueror of Babylon. Cp. on Isa. xiv. 1.
—weeping] For their sins. This prophecy will have a still fuller accomplishment, when the Jews, being delivered by Christ, the Divine Cyrus, will turn to God with penitential sorrow, and be joined together in the true faith, in the spiritual Zion of His Church. See xxxi. 5, 18, and Zech. xii. 10—14. "They shall look on Me Whose they have pierced, and mourn for Him." And this is further illustrated by what follows, “My people have been lost sheep.” Cp. Matt. x. 6; xv. 24. Rom. xi. 26.

6. Their resting place] The place where flocks are refreshed, and lie down in peace and safety. Cp. Isa. lxv. 10; above, xxxi. 23.

7. Remove out of the midst of Babylon] Cp. l. 4. 6, and Rev. xviii. 4, and see Origen, hom. 20 and 21 in Jeremiah, where he expounds these prophecies in a spiritual sense. Cp. below, vv. 21, 29.

8. Be as the he goats] Lead ye the way for the people, out of Babylon, as the he-goats press forward, and place themselves at the head of the flocks, and lead them to pasture.

9. Their arrows] The arrows of the Medes, cp. Isa. xiii. 18; and Elamites, Jer. xlix. 34.

10. shall be satisfied] Cp. xix. 9.


12. be as the he goats] Lead ye the way for the people, out of Babylon, as the he-goats press forward, and place themselves at the head of the flocks, and lead them to pasture.

13. But it shall be wholly desolate:

The restoration of the Jews JEREMIAH L. 5—13. from Babylon.
14. Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: All ye that bend the bow, Shoot at her, spare no arrows: For she hath sinned against the Lord.

15. Shout against her round about: She hath given her hand: Her foundations are fallen, Her walls are thrown down: For it is the vengeance of the Lord: Take vengeance upon her;

16. Cut off the sower from Babylon, And him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest: For fear of the oppressing sword They shall turn every one to his people, And they shall flee every one to his own land.

17. Israel is a scattered sheep; The lions have driven him away: First the king of Assyria hath devoured him; And last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones. 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.

18. 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.

19. In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, 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 whom I reserve.

21. Go up against the land of Merathaim, it is prophesied, will it be with the mystical Babylon (Rev. xviii. 10).

19. Carmel—Gilead] Carmel and Mount Ephraim, on the west of Jordan, Bashan and Gilead on the east. This promise was partly fulfilled in the restoration, and will have its perfect accomplishment in Christ. Cp. xxxiii. 12. Isa. lv. 10; and below, on Ezek. xxxiv. 13, 14; xxxvi. 24; xxxvii. 21. See what follows concerning the remission of sins, which can only be had in Christ.

21. Merathaim] Literally, double rebellion, a symbolic name of Babylon (Gen. 508). Fuerst, 872, as Pekah here is, and Sheshach in xxx. 26 and li. 41. Cp. note on xxx. 26, and on Ezek. xiii. 23. The land of Merathaim is called here (e. g., "the land of the Chaldeans," With this dual noun (Merathaim) applied to Babylon, we may also compare the noun Cushah-reshathaim, a King of the same country. That name signifies "Ethiopian of double evil," and he who was called by that name oppressed Israel. See above, on Judg. iii. 8, and the note there, p. 93, on the Acts of Othniel, the Judge of Israel, who delivered them from him. Babylon is called the land of Merathaim, or double rebellion, because it was—
Even against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod:
Waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the Lord,
And do according to all that I have commanded thee.

A sound of battle is in the land,
And of great destruction.

How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken!
How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!

I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken;
O Babylon, and thou wast not aware:
Thou art found, and also caught,
Because thou hast striven against the Lord.

The Lord hath opened his armoury,
And hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation:
For this is the work of the Lord God of hosts,
In the land of the Chaldeans.

Come against her from the utmost border,
Open her storehouses:
[†] Cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly:
Let nothing of her be left.

Slay all her bullocks;
Let them go down to the slaughter:
Woe unto them! for their day is come,
The time of their visitation.

The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon,
To declare in Zion the vengeance of the Lord our God,
The vengeance of his temple.

Call together the archers against Babylon:
[‡] All ye that bend the bow,
Camp against it round about;

(1) The land of Nimrod—whose name was so called from rebellion—who built the tower of Babel in defiance of God (see above, notes on Gen. x. 10, and xi. 2—9), and because it was

(2) The land of those who in later days rebelled against

Prophecy has also a reference to Christian times, and no one who examines the claims which the Church of Rome, the mystical Babylon, makes to a twofold supremacy, spiritual and temporal, usurping the attributes of God Himself (see below, on the Book of Revelation, xiii. p. 233, and xvii. p. 257, and on 2 Thess. ii. 9—12), can doubt that she is FULLY called "the land of

Merathaim, or of double rebellion against God." "Whoever considers what Popery is, as it is professed at Rome, must confess that it is a manifest open usurpation of all human and divine authority" (Bp. Butler, Serm. v.).

Pekod.

Pekod] Visitation (Gen. 6:17), another symbolical name of Babylon. Because she is the land of Merathaim, or of double rebellion, against God, therefore she is the land of Pekod, or visitation, that is, of punishment from Him, as it is expressed in v. 24, "thou art caught, because thou hast striven against the Lord." She thinks herself secure, but He will visit her for her sins. See the reference to this in the root pakad, repeated in v. 18 (where it is rendered punish) v. 27, the time of visitation, v. 31, and li. 44. 47. 52 (see margin), and compare the note Ezek. xxiii. 25, where Babylon is also called Pekod by Jeremiah's contemporary Prophet.

Here, again, is a prophetic warning to Christendom in these latter days. Rome, which (as is shown at large in the notes below on the Apocalypse) is the mystical Babylon, is now the land of Merathaim, or of double rebellion, but the time is coming when she will be the land of Pekod, or of judicial visitation from God. See Rev. xiv., xvii. 1—21.


b. To declare in Zion the vengeance of the Lord our God,
The vengeance of his temple.

Call together the archers against Babylon:
[‡] All ye that bend the bow,
Camp against it round about;

So it is said in the Apocalypse, of the mystical Babylon, "In one hour her judgment is come" (Rev. xviii. 10), and she is burnt (xviii. 8, 9).

[‡] Her strong men—like cattle for the shambles.

— visitation] Pekudah. See v. 21.

b. from the utmost border] Or, from the last; all together, from the foremost to the hindmost of the army of the invader, sound and enter Babylon.


[‡] As heaps] Of corn heaped together, and burnt, without any resistance; this metaphor describes the suddenness, ease, and completeness with which Babylon will be taken and spoiled; it will be like the conflagration of a barn of corn. Cp. v. 32.

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[‡] Her strong men—like cattle for the shambles.

— visitation] Pekudah. See v. 21.

b. to flee out of Babylon—to declare in Zion] It is not enough to flee from Babylon, we must go to Zion. We must fly from the heresy and idolatry of Babylon, and hold fast the sacred faith and worship of Zion, the Church of God (Origin).

This also is to be applied to the mystical Babylon, of which it is said by God in the Apocalypse, "Come out of her, My people" (Rev. xviii. 4). Cp. below, li. 43. 45.

— The vengeance of his temple] His vengeance for the profanation of the holy vessels taken from it. See Dan. v. 3.
Judgment on Babylon.

JEREMIAH L. 30—39.

Deliverance of Judah.

Let none thereof escape:
4 Recompense her according to her work;
According to all that she hath done, do unto her:
* For she hath been proud against the Lord,
Against the Holy One of Israel.

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.

Behold, I am against thee, O thou † most proud,
Saith the Lord God of hosts:
For ‡ thy day is come, the time that I will visit thee;
And † the most proud shall stumble and fall,
And none shall raise him up:
And ‡ I will kindle a fire in his cities, And it shall devour all round about him.

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.

Their Redeemer is strong;
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.

A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord,
And upon the inhabitants of Babylon, And † upon her princes, and upon ′ her wise men.

A sword is † upon the ‡ liars; and they shall dote:
A sword is upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed.

A sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots,
And upon all ‖ the mingled people that are in the midst of her; And ′ they shall become as women:
A sword is upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed.

A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up:
For it is the land of † graven images,
And they are mad upon † their idols.

Therefore the wild beasts of the desert
With the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell there,
And the owls shall dwell therein:
* And it shall be no more inhabited for ever;
Neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.

29. Recompense her—do unto her] So of the mystical Babylon it is said in the Apocalypse (Rev. xviii. 6), ἀποδοθεντα αὐτῇ ὡς καὶ αὐτῇ ἀντίθετον, καὶ διαλύσωσον τὴν κατὰ τὰ ἑργά ἄντικης, words derived from the Sept. here, ἀντιθέται αὐτῇ κατὰ τὰ ἑργά αὐτῆς.
31. O thou most proud] Literally, O Pride (Hebr. Zadóq), twice here (rev. 31 and 32) Babylon is called Zadóq as being the personification of Pride (Genes. 289); and is called Merathaim (v. 21), being the impersonation of rebellion against God; as Egypt is called Raháh, for its fierce insoucience. See on Ps. lxxxv. 4; lxxxix. 10. Isa. xxx. 7.
37. their horses—their chariots] Cp. the prophecy concerning the mystical Babylon, where "horses and chariots" are mentioned as here (Rev. xviii. 13).
38. A drought is upon her waters] A prophecy fulfilled in the drying up of the Euphrates by Cyrus, in order to make an entrance for his troops into the heart of the city, Babylon, by night, when it was engaged in the festal revelry of an idolatrous anniversary. See above, note on Isa. xxi. 5; xlv. 27.
39. the mingled people] The allies and mercenary troops of Babylon. See xcv. 20; xlv. 21.
39. the wild beasts] See notes above, on Isa. xliii. 21, whence these words are repeated. Compare the prophecy concerning the mystical Babylon, Rev. xviii. 2.
* it shall be no more inhabited—generation] Adopted from Isa. xiii. 20.
Before CHRIST

u Gen. 19. 25.
Isa. 13. 19.
ch. viii. 2.
51, 26.

40. As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah
And the neighbour citie thereof, saith the Lord;
Neither shall any son of man dwell therein,
So shall no man abide there,
Be 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;
They shall hold the bow and the lance:
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.

The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them,
And his hands waxed feeble:
And pangs as of a woman in travail.
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 [appoint me the time?
And who is that shepherd that will stand before me?
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.

At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved,
And the cry is heard among the nations.

I. Thus saith the Lord;
Behold, I will raise up against Babylon,
And against them that dwell in the midst of them that rise up against me,
A destroying wind;
And will send unto Babylon f fanners.

41. x ver. 9.
ch. 6. Kings 22, 14,
& 51, 27.
Rev. 17. 16.
y ch. 6. 23.
z Isa. 13. 18.
a Isa. 5. 39.

42. \(\phi\) Or, consent me to plead?
\(\delta\) Job 41. 10.
ch. 49. 10.
e Isa. 14. 24, &c.
ch. 51. 11.

43. \(\psi\) Or, consent me to plead?
\(\chi\) Heb. heart.
\(\alpha\) 2 Kings 19. 7.
ch. 4. 11.
b ch. 15. 7.

44. who is a chosen man—like me?—that shepherd that will stand before me?—Cyrus is called God’s Shepherd, and His Associate (Isa. xlv. 28; xlv. 1). These words refer, in the first instance, to Cyrus; but they have their perfect accomplishment in Christ; see above, on xlv. 10.

45. See Jos. xxxvi. 22.

46. \(\chi\) Heb. heart.
\(\alpha\) 2 Kings 19. 7.
ch. 4. 11.
b ch. 15. 7.

47. \(\chi\) Heb. heart.
\(\alpha\) 2 Kings 19. 7.
ch. 4. 11.
b ch. 15. 7.

48. This rendering (fanners) follows the reading zorim, and so Vulg.

According to the common reading, the words are to be rendered strangers, who will scatter her; where there is a paronomasia, or play on the words, in the original. See Graf, 601.
Flee out of Babylon. JEREMIAH LI. 3—11. God's work for Zion.

That shall fan her, and shall empty her land:
For in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about.

3. Against him that bendeth 4 let the archer bend his bow,
And against him that lifteth himself up in his brigandine:
And spare ye not her young men;
5. Destroy ye utterly all her host.

Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans,
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.

6. Flee out of the midst of Babylon,
And deliver every man his soul:
Be not cut off in her iniquity;
For this is the time of the Lord's vengeance;

1. He will render unto her a recompense.

7. Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand,
That made all the earth drunken:

1. The nations have drunken of her wine;
Therefore the nations m are mad.

3. Babylon is suddenly n fallen and destroyed:

o Howl for her;
5. 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 let us every one into his own country:
For her judgment reacheth unto heaven,
And is lifted up even to the skies.

10. The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness:
Come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God.

11. a Make bright the arrows; gather the shields:

5. Israel—not—forsoaken] Literally, not withaloned, not deserted by the Lord, Who is her Husband. Isa. liv. 5.
—Though their land] Rather, for their land, the land of the Chaldeans, is full of sin against the Holy One of Israel.
Therefore Babylon is punished, and Israel is delivered.

6. Flee out of the midst of Babylon] Escape, O Israel, from Babylon. So it is said concerning the mystical Babylon, “Come out of her, My People” (Rev. xviii. 4).

7. Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord’s hand] That made all the earth drunken] She, like a fair harlot, has bewitched thee with the love-potions of her idolatries.

This imagery is also adopted in the Apocalypse, and is applied to the mystical Babylon, bewitching and intoxicating the nations with a similar draught from her golden chalice. See below, on Rev. xiv. 8; xvii. 2. 4. p. 252.

“The cup in the hand of Babylon” (says an ancient Expositor) “is a golden cup; she chooses such a cup, in order that men’s eyes may be dazzled with the glitter of the gold, and may not inquire what it contains. But,” he adds, “mark well, in the golden cup of Babylon is the poison of idolatry, the poison of false doctrines, which destroy the souls of men. I have often seen such a golden cup, in fair speech of seductive eloquence; and when I have examined the venomous ingredients of the golden chalice, I have recognized the cup of Babylon” (Origes).

May not these words also be applied to the mystical Babylon holding the golden chalice in her hands, and intoxicating the nations with its delusive beverage?

It is called a cup in the hand of the Lord, because it is a punishment to those who will not obey God. God punished the nations by means of Babylon, because they disobeyed Him. See above, xvii. 2—6.

In like manner God uses the mystical Babylon to punish those who will not use aught His gifts—their Conscience, their Reason, and their Will, and above all His Holy Scriptures; “therefore God sends them a strong delusion, that they may believe a lie.” See below, on 2 Thess. ii. 11.

8. Babylon is suddenly fallen] See Isa. xxi. 9; xviii. 9. 11. 11. The same sudden fall is also predicted of the mystical Babylon.
See Rev. xiv. 8; xviii. 10. 17. 19.
—Howl for her] So the Kings of the Earth are represented as mourning over the fall of the mystical Babylon.
See Rev. xviii. 9. 11. 17.
—Take balm] Cp. xlvii. 11.
9. We would have healed Babylon] Literally, we have healed her, as far as was in our power, by warning her of God’s judgments hanging over her; but in vain.
The same is true of the mystical Babylon; she has been warned by prophecies from Isaiah and Jeremiah, from St. Paul (2 Thess. ii. 2—9), and from the Apocalypse (Rev. xiii.—xviii.). But she refuses to be healed.

—her judgment reacheth unto heaven] Her judgment, due to her sin, reacheth to heaven, and calls on God to put it in execution.

So of the mystical Babylon it is said, on the eve of her fall (Rev. xviii. 5). “Her sins have reached unto heaven,”—literally, “have been glued to heaven.

10. our righteousness] Due to His grace, given to us on our repentance (Isa. xvii. 25; li. 1—5).
This is applicable to all true Israelites, whose trust is in the Lord our righteousness” (xviii. 6; xxiii. 16).
11. gather the shields] Fill the shields with your arms, or bodies (Gen. 325). The word rendered shields is by some
The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes:
For his device is against Babylon, to destroy it;
Because it is the vengeance of the Lord.
The vengeance of his temple.

Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon,
Make the watch strong, set up the watchmen,
Prepare the ambushes:
For the Lord hath both devised and done
That which he spake against the inhabitants of Babylon.

O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures,
Thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness.

The Lord of hosts hath sworn by himself, saying,
Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillers;
And they shall lift up a shout against thee.
He hath made the earth by his power,
He hath established the world by his wisdom,
And hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding.
When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens;
And he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth:
He maketh lightnings with rain,
And bringeth forth the wind out of his treasuries.

Every man is bruitish by his knowledge;
Every founder is confounded by the graven image.
For his molten image is falsehood,
And there is no breath in them.

They are vanity, the work of errors:
In the time of their visitation they shall perish.

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.

Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war:
For with thee will I break in pieces the nations,
And with thee will I destroy kingdoms;
And with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider;

translated quivers (so Vulg., Syriac, Targum); and this seems the more natural sense.
— of the Medes See above, on Isa. xiii. 17, and xxi. 2.
12. Make the watch strong This is derived from Isa. xxi. 5, 6. See the notes there.
13. upon many waters Babylon was protected by the Euphrates and its canals; cp. v. 32, and 1. 38. Compare the description in Niebuhr (Assur, p. 229), and the cylinder of Nebuchadnezzar (in the possession of Sir Thomas Phillipps, of Middlehille), where he speaks of his fortification of Babylon by means of dykes like the sea (Oppert. Nægeli).
Compare the description of the mystical Babylon “sitting upon many waters, which are multitudes, nations, and tongues” (Rev. xvii. 1. 15.) These are her subjects, and are a defence to her city, and are a help to her in her spiritual commerce, as the Euphrates was a cause of wealth to Babylon.
Or it may mean the measure of thy cutting off (Vulg., Gesen., Maurer, Graf, Nægeli), i.e. the appointed yard of thy fortunes is span, and is now to be cut off.
14. I will fill thee with men This was fulfilled in the sudden appearance of the Persians like a swarm of locusts filling the city.

— caterpillers] Locusts. Nahum iii. 15. Joel ii. 18—19.] Repeated from x. 12—16; where see the notes. There they are introduced by a verse in Chaldee to show that they are designed as a warning against the idolatry of Babylon. These verses are not a superfluous episode, or a spurious interposition, as some allege (Nægeli. 355), but an appropriate statement of the Omnipotence of the Lord God of Israel, as contrasted with the impotence of the idols worshipped at Babylon. They declare the blessedness of Israel,—if they trust in the Lord their God,—as distinguished from the misery of idolaters; and they may be compared with the similar assertions in Isa. xli. 12—31; xlii. 1—14.
20. battle axe] Hammer. Cp. l. 23, where, however, another word (paltith) is used in the original and applied to Babylon; here the word is mappets. Cp. Prov. xxv. 18, where mephit is rendered man. See Gesen. 498, 499.

The Lord, speaking by the Prophet, suddenly turns to Cyrus, the conqueror of Babylon (to whom he has already referred in v. 11), and makes him to be the hammer in His own hand for bruising Babylon, as Babylon had been (l. 29), and Assyria before it, for punishing other Nations, especially Israel and Judah for their sins; see on Isa. x. 5, and xxx. 32. And with regard to the commission of Cyrus against Babylon, see Isa. xiv. 1—5.
Babylon shall be desolate. JEREMIAH LI. 22—30. Panic at Babylon.

And with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider;
With thee also will I break in pieces man and woman;
And with thee will I break in pieces old and young;
And with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid;
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.

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.

Behold, I am against thee, '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,
And will make thee a burnt mountain;
And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner,
Nor a stone for foundations;
But thou shalt be † desolate for ever, saith the Lord.

Set ye up a standard in the land,
Blow the trumpet among the nations,
Prepare the nations against her,
Call together against her the kingdoms
Of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz;
Appoint a captain against her;
Cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillers;
Prepare against her the nations with the kings of the Medes,
The captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof,
And all the land of his dominion.

And the land shall tremble and sorrow:
For every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon,
To make the land of Babylon a desolation,
Without an inhabitant.

The mighty men of Babylon have forborn to fight,
They have remained in their holds:
Their might hath failed;
They became as women:
They have burned her dwelling places;

25. †O destroying mountain—burnt mountain Babylon, which raised itself up to heaven, and proudly dominated, like a lofty mountain, over the other kingdoms of the world (cp. xxii. 6) and destroyed them, will become a burnt mountain (cp. Rev. xviii. 8), a volcano, set on fire by God’s hand, and bringing desolation on itself by its conflagration. Cp. note above, on Isa. xlvii. 14.

So the mystical Babylon will be consumed by fire (Rev. xvii. 16; xviii. 8, 9, 18). The words rendered destroying mountain are literally mountain of corruption (mashchilh), the same words as are applied to the Mount of Olives in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, and there rendered mount of corruption on account of the idolatries practised on it; and this was very applicable to Babylon for the same cause, and by them she corrupted and destroyed others, who were connected with her, and she was eventually destroyed by God on account of her idolatries (Dan. v. 23—29; Isa. xiv. 16). The mountain of corruption became a mountain of combustion.

26. † desolate for ever Babylon.


28. Prepare[ literally, consecrate; being commissioned by God to do His work against Babylon. Cp. on Isa. xiii. 3.

30. They have burned her dwelling places[ They (the invaders under Cyrus) have burned the dwellings of the Babylonians. For the fulfilment of this see note above on Isa. xlvii. 14. The mountain of corruption became a mountain of combustion—so it will be with the Babylon of the Apocalypse (Rev. xvii. 16).]
Doom of Babylon

JEREMIAH LI. 31-34.

For her cruelty to Zion.

Before CHRIST 505.
CH 506.
e Lam. 2. 9.
Amos 1. 2.
Micah 13.
g Isa. 41. 15.
Hab. 3. 12.
Jer. 1. 19.

The daughter of Babylon is like a threshold floor, || It is time to thresh her:
Yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come.

Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath devoured me, He hath crushed me, He hath made me an empty vessel, He hath swallowed me up like a dragon,
in his soldiers: "My friends, the river (Euphrates) has retired from its channel into the city; and let us enter it with confidence, knowing that they against whom we are going, are the same persons whom we conquered formerly, although they had many allies, and were awake, and sober, and armed, and marshalled together; but now we shall attack them when many of them are asleep, and are intoxicated, and all are in confusion; and when they perceive that we are inside the city, they will be made still more helpless by their paucity. And if any of you think that we shall be exposed to a danger, which is said to be a terrible one to those who enter hostile cities, namely, lest the besieging should mount the roofs of their houses, and hurl missiles at us from this side and that, be ye of good confidence in this respect also; for if they climb to the tops of their dwellings, we shall have Hadheusites (the god of fire) on our side; and the purposes of their houses are combustible, their doors are made of palm-tree wood, and are smeared with bitumen, which will serve us for tinder, and we have torches in our hands, which will soon kindle a fire, and much pitch and tow, which will feed the flame; so that the most soon flee from their houses, or else be consumed by fire. Hasten, therefore, to arms, and I will lead you, with the gods, and so ye, Gadates and Gobryas, show us the way, for ye know it; and when we are within the city, guide as quickly as ye can to the palace." "Yes," replied Gobryas, "we will; and I should not be surprised if the doors of the palace are now open, for the whole city seems to-night to be given up to revelry" (Xenophon).

31. One post shall—end! In his account of the capture of Babylon by Cyrus (Xenophon, Anab. iv. 2. 10), "The Persians (who entered the city by the channel of the Euphrates, which they had drained off from its bed) came upon them unawares; and on account of the extent of the city, as is said by those who dwelt there, where the extremities of it were taken, the Babylonians who dwelt in the middle of it were not aware that they were captured, but were dancing at that time (for it happened to be a festival), and were rejoicing, until they perceived it in very deed." Cp. Aristot. Polit. iii. c. 1, who says, that Babylon was so vast in extent as to be "more like a nation than a city; and it is said that when it was taken, some of its inhabitants did not hear of the capture till the third day.

The palace in which the King heard the news was in the northern half of the city (near the banks of the Euphrates); and its site is now called El Karr, or the Palace. See above, on Isa. xiii. 19, and Rawlinson, Anc. Mon. iii. 363. It was built by Nebuchadrezzar.

32. the passages are stopped! The passages are occupied; surprised by the troops of the enemy. See v. 41, where the word is rendered surprised, and so in xlviii. 41. Herodotus (i. 191) says, that if the passages from the Euphrates into the city (which were usually closed at night) had not been left open at that time, on account of its being a night of festive rejoicing, the army of Cyrus would have been caught in a net, in the channel of the Euphrates, and have been easily destroyed by the Babylonians, instead of taking the city.

the reeds they have burned with fire. There is no sufficient authority for reeds; the sense rather is, the swamps they have burned with fire, the lakes or moats formed for the defence of the city (Herod. i. 190). The expression is a hyperbolic one; and designedly so, to show the extreme surprise and alarm of the Babylonians, when they saw the configuration of their houses, and the capture of their city. "They, the enemy, have dried up our river, and have even burnt up our lake!"

—affrighted! Are scared away.
The following remarks on the fulfilment of this prophecy, are well worthy of attention.

"Jeremiah's prophecy of the capture of Babylon is so graphic, that it takes its place in history, accrediting the accounts of Herodotus and Xenophon. Its mighty men 'forbear to fight, they remain in their strongholds; they become as women. Post shall run to meet post, and messenger to meet messenger, to tell the King of Babylon that his city is taken at the end thereof, and that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the meu of war are affrighted' (Jer. iii. 30-32).

The title 'vision' justifies us in conceiving that vivid pictures, such as those of the capture of Babylon in Jeremiah and Isaiah (and the like in other Prophets), were first spread before the Prophets' minds, and then described by them in God-given words. The traits are characteristic of this siege, not of stages in general. The idyllic nature of the Babylonian, its night of revelry, its sudden interruption, the fruitless cry 'to arms,' the drying up of the Euphrates by fire, the possession of the passages, the vast city taken ere it was aware, the hurrying of the posts to tell the King, we see it all vividly with our own eyes, as much as in the historical relations of the capture. Yet neither Prophet supplies the whole history. Both see the besieging armies; Jeremiah, the Kings of the Medes and of the North; Isaiah, the Persians also; both, the destruction of Babylon, the breaking in pieces of her gods. Isaiah alone sees the festive night, the sudden surprise amidst their revelry. The night of my pleasure he hath turned to terror to me. They prepare the table, watch the watch, eat, drink; 'arise, ye princes, anoint the shield!' (Isa. xxx. 4, 5). In another vision he sees the slaughter of the King, his burial not among the tombs of his fathers (xv. 15—22). Jeremiah alone sees the mode of the capture, the completeness of the slaughter of repose in which they were wrapped. Daniel, Xenophon (fem. Cyrop. vii. 8—9), Herodotus (i. 191), relate the festival revelry; Herodotus and Xenophon state that Cyrus knew of it, and entered by the Euphrates. Daniel and Xenophon (ib. § 11), relate the death of the King; Xenophon relates that the assault was in the night (ib. 9), that the watch was surprised drinking (ib. 10), the city captured through the death of the King, in that same night (ib. 11, 12), as Daniel relates that in the night the King was slain; Herodotus adds, that the river-gates were left open, those same passages which Jeremiah beholds as sealed. The complete security of Babylon is related by both the Greek historians (Her. i. 190. Xen. l. c. 5 ?); its deliberate unwariness stands in strange contrast to its subsequent energy in rebelling" (Dr. Pusey, Lectures on Daniel, p. 298).

Desolation of Babylon.

Jeremiah lx. 35—44.

He hath filled his belly with my delicates, He hath cast me out.

35 [The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, Shall the inhabitant of Zion say; And my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, Shall Jerusalem say.

36 Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; And I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.

37 And Babylon shall become heaps, A dwelling place for dragons, An astonishment, and an hissing, Without an inhabitant.

33 They shall roar together like lions; They shall yell as lions' whelps.

39 In their heat I will make their feasts, And I 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 Sheshach taken! And how is the praise of the whole earth surprised! How is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations!

42 The sea is come up upon Babylon: She is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof.

43 Her cities are a desolation, A dry land, and a wilderness, A land wherein no man dwelleth, Neither doth any son of man pass thereby.

44 And I will punish Bel in Babylon, And I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: And the nations shall not flow together any more unto him:

Yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall.

— He hath cast me out] Of his mouth; the metaphor is kept up. Cp. Rev. iii. 16.

36. I will dry up her sea] The Euphrates, dried up by Cyrus. See on i. 38. Great rivers like the Euphrates (Gen. 350) and Nile, are called seas. Cp. above, on Isa. xxii. 1; xxvii. 1.

37. Babylon shall become heaps] Fulfilled to the letter. See the words of Rawlinson, quoted above in the notes on Isa. xiii. 19.


38. They shall roar] Rather, they roar together as lions. He is describing the violence and rage of the Chaldeans, roaring like lions when they are about to seize their prey. Cp. Amos iii. 4. In this picture of their confidence, he adds a prophetic representation of their destruction, in the very moment of their revelry. What follows.

39. In their heat—not wake] While they are flushed with confidence and victory, and in a feverish paroxysm of carnal joy ( cp. Hos. vii. 4—5), I will make their feasts (Belshazzar's feast); I will make them drunken. They will red with riot and revelry, but their riot and revelry will be occasion and cause of their destruction; they will rejoice, but the consequence of their rejoicing will be that they will be caught in it by their enemy, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awake. The cup of their joy will become to them the cup of My fury. Cp. xxiv. 15, and below, v. 57; and for the fulfilment of this prophecy, see Dan. v. 1—9, 30, and the narrative of the death of Belshazzar and his princes, in the notes above, on Isa. xiv. 19 and xxii. 5, 9.

41. Sheshach] A symbolic name for Babylon, turned upside down. See the note above, on xxv. 26.

— the praise of the whole earth] Babylon had been embellished with ornaments more than any city that we are acquainted with, says Herodotus (i. 178).

44. Bel] See above, the notes on i. 2, and on Isa. xlvii. 1, concerning him and his temple.

— I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed] Especially the holy vessels taken out of the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, and placed in the temple of Bel, and brought forth from it by Bel, and restored by the instrumentality of Cyrus, to Jerusalem. See on 2 Chron. xxxvi. Dan. i. 2, 3; v. 2, 3, 23; and note above, on Ezra i. 7, where is a comment on the spiritual significance of this act.

— the wall of Babylon] This is fitly connected with Bel; for the wall of Babylon, built by Nebuchadnezzar, was called after him, Lugur-Bel, i. e. Bel defends (see above, on Isa. xiv. 21, and below, on v. 53), and Nibittu-Bel, i. e. habitation of Bel (Oppert). And the name of the ruler of Babylon at that time, Belshazzar, was derived from Bel.
45. My people, go ye out of the midst of her] The sacred vessels will be restored to God's service; and ye, My people, who are like sacrificing sheep devoted to Him, but now captive in Babylon, go ye forth and deliver your souls.

These words are adopted by God Himself in the Apocalypse, and are addressed to those who are now captive in the mystical Babylon—the Church of Rome. See Rev. xviii. 4.

46. A rumour—ruler against ruler] Cyrus had fought against Nabonides, or Nabonadius, King of Babylon, the successor of Nabuchadnezzar, who followed the short-lived son of Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-merodach. Cyrus, before he attacked Babylon, engaged in battle with Nabonides, whose son Belshazzar ruled as the viceroy of Nabonides. Nabonidas fled to Bar-sippa, on the west side of the Euphrates, and a few miles to the south-west of Babylon (Berosus, Frag. 14), and left Belshazzar to defend the city (Herod. viii. 594—515).

After the fall of Babylon and the death of his son Belshazzar, Nabonidas surrendered himself to the conqueror (Berosus, Frag. 14).

The following historical summary of events may serve as a commentary on the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning the fall of Babylon, and will show how circumstantially it was fulfilled:

"In his father's absence, Belshazzar took the direction of affairs within the city, and met and failed for a considerable time all the assaults of the Persians. He was young and inexperienced, but he had the counsels of the Queen-Mother to guide and support him, as well as those of the various lords and officers of the court. So well did he manage the defence, that after a while Cyrus despaired, and, as a last resource, ventured on a stratagem in which it was clear that either he must succeed or perish.

"Withdrawing the greater part of his army from the vicinity of the city, and leaving behind him only certain posts of observation, Cyrus marched away up the course of the Euphrates for a certain distance, and there proceeded to make a vigorous use of the spade. His soldiers could now appreciate the value of the experience which they had gained by dispersing the Gycines, and perceive that the summer and autumn of the preceding year had not been wasted. They dug a channel or channels from the Euphrates, by means of which a great portion of its water would be drawn off; and hoped in this way to render the natural course of the river fordable.

"When all was prepared, Cyrus determined to wait for the arrival of a certain festival, during which the whole population were wont to engage in drinking and reveling, and then silently, in the dead of the night, to turn the water of the river, and make his attack. All fell out as he hoped and wished. The festival was even held with greater pomp and splendor than usual; for Belshazzar, with the natural insolence of youth, to mark his contempt of the besieging army, abandoned himself wholly to the delights of the season, and himself entertained a thousand lords in his palace. Elsewhere, the rest of the population was occupied in feasting and dancing. Drunken riot and mad excitement held possession of the town; the siege was forgotten; ordinary precautions were neglected. The next solstice of the river-gates must have been a neglect of this kind. Had the sentries even kept proper watch, the enemy's approach must have been perceived.

"Following the example of their King, the Babylonians gave themselves up for the night to orgies, in which religious frenzy and drunken excess formed a strange and revolting medley.

"Meanwhile, outside the city, in silence and darkness, the Persians, watched at the two points where the Euphrates entered and left the walls. Anxiously they noted the gradual sinking of the water in the river-bed; still more anxiously they watched to see if those within the walls would observe the suspicious circumstance, and sound an alarm through the town. Should such an alarm be given, all their labours would be lost. If, when they entered the river-bed, they found the river-walls manned, and the river-gates fast locked, they would be, indeed, 'caught in a trap' (Herod. i. 191). Ensconced on both sides by an enemy whom they could neither see norreach, they would be overwhelmed and destroyed by his missiles before they could succeed in making their escape. But as they watched, no sounds of alarm reached them, only a confused noise of revel and riot, which showed that the unhappy townsman were quite unconscious of the approach of danger.

"At last, shadowy forms began to emerge from the obscurity of the deep river-bed, and on the landing-places opposite the river-gates, scattered clusters of men grew into solid columns, the undefended gateways were seized, a war-scout was raised, the alarm was taken and spread, and swift runners started off to 'show the King of Babylon that his city was taken at one end' (Jer. ii. 31). In the darkness and confusion of the night a terrible massacre ensued (Xenoph. Cyrop. vii. 5). The drunken revellers could make no resistance. The King, paralysed with fear at the awful handwritting upon the wall, which, too late, had warned him of his peril, could do nothing even to check the progress of the assailants, who carried all before them everywhere. Bursting into the palace, a band of Persians made their way to the presence of the Monarch, and slew him on the scene of his impious revelry. Other bands carried fire and sword through the town (Xen. Cyrop. vii. 5). When morning came, Cyrus found himself undisputed master of the city, which, if it had not deserted his efforts, might with the greatest ease have baffled them" (Ravindson's Ancient Monarchies, vol. iii. p. 515).

49. The heavens and the earth—shall sing] Shall rejoice over the fall of Babylon, which will lead to the deliverance of Israel. So, of the mystical Babylon it is said, "Rejoice over her, thou heavens, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets, for God hath avenged you on her" (Rev. xviii. 20). Then will be a great jubilee, when many of God's people, now captive in the Church of Rome, are delivered from their spiritual bondage, and when God visits her for her idotry. See n. 52.
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,  
That I will do judgment upon her graven images:  
And through all her land the wounded shall groan.  

53 f Though Babylon should 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:  

h For the LORD God of recompences shall surely requite.  

57 And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men,  
Her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men:  
And they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake,  
Saith k the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.  

53 Thus saith the LORD of hosts;  

j The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken,  
And her high gates shall be burned with fire;  
And l the people shall labour in vain,  
And the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.  

59 The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah into Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And this Seraiah was a quiet prince.  

60 So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon

— the folk in the fire] Rather, for the fire; that is, their labour in building and adorning Babylon will be only to provide fuel for the fire, which will destroy it. The same words occur in Habakkuk ii. 18 (see W. Lowth here, and Nold, Conc. p. 185, and Green. 196), where the same correction is to be made in our Version.  


59. Seraiah the son of Neriah] Seraiah was a brother of Jeremiah’s friend and minister, Baruch. See xxxii. 12.  

— Judah] Perhaps Zedekiah was sent forth by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon in order that he might renew his oath of allegiance to the Chaldean throne.  

Probably Nebuchadnezzar had some suspicions of the hostile confederacy which Zedekiah, being encouraged by Hananiah and other false prophets, was organizing against him at that time. See xxvii. 3—12; xxviii. 1—11.  

— And this Seraiah was a quiet prince] Rather, “And Seraiah was chief of the halting,” i.e. of the resting-place, or repose. See Gesen. 496; Ewett, 832. Seraiah was Chief Courier and Marshal, whose office it was to determine the stations in the royal progress, where the Caravan was to halt for the night, and to
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 "none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever. 63 And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: 64 and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: and they shall be weary.

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

LII. 1 Zedekiah was a one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Libnah. 2 And he did that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiaikim 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.

4 And it came to pass in the 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. 5 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. 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 Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath; where he gave judgment upon him. 10 And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah. 11 Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.

arrange for the lodging and provision for the royal cortège. Cp. Num. x. 33, where the word here used (memuchah) is translated resting-place.

This incident is probably mentioned in order to suggest to the reader the reflection, that, inasmuch as this Seraiah was brother to Baruch, and enjoyed the confidence of Jeremiah, who entrusted him with this prophecy concerning Babylon, and inasmuch also as Seraiah was a cornet of King Zedekiah, and accompanied him as his Chief Courier and Lord Marshal in his journey to Babylon, he would have frequent private opportunities, in their resting-places at night on the road, to read this prophecy to Zedekiah, and converse with him on topics connected with it, especially on the prophecies of Jeremiah.

What an interesting subject for conjecture does this view open upon us! How many thoughts may have passed through the mind of the King and of Seraiah his Chamberlain at that time! How many conversations may they have had—or, certainly, might they have had—concerning the destiny of Jerusalem and of Babylon, and concerning things in the far-off future—the liberation and return of the captives of Israel from Babylon by the same road on which they were travelling; and even with regard to blessings more remote, which Jeremiah had pre-anounced—the graces and glories of the Gospel of Christ!

61. and shall see, and shall read] Rather, See to it (i.e. take good heed; cp. Gen. xx. 10. Ps. lxxvi. 18), and read all these words. Remember to read them, and to read them all.

63. 64. thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates—Thus shall Babylon sink! Compare the words concerning the mystical Babylon (Rev. xviii. 21), “A mighty Angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more.”

64. and they shall be weary] Words repeated from v. 58, the end of Jeremiah's words. By quoting the last words of the prophecy, Jeremiah seems to re-enforce the duty upon Seraiah of reading it, all word for word, even to the end.

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah! Therefore the next chapter was added by another, in order to show the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecy.

CH. LII. 1—3. Zedekiah—Babylon] See 2 Kings xxiv. 18—20, where the same words occur. 4—11. And it came to pass—death] See above, on 2 Kings xxv. 1—7, where nearly the same words occur; and above, xxxix. 2—7, concerning the circumstances of the King's flight and capture, and the judicial sentence upon him at Riblah.

11. he put out the eyes] A fit punishment for one who refused to see the light of God's truth.
In the fifth month, in the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzar-adan,  


primarily, Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard, which had served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem,  


and burned the house of the Lord, and the houses of all the high priests; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great men, burned he with fire;  


and all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about.  


Then Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive certain  


of the poor of the people, and the residue of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the multitude.  


But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard left certain of the poor of the land for vine-dressers and for husbandmen.  


Also the pillars of brass that were in the house of the Lord, and the bases of brass that was in the house of the Lord, the Chaldeans brake, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon.  


The caldrons also, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the bowls, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered,  


took they away.  


And the basins, and the 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 sea, and twelve brassen bulls that were under the bases.  


The two pillars, one  


ment that others of them were left for vine-dressers and husbandmen.  


The two incidents, when combined, serve to show the misery entailed on Jerusalem's sinners.  


Thus a moral lesson was taught to Judah by God, that they should not rely on the ritual accessories of the Temple, however beautiful and solid; that they should not trust in the laver—the external means of purification, and the material emblems of power—but should rely on the cleansing work of the Holy Spirit in the heart, and on the never-failing support and strength—the true Josch and Boaz—which God gives to all who believe and obey Him.
were under the bases, which king Solomon had made in the house of the Lord:

21 And concerning the pillars, the height of one pillar was eighteen cubits; and a fillet of twelve cubits did compass it; and the thickness thereof was four fingers: it was hollow. 22 And a chapter of brass was upon it; and the height of one chapter was five cubits, with 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 upon a side; and all the pomegranates upon the network were an hundred round about.

24 And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, 4 and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the door: 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 were near the king’s person, which were found in the city; and the principal scribe of the host, who mustereth the people of the land; and threescore men of the people of the land, that were found in the midst of the city. 26 So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah. 27 And the king of Babylon smote them, and put them to death in Riblah in the land of Hamath. Thus Judah was carried away captive out of his own land.

24 This is the people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year three thousand Jews and three and twenty: 29 in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two persons: 30 in the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadrezzar Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven proof of the writer’s independence and access to original documents.

The present account of the deportation of captives by Nebuchadrezzar himself (not Nebuzar-adan) is subordinate and supplemental to other narratives concerning those who were taken from Jerusalem itself at other times, one of which is specified in the present chapter (vv. 12—16).

Two of the deportations here mentioned are of Jews. Only one was from Jerusalem itself.

That this is their true character is evident from the smallness of the number here specified. The total of these three deportations is only 4600, whereas in 2 Kings xxiv. 14—16, they who were carried captive with Jehoiachin by Nebuchadnezzar, in the eighth year of his reign, were 18,000 souls. How many were carried away captive with Zedekiah by Nebuzar-adan when Jerusalem was burnt, we are not told, but probably a still larger number.

The words in the text would be clearer, if they were thus represented (as in Targum and Syriac)—This is the people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried away captive in the seventh year of his reign; without any stop after captive.

These were carried away when Jehoiachin had rebelled against him in the third year of his reign, which was the seventh year of Nebuchadrezzar; and these are not said to have been taken away from the city of Jerusalem itself, they are described only as Jews. See 2 Kings xxiv. 1—3.

29. in the eighteenth year] When Nebuchadrezzar raised the siege of Jerusalem, and departed to Babylon. Cp. xxvii. 5. This explains the small number of that captivity.

30. In the three and twentieth year] Four years after the fall of Jerusalem. Those who were then taken captive, are not said to be from Jerusalem, but they are called Jews; that is, inhabitants of the country around it. It is probable, that they were carried away in an invasion consequent on the murder of the Governor, Gedaliah, whom he had set over Judah. See above, xlii. 17, 18, which describes the fear that the Jews felt “because of the Chaldeans; for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nathaniel had slain Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon made Governor in the land.” This deportation was the smallest of all. On this subject cp. Arsbach, Ueber Chronol. Sacra, pp. 36, 38.
hundred forty and five persons: all the persons were four thousand and six hundred.

31 And 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 lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison, and spake kindly unto him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon, and changed his prison garments: and he did continually eat bread before him all the days of his life. And for his diet, there was a continual diet given him of the king of Babylon, every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

31—34. And it came to pass—life] See above, on 2 Kings xxv. 27—30.

31. the five and twentieth day of the month] In 2 Kings xxv. 27 it is in the seven and twentieth. In neither case is the word day in the original; and the month specified is the twelfth or last month. We do not know the names of the Babylonish months, nor their mode of reckoning days and months (Ideler, Chromol. i. 202); but it is supposed to have borne a resemblance to the Egyptian (Ideler, 203), and the Egyptians intercalated five days at the end of their twelfth month (Herod. ii. 4). The twenty-fifth day was reckoned several times (according to the Bissextile principle), so that what was the twenty-seventh according to one calculation, might be the twenty-fifth according to another reckoning.

It is remarkable that the Sept. here has four and twentieth; the discrepancy is solved on the supposition that the advancement of Jehoiachin was ordered on the twenty-fifth day, but not accomplished till the twenty-seventh; and this is not improbable. After a long imprisonment it would require some time for Jehoiachin to change his prison garments and to adorn his person (cp. Gen. xii. 14), so that he might be fitted to take his place above the tributary Kings of Babylon, such as the Kings of Egypt, Tyre, Ammon, Moab, Edom. See xxvii. 2, 3; xlvi. 30; xlvii—lxix.

This change of condition, vouchsafed at Babylon by God’s mercy, even to Jehoiachin—no longer called Coniah (see on xxii. 24. 28; xxxvii. 1)—after the terrible maledictions denounced against him (xxii. 24—30), and after a long exile and captivity of thirty-seven years, was like a message of mercy and comfort from God Himself, and was a prelude and a pledge of the liberation and exaltation of the Jewish Nation, when it had been humbled and purified by the discipline of suffering; and of its return to its own land; and it was like a joyful pre-announcement of that far more glorious future restoration—which the Prophets in the Old Testament, and the Apostles in the New, foretell,—of Israel to God in Christ; to Whom, with the Father and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour, glory, dominion, adoration, and praise, now and for ever. Amen.
INTRODUCTION TO THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

This Book is called in Hebrew Aicah (pointed, eyricht), i.e. How! from the first word in it—"How doth the city sit solitary!" The Rabbis name it Kavitth, Lamentations, from kivth, a dirge (Jer. vii. 29 ; ix. 9. 19. Gesen. 731); and this name is adopted by the Sept., Syriac, Arabic, Vulg.

The Book is formed of five elegies, arranged in five chapters. In the first, second, and fourth chapters, each verse begins with a letter corresponding to the order of the letters in the Hebrew Alphabet, consisting of twenty-two letters; the first verse commencing with Aleph, the second with Beth. (Cp. Psalm cxix. and the notes above, on other alphabetical Psalms, ix. x. See Introduction to Psalms, p. xiii.

Hence each of those chapters consists of twenty-two verses.

In the first, second, and third chapters, each verse is a triplet, with two exceptions—ev. i. 7 ; ii. 19.

In the second, third, and fourth chapters the letter pe preceeds ayin. Cp. Hävernick, p. 512, and Nägel, p. ix, and notes above, on Ps. ix. and Ps. xxv., where it is shown that similar anomalies exist in the alphabetical Psalms.

In the third chapter each stanza consists of a group of three verses. The stanzas are alphabetical; hence it consists of $3 \times 22 = 66$ verses.

The principle of this artificial arrangement has been already noticed in the Introduction to Jeremiah. Doubtless, also, this mode of composition was adopted in order that this sacred dirge might awaken and cherish a spirit of true religion in the heart of the Hebrew Nation. The Lamentations of Jeremiah are a national expression of woe, a national confession of sin, and a national prayer for pardon and grace, which, by reason of its alphabetical structure, might be readily committed to memory by the Hebrew captives in Babylon and Egypt. See Prelim. Notes above, to Ps. ix. and Ps. cxix.

The fifth chapter is not alphabetical; but the number of the verses is the same as in chaps. i. ii. iv.; viz. the number of the letters in the Hebrew alphabet—22.

The place which this Book occupies among the Chetubim, or Hagiographa 1 in the Hebrew Canon, as arranged by the Masorites, is probably due to the liturgical use which was made of it in the Hebrew Church, which appointed it to be said on the Fast of the fifth month, on which the Temple and City of Jerusalem were burnt by the Chaldeans 2.

This appointment expresses the national belief that this Book of Lamentation was designed to be an elegy on the destruction of Jerusalem; and not, as some have supposed, on the death of Josiah 3.

The Septuagint prefaces its Version of this Book by the following words, which are adopted by the Arabic and Vulgate. "It came to pass, that after Israel was taken captive and Jerusalem was made desolate, Jeremiah sate weeping, and lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem, and said," &c. The Arabic Targum begins its paraphrase with these words, "Jeremiah the Prophet and great Priest said," &c.

The Lamentations are reckoned as a portion of Jeremiah’s prophecies by Josephus (c. Apion. i. 8), and Melito (Euseb. iv. 26), and Origen (Euseb. H. E. vi. 25).

The principal objections that have been raised by some 4 to this statement, which represents the

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1 The order of these Books in the Hagiographa follows the order of the Hebrew Calendar. The Canticles takes the lead, being used at the festival of the Passover; then comes Ruth, being appointed for Pentecost; then the Lamentations, being repeated on the Fast of the ninth of Ab, or fifth month, instituted to commemorate the destruction of the City and Temple by the Chaldeans, and afterwards by the Romans. See above, Introduction to Ruth, p. 158.


3 See 2 Chron. xxxv. 25.

4 Herrmann von der Hardt, A.D. 1712, seems to have been the first who expressed an opinion that the Lamentations were not written by Jeremiah. He has been followed by Cosse, Ewald (2nd ed.). Bunsen (who ascribed them to Baruch, or some scholar of Jeremiah), and, in part, by Theinas, who assigns the second and fourth chapters only to Jeremiah; and by Nügelsbach.
INTRODUCTION TO THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

judgment of the Ancient Hebrew and Christian Church, will be considered in the course of the following notes.

The Book has been accepted as a genuine work of Jeremiah by most modern critics, even some who are usually most sceptical in such matters.

Evidence of the great similarity of style between this Book and the Prophecies of Jeremiah has been displayed by Kueper, Jerem., pp. 45—47; Hävernick, Einleit, pp. 515, 516; Engelhardt, p. 6; Keil, Einleit, p. 379; Vaihinger, Einleit, p. 338.

The principal commentaries on this Book are those of Origen (Selecta in Threnos), Ephraim Syrus, Theodoret, Aquinas, Calcin, C. A Lapide, Sanctius, C. B. Michaelis, Maurer, Kalkar, Ewald, Thenius, 1855, Vaihinger, 1857, Engelhardt, 1867, Nägelsbach, 1868. See the list in Nägel., p. xvii.

It has been already observed, that Jeremiah is the Prophet of suffering, and a signal type of Christ in His Passion. And we should lose much of the devotional uses which may be made of this Divine Book, if, in the utterances of the Prophet, mourning over the ruins of Jerusalem, we were not to recognize a mysterious prelude to the lamentations of the Man of Sorrows mourning over the Fall of Man, and over the ravages and desolation produced by sin, the cause of His own Suffering. “Symbolico” (says A Lapide) “in hisce Threnis Christi Patientis affectus, dolorem, atque acerbitatem ita in se graphicé exprimit ac depingit Jeremia, ut Christum hic in Cruce pendentem, loquentem et lamentantem audire tibi videaris.”

The Ancient Hebrew Church, as has been noticed, appointed the Lamentations to be said on the Fast instituted to commemorate the Fall of Jerusalem—the ninth of the fifth month; and with no less propriety the Ancient Latin Church directed this Book to be used in the Fast of Holy Week, especially on Good Friday.

See, for example, iii. 27; iv. 20; v. 7.

3 As Eichhorn, Bertholdt, De Wette, Bloch, as well as Hävernick (Einleit. p. 515), and Keil (p. 379). See also Davidson, iii. 135—138.

See above, Introd. to Jeremiah.

4 Cp. below, i. 12, and Prelim. Note to chap. iii. The Lessons used are:—on Maundy Thursday, i. 1—5; i. 6—9; i. 10—14. Good Friday, ii. 8—11; ii. 12—15; iii. 1—9. Easter Even, iii. 22—30; iv. 1—6; v. 1—11. Cp. Neumann, ii. 486. Nägel. p. 6. The musical services of the Holy Week, in which the Lamentations form an important part, are described by Mendelssohn, Reisenbriefe, p. 166; Leipzig, 1861. Protestant Germany has also adapted the Lamentations to a similar use. See Schäferlein, Schatz des liturg. Chor- und Gemeinde-Gesanges, ii. 444. Cp. Nägel. p. 6.

In any additions to the Lectionary of the Anglican Church, this ancient and appropriate connexion of the Lamentations of Jeremiah with the offices of Holy Week ought not to be forgotten. Perhaps also it may be allowable to add, that the ancient appointment in the Hebrew Church, of the Canticles also for Passover (see above, Introd. to Song of Solomon, p. 127, and note on that Book, iii. 6, and Introd. pp. 122—125), and of the Book of Ruth for Pentecost (see above, Introd. to Ruth, pp. 158—160, and note on Ruth iii. and iv.), may suggest much for our imitation, in the assignment of Proper Lessons for the Christian solemnities of our Passover and Pentecost.
THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

I.  

1. HOW doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people!

-Or, pleasant Cp. Jer. xlviii. cxviii. this Kings

2. All her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies.

3. Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude:

4. The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts:

5. Her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper;

6. All her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.

7. Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries

8. Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she is removed:

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The Lamentations of Jeremiah are a book of the Old Testament of the Bible. The text presented here is a natural reading of a page from a document, preserving the original language and structure of the biblical text. The Lamentations consist of five poems, each expressing the sorrow and despair of the prophet Jeremiah over the fall of Jerusalem and the exile of the people. The verses quoted above are from the first poem, expressing the desolation of the city and the mourning of its inhabitants.
All that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness:
Yea, she sighest, and turneth backward.

9 Her filthiness is in her skirts; she remembereth not her last end;
Therefore she came down wonderfully: she had no comforter.
O Lord, behold my affliction: for the enemy hath magnified himself.

10 The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things:
For she hath seen that the heathen entered into her sanctuary,
Whom thou didst command that they should not enter into thy congregation.

11 All her people sigh, they seek bread;
They have given their pleasant things for meat to relieve the soul:
See, O Lord, and consider; for I am become vile.

|| Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me,

Wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

13 From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaileth against them:
He hath spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back:
He hath made me desolate and faint all the day.

14 The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand: they are wreathed, and come upon my neck:
He hath made my strength to fall, The Lord hath delivered me into their hands, from whom I am not able to rise up.

15 The Lord hath trodden under foot all my mighty men in the midst of me:
He hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men:

The Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a winepress.

16 For these things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water,
Because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me:

abomination, or a filthy thing, or "excrementum," which men remove from the sight. Cp. v. 17, and Levit. xxii. 2; xv. 19. See Gesen. 518; Euerst, 907; and see what follows.

9. Her filthiness is in her skirts] It is visible to all; she cannot deny her unchastity.
—she remembereth not her last end] When she committed sin, she did not remember her last end, that is, the final and fatal consequences which, as God warned her, would proceed from it. There is a reference to Deut. xxxiii. 29, "O that they would consider their latter end!"

10. her pleasant things] Especially the sacred vessels, and other furniture, of the Temple (2 Chron. xxxvi. 10. Jer. lii. 17).
—They should not enter] Another reference to Deut. xxiii. 3. They who were forbidden by the Law to defile the sanctuary not only have entered into it, but have destroyed it.

12. Is it nothing to you—anger] Literally, Is it not to you? This seems the right interpretation, and is followed by Syriac.
See Euerst, 710, 720; Gesen. 426.

This sorrowful exclamation may, in a secondary and spiritual sense, be regarded as coming from the lips of Christ on the Cross, bewailing the sins and miseries of the world, which caused Him that bitter anguish, of which alone it could be properly said, "that no sorrow was like unto His sorrow." Cp. A Lapide here, and Prelim. Note to chap. iii., and Förster, " Potissimum factum apostrophe uti Salvator in die Paschaecenec." For such reasons as these, this Book is appointed for use in the Latin Church on Good Friday. See above, Introduction, and below, Prelim. Note to chap. iii.
—done unto me] See on v. 22; iii. 15.

13. From above—fire] Like the lightning from heaven, which scorched up the cities of the plain.
—He hath spread a net] Like a hunter for his prey.

14. they are wreathed] My sins are twined together, to as to fasten the yoke upon my neck. Cp. Deut. xxvi. 48. The reason of this comparison is, that sins become punishments ("peccati penam peccatum"), and are a sore burden, too heavy for the sinner to bear (Ps. xxxvii. 4).

The Lord Adoni. This name, Adoni, never occurs alone in the prophecies of Jeremiah, but is always followed by Jehovah; but in the Lamentations, Adoni is never followed by Jehovah, and stands alone in fourteen places; i. 14, 15 twice; ii. 1, 2, 5, 7, 18, 19, 20; iii. 31, 36, 37, 38 (Niglot.). The Prophet appears thus to intimate in the Lamentations, that now, in her captivity and humiliation, Jerusalem felt the lordship of Jehovah, the God of Israel; but by reason of her sins, no longer felt that lordship to be exercised by Him as Jehovah, i.e. as the God of His covenant People, to protect them. A similar feeling made Solomon abstain in Ecclesiastes from the use of the name Jehovah altogether. See above, Introduction, to Ecclesiastes, p. 77. The word Adoni does not occur once in chapters iv. and v. of Lamentations; but Jehovah occurs in them six times: viz. iv. 11, 16, 20; v. 1, 19, 21.

15. called an assembly against me to crush my young men] An oxymoron; the term to call an assembly (Hebr. mickud) signifies the gathering of a holy convocation for festal rejoicing, or other religious purposes.

But now the religious festivals of Jerusalem have ceased (see v. 4), and God has called an assembly of enemies to crush her. Compare the expression to devastate war, or consecrate an army against a city. See on Isa. xiii. 3. Jer. vi. 4; li. 27, 28. Joel iii. 9. The figure of woe is derived from that of the winepress which follows; the Lord hath trodden the winepress of the virgin the daughter of Judith. See the margin, and cp. Isa. xiii. 2. 3. Joel iii. 13. Rev. xiv. 19. "Uva sum, sed vimum ero, si prius calabrum" (Augustine).

16. should relieve] Bring back, or restore my fainting soul to life. See also v. 19.
My children are desolate, because the enemy prevailed.

17 Zion spreadeth forth her hands, and there is none to comfort her: The Lord hath commanded concerning Jacob, that his adversaries should be round about him:

Jerusalem is as a menstruous woman among them.

The Lord is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment:

Hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow:

My virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.

I called for my lovers, but they deceived me:

My priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city,

While they sought their meat to relieve their souls.

Behold, O Lord; for I am in distress: my bowels are troubled;

Mine heart is turned within me; for I have grievously rebelled:

Abroad the sword bereaveth, at home there is as death.

They have heard that I sigh: 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 the day that thou hast called, and they shall be like unto me.

22 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 my heart is faint.

II. How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger,

And cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel,

And remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger!

The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, and hath not pitied:

He hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of the daughter of Judah;

He hath brought them down to the ground: he hath polluted the kingdom and the princes thereof.

He hath cut off in his fierce anger all the horn of Israel:

He hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy,

And he burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about.

He hath bent his bow like an enemy: he stood with his right hand as an adversary,
And slew \( ^{1} \) all that were pleasant to the eye in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion:

He poured out his fury like fire.

5 \( ^{k} \) The Lord was as an enemy: he hath swallowed up Israel,
1. He hath swallowed up all her palaces: he hath destroyed his strongholds,
5 And hath increased in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation.
6 And he hath violently \( ^{m} \) taken away his \( ^{j} \) tabernacle, \( ^{n} \) as if it were of a garden: he hath destroyed his places of the assembly:
6 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.
7 The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary,
He hath \( ^{\dagger} \) given up into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces;
5 They have made a noise in the house of the Lord, as in the day of a solemn feast.
8 The Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion:
5 He hath stretched out a line, he hath not withdrawn his hand from
\( ^{\dagger} \) destroying:
Therefore he made the rampart and the wall to lament; they languished together.
9 Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and \( ^{1} \) broken her bars:
\( ^{i} \) Her and her princes are among the Gentiles:
\( ^{i} \) The law is no more; her \( ^{a} \) prophets also find no vision from the Lord.
10 The elders of the daughter of Zion \( ^{x} \) sit upon the ground, and keep silence:
They have \( ^{z} \) cast up dust upon their heads; they have \( ^{z} \) girded themselves with sackcloth:
The virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground.
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;
Because \( ^{d} \) the children and the sucklings \( ^{j} \) 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?

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### Notes

1. **Lamentations II. 5—13.**
2. **Before CHRIST.**
3. **CHRIST about 308.**
4. **\( ^{k} \) Heb. all the desire.**
5. **of the eye.**
6. **1 Ezek. 24, 25.**
7. **k vers. 4.**
8. **Jer. 20, 14.**
9. **1 2 Kings 25. 9.**
10. **Jer. 52, 13.**
11. **m Ps. 50, 12.**
12. **& 59.**
13. **Isa. 5, 5.**
14. **1 Or, 5, 6.**
15. **n Isa. 1, 8.**
16. **p ch. 1, 4.**
17. **q Zeph. 2, 18.**
18. **r Jer. 51, 30.**
19. **s Deut. 28, 56.**
20. **2 Kings 24, 15.**
21. **2 K 7. 7.**
22. **ch. 1, 3, & 4, 20.**
23. **t 2 Chron. 15, 3.**
24. **u Ps. 74, 9.**
25. **Ezek. 7, 26.**
26. **v Job 2, 13.**
27. **Isa. 3, 26.**
28. **ch. 2, 29.**
29. **y Job 5, 12.**
30. **z Job 15, 3.**
31. **Ezek. 7, 15, & 27, 31.**
32. **a Ps. 6, 7.**
33. **b ch. 3, 49, 6c.**
34. **b ch. 1, 20.**
35. **c Job 16, 13.**
36. **Ps. 22, 14.**
37. **d ver. 10.**
38. **e ch. 4, 4.**
39. **f Or, joist.

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**himself—his right hand—as an adversary.** The Prophet first has a general view of the awful form of the Almighty, and then beholds His Right Hand putting itself forth as an enemy against Zion.

5. **hath increased—lamentation.** He hath leaped up mourning and lamentation upon the head of the daughter of Zion.

6. **he hath violently taken away—assembly.** He hath wasted His tabernacle as a garden; i.e. with the same ease as if it were a garden; and its condition is now like that of a paradise trodden down and despised.

—**The Lord hath—Zion.** Literally, the Lord hath caused to be forgotten in Zion, festival (mêd) and sabbath. See above, on i. 4, and Ps. lxiv. 8; the same word occurs in the next verse.

7. **a noise.** A cry of jubilee. There is a contrast between the former shout of festal joy of worshippers in the Temple, and the cry of exultation of the Chaldeans, "Down with it! Down with it to the ground!"


9. **my liver is poured upon the earth.** Liver (called by the Hebrews cabal, "as the heaviest and densest of the viscera") was regarded as the seat of the strongest and deepest affections (Delitzsch, Psychol. iv. § 13); and the pouring out of the liver upon the earth is expressive of the greatest agitation. Cp. Job xvi. 13, "He pourreth all my gall upon the ground."

10. **What thing shall I take to witness for thee?** 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?
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.

a Shall the women eat their fruit, and children || of a span long?
b 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; d thou hast killed, and not pitied.

22. Thou hast called as in a solemn day e my terrors round about,
So that in the day of the Lord’s anger none escaped nor remained:

14. Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee:
These words are adopted by Ezekiel, vii. 24. Cp. xiii. 6—11.
14. a and causes of banishment || Literally, and drivings away; the prophecies of thy false prophets, to which thou didst hearken, instead of listening to God, have banished thee, and driven thee away from thy home.

15. Their heart cried unto the Lord] The heart of the inhabitants of Zion, finding no comfort any more in her false prophets, and being ready to burst with grief, by reason of the joy and scorn of her enemies, cries to the Lord—to Adonai, the Lord of the heathen, as well as of Israel, for help in her misery.

The Prophet of the Lord then turns to her and speaks. O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down! There ought to be a full stop after the word Lord.

16. a wall of the daughter of Zion] The Prophet appeals to the wall of Jerusalem, as that which once encircled her with defence, but now lies prostrate, and which, being reduced to ruins, was the fittest representative of the city in her desolate condition. He gives a voice to the stones of the wall, and makes them weep for her sorrow. We need not be surprised by such a prosopopoeia as this, any more than by his exclamation, O earth, earth (xxiii. 20), or by the language of Habak. ii. 11. “The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam shall answer it;” or by our Lord’s words (Luke xix. 40), “If these should hold their peace, the stones would cry out.” Cp. Nägeli, pp. 26, 27.

— the apple of thine eye] Literally, the daughter of thine eye. See Ps. xliii. 8.

19. b the watches] The night-watches, of which there were three among the Hebrews (Exod. xiv. 24. Judg. vii. 19. 1 Sam. xi. 11. Wis. 4. 4. 130. — the top of every street] Cp. ii. 19. The wall, which girdled Jerusalem, is regarded as a Mother, which nurses the inhabitants, her offspring, in her bosom; and she hums for the children which lie at the end of the streets, extending from one side of the city to the other.

20. Behold, O Lord] This is a continuation of the pathetic appeal from the wall which surrounded Jerusalem, and which now lay in ruins on the ground.

— Shall the women—spans long?] Shall women eat their fruit, namely, the children carried in the palms of their hands? literally, “pueros, gestationum palmis,” Heb. tippachim, from tipshach, to spread out, to expand, to dandle on the opened palms of the hands. See Gesen. 324, and the note at the end of this chapter; and below, iv. 10.

22. Thou hast called as in a solemn day e my terrors round about,
Instead of proclaiming to me a sacred festival of joy,
Those that I have swaddled and brought up hath mine enemy consumed.

1. I AM the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. 

2. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light. 

3. Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day. 

4. My flesh and my skin hath he made old; he hath broken my bones. 

5. He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travel. 

6. He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old.

7. He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy. 

8. Also 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. 

10. 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 pulled me in pieces: he hath made me desolate. 

12. He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow. 

13. He hath caused the arrows of his quiver to enter into my reins. 

14. I was a derision to all my people; and their song all the day.

15. He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood. 

16. He hath also broken my teeth with grave stones, he hath covered me with ashen ashes. 

17. And thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgot prosperity. 

thou hast announced to me nothing but terror, and hast summoned a congregation of alarms to astound me. 

... [verified text content]... 

thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgot prosperity. 

... [verified text content]...
The Prophet's sufferings

LAMENTATIONS III. 18-41.

18. My strength— is perished from the Lord. The Lord, to Whom I looked for help, has become mine Adversary, and has destroyed my trust, and my hope.

19. Remembering] Rather, remember, as in margin; and so Vulg., Ewald, Nägeli.

20. My soul hath them still in remembrance. Remember, that my soul sinks within me (Nägeli). But it seems better to render it, my soul remembers, etc. (literally, "recordando recordatur"). and it sinks down upon me (Vulg.). The soul (Hebr. nephesh) is the seat of the animal affections, and it sinks down, as it were, in a swoon, upon the spirit (Hebr. ruach), the divine faculty, and overwhelms it.

21. This I recall to my mind. I will recall to mind this, when I am going to utter; namely, the unsatisfying quality of God's mercy. Yes, I remember my own sorrows, but I will call to mind also His love.

22. Quietly wait] Literally, wait in silence.

23. [God— that he bear the yoke in his youth] It has been inferred from this verse by some, that Jeremiah could not have written the Lamentations, or not have written them in consequence of the destruction of Jerusalem, because he was not then young.

But the sentiment before us is very appropriate to Jeremiah, who had been chastened in early life by God, and had thus learnt a lesson of patience and cheerful resignation under the severest personal afflictions (see above, Introduction); and he here recognizes the benefit of that early discipline.

30. He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him] Words adopted from Isaiah, speaking in the name of the suffering Messiah. See Isa. 1. 6.


34-36. To crush under his feet] The Prophet comforts himself with the reflection that God sees and marks all the sorrows of His servants, and will restrain and punish the wrath of their proud oppressors; specially the Babylonians.

The sense is,—For a man to crush under his feet all the captives of the earth (as the Chaldaeans crushed indiscriminately their Hebrew Captives, without regard to sex or age), to pervert a man's cause in the face of the Most High, to subvert a man in his cause—this the Lord does not look on with approval. For He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity (Hab. i. 13). Cp. Isa. lili. 2, and Green. 7. 19, for this use of the Hebrew idioms, to see. Some (as Nägeli) understand the sentence interrogatively,—Does not the Lord see all this? and will He not punish it?

39. Wherefore doth a living man] Wherefore does a man, whose life is still spared by God's mercy, and to whom, therefore, the door of repentance and pardon is not yet closed, murmur (see Num. xi. 1, where the same word, literally signifying to breathe hard, is used), instead of using his breath and life in order to pray for forgiveness, and to amend his practice?

— For the punishment of his sins] Literally, for his sins— for his own fault. Why does the sinner murmur at God for that which he has brought on himself by his own sin, and which may be removed by repentance? See what follows.
The Prophet calls LAMENTATIONS III. 42—66. IV. 1. and is comforted.

We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned. Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: 'thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied. Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, "that our prayer should not pass through. Thou hast made us as the "offspring and refuse in the midst of the people. All our enemies have opened their mouths against us.

Fear and a snare is come upon us, "desolation and destruction. My eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people. Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission, Till the Lord 'look down, and behold from heaven. Mine eye affectioneth mine heart || because of all the daughters of my city. Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird, "without cause.

They have cut off my life * in the dungeon, and * cast a stone upon me. Waters flowed over mine head; then * I said, I am cut off.

I called upon thy name, 0 Lord, out of the low dungeon. Thou hast heard my voice: hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry. Thou * drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.

0 Lord, thou hast * pleaded the causes of my soul; 'thou hast redeemed my life.

0 Lord, thou hast seen my wrong: $ judge thou my cause.

Thou hast seen all their vengeance and all their * imaginations against me.

Thou hast heard their reproach, 0 Lord, and all their imaginations against me: The lips of those that rose up against me, and their device against me all the day.

Behold their * sitting down, and their rising up; * I am their musician.

Render unto them a recompence, 0 Lord, according to the work of their hands.

Give them || sorrow of heart, thy curse unto them.

Persecute and destroy them in anger * from under the * heavens of the Lord.

IV. 1 How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!

45. offspring and refuse in the midst of the people] Literally, the nation, among which we Israelites are scattered. Such the Jewish nation has been for 1800 years; and such it will remain till it turn to God in Christ. 51. Mine eye offset my heart [Mine eye vexeth my soul (sopher), the seat of passion (see v. 20) by the misery which it sees, and for which it weeps. On the verb dath here used, cp. i. 12, 22; ii. 20, where it is rendered by do, and see Genesis. 633, and above, i. 13. 53. in the dungeon] In the cistern or pit, which was literally true of Jeremiah, and figuratively of Christ. See above, Jer. xxxviii. 6, 7, 9—13. 54. Waters flowed over mine head] Cp. the Passion Psalm lxix. 2. — I am cut off] Cp. Ps. lxxxviii. 5. 55. Called upon thy name—out of the low dungeon] Rather, out of the lowest pit; the same words as in the other great Passion Psalm: Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit (Ps. lxxxviii. 6).

65. my breathing] My respiration, my recovery of breath. Cp. Exod. viii. 15, the only other place where the word occurs, and where it is rendered respites.
The stones of the sanctuary are poured out *in the top of every street.

2 The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, How are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!

3 Even the sea monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones:

The daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness.

4 The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst;

5 They that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets:

They that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills.

6 For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom,

Their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.

7 They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger:

For these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field.

8 The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children:

They were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.

9 The Lord hath accomplished his fury; he hath poured out his fierce anger,

And hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof.

10 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.

For the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests,

That have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her,

were once so fair, are now sullied with sorrow and darkened by woe.

rubies ] Cp. on Job xviii. 18. Prov. iii. 15; viii. 11; xx. 15; xxxii. 10. Perhaps coral.

their polishing ] Hebr. gizrah, their figure, Fr. taille, what is carved into a beautiful form; see iii. 54, where the verb occurs ("I am cut off"); and cp. below, Ezek. xii. 12; xiii. 1. 18, where the word gizrah describes a large square squire to the west of the Holy of Holies.

8. a coal ] Darkness.


13. her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests, that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her! This sin of the priests and prophets of Jerusalem, who conspired against Jeremiah, and slew other servants of God, reached its height when they murdered the Just One; see the words of Christ, Matt. xxiii. 31. 37; and of the First Martyr, Acts v. 52, and of St. Paul, 1 Thess. ii. 15, and those of James the Just, who himself was murdered by them at Jerusalem (James v. 6).
They have wandered as blind men in the streets, 'they have polluted themselves with blood,

That men could not touch their garments.

They cried unto them, Depart ye; it is unclean; depart, depart, touch not:

When they fled away and wandered, they said among the heathen, They shall no more sojourn there.

The anger of the Lord hath divided them; he will no more regard them:

They respected not the persons of the priests, they favoured not the elders.

As for us, our eyes as yet failed for our vain help:

In our watching we have watched for a nation that could not save us.

They hunt our steps, that we cannot go in our streets:

Our end is near, our days are fulfilled; for our end is come.

Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the hallowed:

They pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness.

The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits,

Of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen.

Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz;

The cup also shall pass through unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shall make thyself naked.

The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion;

He will no more carry thee away into captivity:

He will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom; he will discover thy sins.

V. 1 *Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us:
Consider, and behold our reproach.*

15. They cried unto them—unclean] Rather, Men cried unto them, Depart ye, O thou unclean! Depart ye, depart ye! That is, the Priests and Prophets, who, in their spiritual pride, formerly said to others, Come not near to me: I am holier than thou.” (Isa. 52:13.)

They have polluted themselves with blood, and men shall cry to them tâmâl tâmâl! (unclean! unclean!)—words which the leper was obliged to cry out, in order to keep others from him (Levit. xiii. 45). The singular number (unclean) is here used, in order to connect the words with that cry of the leper.

16. The anger of the Lord hath divided them! Hath scattered them among them. See Gen. xlix. 7, where the same word occurs. Not the Chaldeans, but the Lord God of their fathers, has dispersed them for their sins.

— they! Their enemies.

17. Our eyes as yet failed for our vain help! Our eyes failed for looking to Egypt for help against the Babylonish invaders (see above, on Jer. vii. 20; xxxvii. 4—10; xlv. 17), and we have found to our bitter disappointment that Egypt is a nation that cannot save us. Cp. above, on Isa. xxx. 7.

20. The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord! It has been objected by some, that the Lamentations could not have been written by Jeremiah on the occasion of the destruction of Jerusalem, because such words as these could not be applied to such a viciss King as Zedekiah.

But such an objection as this betrays an ignorance of the nature of true Loyalty, as taught by Almighty God in the Old Testament as well as in the New. He teaches us to distinguish the person of the Sovereign from his office, and to reverence his authority as from God (Rom. xii. 1—7), whatever may be his personal character. Even Saul was “the Lord’s Anointed,” and was revered and bewailed as such by David. See on 1 Sam. xxvi. 8. 11. 16. 23. 2 Sam. i. 14. 16. And Our Blessed Lord and His Apostles teach us to obey a civil

Ruler, as God’s deputy and vicegerent, in all things not unlawful, although that ruler may be a Tiberius (see on Matt. xxii. 21) or a Nero (see on Rom. xiii. 1—7. Titus iii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 13).

These words have been applied in a spiritual sense to Christ Himself. “Proprietors de Christo dicit Jeremias, Spiritus oris nostri Christus caput est, sic ostendens Christum pulsarn esse pro nobis (S. Augustine, De Civitate Dei, viii. 33). See also S. Irenaeus, iii. 11, and S. Justin Martyr, Apol. i. 55. Tertullian, c. Marcion, iii. 6.

21. Rejoice and be glad—daughter of Edom! See above, on 1. 21.

— the cup! See Jer. xxv. 16, 20—21; xlix. 7—12.


22. The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished! Rather, thy sin (see v. 6) is accomplished, completed, and taken away: and for this use of the verb hâmâq, see ii. 22. Jer. vii. 21; xlv. 12, where it is rendered by consummat, and Gen. 807.

— he will discover! He hath uncovered the sins of Edom; and hath covered those of Israel.

Cn. V. } This chapter is entitled in Vulg. “A prayer of Jeremias the prophet,” so Syriac and Arabic. But it is composed throughout in the first person plural, “We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows.”

The alphabetical arrangement, observed in all the foregoing chapters (see Introduction), is not continued here; but the numerical element, twenty-two, which runs through them, is retained; and thus the connection is kept up between this and the foregoing chapters. Way the acrostic character was not also preserved, is not evident; but probably the reason was, because the present dirge, which is the final one, is of less impassioned character; and the writer, being less agitated by emotions, and

149
Our inheritance is turned to strangers,  
Our houses to aliens;  
We are orphans and fatherless,  
Our mothers are as widows.  
We have drunken our water for money;  
Our wood † is sold unto us.  
† Our necks are under persecution:  
We labour, and have no rest.  
We have given the hand to the Egyptians,  
And to the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread.  
Our fathers have sinned, and are not;  
And we have borne their iniquities.  
Servants have ruled over us:  
There is none that doth deliver us out of their hand.  
We gat our bread with the peril of our lives  
Because of the sword of the wilderness.  
Our skin was black like an oven  
Because of the terrible famine.  
They ravished the women in Zion,  
And the maids in the cities of Judah.  
Princes are hanged up by their hand:  
The faces of elders were not honoured.  
They took the young men to grind,  
And the children fell under the wood.  
The elders have ceased from the gate,  
The young men from their musick.  
The joy of our heart is ceased;  
Our dance is turned into mourning.  
The crown is fallen from our head:  
Woe unto us, that we have sinned!  
For this our heart is faint;  
For these things our eyes are dim.  
Because of the mountain of Zion, which is desolate,  
The foxes walk upon it.  
Thou, O Lord, remainest for ever;  
Thy throne from generation to generation.

having tranquilized himself by the utterance of his sorrow, and by meditations on the attributes of God, did not need the help of that artificial appliance to support and control him; and because the Prophet is now in the attitude of quiet submission and of patient resignation to God; and therefore this chapter partakes more of the nature of a calm and humble supplication.

We have drunken our water for money] Bearing captives and bondmen, and not able to go forth at liberty to procure water and wood—the common necessaries of life.

Our necks are under persecution] Or, we are hunted by pursuers, who are ever hanging over our necks (Ewald, Theiner).

We labour] We faint, we are weary. See Jer. xlv. 3.

We have given the hand] We have held out our hand, as way-side beggars, for alms. Cp. 1 Chron. xxix. 24.

† to the Egyptians and to the Assyrians] Literally, to Egypt and to Assyria, among whom we are scattered.

Our fathers have sinned—and we have borne (or bear) their iniquities] Cp. Jer. xv. 4, where God says, "I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah." The sins of their forefathers were visited upon them, because they themselves had sinned, as they themselves confess (i. 5, 8, 9. 14. 18; ii. 14; iii. 42; iv. 6; v. 10). There is, therefore, no reason for supposing, with some, that these words could not have been written by Jeremiah, being at variance with the doctrine in Jer. xxxi. 20. Cp. Ezek. xvii. 2. Cp. Engelhardt, p. 9. See below, on Matt. xxii. 35.

Servants have ruled] Rather, have got the mastery, and rule over us; servants are our lords. Such, in later times, were Samballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant (Neh. ii. 10. 19).

We gat] We get. A specimen of the malignant spirit of the neighbours of Jerusalem may be seen in Jer. xi. 14; xii. 3. Cp. Neh. iv. 7—12.

fell under the wood] Which they were compelled to hew and carry, as bond-slaves.

The crown is fallen from our head] Cp. Jer. xiii. 18. Jerusalem is no longer a Queen; her diadem has fallen from her brow. Cp. above, i. 1; ii. 15.

foaxes] Jackals. Cp. Ps. xiii. 10, and Neh. iv. 3, where the desolate state of Jerusalem is represented by the speech of Tobiah the Ammonite.
Turn Thou us unto Thee,  LAMENTATIONS V. 20—22.

O Lord.

Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever,
And forsake us so long time?

Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned;
Renew our days as of old.

But thou hast utterly rejected us;
Thou art very wroth against us.

Turn thou us unto Thee, Lord, and we shall be turned.

A very appropriate prayer for Israel weeping over the ruins of Jerusalem destroyed, first by the Chaldean armies, and next, on the anniversary of the same day, by the power of Rome, for its sins. Israel says, "Turn thou us, O Lord, and we shall be turned;" and the Apostle of Israel, the great Hebrew of the Hebrews, St. Paul, says, "Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn unto the Lord, the veil shall be taken away" (2 Cor. iii. 15, 16). May He hasten the time! Then the dirge of Lamentation will be changed into a jubilee of joy.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

The names of the Hebrew prophets have a sacred significance. Of the four greater prophets, two prophesied at Jerusalem—Isaiah and Jeremiah; and two prophesied in Babylonia—Ezekiel and Daniel. The names of the two who prophesied at Jerusalem, Isaiah and Jeremiah, are compounded with the divine Name Jah or Jehovah, the appellation of God as the Lord of the covenanted people, Israel. The names of the other two prophets, Ezekiel and Daniel, who prophesied in the land of Babylon—the great Empire of the world as distinguished from Sion, the Church of God,—are compounded with the sacred Name El, which designates God in His universal supremacy as Creator and Ruler of all things, and which bears the same relation to Elohim, as Jah does to Jehovah.

This assignment of names to these four great Hebrew seers was providential. As has been already observed, Jeremiah reiterates and authenticates the words of Isaiah; and, as may readily be shown, not only did the prophet Daniel, at Babylon and at Susa, study the Book of Jeremiah and refer to it in his own prophecies, and act upon the revelations made therein, and thus set his own seal upon the writings of Jeremiah, but the prophecies of Ezekiel also are like a responsive echo to those of Jeremiah. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel were Priests as well as Prophets. Jeremiah is the prophet of the tenderest affections, Ezekiel is the prophet of the most fervid imagination; Jeremiah is more than the Euripides, Ezekiel is more than the Aeschylus, of Hebrew prophecy. Ezekiel, at the river Chebar in northern Mesopotamia, bore witness to the divine utterances which came from Jeremiah at Jerusalem. The prophet Jeremiah at Jerusalem was set there by God to be a faithful witness in an evil generation: "I have made thee to be a fenced city, an iron pillar, and brassen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, the princes, and the priests, and the people of the land." And to the prophet Ezekiel, among the Hebrew captives in Babylonia, God said, "Behold, I have made thy face strong against their face, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads; as an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead; fear them not, neither be dismayed." The two prophets stood like two opposite cliffs hanging over intervening straits—such as Calpe and Abyla, or Sestos and Abydos,—confronting one another, rising above the swell of the ocean, and dashed upon by a stormy sea rolling between them.

This phenomenon displays a truth which ought ever to be present to the mind of the student of Hebrew prophecy. All the prophets, in whatever time and in whatever land they lived, prophesied by one and the same Spirit; and, as St. Peter affirms, that Spirit was the Spirit of Christ. St. Peter says that the prophets "searched diligently, what the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." This apostolic sentence is the clue to all right prophetic interpretation. The Spirit in all the persons was the Spirit of Christ, and it testified of His sufferings, and of the glory that would follow from them.

This truth is displayed in the names, persons, and prophecies of the four greater Hebrew prophets. Isaiah, which means the salvation of Jehovah, is the first Hebrew prophet who calls the Messiah the servant of the Lord; and he sets before us more clearly than any other of his predecessors the Passion of Christ. Jeremiah, as we have seen, is the prophet of suffering, and his prophecies are followed by a national dirge in his Lamentations. He is the type of the Christus patiens. But Ezekiel is the prophet of the glory that would follow the suffering. The prophecies of Ezekiel are introduced with a revelation of glory. He himself a priest, called to his prophetic office at the river Chebar in his thirtieth year, and designated by God throughout his prophecies as son of man, (which the fourth month of the fifth year of the captivity at Babylon of King Jehoiakim or Jehoiachin (B.C. 595); the fifth year of his successor, Zedekiah; and about seven years before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, in the thirteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (B.C. 588). Ezekiel continued to prophesy for at least twenty-two years. See xxix. 17; xl. 1

1 Above, Introduction to Jeremiah, pp. viii. ix.
2 Dan. ix. 2. Compare Jer. xxv. 11; xxix. 10.
3 Compare Jer. i. 13 with Ezek. xi. 3, 7; xxiv. 2; Jer. iii. 6—11 with Ezek. xvi. 46—51; xxii. 11; and see the notes on Ezek. iv. 9; xl. 16; xiii. 2, 3; xiv. 14; xxxii. 19.
4 Jer. i. 18.
5 Ezek. iii. 9.
6 1 Pet. i. 11.
7 Ezek. i. 1. Ezekiel began to prophesy on the fifth day of
no Hebrew prophet who prophesied at Jerusalem ever is’); and seeing the heavens opened, and beholding visions of God’s glory, is a signal type of the Incarnate God, “the Son of Man,” standing in His thirtieth year, at the river Jordan, and inaugurated there as Prophet, Priest, and King, when, as the Gospel says, “the heavens opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Him, and lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Jeremiah’s prophecies begin and end with a vision of suffering; Ezekiel’s prophecies begin and end with a vision of glory. The last nine chapters of Ezekiel describe the visionary Temple and the ideal Holy Land, in a mysterious transfiguration, and are prophetic representations of the grace and glory of the Catholic Church of Christ, and are like a prelude to the visions of the Apocalypse, and the splendours of the Church glorified in heaven.

His brother prophet, Daniel, at Babylon completes this glorious picture, by his descriptions of the Second Coming of Christ, and the general Resurrection, and the Judgment of quick and dead, and the bliss of the saints in glory. And thus these two great Prophets of the Exile and the Captivity of Israel are also the two great prophets of the everlasting peace and heavenly joy of the Church of Christ.

The sufferings of Christ as revealed by Isaiah and Jeremiah, the two greatest prophets who prophesied at Jerusalem, and whose names are compounded with the sacred appellation of Jah or Jehovah, the Lord God of Israel, the God of the Hebrew Church, lead on by a beautiful transition to the glories of Christ, which followed those sufferings, and which are revealed in Ezekiel and Daniel, who prophesied in a heathen land, and whose names,—one, that of Ezekiel, referring to the strength of God, and the other, that of Daniel, to the judgment of God,—are compounded with Et, the Hebrew designation of God the Creator in His Universal Supremacy, and Who unfolded in their prophecies the gracious assurance that although the material Jerusalem was levelled in the dust, and though the Church of God was in exile and captivity, hanging up its harp on the willows which overhung the waters of Babylon, yet the glory of the Lord can never fall away, nay, it gleams forth more brightly from the gloom of sorrow and suffering, it derives fresh life from death, and a new creation from destruction. Although banished from Jerusalem, it is diffused into the heathen world, which has become a temple and city of God, and is a place of preparatory probation for the Church glorified in heaven.

Ezekiel, whose prophetic designation is “son of man,” is the priest and prophet, not of the Temple and City of Jerusalem, but of the spiritual Temple of Universal Humanity. This is his great value: he catholicizes Hebraism. He leads us on to contemplate and adore the Lord God of the Old Testament in all the breadth and depth and height of His divine attributes, as Universal Father and Saviour of all.

Observe how he displays God’s Omnipresence and Omniscience.

A short time before the destruction of Jerusalem, Ezekiel, the captive prophet in exile on the banks of the river Chebar, being severed, at a distance of more than 400 miles on the north-east from Jerusalem, was enabled, by the Holy Spirit, to behold and to describe the strange mysteries of impure worship which were celebrated in the secret chambers and dark crypts of the Temple there; his inner eye was illumined by the Spirit of God, and he was enabled to specify by name the men who were standing there with censers in their hand, and raising a thick cloud of incense, through the misty veil of which he described the vermilion paintings on the wall, of grotesque figures of creeping things and abominable creatures of Egyptian idolatry in the chambers of their imagery; he was enabled to see the women mimicking the ritual of Phenicia and weeping for the Syrian Thammuz, or Adonis, in the courts of the Lord God of Israel; and he saw the men between the porch and the altar in Sion turning their backs on the Temple of Jehovah, and bowing down their heads in lowly adoration to worship the rising sun.

The prophet Ezekiel, dwelling in exile in Babylon, was also enabled to foresee and describe the scene of that last fatal night of Jerusalem besieged by the Chaldean army, when the last king of Judah, Zedekiah, who had mocked the warnings of the prophet Jeremiah, stole secretly out of his palace with a few attendants, and passed along through the gate between the two walls which were by the king’s garden, with his face muffled up in his mantle, and was caught, as it were, in a net, with his companions, by his Chaldean enemies in the plain of Jericho.

1 Daniel, who did not prophesy at Jerusalem, is once so called, viii. 17. 2 Matt. iii. 16, 17. Mark i. 10, 11. Luke iii. 21—23. Vol. V. Part II.—153 3 See below, the Retrospect of that Vision, at the close of the present Volume. 4 Dan. vii. 9—14; xii. 2. 5 See Ezek. viii. 8—16. 6 See Ezek. xii. 12, 14.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

Not merely was Ezekiel enabled to see these things, and to describe them, but he was commanded to show his faith in his own inspiration by enacting them in the presence of the captives in Babylon. He was commanded to portray the siege of Jerusalem by a picture drawn with chalk on a dark brick of Babylon; and to represent its blockade by visible actions; and he was commanded to show his faith in his own revelations from God, by removing his own furniture from his own house in Babylonia in the dim twilight, as a token that Zedekiah, the king of Judah, would in like manner go forth in the dusk of the evening from his palace; and he was ordered to declare the meaning of these prophetic actions to those who were with him in Chaldea, so that, if these symbolical actions had not been realized by that which they were intended to symbolize, Ezekiel would have become a laughing-stock to the captives, and would have been rejected with scorn by the Hebrew Nation, and have never been received by them as an inspired prophet of God.

Ezekiel was recognized by the Hebrew Church as a prophet of the Lord; he was owned as such by Christ and His Apostles. And therefore these words and acts of Ezekiel preach to us and all the world the great doctrines of the Divine Omnipresence and Omniscience, and of our own personal responsibility.

If Ezekiel, at the river Chebar, was enabled by God to reveal the hidden things of the secret chambers of the Temple at Jerusalem, and to specify by name the persons who were there engaged in those unhallowed mysteries, and to see through the thick cloud of the incense which enveloped them; can it be supposed that there is any thing in the most recesses of our hearts which the eye of Ezekiel's God does not penetrate and pierce? Can it be imagined that there is any idolatry—carnal, intellectual, or spiritual—which we ourselves practise in the secret crypts and subterranean chambers of the imagery of our own thoughts, which is not clear as noon-day to His view? And can it be imagined that there is any thing which He will not bring forth to judgment as He brought forth the men of Jerusalem to be judged by the Man, an impersonation of Christ, whom Ezekiel saw clothed in linen, with a writer's ink-horn at his side, to note down, in a book, the actions of the princes and people at Jerusalem, and who executed sentence upon them, and who also set His mark—a mark, it was, of the cross—on the forehead of every one who sighed, wept, and mourned over their hateful abominations—in order that they might be spared in the terrible slaughter which destroyed the rest.

This prophetic representation of the divine attributes of Omnipresence and Omniscience is combined in Ezekiel with a solemn declaration of the hollowness of all mere formal, ceremonial worship; and of the necessity of a deep sense of man's individual responsibility, and of the duty of searching self-examination, and of practical repentance, and of spiritual, vital, and personal religion.

In the latter days of Jerusalem, before its destruction by the arms of Babylon (as afterward in the time of our Lord and His Apostles, before its destruction by Rome), the inhabitants of the Holy City relied on their religious privileges, and were elated with spiritual pride and presumptuous self-confidence. They vaunted themselves to be the national depositaries and guardians of the sacred oracles of God. They were possessors of the Law, the Prophets, and the Priesthood. They dwelt in the Holy City, and worshipped in the courts of the Temple. They thought themselves safe there; they imagined, that because they themselves had been spared, while King Jehoachin and the Queen mother, and many thousands of their countrymen had been carried away captive to Babylon, they themselves must be special favourites of the Lord God of Israel. They disparaged their captive brethren and extolled themselves: "The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord" are these. Theirs was a hypocritical religion of external ceremonies, and of arrogant self-conceit and vainglorious self-righteousness; joined with censorious and rash judgments of others, and with malignant scorn, bitterness, and strife, and with supercilious disdain and virulent hate of all who spake to them the plain truth in homely language—such as the prophet Jeremiah, calling them to the exercise of the moral virtues of justice, righteousness, mercy, and truth; and rebuking them for their neglect of those virtues; and denouncing God's judgments upon them for their hypocrisy. They were a barren leafy fig-tree—a fig-tree rustling in the breeze with luxuriant green foliage, but bearing no fruit, and therefore to be blighted and withered by the breath of God; and Jeremiah represented to them their own corrupt moral and spiritual condition by a prophetic parable—that of the two baskets of figs: the bad figs in the one basket symbolizing themselves, Jerusalem and its people; while the good figs in the other basket were emblematic of their captive brethren at Chebar, whom they despised.

1 See Ezek. iv. 1. 3. 2 See Ezek. xii. 3—15. 3 See Ezek. ix. 1—7. 4 See Ezek. xxiv. 1—10. 5 Jer. vii. 4.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

The prophet Ezekiel completed the picture. He beheld the Glory of the Lord, enthroned upon the cherubim, forsaking the Temple of Jerusalem, which was profaned by the sins of Priests, Princes, and People. He saw the Glory of the Lord rising aloft and floating away over the east gate of the Temple, to the Mount of Olives and towards the land of Chaldea.

These things are profitable to us who live in these latter days. They warn us that the true strength and glory of a Church does not consist in the magnificence of its sacred fabrics, nor in the splendour of its religious ritual, but in the hearts and lives of its people. They teach us that the verdict of Ichabod may be pronounced over us, and certainly will be, if we do not cherish those inner graces of holiness, gentleness, meekness, love, truth, and peace, without which the most splendid Minsters and most pompous ceremonials are abominable in the sight of Him Who searcheth the heart, and Who requires the moral, intellectual, and spiritual sacrifice of the whole inner man.

Both Ezekiel and Jeremiah were Priests, as well as Prophets. As such they had a special reverence for the Temple at Jerusalem and its Ritual, and for all the requirements of the Levitical Law. They cannot be suspected of any bias towards that fanatical Puritanism which disparages outward forms of religion, and resolves all devotion into a mere subjective spiritualism. And therefore the language of these two Hebrew priests and prophets on the subject is more entitled to our attention. The message of Ezekiel to Israel, a message repeated with earnest solemnity, was this, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." He declares that though the greatest Saints were collected together from the Hagiology of every age, and were concentrated as contemporaries in a Church in one age—though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it—they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, they shall deliver only their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God.”

What is this but to teach us that we may not rely for our acceptance with God on the privileges of Church-membership, except so far as we are making those privileges our own by a right use of them, and by bringing forth their fruits in our lives? What is this, but to remind us that each individual soul among us is to be brought singly, one by one, into personal communion and contact with God, and to stand, as it were, confronted, face to face, with Him, and to be left alone with Him, disentangled from all the intertwinings and interweavings of all other souls, and to bear its own burden, and to be placed in independent isolation before its divine Judge, and to be scanned and scrutinized through and through by His divine eye, and to receive its own sentence from Him, for everlasting bliss or everlasting woe, at the great Day.

Surely it is an awful thought, and it is made more awful by the view which the Prophet presents to us of the sinfulness of sin: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” This is the burden of Ezekiel’s prophecy. The practical comment which he gives on these words is full of meaning. Ezekiel at the river Chebar had by divine illumination a vision of the siege of Jerusalem: “Son of man, write the name of the day, even of this same day; the King of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day.” Ezekiel had also a prophetic revelation of the miseries of that siege, and of its woeful catastrophe. And soon afterwards, probably on the same day in which Jerusalem was taken, he had another message,—“Son of man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke, yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shalt thy tears run down.” He was forbidden to put on the attire, or utter the lamentations, of a mourner. So (he adds) “I spake unto the people in the morning; and in the evening my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded.”

The Hebrew captives at Chebar were astounded at such demeanour as this, and asked the reason of it. The prophet answered them that he himself—he, Ezekiel,—was to be a sign to them; and that what he himself did, they must also do. They had hoped for a speedy return to Jerusalem, their own home—their whole hearts were there. Jerusalem was the desire of their eyes; it was dear to them as a wife; but Jerusalem was to be suddenly smitten. God would take it away from them by an unexpected death-stroke. In them were to be realized the words, “I spake unto the people; and in the evening my wife died.” The fall of Jerusalem was the death of their wife. And yet they must not weep nor mourn for its fall. "Ye," says the prophet, "shall do as I have done." They were not to weep or mourn even for the destruction of Sion by the armies of Babylon; but they must mourn and weep for something else. All their tears were to be reserved for that: all their sorrow for the destruction of Jerusalem was to be merged and absorbed in sorrow for that. And

1 See Ezek. x. 1—22; xi. 22.
2 Ezek. x. 22.
3 See, for example, Jer. iv. 4, and vii. 22; ix. 25, 26; and on Ezek. xviii. 31; xxxi. 13; xxxii. 18, 20; xxxvi. 26, on 155
4 Ezek. xviii. 4, 20. 5 Ezek. xiv. 14, 20. 6 Ezek. xxiv. 2.
7 Ezek. xxiv. 16, 18. 8 Ezek. xxiv. 21, 22.

X 2
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

what was it? It was their own sin; for this it was which caused her fall. Ye shall not mourn nor weep for the destruction of the City and the Temple, dear as they are to you. No; but what does the prophet add? "But ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one toward another."

Here is instruction for those who live now. No sufferings, however great—not the loss of a dear wife, not the disestablishment of a national Church, not the ruin of a beloved Country, although these things are entwined with all their tenderest affections—are to draw forth from their eyes a single tear, in comparison with their own sins, which are the real source and well-spring of all their miseries in Church and State. We must pine away for our own iniquities, and mourn towards another.

At the present time some among us may be trembling for the safety of their own Sion. And they have cause to do so. Let us therefore look inward. Let us examine our own hearts and own hands. Let us scrutinize our own lives. Let us seek and pray earnestly for grace, that we may feel more deeply the heinousness of our own sins. Let us put away all envy, strife, hatred, and malice, and be at one among ourselves. Let us cleanse the sanctuary of our own hearts. Let us cherish the graces of faith and love, truth and peace, kindness and equity, which are its best ornaments—ornaments far more lovely than the sculptured lilies and carved cherubim and palm-trees which decorated the Temple of Solomon. Then God will be with us. Then the glory of the divine Shecinah will not float away from the courts of our Sion to the lonely river of some distant Chedar. And no armies of Babylon will be able to destroy the walls, and to profane the Holy Place, of the Temple of our Jerusalem.

Whatever in God's providential visitation may be in store for the Nation and national Church of Ireland and England—whatever may befall other Nations and other national Churches—Ezekiel, at the river Chebar, provides comfort for the faithful in every age and clime. The destruction of the City and Temple at Jerusalem was like the death of a beloved wife. It was a sadder pang to them than the death of a dear Rachel to the patriarch Jacob at Bethlehem. The expatriation of the citizens of Jerusalem from that home of their hearts, their dispersion as wanderers and captives in a far-off heathendom, was like a national widowhood and a national orphanhood. But yet the Lord God of Israel was the God of all true Israelites in Chaldea as well as in Judah. He is the God of every land and every age. He is Jehovah Elohim. And this great truth was brought out more clearly by the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple, and by the scattering of her princes, priests, and people into the far-off regions of the East. They learnt thus to realize God's Omnipresence. They learnt that true religion does not depend on the material fabric of a Temple, however glorious; nor on its religious Ritual, however gorgeous, and even though it be prescribed by God Himself; but that it depends on the presence of God in the hearts of His people. The Glory of the Lord God had been seen by the prophet Ezekiel floating away in the clouds on the winged chariot of the Cherubim from the Temple of Jerusalem. And why? Because that Temple was profaned by the sins of the worshippers in it. And this migration of the God of the Temple was a signal that He had given it up to destruction. But that Glory of the Lord was seen by the prophet in the wilderness of Chaldea on the banks of the river Chebar, four hundred miles from Jerusalem; and God had said to him, "I will be your Sanctuary." 1

Thus it was revealed to the world, that though Thrones may totter and fall, though Cities may be thrown prostrate on the ground, though Dynasties, Empires, and Kingdoms pass away like visionary shadows and spectral phantoms, though Nations may be scattered, and national Churches may fall, yet there is the same Jehovah—the same Triune God—ever sitting enthroned upon the cherubim, ever riding upon the winged chariot of the fourfold Gospel throughout the world; and though we be exiles and prisoners in Chaldea with Ezekiel, or with St. John at Patmos, yet with them we may have visions of God. And this blessed assurance is confirmed to us by the Holy Spirit speaking to us by Ezekiel, and revealing to us in the last nine chapters 3 of his sublime prophecy the glories of the Church of Christ Universal, which is our indestructible Sion; and summing up all with those memorable words, "the name of the city from that day shall be Jehovah Shammah,"—"the Lord is there." 4

A great conflict seems to be near at hand. And we know from the sure word of Prophecy that the Church of God will be assailed in the latter days by an Antichristian confederacy of discordant powers combined against her. The thoughtful reader of Ezekiel's prophecies may calmly contemplate that conflict; and may behold its issue revealed to his eye by the Holy Spirit of God, and may derive holy comfort and courage from that divine revelation 4.

1 Ezek. xi. 16.
2 Ezek. xl.—xlvi.
3 Ezek. xlvi. 35.
4 See below, on chaps. xxxvii.—xxxix.
The following summary of the Prophecies of Ezekiel may be acceptable to the reader:—

"Argumentum operis, cum ad confirmationem tendat libri Jeremiæ, ad illius mentem et contenta quæm proximè accedit. Agit quippe de regis Zedekiae, et populi Hierosolymis adhaec superstitionis captivitate per Nebuchadnezarum futurâ, de totali urbis excedio, et gloriam Dei justo ejus judicio a templo, quo temere nitebantur, auferendâ, deque gravissimis, quæ genti urbi omnique Judææe imminebant, calamitatis: prolîxè etiam, de pœnarum harum causis, quod contaminati essent Judæi multis superstitionibus, quod inter se essent perfidi, avari, crudelites et rapinariem pleni, luxuriae quoque dediti, et projecti ad libidines.

"Prefert hæc vero suauissimas quoque idoneis interserit locis promissiones, non modo de captivorum in patriam reditum et liberatione e servitute Babylonica, de restauracione templi et urbis—novoque gentis decore et flore, sed vel maximè de Christo, per quem restituendâ erat in regnum Dei et patriam eccelem, de gratiâ Evangelii ac felicitate Ecclesie Novi Testamenti, ut hoc pacto et ad penitentiam populus excitetur, et de divinâ gratiâ atque pecatorum condonatione confirmetur, et in spe meliorum temporum erigatur.


"The individual promises which are scattered throughout the book [of Ezekiel’s prophecies] may be combined together so as to form the following picture. As the judicial work of the Lord would not be brought to an end till the last remnant of Judah had been carried into captivity, so would His saving work not cease when a portion only of the covenant nation had been brought back to the land of promise. Not Judah alone, but Israel also, would be restored—a prediction which was actually fulfilled, as we learn from Acts xxvi. 7, Luke ii. 32, and Rev. vii. 4, sqq. During the short period of their banishment, the Lord would still keep His hand stretched out to guard His rejected people (chap. xi. 16). Their deliverance from exile would be followed by still greater mercy in the appearance of the Messiah. From the family of David, which had been reduced and entirely bereft of its royal supremacy, there would come forth, through the miraculous interposition of the Lord, an exalted King, in Whose sovereignty and protection the nations of the earth would put their trust (chap. xvii. 22—24). The Lord Himself would become the Shepherd of His deserted flock, and feed it through His servant David (chap. xxxiv. 23—31; xxxvii. 24). The Messiah would combine the office of high priest with that of a king, and in the exercise of the latter would exalt the righteousness which former rulers had trodden under foot (chap. xxi. 25, 26). The people would receive the inestimable blessing of the forgiveness of sins (chap. xxxvi. 25; xxxvii. 23). The Lord would give them a heart of flesh (chap. xi. 19). By His breath of life He would rouse them from spiritual death (chap. xxxvii.). The kingdom of God would shine forth with a glory before unknown, as in the new temple, described in chaps. x.—lviii. A stream of salvation, issuing from this temple would renovate the world, which was dead in sin and wretchedness (chap. lxxvii. 11, 12). The Gentiles would be admitted to an equal participation in the fellowship of the kingdom of God (chap. lxxvii. 22, 23; cp. Rom. vii. 4 sqq.). So great would be the fulness of salvation, that it would avail even for the deepest depravity, and Sodom might find in it the means of restoration. The Kingdom of God would be universally victorious over its enemies: this is shown in the prophecy respecting Gog the King of Magog (chaps. xxxviii., xxxix.), a prophecy which is comprehensive in its character; Gog represents all the future enemies of the kingdom of God.” Cp. the Commentary on Rev. xx. 8.

The principal Commentaries on Ezekiel are those of Origen (Homilies), S. Jerome, S. Gregory the Great (Homilies), Theodoret, Pintus, Pradus and Villalpjmdus (1596—1605), C. A. Lapide, Calvin, Bishop Patrick, M. Henry, Venema, Hävernick (1843), Henderson (1855), Fairbairn (3rd edit. 1863), Keil (1868), Hengstenberg (1868).
THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

EZEKIEL.

I. 1 Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. 2 In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity,
Ezekiel at Chebar.

3. the word of the Lord came expressly unto... Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was there upon him.

4. And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

5. Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was the appearance of the likeness of four living creatures. This was their appearance; and they had all four the same likeness. Each of them had four faces, and four wings.

The four living creatures, or Cherubim.

5. four living creatures These verses, to the end of the chapter, will best be considered continuously in one note. The living creatures are four; four is a number symbolical of universality (see the note at end of Rev. xi.). They are called Cherubim below (v. 2–9, 14–16, 18–20; xlv. 22). In the Apocalypse of St. John they are called Gas, living creatures. There they are about the throne of God. In Ezekiel they form the throne or Chariot, on which He sits and rides (see above, on v. 3, note 2). They lift up their wings upward from the earth, and the glory of the Lord is upon them (see x. 17–19; cp. here v. 26). Their feet are straight, vigorously extended—a symbol of strength and of rectitude; and their soles sparkle like the splendour of polished brass. The hand of God is upon his head, and they are joined together; and they turn not when they go, but go straight forward. Each of the four living creatures has a fourfold aspect; the likeness of a man and of a lion on the right side; and the likeness of a man and of a flying eagle on the left. Their faces and their wings are separated from above (the word does not mean stretched upward, as in the text); each has a distinct face and wings; but one pair of the wings of each is joined to the wings of another cherub, to denote unity in flying, and with another pair they cover their bodies in reverence (cp. Isa. vi. 2). Whither the Spirit will go they go; they are like burning coals of fire, and lamps or torches, Hebr. lapachim; the same word as is used of the lamps of Elisha (Judg. vii. 19, 20), and therefore very suggestive (see the note above, at the end of Judges, chap. vii.) as describing the flashing forth of Divine Truth by Evangelical preaching. The fire goes up and down among them, like the fire among the Pentecostal living creatures in Acts ii. 2 and iii. 5; or the fire in Ezekiel's vision, and from the fire goes forth lightning; and the living creatures run to and fro like a lightning flash. Each of the living creatures has a wheel for each of its four faces. The wheels are like cherubim; literally, like the eyes of Teshub or Teshub; or the brightness of topaz or chrysolite found at Tarshish, and called from it; as gold is called from Ophir, and ruby is called carnelian from Carcebada, or Carthage (Genes. xxv. 26; Fuerst, 185), Each of the four living creatures, or Cherubim, has one likeness; and their wheels are like a wheel within a wheel, set transversely, so as to move in any direction without turning. And the rings, or folios, of the wheels are full of eyes; when the living creatures go, the wheels go with them;
The four living Creatures,

EZEKIEL I. 6—11.

the Chariot of God.

Before CHRIST about k. ver. 10, ch. 10. 14, 21, Eccl. ii. 18, ch. 10. 6, Rev. i. 13, Prov. xvi. 9, ch. 10. 8, 21, o. ver. 12, ch. xii. 8. See Rev. 4. 7, v. Num. 2. 10, N. Num. 2. 3, N. Num. 2. 18, K. Num. 2. 22, 1 Or, divided above.

was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings. 7 And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf’s foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass. 8 And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings.

Their wings were joined one to another; and they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward. 10 As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; and they four also had the face of an eagle. 11 Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and

and when the living creatures are lifted up, the wings are lifted up. Whither the Spirit wills to go, they go, and the wheels go with them: for the Spirit of the living creature is in the wheels. Above the heads of the living creatures is the likeness of the firmament (Hebr. ra’akha, Gen. i. 6; cp. below, x. 1), as the brightness (literally, the eye) of crystal, terrible, stretched forth over them. And under the firmament their wings straight (cp. v. 7, where their feet are described as straight) one toward another (literally, each to its sister); each one has two, covering on this side, and each one has two, covering on that side the bodies of the living creatures, as the prophet, from a comparison of x. 11, that, on the whole, each cherub had six wings, as the Seraphim have in Isa. vi. 2.) And I heard the sound of their wings "as the sound of many waters" (cp. Rev. i. 15; xiv. 2; xix. 6), as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of a multitude (see Gen. xxvii. 9), as the noise of an army.

When they stand they let down their wings. And there is a voice from above the firmament over their heads, when they stand and let down their wings. And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the likeness of a cherub, of a cherub, of a cherub, Exod. xxiv. 16, "They saw the God of Israel, and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire-stone, and as it were the body of heaven in clearness;" and upon the likeness of the Throne is the likeness after the appearance of a Man above upon it. And I saw like the splendour of Chasmah (see on v. 4), as the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of His loins downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of fire within it round about, so was the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of His loins downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of His loins downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of His loins downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of His loins downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of His loins downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of His loins downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of His loins downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.

What is the meaning of this Vision?

The prophecies of Ezekiel are distinguished by their universality. In them the Lord God of Hosts is presented to the view, not as a localized Presence at Jerusalem, but as filling the whole Earth with His glory. This Vision is a prelude to these prophecies.

It represents the Lord God of Israel, the Lord of Glory enthroned upon the Cherubim, or Living Creatures, and riding upon them, as upon a chariot, into all lands. These four living creatures, which reappear in the Apocalypse in a somewhat modified form, are supposed, with good reason, by ancient Christian Interpreters (such as S. Irenaeus, S. Albinus, S. Jerome, S. Augustine, and S. Gregory the Great, and others), to represent the fourfold Gospel, on which the Lord, the Triune God, is borne, as on a royal Throne and triumphal Chariot, into the four quarters of the world. (The patriarchal anheծings of this spirit may be seen below, in the note on Rev. iv. 4, pp. 182—181; and in the Editor’s Lectures on the Canon of Scripture, p. 163, and need not be repeated here.)

The Gospels are four, and four only; they are Living Creatures for the living, Omens of the Ever-living God; each has four faces, for each displays the fourfold attributes of Christ. Each reveals Him as Man, as King (symbolized by the Lion), as a Sacrificed Victim (typified by the Ox), and as the Shepherd and Life. Whose morns on an Eagle’s pinions to heaven, and Who carries us thither, as eaglets, on His wings. See below, on Matt. xxiv. 28. Luke xvi. 37. As is said in the ancient Christian Hymn,—

Qunctus describunt isti Quandrum formae actu Christi:

Natus Homo declaratar, Titulus-sacrificatur, Et ascendit Aquila."

Each Gospel has wings, and a man’s hand is under the wings; for in each is human ministry winged by Divine Power. They have straight feet and wings; nothing is disturbed in them; they move wherever the Spirit guides them. One and the same Spirit moves in the four Gospels, and by them, who are marvellously joined together, intertwined with coincidences and varieties, wing interwoven with wing, and wheel inwound in wheel; and their wheels are full of eyes, and they sparkle with Divine light; and they cover their bodies in reverent adoration of Him Who rides upon them; and they fly with lightening’s speed, and with a lightening’s flash, and carry the Church upon their wings into every clime, and to the four corners of the Earth (see on Rev. xii., 14); and their wheels and their hands are like a mighty hand; "their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the end of the world." See on Ps. xix. 4.

This Vision was designed to comfort Ezekiel in his captivity, and to encourage him to do his work as a Prophet to Israel and the world. Isaiah, who foretold the captivity of Israel and Judah, was consoled by his vision in the Temple, declaring that "all the earth is full of the glory of the Lord;" so Ezekiel, who was commissioned to be a Prophet of woe to Judah, and to the city and Temple of Jerusalem, was cheered, and was enabled to cheer others, with the revelation, that, whatever might happen to the walls of Sion and to its Temple, yet the Lord of Hosts, who sat there between the cherubim, and was there worshipped, was the Almighty God (c. 21); and that the cherubim would continue to stand before the Lord, and He would ride upon it as a Mighty Conqueror and King into all lands in the Gospel of Christ, and in all true preachers of it, and in all faithful believers of it, who are transfigured into the likeness of Christ. Who is revealed in the Gospels, and partake of His attributes and His glory. There is, therefore, a divine truth in the opinion, that these fourfold Cherubim, or Living Creatures, represent the whole glorified society of believers who show forth their faith in the Gospel, and live for ever in Christ. Cp. Colovis and Luther quoted by him, pp. 499. 501; and Tiefert, Dubia, p. 407.

The scope of the whole Book of Ezekiel says Corporate, Int. viii. 26; Matthiades, Prov. ix. 1) is the glorification of Christ and His Kingdom; therefore the meaning of it, Christ is manifested riding on His Evangelic charriot, and about to advance His Gospel throughout the world. In the sequel of the prophecy, the union of Israel and Judah in Christ is represented (chap. xx. xx. xx. xxvii.), and the resurrection of sins through Him (chap. xxvi.). He is described as the Good Shepherd (chap. xxvii.); and the conversion of the Gentiles is exhibited (chap. xxviii.); and the resurrection of the faithful to life everlasting (chap. xxix.); and the destruction of the enemies of the Church (chap. xxxviii. sq.); and the glory of the Church triumphant.

Lastly, the Holy Spirit in the Apocalypse (iv. 1—11) blends together the imagery of the Vision of the Prophet Ezekiel at the river Chebar with the imagery of the Vision of the Prophet Isaiah in the Temple at Jerusalem, and teaches us to recognize in both a revelation of the Triune God. The four Living Creatures, or Cherubim, of the former, have six wings, and are full of eyes around (literally, as in a wheel, κοίνον), and within; and they rest not day and night, saying, in the words of the Seraphim in Isaiah, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty" (Rev. iv. 8).
two covered their bodies. And they went every one straight forward: yther the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went. As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.

Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces. The appearance of the wheels was 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. When they went, they went upon their four sides: and they turned not when they went. As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round about them four.

And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them: and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up.

Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither was their spirit to go; and the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. 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 of the living creature was in the wheels.

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. 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.

And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings. And there was a voice from the firmament that was over their heads, when they stood, and had let down their wings.

And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, 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. And 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. 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.

This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.
Son of Man;  

EZEKIEL II. 2—10.  

His mission.

Ezekiel, standing before God and speaking as a prophet, proclaimed a message: 

"I, the Lord, am your God; and I will give you the land of your fathers. 3 And you shall know that there has been a prophet among them."

And thou, son of man, 4 be not afraid of their words, though || briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: 1 be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, 2 though they be a rebellious house. 3 And thou shalt speak my words unto them, 4 whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear; for they are t rebellious. 5 But thou, son of man, what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee. 6 And when I looked, behold, 6 an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, 6 a roll of a book was therein; 10 and he spread it before me; and it was written been taken away from the privileges and pleasures of the royal Court at Jerusalem, but he was made a Prophet to all Mankind; he spoke of Messiah the Prince, the Redeemer of all the World. He too was exalted to recognize his dignity in his rebellion, and to the common family of all Nations. He was addressed by the Angel, not as son of Judah, but as son of Adam. 1 "He came near where I stood, and when He came I was afraid and fell upon my face, but He said unto me, Understand, O Son of Man" (Dan. viii. 17).

The names of the two greater prophets, who prophesied at Jerusalem (Isaiah and Jeremiah), are characterized by the same divine element—the Name Jan, the Name of the God of the covenant with Israel; but the names of the two greater prophets who prophesied in exile in Chaldea, are distinguished by the Divine Name which marks the relation of God to the Universe generally—Ezekiel. See on Gen. ii. 4. Exod. vi. 2. Ps. xix. 1. 7, where their difference is marked by a transition from the one name to the other. Cp. above, Introduction, p. 152. The relation of Ezekiel, the priest and prophet at the river Chebar, to Jesus Christ, the Great Priest and Prophet at Jordan, has been already noticed (see vi. 1). As Ezekiel at Chebar, when in his thirtieth year, beheld the heavens opened and saw visions of God, and was invested with his prophetic office, and was inaugurated in his mission to Israel and the World, but was addressed by God as Son of Adam; so, when the holy Evangelist St. Luke relates that Jesus was baptized at thirty years of age at Jordan, and saw heaven opened and the Spirit descending upon Him, and the Voice was heard from heaven declaring Him to be the beloved Son, he proceeds immediately to insert a genealogy which shows him to be the Son of Adam (see below, on Luke iii. 23). The Eternal Son of God became Son of Man, and was baptized, and He sanctified water by His baptism in it, and He was declared to be the Messiah, the Prophet, the Priest, the Redeemer and the Son of Adam (as Ezekiel and Daniel were); and thus we, who die by our first birth in Adam, rise again by Regeneration in Christ.

Ezekiel is often addressed as Son of Man (says S. Jerome). Daniel rarely; both were captives, and both counselled a captive People, and both were types of Him who said, "The Son of Man hath not where to lay His head" (Matt. viii. 20).

Below, in iii. 17, we read this address to Ezekiel, "Son of Man, I have set a watchman of the house of Israel, Ezekiel, the priest of the tribe of Levi, has received an unmerited commission as a prophet. He prophesies to a scattered people: he prophesies to the people. He feels sympathy with all; "A voice to me unto."

And in this universal sympathy he is a figure of Christ. See Heb. iv. 15; v. 1, 2. (Stand upon thy feet) The frequent commands which Ezekiel receives from God to do and to speak—and which he is continually acknowledging that he receives—have been construed by some modern critics into an avowal on his part that he needed perpetual directions what to do and to speak, and into an evidence of a decline of prophetic power in him.

But this is an erroneous inference. Ezekiel reminds his hearers and readers that he is not like the false prophets, who prophesied of their own heart (xii. 3; cp. Jer. xxiii. 10), and that he is the organ and minister of God. 2. set me upon my feet) As Daniel (s. 11). Cp. Rev. i. 17. 3. to a rebellions nation] Literally, to the rebellions nations (gogim), or to heathen, the rebellions. Israel is regarded as a heathen nation on account of its sins (see above, on Isaiah xiii. 7), and a heathen nation that is rebellious.


Thus saith the Lord God Thus saith Adonai Jehovah. The prophecies of Ezekiel are distinguished by this characteristic formula, which occurs about a hundred times in the first twenty-six chapters, and is very rare in other prophets. Ezekiel prophesied in exile in a heathen land; and he is ever reminding the Hebrew captives to whom he prophesied, that Jehovah, the God of Israel, is the Sovereign Lord of the Universe. See below, iii. 1. 5. a rebellions house] Literally, a house of rebellion. Hebr. meri (from marah, to resist, to rebel), a word which occurs fifteen times in Ezekiel (ii. 5, 6, 7, 8; iii. 9, 20, 27; xii. 2, 3, 9. 25; xvii. 12; xxiv. 3; xlv. 6); and only once in any other prophet, viz., Isaiah xxx. 9; the Sept. has νεκρος παρασκεπων, and seems to have connected the word with marah, bitterness, and marar, to be bittered; indeed, the words seem to be akin. Compare Jer. i. 21, on the word Merathaim, double rebellion.

6. briers and thorns) The former word in the original is from a verb, sarab, to burn or sting; the latter from satal, to intertwine (see Fuerst, 98; Gesen. 588); and the idea conveyed by both terms is twining, and the spreading and of tenacity—scorpions] Cp. Ecclus. xxvi. 7.

7. open thy mouth, and eat) See iii. 1—3. "Eat this roll; so I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat the roll. And He said unto me, Son of Man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee; then I did eat it, and it was in my month as honey for sweetness" (as all God's words are to the faithful, who is favoured by a commission from Him). Compare the words of the Angel to St. John in the Apocalypse. He said unto me, Take it (the roll), and eat it up, and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey; and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter." On the signification of this act, see below, on Rev. x. 9, 10.


10. written within and without) So as to be completely filled, as the seal roll in the Apocalypse. See on Rev. v. 1.
Ezekiel 1:1-14

The Vision of Glory

Before Christ about 595.

Cn. III. 1. eat this roll] See v. 10. “All my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears;” and cp. Job xxviii. 12, and Jer. xv. 16. “Thy words were found, and I did eat them.”

3. it was in my mouth as honey] Cp. Ps. xix. 10; xci. 103. Jer. xxx. 16; yet after eating it “he went in bitterness” (v. 14). Cp. on Rev. x. 9, 10. It was sweet to receive God’s words and to be God’s prophet; but it was a bitter thing for a son of man to be a messenger of woe to his own flesh and blood.

5. of a strange speech and of an hard language] Literally, deep of lip and heavy of tongue.

6. to many people] Literally, to many peoples.

8. I have made mine face strong] Here is a reference to the name of Ezekiel, whom God makes strong (Hebr. chazak). Their heart is stiff (chazak); he will make mine face strong (chazak) and thy forehead strong (chazak) as an adamant more hard (chazak) than flint; and the hand of the Lord was strong (chazak) upon me (v. 14).

The adjective chazak and its cognate verb chazaq occur six times in this chapter; and the inference from this is, that Ezekiel is to be, what his name imports, strong by power and the might of the Spirit of God. Cp. the notes on Isaiah xxv. 4, where is a similar allusion to the name of Hashach.

9. an adamant] Or diamond; Hebr. zahar, so called from cutting; see Jer. xvii. 1. Gesen. 834.

11. the captivity] Hebr. gôla, a band of captives; from gala, in the same sense as galal, to roll out, and to wander away (Ezra, 285). Cp. Ezra i. 11. Jer. xxviii. 6.

12. the children of the people] The rebels are not My people; they have disfranchised themselves by their sins. See on Exodus xxxii. 7.

13. f 15:14 “Thus saith the Lord God.”

Before CHRIST about 1655.

1. Hebrew text.
5. Ezek., xliii. 16.
6. Hebrew righteousness.

Before CHRIST about 1655.

2. Ps. 3, 15, ch. 1, 3, & S. 1, 37, 1.
4. Ezek., 137.
5. Ezek., xxxiii.
6. Ezek., xliii. 16.
7. Ezek., xliii. 16.
8. Ezek., xxxiii.
9. Ezek., xliii. 16.
10. Ezek., xxxiii.
11. Ezek., xliii. 16.
13. Ezek., xliii. 16.
15. Ezek., xliii. 16.
17. Ezek., xliii. 16.
18. Ezek., xxxiii.
19. Ezek., xliii. 16.
20. Ezek., xxxiii.
21. Ezek., xliii. 16.
22. Ezek., xxxiii.
23. Ezek., xliii. 16.

15. Tel-abib. Hill of Abib; either hill of corn (Genes. 861) or of grass-land (Fuerst, 9, 1473), probably so called from its fruitfulness (Keil), on the river Chebar, where a colony of Jewish captives was settled.

— I sat So the Hebrew keri, or margin, and this reading is followed by the ancient versions (Sept., Vulg., Syriac, Arabic, Targum, all which have “I sat”); but the Hebrew text has ashker, which some would read, by a change in the vowel points, ashker, I beheld, from shker, to see. So Gesenius, 878; Fuerst, 1498; Hitzig, Exegeten, and others. But the marginal reading, I sat, seems preferable. Cp. Job iii. 18: “They sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, for they saw that his grief was very great.” Seven days was the usual time of mourning (Gen. i. 10; i Sam. xxxi. 13). Or if we retain the text, then it should be printed ashker (the relative), and be connected with sham, there [Keil].

16. at the end of seven days—the word of the Lord came] For a similar proof of prophetical inspiration, see above, Jer. xliii. 7.

17. Son of man See above on ii. 1.

— I have made thee a watchman Literally, I have given thee (to be) a watchman. The Ministers of the Church are God’s gifts to it. Cp. the word Nethinim (1 Chron. ix. 2, and Ezra ii. 43. Neh. iii. 20). See and ejph. iv. 11. “He gave gifts to men; He gave some to (be) Apostles, some to be prophets.”

— a watchman evewr (Sept.) spectaculaire [Vulg.]. There are two words which describe the office of God’s prophets and pastors; both rendered watchman in our Version; one from shamar, to keep, and this is the word translated watchman in Cant. iii. 3; т. 7. Isa. xxii. 11; lxxii. 6; the other word, which is used here and in Isaiah iii. 8; lxxi. 10. Jer. vi. 17; and below, xxiii. 2. 6. 7. 7. The great chapter on ministerial duties), and which is from tsaphah, to look out as a watchman on a city’s walls, to see whether an enemy is coming, and to give warning of his approach.

Together, these two words describe the different parts of the pastoral office, viz., (1) to keep the sheep safe and within the fold; and (2) to be vigilant against the incursions of the wolf or the robber. Spiritually, the Christian Pastor must feed his sheep with wholesome doctrine, and guard them against false teachers.

— give them warning] The Hebrew verb here used, zahar, which is repeated fourteen times in Ezekiel in his two emphatic chapters on pastoral care (see ve, 18, 19, 20, 21; and xxiii., 104)

3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9), is a remarkable one; it properly signifies to shine, to be brilliant, and in highflight to make to shine, to spread brightness (Genes. 240; Fuerst, 386), and it denotes the act of the watchman on the walls (when he sees the approach of the enemy), bolding forth from the city tower a bright torch or other shining signal and beacon-fire, to warn the city and the neighbouring towns. Cp. Jer. vi. 1. “Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Beth-haccerem.” Such is the duty of the watchmen who are set by Christ on the walls of the Sion of His Church; they must always be on the look out, and must also give clear notice of the coming of the foe by blowing a shrill blast of the trumpet (1 Cor. xiv. 8), and displaying a beacon-fire. Cp. Justin Martyr, c. Tryphon. § 82. & Augustine, Sermon, 17 and 37.

This divine commission to Ezekiel instigated the faithful and courageous Bishop of Milan, S. Ambrose, to rebuke the Emperor Theodosius for his sin in the massacre at Thessalonica. See Ambrosi Ept. 54: “Si sacerdos non dixerit erant, qui erat erat in suæ culpæ mortiæ, sed sacerdos reus erat notus qui non admonuit errantium.”

19. thou hast delivered thy soul] Then hast plucked it out like a bird from a snare, or like a sheep from the mouth of the destroyer (xxiv. 10; Amos iii. 12). Cp. Prov. vi. 6. See Gesenius on the word natat, 563, and cp. below, xiv. 20, where Noah, and Job, and Daniel, are specified as delivering their own souls from being overwhelmed in the common destruction.

20. I lay a stubbling-block before him God makes men’s iniquity to be their occasion of falling, and punished them by their sins as He did Pharaoh (cp. Jer. vi. 21); at the same time the Prophet seeks to show that these stumbling-blocks are originally from the sinner himself. See xiv. 3, 4, 7; and on 1 John ii. 10.

22. the plain] Hebr. bickah; literally, the cleaving or separation, that which divides mountains from one another (Genes. 136). The Lord revealed Himself to Ezekiel at a river—the river Chebar in Chaldea—and at the hill Tel-abib, and in the wide vale or plain; and thus He showed that His presence is not confined to the Hill of Sion, and that He is not a “God of the hills” only, or “a God of the valleys,” but that He can make every place to be a Jerusalem and a Temple. Cp. below, viii. 4.

23. the glory of the Lord stood—as the glory which I saw by the river of Chebar] The glory of the Lord stands, it abides.
there, as the glory which I saw by the river of Chebar: and I fell on my face. 

Then the spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me, and said unto me, Go, shut thyself within thine house. But thou, O son of man, behold, they shall put bands upon thee, and shall bind thee with them, and thou shalt not go out among them: and I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprover: for they are a rebellious house. But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; He that heareth, let him hear; and he that forsaketh, let him forbear: for they are a rebellious house.

IV. Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and pourtray upon it the city, even Jerusalem: and lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set || battering rams against it round about. Moreover take thou unto thee 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.

This shall be a sign to the house of Israel.

Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel
Ezekiel was to represent Israel's sin by lying on the left side, and Judah's by lying on the right; thus showing God's preference of Judah, as distinguished from the Ten Tribes which revolted from it (Ecl. x. 2).

5. I have laid upon thee] As a punishment. I have appointed thee a day of punishment—in remaining in one posture—for each year of their obstinate sin. Cp. v. 8; and Num. xiv. 44. — according to the number of the days] A day for a year (v. 6).

Such was the result of Judah's trial, as contrasted with that of Israel. The two Tribes returned after the captivity in Babylon.

Not so the Ten Tribes which had fallen away under Jeroboam. Their sin and punishment is represented by 10 × 39, i.e. ten times the number which falls short of forty. The Ten Tribes are still in captivity, even to this day.

Other explanations of these two numbers in a symbolical sense may be seen in Hitzig, Haebernick, Fairbairn, Kleisth, and Keil; but they hardly seem satisfactory.

8. the days of thy siege.] It has been inferred from some of these words, that these days not only signified the years of Israel's sin, but the duration of Jerusalem's siege; but they do not seem to tally with the account of its continuance in 2 Kings xxi. 1—4, Jer. xxxix. 1, 2, which extend the siege to 503 days. However, it seems that there was an interval of repose in these 503 days, in consequence of the arrival of succour from Egypt (Jer. xxxvii. 5. 11); and thus the 503 days of siege may have been reduced to 430 or to 390 (Theodoret, Vatablus, A Lapide, W. Lowth).

9. fitches] Spelt. Cp. Ex. ix. 32. Isaiah xxviii. 25. This was to show that it would not suffice for making bread in the siege (see v. 16), but that the inhabitants of Jerusalem would be reduced to mix up the coarsest grains with it.


11. sixth part of an hin] About a quarter of a pint. 12. as barley cakes] Made in haste. Cp. Ex. xi. 29; — with dung] So strait will be the siege, that they will not be able to go forth to get fuel, but will use dung for it. Cp. 2 Kings vi. 25, describing the siege of Samaria; the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung was sold for five pieces of silver. See also the threat of Rabshakeh, 2 Kings, xviii. 27.

In some regions of Western Asia, where wood is scarce, cow-dung forms the common fuel; and is carefully packed and stowed in stacks and preserved (Kittel, p. 294; Keil, p. 51). — in their sight! So that when it comes to pass they may confess that thou art a true prophet, and that the Lord hath spoken unto thee; and that they may listen to thy words and repent, and that they may know that the miseries inflicted by the Chaldaeans on Israel and Judah are not to be ascribed to any power of theirs, but to the retributive justice of the God of Israel and Judah for their sins; and that they may believe that the other prophecies, concerning God's love to them if they will repent, and concerning His reconciliation to them in the Messiah, will be fulfilled also.

If (as some modern Expositors suppose) all that is described in this chapter was merely visionary, and if no overt acts were performed by the prophet, "as a sign to the house of Israel" (c. 3), and in their sight, then none of these sublateral results would have accrued from Ezekiel's prophecy, and he might have been rejected by the Jews and the World as a mere fanciful enthusiast. It has been alleged by some, that Ezekiel would not have been able to do so, according to the literal interpretation, he is required to do in this chapter. But to all such objections it may be replied with S. Augustinus, "O Domine Deus, da quod ubies, et ubi quod vis." Whatever God commands any one to do, He enables him to do.

With regard to the allegorisation, that is here enjoined by God to be done by Ezekiel was unseemly, we may say with an ancient Expositor, This was the trial of the prophet's faith, and a proof of his sincerity. Very Deus ducet jubetque suas stultum esse mundo, ut sapient Ammon. Ept., Ezekiel symbolised Judah's sin by his acts; and the loathsome character of his acts represented the hateful nature and miserable consequences of their sin.

What Ezekiel did in these respects was extraordinary and paradoxical. But there was a purpose in this strangeness. Ezekiel prophesied, not only by words, but by works; and the singularity of these acts called attention to what he did, and made it to be subject of public notoriety among the people; and thus the future events represented symbolically by these prophetic acts were proclaimed among the captives at the time of the performance of the acts; and when, afterwards, those events came to pass, they would be convinced that the Lord had spoken by him.
13 And the Lord said, Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, whither I will drive them.

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 dieth of itself, or is torn in pieces; neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth.

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.

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: that they may want bread and water, and be astonied one with another, and consume away for their iniquity.

1 And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber’s razor, and cause it to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard: then take thee balances to weigh, and divide the hair. Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when 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.

Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirts. Then take of them again, and 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.

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. And she hath changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations, and my statutes more what he was about to utter in God’s name (v. 5). See Levit. xxvi. 5.; above on iv. 12.

— balances to weigh The hair, in order to show that God’s judgments on Jerusalem were not executed in passionate caprice, but with the calm deliberation of exact retributive justice.

— the hair of thy head They are all numbered, saith our Lord to His disciples (Matt. x. 30).

1. Even thus The acts of Ezekiel were signs of two things, and to two different parties: (1.) Of misery to the Children of Israel in their dispersion, which is noted here; (2.) Of misery to Jerusalem in the approaching siege (c. 16).

— shall eat their defiled bread Or, they shall eat their bread defiled; that is, they shall not be able to observe the Levitical Law with regard to clean and unclean meats; such are called abominable flesh in i. 14.

In a spiritual sense, it may be said that, even to the present day, the Jews dispersed among the Gentiles eat bread like that prepared by Ezekiel. For, in that they believe on God, they eat bread made of wheat—the food of men; but in that they deny Christ, they eat the fodder of cattle mingled with it (S. Jerome).

15 I have given thee cow’s dung If, as some suppose, all this was a vision, what did it matter which of the two were precisely, since neither, on that hypothesis, was to be used? Herein is another proof that the vision was to be extended.


EZEKIEL IS COMMANDED TO SHAVE HIS HEAD A PROPHETIC ACT, SHOWING GOD’S FUTURE JUDGMENTS ON JERUSALEM.

Ch. V. 1. a sharp knife Literally, a sharp sword—symbol of the destruction of a large part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem by the sword of the Chaldaens. See v. 12, where the same word (cherub) is repeated, and is translated sword. Cp. xi. 8. 10.

— take thee a barber’s razor Rather, as a razor of barbers, thou shalt take it (the sword) to thee, and cause it to pass. The sword is to be used as a razor; so the Assyrian army is called a razor in Isa. vii. 20.

— to pass upon thine head Ezekiel was a priest (i. 3), and yet he is commanded to shave his head, which, as Movaeidues observes (More Nevoch. ii. 46), was against the Levitical Law (cp. xlv. 20). By this extraordinary act he called attention to

Before CHRIST about


14. The verb here used (marah) occurs forty times in the
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 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, neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about you;

8 Therefore 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 And 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.

10 Therefore the fathers shall 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 scatter into all the winds.

11 Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord God; Surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity.

12 A 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 I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.

13 Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted: and they shall know that I the Lord have spoken it in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them.

14 Moreover I 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 reproach 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 furious rebukes. I the Lord have spoken it.

16 When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for their destruction, and which I will send to destroy you: and I will increase the famine upon you, and will break your staff of bread: so will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the Lord have spoken it.

VI. 1 And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, set thy face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them, 3 and

Bible, and is never translated change, except here, but always by rebel, or disobey, or some similar word (cp. Gesen. 508). The sense is, "rejected my judgments for wickedness;" that is, in order to perpetrate iniquity.

7. Because ye multiplied more than the nations] Rather, because ye were reproved against Me more than the heathen. See Gesen. 228. Cp. Ps. ii. 4; xvi. 6; and Targum and Keil here.

— neither have followed according to the judgments (or statutes) of the nations] Ye, the favoured people of God, who have had the privilege of possessing My Law, have not lived up even to the laws of the Gentiles, who are a law unto themselves (Rom. ii. 14), and have been less righteous than the heathen themselves. Cp. Rom. ii. 27: "Shall not the uncircumcision judge them?"

10. Therefore the fathers] Rather, fathers—and sons; there is no article in the original. Cp. the prophecies Lev. xxvi. 20, Deut. xxviii. 52, and see the fulfilment in Lam. ii. 20; iv. 10. When it is there said that even mothers did it, it may be inferred that it was done by fathers also. Cp. Ezech. ii. 3.

In a figurative sense, the prophecy in this verse (that parents would eat children, and children parents) is fulfilled when teachers in the Church, who ought to be spiritual parents, and to feed their offspring with sound doctrine, destroy them by heresy; and when disciples, who ought to revere their teachers, devour them by malignant slander and petulant insolence. Cp. S. Jerome here.

11. will I also diminish thee] Literally, diminish from thee; as Ezechiel had shaven off his hair. Cp. xvii. 26, where the same verb is used, and Gesen. 180.

12. pestilence, and—famine] See Josephus, Ant. x. 8. 1, who mentions both.

13. say Fury to rest?] To refresh itself and be satiated. — I will be comforted] Cp. Isai. i. 24: "I will ease me of mine adversaries;" regarded as a heavy burden pressing upon God with the load of their sins.

— they shall know that I the Lord have spoken it] See on vi. 10.


Cf. VI. 2, the mountains of Israel] As specially defiled by idolatrous high places (cp. 3. 13) set up in opposition to "the mountain of the Lord's house" at Jerusalem. See . S. Jerome.
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 valleys; Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and "I will destroy your high places. 4 And your altars shall be desolate, and your \[\text{images shall be broken: and I will cast down your slain men before your idols.} 5 And I will \[\text{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 dwelling places the cities 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. 7 And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and ye shall know that I am the Lord. 8 Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the sword among the 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 I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and \[\text{with their eyes, which go whoring after their idols;} and \[\text{they shall loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.} 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 \[\text{with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot,} and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! \[\text{for 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 is besieged shall die by the famine: \[\text{thus will I in ch. 5. 12, accomplish my fury upon them.} 13 Then \[\text{shall ye know that I am the Lord.} 14 When their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, \[\text{upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains,} and \[\text{under every green tree,} and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols. 14 So will I \[\text{stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, yea,} \[\text{more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblath, in all their habitations: and they shall know that I am the Lord.} 11. Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot! Strike one palm upon another (cp. xxi. 17. Num xxiv. 10), and stamp on the ground with thy foot; call attention, by acts of grief and consternation, to thy prophetic words of denunciation on Judah and Israel. The sorrow of Ezekiel was like the tears of our Blessed Lord (Luke xix. 41), produced by a foresight of the woes coming on Jerusalem, and a visible evidence of his belief in the truth of the words uttered by his mouth. 13. sweet savour! Literally, an odour of well-pleasing—a phrase borrowed from the Pentateuch, and not found anywhere else except in Ezekiel. See on Gen. viii. 21. Exod. xxxix. 18. Lev. i. 9. Cp. below, xvi. 19; xx. 28. 41. The Jews offered to idols what was due to God. 14. more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblath! Or, more desolate than the wilderness of Diblath (Syria). The land of Israel will be more desolate than that of God's enemy, Moab, where Diblathaim was (Num. xxxii. 46). Jer. xxvi. 22. There hardly seems sufficient reason for adopting the ancient conjecture of some of the Rabbis, that we ought to read Riblah here for Diblath. Perhaps the name Diblath may have been chosen also for its symbolical meaning (see S. Jerome here), "a cake of figs." Ye shall be like figs, once fresh and luscious, but afterwards dried and squeezed together. See Flavius, 999, and compare the symbolical names in Isaiah xvi. 9; xxi. 13; and in Jeremiah xxvi. 20; li. 21; li. 41. The Jews are compared to "vile figs" in Jer. xxiv. 2—8; xxix. 17. The sense is similar in the prophetic denunciation, "I will make the land like the overthrow of Sodom" (Deut. xxix. 23. Is. xiii. 19. Jer. xlix. 18; l. 40. Amos iv. 11). Cp. Zeph. 2.
VII. Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 

1. 2 Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God unto the land of Israel: 

3. An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land. 2 Now is the end come upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways, and will give recompense upon thee all thine abominations. 4 And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations that are in the midst of thee: 

5. Thus saith the Lord God; An evil, an only evil, behold, is come. 6 An end is come, the end is come: it will watcheth for thee; behold, it is come. 7 The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again of the mountains. 8 Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon thee, and accomplish mine anger upon thee: and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense thee for all thine abominations. 9 And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense thee according to thy ways and thine abominations that are in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. 

10. Behold the day, behold, it is come: the morning is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded. 

11. Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness: none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of any of theirs: neither shall there be waiting for them. 

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. 

13. For the seller shall not return to that which is sold, although they were yet alive: for the vision is touching the whole multitude thereof, which shall not return; neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life. 

14. They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready; but none goeth

When Israel entered on that course of sin which ended in its ruin, the rod of the Babylonian power was planted, and as the sins of Israel increased, the rod went growing in the pride of its might, until, under Nebuchadnezzar, it became a great tree, and overshadowed the earth. So it is with Nations still. Whenever a Nation enters upon and persistently pursues a course of sin, so surely does God plant a rod for it, which will blossom for its chastisement at the set time. So also it is with individuals. Therefore, whenever we feel that the rod of punishment is blossoming against us for our sins, let us then look for comfort and instruction to the Rod which blossoms from the root of Jesse, whose leaves are for the healing of the Nations. 

11. a rod of wickedness That is, to punish the wickedness of Jerusalem.

When Jerusalem had been destroyed, and the Jews were scattered, some of them returned and settled in the land. None of them (i.e. of the inhabitants of Jerusalem) shall be left, nor of their multitude, nor of their riches. There is a play on the words in the original. See Gesen. 227; Fuerst, 364.

—neither shall there be waiting for them. Rather, neither shall there be any beauty in them (Sept., Arabic, Gesen. 360). 12. let not the buyer rejoice. For he will not enjoy what he has bought; nor will the seller mourn for having sold that which the buyer will not live to possess.

13. the seller shall not return—To repose, in the year of jubilee, what he has sold (Levit. xxv. 13).

—neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life. Rather, by the iniquity of his life. The only means of strength to the buyer are in his obedience to God’s commandments. He is the “Strength of Israel.” But they have sought to strengthen themselves by devices of their own; as by serving other gods, and by resorting to Egypt for help. But they will soon find that they have woosed the cause of their own weakness and destruction.

14. They have blown the trumpet To muster their forces against the Chaldean invaders; but none dares go forth to the
The Temple will fall.  

EZEKIEL VII. 15—27.  

Make a chain.

to the battle: for my wrath is upon all the multitude thereof. 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.

16 But 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. 17 All hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall be weak as water. 18 They shall also gird themselves with sackcloth, and 'horror shall cover them; and shame shall be upon all faces, and baldness upon all their heads.

19 They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be † removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels; 20 for the beauty of their ornament, he set it in majesty: but they made the images of their abominations and of their detestable things therein: therefore have I 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 || robbers shall enter into it, and defile it.

23 Make a chain: for 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 their holy places shall be desecrated. 25 † Destruction cometh; and they shall seek peace, and there shall be none. 26 □ Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour; † then shall they seek a vision 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 † according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I am the Lord.

† Heb. with their judgments.

* ver. 4.
EZEKIEL VIII. 1–11. in a vision to Jerusalem.

VIII. 1 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 the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord God fell there upon me. 2 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, as the colour of amber. 3 And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy. 4 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the plain.

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 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, poured 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. 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, 'The Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth.'

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, 17 between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, 18 with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped 19 the sun toward the east.

17 Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? 20 Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. 21 In amorous ditties all a summer’s day; While smooth Adonis [the river of Lebanon] 22 from his native rock Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood Of Tammuz’ yearly wounded; the love-tale Infected Sion’s daughters with like heat; Whose wanton passions, in the sacred porch Ezekiel saw, whom, by the vision led, His eyes surveyed, and was served with 23 the dark idolatries Of alienated Judah.

16. (the inner court) The Holy Place, or Court of the Priests.

— at the door of the temple. At the entrance of the temple. Hebr. הַמַּלְאָכֶה, i.e. the palace of Jehovah; and it is added that they turned their back to the temple, the palace of the Great High Priest, the Image of the Great High Priest, Jehovah, and worshipped 24 of the Lord God of Israel, the King of Kings! So great was their unthankfulness, and so bold and fearless was their impiety. On the word-keysal, see on 1 Sam. i. 9; it is the word used by Isaiah (vi. 1). The word סוכך means a dark cloud in chaps. xliii., xlviii., the description of the Temple in the Vision,

— between the porch and the altar. The place appointed by the priests, to weep there for the people’s sins (Joel ii. 17). There, where they ought to have been prostrate on their faces, sad and low, and not have stretched their hands to the Sanctuary, pleading for mercy for themselves and their country, there they stood with their backs turned on the Holy of Holies (cp. 2 Chron. xxix. 6. Jer. ii. 27; xxxii. 33; below xxxii. 35), and with their faces to the East, worshiping the Sun! Cp. 2 Kings xxiii. 5. Jer. viii. 1—3.

— about five and twenty men. Perhaps the heads of the twenty-four courses of Priests, with the High Priest as their leader (Lightfoot).

— they worshipped. Literally, they bowing yourselves down. Some have supposed an error in the MSS. here, on account of the change of pronouns. See Gesen. 814. 882. Cp. Fuerst, 171. 1506. But perhaps there may be an intentional change from the third person to the second, for the purpose of expressing anger in a more direct manner. They turn their backs on Me; but I will turn My face to you, who do this, and punish your sin.

17. and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. According to the custom of the Persians, who, when worshipping the rising sun, held a tamarisk branch in their hands, called barzoum (Sirah, xiv. 733; Hyde, De Vet. Bel. Pers. 350; Zendavesta, iii. 204 (ed. Kühner); Gesen. 247, 485). Objections are urged by some (e.g. Keil, 77) to this interpretation; but it seems the best that has yet been given. The reason why the phrase is thus expressed, “they put the branch to their nose,” is explained by what follows, “the seat of rage being the nose.” 

m Joel 2. 17. n ch. 11. 1. o Jer. 2. 27. & 32. 33. p Deut. 4. 19. q kings 23. 5. 11. r Job 31. 32. s Jer. 41. 17. t Or. Is there any thing lighter than to consult. u ch. 9. 9. v ch. 5. 13. w 16. 42. & 24. 13.
The faithful are marked

EZEKIEL IX. 1—6.

on their foreheads.

fore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.

IX. 1 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, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar. 3 And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, wherupon 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; and the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, 4 and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. 5 And to the others he said in the hearing, Go ye after him in the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: 6 slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they

The Marking of the Faithful in Jerusalem with a Mark on their Foreheads.

The Destruction of the Rest.

Ch. IX. 1. He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice. The idolaters are described at the close of the foregoing chapter as crying with a loud voice in God's ears for mercy, but crying in vain, when too late; and here God Himself cries with a loud voice in the prophet's ears, and gives a commission for judgment.

—every man Every one of the six angels mentioned in v. 2. xlvii. 3. xviii. 1. xi. 10. They are called angels because they are sent to the Gentiles, and especially Calvovius, p. 512, and M. Henry, Hengstenberg (here and in his Christol, on Amos ix. 1), and Fairbairn. His attitude is that which is peculiar to Christ as Universal High Priest. See what follows.

—slaughter weapon. As if they were Levites waiting upon the Priest in the midst, whose orders they were to execute; and as if those evil men who were to be slain were sacrifices to God in His Temple. The wicked are often designated in Holy Scripture under this figure of sacrifice. See on Isa. xxxiii. 6; below, xxxix. 17. Mark iv. 49.

—clothed with linen. Compare the description of Christ in Dan. x. 5, 6, and Rev. i. 13, and cp. Tertullian c. Jullius, c. 12, and, on the use of linen in sacred ministrations, see Exod. xxvii. 42. Levit. xvi. 23, and on Jer. xiii. 1, and below, xlv. 17, 18.

—with a writer's inkhorn by his side. The regular scribes in Talmudic times were called scribes, silver pens, or copper "dawarah" inkhorn, or case with receptacles for ink and pens, stuck in the girdle. This is a very ancient custom. See Ezek. ix. 2. 3. 11. Lane, Mod. Egypt. p. 31 (cp. Jer. xxxvi. 21—23.

The Glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub—(to the threshold of the house) In order to execute judgment there on those who profaned and polluted the Temple. The glory of the Lord goes up from the cherubim on which Ezekiel had seen Him (5. 26; 11. 18; viii. 4) to the threshold, in order that it might be known that the Lord, Who had revealed Himself to Ezekiel, was no other than the God of the Temple. Cp. v. 1.

4. Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem. Even in the execution of vengeance, God shows that His primary desire is to have mercy. He begins with preserving the faithful. Cp. Mat. xxv. 31. The chief angel is employed in the work of salvation; the other six, who have a commission to destroy those who are not marked with the sign, follow after him (v. 4). Cp. Rev. iv. 4. —set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof Set a mark. The Hebrew verbs and noun here used are tavah and taw. The former is used in Ps. lxxviii. 41, the latter in Job xxxi. 35, where see the note. If the letter taw itself was inscribed on the foreheads of those who were marked, it then seems probable that the mark impressed upon them was in the form of a cross. See Gesen. 557; and so Fuerst, 1461; and so Hitzig here, and Keil. The Taw, has "signa Thau super frontes," and "unnum super quae videritis Thau ne occidatis." That the letter Thau was anciently made in the form of a cross, is asserted by Origen here, who says, that when he inquired of some Jews of his age what they could tell him concerning the meaning of this sign here, some of them answered, that, being the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, it was the sign of completeness; others, that being the first letter of the word Thorah (Law), it signified righteousness; and others attempted, who believed in Christ, said that it was in the ancient form of the sign of the cross. And Tertullian c. Marcion. iii. 22, referring to this passage, says, "Ipa est litera Graecorum Tau, nostra autem T, species Crucis, quam portabantur futurum in futurus nostrum apud verum et Catholicon Ecclesiam." Cp. Tertullian c. Jud. 3. Marcell. ad Demetriam 22; S. Jerome says "Antiquus Hebraeorum litterae quibus usque hodie utuntur Samaritani extrema Thau litera crucis habet simulidentemque in Christianorunm futurum pingitur," and cp. Grotius here: Bp. Walton (de Sicaie, p. 36, and in his Prolegomena, p. 36; and Montfaucon, Palaeog. Gr. ii. 3, quoted by W. Lowth here, who have proved that the letter Thau was anciently made in the form of the Cross; and it still retains that form in the Ethiopic alphabet. Cp. supra.

This is a prophetic foreshadowing of the great universal sealing described by St. John in the Apocalypse, where the saints of God are sealed on their foreheads. See on Rev. vii. 1—3; cp. Rev. xiv. 1.

began at the ancient men which were before the house. 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.

8 And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I fell upon my face, and cried, and said, 9 Ah Lord Go! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem?

Then said he unto me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness: for they say, The Lord hath forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not. 10 And as for me also, mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will recompense their way upon their head.

And, behold, the man clothed with linen, which had the inkhorn by his side, reported the matter, saying, I have done as thou hast commanded me.

X. Then I looked, and beheld, 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 And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city. And he went in in my sight.

Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.

Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory.

And the sound of the cherubims' wings was heard even to the outer court, as the voice of the Almighty God when he speaketh.


10. mine eye shall not spare: Because they say that I do not see (v. 9).

11. [the man clothed with linen—reported the matter:] It is not added—the six men reported the accomplishment of their mission. There is a merciful intention, in this joyful report of those who were saved, and in the silence of the ministers of destruction: *Neque enim latet sem moriaris imploravit sententiam, quae non sermo sed opere probatur* (S. Jerome).

THE COALS OF FIRE SCATTERED OVER THE CITY—THE DIVINE GLORY REMOVES FROM THE TEMPLE.

Ch. X. 1. a sapphire stone: The Throne of God. Cp. above, i. 26. Exod. xxiv. 10.

2. he spake unto the man clothed with linen—fill thine hand with coals of fire—and scatter them over the city: The Man clothed with linen, who appears to be the Son of Man in His priestly and judicial office (see on ix. 2, 3), has a commission from the Divine Glory, which is enthroned on the cherubim, to take coals of fire, the signs and instruments of Divine retribution (Ps. cxv. 4; cxl. 10. Rev. viii. 5), from among the cherubim, which were like coals of fire (above, i. 13), and to scatter them over the city—Jerusalem.

It was revealed by this Vision that the destruction of Jerusalem would be by fire; and that it would not be effected by the power of the Chaldians, acting by their own strength, but by them as ministers of God, and as executioners of His anger against Jerusalem for the sins revealed in the former Visitation.

The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple was due to sins committed by Jerusalem in the Temple itself. So it was in its destruction by the Babylonians; and so it was also in its later destruction by the Romans. See below, on Matt. xxiv. 15. The ruin of Nations and Churches is always from themselves.

8. Ah Lord Go! will thou destroy all the residue? See xxi. 3.

10. mine eye shall not spare: Because they say that I do not see (v. 9).

14. Heb. the hollow of that hand.

15. The word gu blasphemy is expressive of violent motion, like that of a whirlwind (see lxxxiii. 13), and is only found in five places in Ezekiel (x. 2, 6, 13; xxiii. 24; xxvi. 10).

3. The right side: the north side, if the Prophet is speaking relatively to the entrance from the East; otherwise, according to Hebrew usage, the right side represents the south (1 Sam. xxiii. 19. 24. 2 Sam. xxiv. 5. Gesen. 351), and so it is rendered in the Targum.

4. The cloud filled the inner court—And the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory: The presence of the Lord of Hosts on the cherubim was thus proved, and it was shown that His glory was there no less than at Sinai (Exod. xix. 9; xxiv. 15, 16, 18), and in the Levitical Tabernacle (Num. ix. 19; xii. 10), and in the Temple of Solomon (1 Kings viii. 10). The same truth, that God's glory is not limited to any particular spot, but that He can make any place to be a Temple of His glory, was shown by the cloud at Christ's Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 1, 5) on the mount, which was made "the Holy Mount" by the cloud of His presence and "excellent glory" (2 Pet. i. 16, 17).

This was a cheering assurance to the Prophet now that the Temple of Jerusalem was to be destroyed.

5. And the sound of the cherubims' wings was heard. As long as Jerusalem was faithful to God, His Presence and Glory sat enthroned in calm majesty between the cherubim on the ark in the Holy of Holies (Ps. lxxx. 1; cxix. 1). But now that Jerusalem had rejected Him, He was about to forsake her; He had chosen for Himself other cherubim, which He had revealed to Ezekiel even in Babylon, by the river Chebar (L 3; cp. below, re. 15 and 22); and the flapping of their wings betokened His departure from the house. See v. 18.
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 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 And there appeared in the cherubims the form of a man's hand under their wings. 9 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 beryl stone. 10 And as for their appearances, they four had one likeness, as if a wheel had been in the midst of a wheel. 11 When they went, they went upon their four sides; they turned not as they went, but to the place whither the head looked they followed it; they turned not as they went. 12 And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about, even the wheels that they four had. 13 As for the wheels, || it was cried unto them in my hearing, O wheel. 14 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. 15 And the cherubims were lifted up. This is the living creature that I saw by the river of Chebar.

16 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. 17 When they stood, these stood; and when they were lifted up, these lifted up themselves also: for the spirit of the living creature was in them.

18 Then the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims. 19 And 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 Lord's house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. 20 This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the cherubims. 21 Every one had four faces

The form of a man's hand. The word for man here is adam (homo), but the man clothed in fine linen is always called ish (vir); and so the former in the Sept. is אֱלֹהִים, the latter is ἄρραβος. ||

9—12.] See i. 16—18.

13. O meek! Rather, The whirling! In the Hebrew it is 'The galgal' 14 see above, on v. 2. The Sept. has gēlērho, and similarly the Syriac reproduces the Hebrew word. The Vulg. has 'volubiles,' and so Targum. In the Arabic it is rendered, 'The wheels were called rapid, most rapid.' The meaning appears to be, as Theodoret expresses it, 'a command was given to the wheels to roll round.' The Divine Voice sets the wheels in motion, and commands them to whirl round with their greatest speed, in order that the Divine Glory may fly like lightning from the Temple, which has been profaned by the sins of the people, and which is now to be burnt with fire. ||

Here is a specimen of perfect obedience. He who rightly obeys God does not delay a moment, but at once prepares his ears to hear, his tongue to speak, and his feet to run, and girls up the loins of the whole man to execute His will (S. Bernard). The Spirit is in all the wheels, and the result is one galgal, or revolution of the whole man.

14. The face of a cherub. Rather, of the cherub (as in vv. 2 and 4): the other three words here (man, lion, eagle) have not the article. The reason why one of the four Living Creatures is called 'the cherub' here, is to identify it with that which is mentioned above as such (v. 7): and because, probably, the prophet had a full view of the quadriform aspect of this cherub; and, therefore, does not characterize it by any one of its faces, as he does the other three.

15. The cherubim were lifted up.] To bear the Divine Glory, as before a chariot, in its departure from the Temple (v. 18).

16. The glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house.] The Divine Glory quitted the Temple, on account of the sins of the rulers, of the priests and people of Jerusalem, and stood over the Cherubim. For a like reason our Lord said to the Jews, 'Your house is left unto you desolate' (Matt. xxiii. 38). In this Vision was a prophetic intimation, that, for the wickedness of Jerusalem, the 'Glory of the Lord' would depart from Jerusalem, and would fly on the Evangelic Cherubim into all lands; Jerusalem would be Ichabod, and the World would become a Jerusalem in Christ. See what follows in the next chapter.
apiece, and every one four wings; and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings. And the likeness of their faces was the same faces which I saw by the river of Chebar, their appearances and themselves: they went every one straight forward.

XI. Moreover, the spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto the east gate of the Lord's house, which looketh eastward: and behold at the door of the gate five and twenty men: among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people. Then said he unto me, Son of man, these are the men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel in this city: which say, It is not near; let us build houses: this city is the caldron, and we be the flesh.

Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man.

And the 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. Ye have multiplied your slain in this city, and ye have filled the streets thereof with the slain.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Your slain whom ye have laid in the midst of it, they are the flesh, and this city is the caldron: but I will bring you forth out of the midst of it.

Ye have feared the sword: and I will bring a sword upon you, saith the Lord God. And I will bring you out of the midst thereof, and deliver you into the hands of strangers, and will execute judgments among you.

威胁的判决和恩典的承诺。以西结十二。1－9。这是那盆子。”

“威胁的判决和恩典的承诺。以西结十二。1－9。这是那盆子。”
10 I will judge you in the border of Israel.10] In the extremity of the land. Ye say with a sneer that this city is your caldron, and that you are side here; but no; ye shall be torn out of it and die in the conflagrations of the land in Rabbah on the north and in Egypt on the south, and thus ye shall know that I am the Lord, and have spoken by Jeremiah. 11. This city shall not be your caldron.11] This city shall not be a pot to you, so that ye should be flesh in the midst of it; namely, contained in it and defended by it. 12. Pelatiah the son of Beniah died] The prophet recognizes here the stroke of God and an omen of complete destruction. "Ah, Lord God, wilt Thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?" Ezekiel seems to refer to God's promise to Jeremiah (iv. 27; v. 10. 18) that He would not make a full end, and to what is said in vi. 8, 9; vii. 16, where He had promised that a remnant should be delivered (the word there is pot, cognate with the root of the name Pelatiah, the Lord delivers), and he repeats the question which he had asked before (see ix. 8), where the word rendered residue is the same as that translated remnant here—sherith. The sudden death of Pelatiah, son of Beniah (see above on v. 1) seemed to be an omen of total destruction. Ezekiel was a priest, and it was his duty, as a priest, to intercede, as Aaron did, for the dying (Num. xvi. 47), and for the people, especially for his own kindred, the Priests; he therefore pleads earnestly for them; but see what God says in reply to his prayer. 13. Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, are men of thy redemption. That is, Thou art Son of Adam (see Adam; see on ii. 1). Thou must not limit thy affection to thy literal kindred, but must extend them to the whole human family; thy brethren, yea thy brethren, who are members of the family of Adam, they are men (observe the word used for man here, enosh, a weak, helpless man) of thy redemption; Hebr. yelahm, from Gdol, a Redeemer; as next of blood on whose rights and duties see Lev. xxv. 25—49; xxvii. 13—31. Num. xxxv. 12—27. Ruth ii. 20; iii. 13; iv. 4; 6. especially on Job xix. 25. Thus, O son of man, thinkest thou to act as a God or Redeemer for thy kindred essential to the flesh, at Jerusalem. But these wicked men have cut themselves off from consanguinity with thee by their sins. Look, therefore, elsewhere. Look to thy brethren of the captivity; look to the whole house of Israel who are scattered abroad. Recognize thy true brethren, thy genuine kindred, in them, who are scorned, disowned, and reproved as aliens and outcasts by those disdainful and bloody men, who have sinned against Me, even before My Face in My Temple, and yet deem themselves safe, and who say to thy brethren, "Get you far from the Lord; unto us (not to you) is this land (of Judah) given in possession."
17 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God; 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. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them an heart of flesh: that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord God.

Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city.

Afterwards 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. Then I spoke unto them of the captivity all the things that the Lord had shewed me.

XII. The word of the Lord also came unto me, saying, Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house.

Therefore, thou son of man, prepare thee || 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.

Then shalt thou bring forth thy stuff by day in their sight, as stuff for Church diffused throughout the world, and to glorify it as His Sanctuary for ever. See S. Jerome, Theodoret.

Our Divine Head, Christ, in His Ascension, carried up all the glory of the Hebrew Church from the Mount of Olives into the Heavenly Temple; and our ascended Lord sent down His glory on the Church at the Day of Pentecost. Hence, in Ezechiel's Vision of the Church Universal, the Divine Glory of the Lord is seen coming to it from the East. See below, xiliit. 1–5.
removing: and thou shalt go forth at even in their sight, † as they go forth into captivity. 5 † Dig thou through the wall in their sight, and carry it forth. 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: 7 for I have set thee for a sign unto the house of Israel.

And I did so as I was commanded: I brought forth my stuff by day, as stuff for captivity, and in the even I † digged through the wall with mine hand; I brought it forth in the twilight, and I bare it upon my shoulder in their sight.

And in the morning came the word of the Lord unto me, saying, 9 Son of man, hath not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to thee, What doest thou? 10 Say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; This burden concerneth the prince in Jerusalem, and all the house of Israel that are among them. 11 Say, 12 I am your sign: like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them: † they shall remove and go into captivity. 12 And the 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 it forth thereby: he shall even be full, that he see not the ground with his eyes.

13 My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and 14 I will draw out the sword after them.

And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries. 15 But I will leave a few men of them from the sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence: that they may declare all theplain of Jericho, and when they had taken him they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, to Riblah, in the land of Hamath, who gave judgment upon him, and slew his sons, and put out his eyes. Jer. xxxix. 6. 2 Kings xxv. 5.

— I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there. 14 And I will scatter toward every wind all that are about him to help him, and all his bands; and I will draw out the sword after them. 15 And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries.

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It is stated by Josephus, that Ezekiah was acquainted with this prophetic action of Ezekiel, and that he deemed it inconsistent with the following prophecy of Jeremiah. "Thou shalt not escape out of the King of Babylon's hand, but shalt surely be taken up into Babylon; and thou eyes shall behold the eyes of the King of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shall go to Babylon — thou shalt not die by the sword, but shalt die in peace." Jer. xxxix. 3, and that Ezekiah believed neither of the two prophecies, because he thought them to be irreconcilable. Both prophecies however were fulfilled (Josephus, Ant. x. 7. 2, and x. 8. 2.) This may supply a salutary caution to those who would reject portions of Holy Scripture, on the grounds of alleged contradictions in them, and it suggests a belief that the discrepancies which seem to exist in them will eventually be cleared up. These circumstantial variations, which are in complex harmony, substantiate an agreement, are appointed trials of the faith and patience of the receivers of Scripture; and, in due time, faith and patience will have their reward. If Ezekiah had not cavilled at the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, but had believed them, and had acted upon them, he and his country would have been saved. Here also we see the independence of the two prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel; and that through the one is an echo to the other, there was no collusion between them.

I will scatter toward every wind all that are about him — I will draw out the sword after them | Compare the narrative of the historian, which shows the fulfilment of the prophecy. The army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and took him in the plains of Jericho, and all his army were scattered from him (2 Kings xxv. 5); the King of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah (Jer. xxxix. 6).
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, 10 Son of man, 7 eat r ch. 16.

thy bread with quaking, and drink thy water with trembling and with careful-
ness; 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
be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them
that dwell therein. 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, 23 Son of man, what is
that proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, 3 The days are pro-
longed, and every vision faileth?

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, The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision. 24 For there
shall be no more any vain vision or flattering divination within the house of
Israel. 25 For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak
shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebel-
lious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord God.

26 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 27 b Son of man, behold, b ver. 22.
they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to e 2 Pet. 3. 4.
come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off.

26 d Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; There shall none d ver. 23, 25.
of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall
be done, saith the Lord God.

XIII. 1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man,
prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto
them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the
LORD; 3 Thus saith the Lord God; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that
 fol low their own spirit, || and have seen nothing!

19. Thus saith the Lord God of the inhabitants of Jerusalem] Let not therefore them of the captivity envy the lot of those at Jerusalem, and murmur at their own condition. See on v. 2.

22. The days are prolonged] This is the language of unbelief and sees. Cp. Isaiah v. 19. Jer. xvii. 15. Amos v. 18. 2 Pet. iii. 3.

23. The days are at hand] Jerusalem was taken and destroyed in about five years after this prophecy of Ezekiel. The speedy fulfillment of this prophecy, and of that in chap. xxiv., which, concerning the immediate future, was a pledge to Ezekiel's hearers that his other prophecies concerning distant events, such as those which pre-announce Christ—the universal King, from the seed of David (xvii. 22—24), and the Good Shepherd (xxiv. 23—31; xxxii. 24), and the High Priest, as well as King (xvi. 9), and the Author and Giver of pardon to the penitent (xxvi. 20; xxxii. 23), would be fulfilled also. They were a pledge of the accomplishment of his predictions that the Lord would take away their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh (xi. 19), and would raise them to spiritual life (xxxiii.), and that the Lord would overthrow all His enemies (xxxii. 28-xxix. 29.), and that the glory of the Lord would shine forth with new splendour in a new Temple—the Universal Church (xi.—xlviii.), and that a stream of salvation would thence flow to all nations (xlviii. 1—
12, 22, 23).

24. vain vision] Words occurring also in Jeremiah's Lamen-
atations, ii. 11. See the note there.

The Reproof of False Prophets.
Ch. XIII. 2. Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel] This prophecy against the false prophets is an echo from the mouth of Ezekiel at the river Chebar to the prophecy of Jeremiah at Jerusalem, who says, "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so" (Jer. v. 29, 31); and who says, "Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake; both prophet and priest are profane; the prophets in Jerusalem commit adultery, and walk in lies, and strengthen also the hands of evil doers." See Jer. xxii. 8—21, and xxvii. 14; xxix. 8, 22, 23.

2, 3. that prophecy out of their own hearts (another echo to Jeremiah, xxii. 16)—follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing] That is, have no vision from the Lord, as the divinely-inspired prophets have. See Is. i. 1. "The vision of Isaiah, which he saw;" and ii. 1. "The word that Isaiah saw."

These words, it may be observed, contain a refutation of those modern theories of Inspiration which represent the writers of Holy Scripture as writing or speaking, like Poets or Orators, from their own hearts, and following their own spirits, and seeing what is produced by their own intellectual efforts, or by the workings of their own imaginations; instead of being (as they were) moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. i. 21), and seeing the vision and the word which the Lord presented to their inner eye. According to such theories, the false prophets whom God condemns by Ezekiel and Jeremiah, might have claimed to be divinely inspired. Cp. Fairbairn, p. 133.
4 O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts. 5 Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle of the day of the LORD. 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.

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 assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the Lord God.

10 Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar: 11 say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: 12 there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hails, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it. 13 Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed it?

14 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 hails in my fury to consume it. 15 So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered mortar, 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: and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

16 Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered mortar, and will say unto you, The wall is no more, neither they that daubed it; 17 to wit, the prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and which saith visions of peace for her, and there is no peace, saith the Lord God.

17 Likewise, thou son of man, set thy face against the daughters of thy people, which prophesy out of their own heart; and prophesy thou against...
God's hands.

him, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Woe to the women that sew pillows to all armholes, and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature to hunt souls! Will ye *hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive that come unto you? And will ye pollute me among my people 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?

Wherefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against your pillows, wherewith ye hear the souls || 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. Your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand to be hunted; * and ye shall know that I am the Lord. Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and * strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, || by promising him life: therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations: for I will deliver my people out of your hand: * and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: * should I be inquired of at all by them?

This sense seems most consistent with the meaning of the verb pârâch, which signifies to break out, to bud, to blossom forth and flourish. Num. xvii. 8. Cant. vi. 11. Isa. xxxv. 2. lxxvi. 14. Hos. xiv. 5 (Geese, 680). Cp. below, xvii. 24. As S. Jerome says, God breaks their coverings like nets, in order that, when they are broken, the souls which these false prophets had ensnared may be free to fly away.

— I will tear them from your arms As nets torn from the hand of the fowler.


God's Answer to Hypocritical Inquirers.

Cf. XIV. 3. * these men have set up their idols in their heart Instead of making their hearts a Temple to Me. The words rendered literally are, they have made their idols to go up upon their hearts, as if their hearts were an altar and throne for idols.

— and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face Instead of setting God's Law continually before their eyes (Deut. vi. 8; xi. 18. Prov. iii. 21. 24).
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.

6 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; Repent, and turn || yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations. 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 inquire of him concerning me; I the Lord will answer him by myself: 8 and I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; 9 and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

9 And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel. 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; 11 that the house of Israel may go no more astray from me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions; 12 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 staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it: 14 though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God.

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NATIONAL SINS AND NATIONAL JUDGMENTS.

13. when the land sinneth] Rather, when a land sinneth; when a Nation sinneth.

14. Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it! Here is another echo to the words of Jeremiah. God had said by him, that if there was a man in Jerusalem that executed judgment and sought truth, He would pardon it (Jer. v. 1). But when the sins of Jerusalem grew ripe for punishment by iniquity, then He said by Jeremiah, "Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me (as intercessors), yet My mind would not be towards this people; cast them out of My sight." Moses had prevailed by his intercession with God on behalf of Israel (Exod. xxxii. 11—14. Num. xiv. 17—20), and Samuel was mighty in prayer (1 Sam. vii. 7—10. Ps. xix. 6). But though both should rise from the dead, and live together in Jerusalem, they should not deliver it from destruction by their prayer—such was its guilt in God’s sight.

This statement is enlarged in Ezekiel, and is applied to any nation generally. By this Noah, Daniel, and Job, from very different countries and ages of the world, even from the days of the Flood to those of Ezekiel, when a social and religious Deluge was breaking in upon his Nation, are brought together, and are supposed to have contemporaries; and it is declared by God that when a Land (a Nation, as a Nation) sins grievously by transgressing against Him, and when He sends a sore judgment upon it for its sins, then, even if a Noah, a Daniel, and a Job were brought together to dwell in it, they should deliver only their own souls; but the Nation, as a Nation, should be desolate.

Why are Noah, Daniel, and Job specified here? (1.) It has been replied by some, that they are examples of three persons of three manners of life—Noah, as living in the Ark, the type of the Visible Church; Daniel, as living a single life in Babylon; Job, a Patriarch living in his family among his possessions (S. Augustine, in Ps. cxxxii. Quast. Evang. ii. 44, on Luke xvii. 34, De Urbi et Excelsis, c. 1.)

(2.) Noah, Job, and Daniel were signal objects of God’s

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Noah, Daniel, and Job. EZEKIEL XIV. 15—21.

National Judgments.

15 If I cause "noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they shall spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts: 16 though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters; but only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate.

17 Or if I bring a sword upon that land, and say, Sword, go through the land; so that I cut off man and beast from it: 18 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.

19 Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast: 20 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.

21 For thus saith the Lord God; How much more when 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?

favour on account of their righteousness—Noah, in being allowed to be an instrument in saving the human race from the Flood in the Ark; Job, in having his estate doubled after his affliction; Daniel, in seeing the captivity and foreseeing the return and the coming of Christ (Origen).

(5.) The principal reason seems to be that Noah, Job, and Daniel were greatly beloved of God because they were eminent in righteousness and in holiness, although they lived in evil days (see Gen. ch. xii. 6; Dan. ii. 9, 23; x. 11, 19), and although they did not possess the advantages which Israel had. Noah had no written Revelation; Job was not of the favoured seed of Abraham, but was a Patriarch and Prophet of the natural world (see above, Introd. to Job, pp. iv.—vi); Daniel was in exile at Babylon, a heathen and idolatrous capital, and was there engaged in the transaction of worldly affairs, which are apt to steal the soul from God. And they signal prevailed in saving others—Noah, in saving the human family; Daniel, in saving the Chaldean astrologers from destruction (Dan. ii. 44); Job, in interesting for his friends (see Job xliii. 8—10). And these three are brought from countries and ages very remote from each other, as if God would clothe the choicest flowers of piety of every time, even from the Flood to Ezekiel's own day, and weave them in a garland together; and He says, "Though these three men were in it, they should deliver, but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God."

DANIEL.

This mention of Daniel (together with that in xxviii. 3, "Thon art wiser than Daniel") is remarkable. It shows that, even when Ezekiel wrote these words, Daniel had attained great celebrity for his sanctity. When the Temple and City of Jerusalem were about to fall, and when the Visible Church of God was about to be driven into banishment, and its public utterances in Judah to cease, there was more need that the Holy Ghost, speaking by one prophet, should bear witness to the mission of another. Therefore at this time we see Ezekiel bearing witness by name to Daniel; and for a similar reason we see Daniel bearing witness to Jeremiah (Dan. ix. 2). Cp. Ezra i. 1. Jer. xxix. 10.

Thus providentially we have a Divine testimony to the singular gifts of Daniel, and an argument for the genuineness of the prophecies which the Church, taught by Christ Himself, has received from Daniel (Matt. xxiv. 15. Mark xiii. 14).

On the mention of Daniel by Ezekiel here, and for a reply to some modern allegations against it, see also Hengst. Beiträge, i. pp. 70—72, and Havernick, Fairbairn, Kliefoth, and Kiel here.

NOAH AND JOB.

From this special commendation of Noah and Job, who were not Israelites, it has been rightly inferred by the Fathers (e. g. by Justin Martyr, c. Tryph. § 45) that God here declares His acceptance of decent Gentiles in every Nation and age of the world.

This was a lesson which was very appropriate to be taught by Ezekiel when the Temple and City of Jerusalem were about to be destroyed and the Jews were to be scattered into all lands; Vol. V. Part III.—185

Before CHRIST about 594.

1 Lev. 26. 22. 23. ch. 5. 17.
2 1 Or, kereare. 1 vers. 18. 19. 20. Heb. in the midst of it.
7 2 Sam. 24. 15. ch. 38. 22. 8 ch. 9. 7. 9 Jer. 25. 17. & 32. 27.
No Trumpet will awaken. England will not stand as England before the Judgment-seat of Christ. The names of France, of Russia, of Italy, and of Spain will not be heard in that universal, everlasting Kingdom, the Kingdom of God.

What then is the inference? Since God governs the world, and since He is just and Omnipotent, and since Nations can sin, as He assures us they can, they must look to be punished in this world. And we need not scruple to add, that as the present world draws nearer to its close, and as, consequently, the time becomes shorter which is available for the execution of God's Judgments on sinful Nations upon earth, we may expect to see National Punishments following more closely on National Sin.

The final period of the World's existence will be enigmatically Theocratic. Divine Prophecy declares that it will be characterized by great National Sin and by severe National Judgments. Its transactions are announced by the heavenly acclamation, "Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of Nations." (so in the best MSS. of the original); "who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name? for Thou art holy for all the Nations shall come and worship before Thee, for Thy Judgments have been made manifest" (Rev. x. 5-7). That period will attain its climax and receive its consummation, when all rebellious Powers will be made to adore Christ (as David prophesies in the second Psalm) and will be bowed down under His feet, as the Kings of Canaan were brought forth from the Cave in which they had taken refuge and were bowed beneath the feet of Joshua, the victorious type of Christ (Josh. x. 22-25). And then the triumph of Christ will be complete, and be sung by the voice of Angels: "The kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Which art, and wast, and art to come, because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power and art King; and the Nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged." (Rev. x. 5-7).

22. therein shall be left a remnant] See vi. Jer. iii. 29, 30. This remnant shall be the seed-plot of the Church of God disseminated into all nations in Christ (Isa. x. 21; xi. 11. Judl ii. 32. Micah v. 7. Zech. viii. 6. 12; x. 9).

The Unfruitful Vine.

Ch. xv. 2. What is the vine tree more than any tree? Or, 180


22. 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 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. 23. And they shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings: and ye shall know that I have not done so without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord God.

XV. 1 And 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? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? 4 Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned. 5 Is it meet for any work? 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 I will set my face against them; they shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them; 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 committed a trespass, saith the Lord God.

XVI. 1 Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, a cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, and say, Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem: Thy birth b and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy fathers made a trespass a trespass.

What is the Vine more than wood, the vine branch among the trees of the forest? What is the Vine-tree, considered merely as timber, among the trees of the forest? It has nothing to commend it as such, it is of no use for building or for carving, its value depends solely on its bearing fruit. And since Jerusalem is an unfruitful Tree, it ceases to have any beauty in God's sight, it is of less worth than the other cities of the world,—even than Babylon itself.


4. Behold, it is cast into the fire! Our Lord Himself has made these words of Ezekiel to be the groundwork of the Parable in which He says, "If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned (John xv. 6)."

6. I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem] Here is an express prediction that Jerusalem would be consumed by fire; and so it came to pass. See 2 Kings xxv. 9. "He burnt the House of the Lord, and the King's House, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt with fire."

Samaria, the capital of the ten Tribes, when taken by the Assyrians, was not burnt; it was not destroyed, but was preserved and colonized by other inhabitants. Jerusalem, the capital of the two Tribes—the two favoured Tribes, Judah and Benjamin—was utterly destroyed by fire; and this has happened twice—once in its captivity by the Chaldeans, and, secondly, in its siege by the army of Rome. Jerusalem, the Holy City, which, having been espoused to God, has committed fornication against Him, has twice been punished by the chastisement appointed in the Levitical Law for a Priest's daughter guilty of harlotry—i.e. by fire. See below, on xvi. 38.

The Spiritual History of Jerusalem, her Sin and Punishment, and her Future Restoration in Christ.

Ch. XVI. 3. Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan] Literally, thy diggings and thy bringings forth. Osea ii. 1, "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are dug." Look at the quarry and mine from whence ye have been hewn and dug out. See below, xxii. 30; xxix. 14, the only other places where the word occurs; and Genesis 47:1.
thy father was an Amorite; and thy mother an Hittite. 4 And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water || to 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 loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born.

6 And when I passed by thee, and saw thee || polluted 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 I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased and waxen great, and thou art come to excellent ornaments: thy breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown, whereas thou wast naked and bare.

8 Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; 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 thou becamest mine.

9 Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy 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.

11 I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck.

12 And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head.

13 Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom.

14 And the 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.

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thy father was an Amorite] Rather, the Amorite was thy father, and the Hittite was thy mother. Such was thy natural origin.

It may be asked, How is this consistent with the origin of Israel from Abraham and Sarah, to which Isaiah refers (li. 1)? The answer is, Isaiah is there speaking of what Abraham became by faith, produced by God's grace. By nature, even Abraham himself was an Amorite, and Sarah was a Hittite.

In reading this parable, addressed to Jerusalem, the Christian student will not fail to apply it to his own state—first, by nature (as being conceived and born in sin; Ephes. ii. 3); and, secondly, by grace (as being espoused in mystical wedlock to Christ; 2 Cor. xi. 2). See on v. 4. "This is a very apt illustration of the miserable condition of all the children of men by nature. We were shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, which rendered us lostsone in the eyes of God" (M. Henry).

4. to supple] Rather, to cleanse (Gesen. 519; Fairb. Keil).

thou wast not salted] As new-born babies were (S. Jer. comm. Gen. De Sanctitate, l. 7), not only to invigorate them, but as a symbolical act of purifying (Hävernick, Fairb. Keil).

According to the secondary sense, in which this vision may be applied to every human soul in its natural state of corruption (see on v. 3), Origen says here, "We, who have received the grace of baptism in Christ, are washed by Him to salvation, if we believe and obey Him, and we are salted with salt." According to His own words, "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matt. v. 13); and if we believe in the Holy Spirit, Who speaks by the Apostle, "our conversation is with grace seasoned with salt" (Col. iv. 6), and we are wrapped in swaddling clothes like "new-born babes, and desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby" (1 Pet. ii. 2).

5. to the loathing of thy persons] Or, in contempt of thy soul; i.e. thy life.

6. And when I passed by thee] Rather, and I passed by thee; "when w." is not in the original.

7. I have caused thee] Rather, I made thee ten thousand, as the sprouting of the field. I multiplied thee exceedingly in Egypt. See on Exod. 1. 7. The verbs here used ought not to be rendered in a perfect tense (as in the Authorized Version), but in the aorist. The Prophet is speaking of what Israel became at a particular time; not of what she continued to be.

— thou art come to excellent ornaments] Thou camest to ornament of ornaments; that is, thou becamest most beautiful. As to the original word here used (addi), see on Ps. xxxix. 9.

7. 8. whereas thou wast naked and bare. Now when I passed by thee—I spread my skirt over thee] Rather, And thou wast naked and bare, and I passed by thee, and I spread my skirt over thee; that is, I received thee under the wing of my robe, I espoused thee. See the notes above, on the history of Ruth, the bride of Boaz (iii. 9). This was what God did to Israel at Sinai. See on Exod. xix. 8; xxiv. 3. Isa. liv. 5. Jer. iii. 14; below, xx. 5. Hos. xi. 10. Amos ii. 10.

10. I—shod thee with badgers' skin] Hebr. tâchash, used for the covering of the Tabernacle. See above, on Exod. xxv. 5; xxvi. 14. Num. iv. 6. It occurs only here and in the Books of Exodus and Numbers; and connects this passage of Ezekiel with the history of Israel in the wilderness after the building of the Tabernacle.

12. a jewel on thy forehead] Literally, on thy nose. Compare the notes above, on Gen. xlix. 22, 47, in the narrative of the special gifts to Rebekah, the Bride of Isaac, whose Marriage has been already considered as having a symbolical character. See above, on Gen. xxiv. 36.

—a beautiful crown] As on the head of a Bride and a Queen (Rother ii. 17. Cp. Rev. xii. 1).
15 "But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playest the harlot because of thy renown, and pourest out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was. 16 p And of thy garments thou didst take, and deckest thy high places with divers colours, and playest the harlot thereupon: the like things shall not come, neither shall it be so. 17 Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them, and tookest thy brodered garments, and coveredest them: and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them. 19 a 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 a sweet savour: and thus it was, saith the Lord God.

18 Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these last thou hast sacrificed unto them unto 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 youth, 23 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;) 24 that thou hast also built unto thee an eminent place, and hast made thy high place in every street. 25 Thou hast built thy high place 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. 26 Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians thy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast increased thee whoredoms, to provoke me to anger.

27 Behold, therefore I have stretched out my hand over thee, and have diminished thee, ordinary food, and delivered thee unto the will of them that hate thee, 28 the daughters of the Philistines, which are ashamed of thy lewd way.

28 Thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians, because thou wast unsatisfied; yea, thou hast played the harlot with them, and yet couldst not be satisfied.

29 Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of Caanaan unto Chaldea; and yet thou wast not satisfied herewith.

15, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown] Literally, upon thy name. Thou madest thy name itself to be the occasion and ground of thy harlotry. Thy harlotry was an offspring of thy spiritual pride. Cp. Hitzig, Mon., Fairb., Keil. 16. deckest thy high places] Thou madest idolatrous shrines on high places, and decked them with hangings of embroidery. Cp. 2 Kings xxii. 7. — shall not come] Heb. to bannah, a paronomasia after the foregoing word, bannah (high places). There is a strong connexion in this seemingly gentle expression. Compare Gen. xxxiv. 7. "which thing ought not to be done." The bannah, lifting up their heads proudly on high toward heaven, in defiance of God, ought not to have come into being at all. Compare above, on Jer. xiv. 5; xxxi. 36.

20, 21. Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my children?] Were thy whoredoms too little, that thou must needs aggravate them by saying My children (says Jehovah), as offerings to idols? See v. 36; xx. 36; 31; xxiii. 21; Jer. vii. 31.

21. 21. to cause them to pass through the fire for them] Or, to them. The force of this vigorous expression will be more readily perceived by considering that the Almighty uses here the same word (the Hebraism of the verb abar, to pass over) as that which He had used when He commanded the first-born sons of Israel to be dedicated to Himself. "Thou shalt set them apart!" literally, shalt cause them to pass over unto the Lord (Exod. xiii. 12. Lev. xviii. 21). But Israel made them to pass over to Medoch, and this, too, through the fire. Cp. below, on xx. 27.

24. an eminent place] Rather, an above, a vaulted chamber for idol worship (fora, ekheia τροπαίων, Sept.; lapyan, Vulg.), like that impure kubbah mentioned in Num. xxv. 8. See the note there. Cp. Genen. 152, under the word here used, gab, which is probably connected etymologically with kubbah. The word is repeated emphatically in v. 24 and 31.

26. great of flesh] Lusty and lustful: such were they for whom thou didst forsake the "God of the spirits of all flesh," to Whom thou wast espoused. Cp. above, on Isa. xviii. 2, concerning the physical strength of the Ethiopians, to whom Judah had looked for help, instead of trusting in God.

27. the daughters of the Philistines, which are ashamed of thy lewd way] The Cities of Philistia blush for thee. The heathens do not change their gods, which are no gods (cp. Jer. ii. 10—13; and below, vv. 47—10); but thou forsaist Me, the One True God, for the gods of all the nations round about thee. Thy enemies themselves are ashamed of thy fickleness.

28. Thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians] In the days of Ahaz (2 Kings xvi. 7—18. Cp. Jer. ii. 18. 36).

30. How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord God, seeing thou dost all these things, the work of an impious whorish woman; 31. that 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!

33. They give gifts to all whores: but thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers, and 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.

35. Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of the Lord: 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 the blood of thy children, which thou didst give unto them; 37. behold, therefore 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 whoredoms unto them, that they may see all thy nakedness. 38. And I will judge thee, as women that break wedlock and 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 thine eminent place, and shall break down thy high places: they shall strip thee also of thy clothes, and shall take thy fair jewels, and leave thee naked and bare. 40. They shall also bring up a company against thee, and they shall stone thee with stones, and thrust thee through with their swords. 41. And they shall burn thine houses with fire, and execute judgments upon thee in the sight of many women: and I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot, and thou also shalt give no hire any more. 42. So will I make my fury toward thee to rest, and my jealousies shall depart from thee, and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry. 43. Because thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, but hast fretted me in all these things; behold, therefore 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 lothed 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 thy father an Amorite. 46 And thine elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand: and 

yea, as cxxvi. Ixxxv. not a yez ch. 11. were +

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, || as if that were a very little thing, 

thou wast corruption more than they in all thy ways. 48 As I live, saith the Lord God, 

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 hairy, and 

committed abomination before me: therefore 

I took them away as I saw good.

Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins; but thou hast multiplied thine abominations more than they, and hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done. 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. 53 When I shall bring again their captivity, 'the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring

Mosh, Ammon, and Edom (Jer. xlviii. 47; xlxi. 6, 39), and by the same analogy we are to understand here, by the turning of the captivity of Sodom, the coming of the Gentiles into the Church." Sodom and Gomorrah are presented to us by Christ Himself as types of the Heathen World, as distinguished from the Jews to whom He preached (see Matt. x. 15; xl. 23); and He declared that the Gospel will be offered to all Heathen Nations before the End comes. See Matt. xxiv. 14. This passage reflects much light on the true nature of the restoration of Israel. Wherever the Church of God is, there is Zion; and the true restoration of Israel is found in its union with Christ, the Seed of Abraham, in whom are all the families of the earth blessed. The captivity of Jerusalem is to be turned back in the midst of them—that is, in the midst of Sodom itself; for in Christ Jesus there is no difference between Jew and Greek; but all are one in Him. As S. Jerome says, after animadverting on the opinion of some who argued from this passage that Sodom and Samaria would be rebuilt and restored to their former beauty, "Nos hoc diemus, quod in Ecclesia statum hae cenacetae completa sint, et quoddam compleanuntur," that is, all these things have been fulfilled, and are daily fulfilled in the condition of the Church. Sodom returns to her former state, whenever a soul, which was once heathen and infidel, is restored to its true nature and recognizes its Creator. Samaria recovers her former felicity, when the soul forsook the errors of heresy, and joins itself to the teaching and faith of the Church. "The turning of captivity," says Dr. Fairbairn, p. 176, "cannot properly signify a return from captivity and a re-

habitation of the old places. This was obviously impossible in the case of Sodom and the cities of the plain. The promise is simply one of restored prosperity; the approaching tide of desolation should again be turned back, and a state of hap-

iness, as of old, be appointed; not that exactly which had been, line for line, but what, in the altered circumstances of another time, might be regarded as corresponding to it." The safe and prosperous condition of former times, says Harsent, "is the determinate form in which the Prophet describes also the future; but presently again this appears arrayed in so ideal a splendour, that very form bursts asunder, and a new world in reality comes into view. There is the same God, with His old felicities of love; but that subjective condition has become different, and hence the old blessings are also a new kind; and the whole state, in consequence, rises into some-

thing far more elevated and glorious than the old one. It is

190
again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them: 54 that thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done, in that thou art 5 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. 56 For thy sister Sodom was not 6 mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy pride, 57 before thy wickedness was discovered, as at the time of thy 7 reproach of the daughters of 7 Syria, and all that are round about her, the daughters of the Philistines, which 8 despise thee round about.

58 k Thou hast 7 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 7 despised 9 the oath in breaking the covenant.

60 Nevertheless I will 10 remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee 10 an everlasting covenant. 61 Then 7 thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give unto thee for 11 daughters, 12 but not by thy covenant. 62 7 And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: 63 that thou mayest 1 remember, and be confounded, 7 and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.

XVII 1 And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable about the house of Israel; 3 and say, as if an assurance were given to a child, whose family had been obscured by misfortune, that he should live to see the former prosperity return again; but meanwhile be himself springs to manhood, and having now other ways to satisfy and higher relations to fill than formerly, the revived prosperity must bring new and nobler gifts within his reach, to place him on the same relative position he originally occupied. In short, the bringing back of the captivity and returning to the former state, as applied to the covenant people of Israel, indicates nothing as to the outward form of things to be enjoyed, but points only to their nature and character, as similar to what already had been. And in regard to the manner of accomplishing the promised good, by controlling Sodom and Samaria with Jerusalem in the happy prospect, it must be borne in mind that the representation is figurative; it is the truth represented and embodied in an ideal history; and nothing more can fairly be deduced from that particular tract now referred to, than that the covenant people, Israel, as they had, in the aggravation and magnitude of their guilt, sunk below the most depraved Nations around them, so they might expect the favour of God’s return and blessing only when they came to view their case in its real enormity, and cherish on account of it a suitable feeling of abasement. They must be ready to put themselves on a level with the lowest, as the necessary condition of their being visited anew with honour and enlargement. Hence it is entirely out of place here to move any question, with some commentators, as to the building anew of Sodom and the other cities of the plain. This were to turn the figure into a reality, and also to transfer the subject itself, from the moral region of God’s government toward men, to the merely natural region of His providential arrangements respecting the material world. And if it is out of place to move such a question with regard to Sodom, it is equally unnecessary, in principle, to move them with reference to the former people, is Israel, which alone is to be regarded here, however it might be connected with them, might also be attained without them; and so far from being necessarily tied to them, may even be found in largest measure while the old things in that respect are gone into oblivion” (Fairbairn; Keil, pp. 141—146).

Observe, that God mentions the restoration of Sodom and Samaria, that is, of Gentiles and Idolaters, before the restoration of Jerusalem. This is a prophecy that the Heathen would first be converted to Christ. The Gentiles will provoke Israel to godly jealousy (Rom. xi.11—15). The fulness of the Gentiles must come in, and then all Israel will be saved (Rom. xi. 25, 26).

Conversion of the Jews.

54. in that thou art a comfort unto them] The conversion of the Jews to Christ will be a great source of strength and comfort to the Christian Church.

56. 7 Then shalt thou remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give unto thee for 11 daughters, 12 but not by thy covenant. 62 7 And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: 63 that thou mayest 1 remember, and be confounded, 7 and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.

61. thou shalt receive thy sisters—and I will give unto thee 13 for daughters] Jerusalem is the Mother Church of all Churches in the world (see above, on Isa. liv.1—5; lx. 1—4); and yet, since no one Church is supreme over the rest, Sodom and Samaria—that is, heathen and idolatrous nations when converted to Christianity—will be sisters in Christ.

63. That thou mayest—be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more] When the Jews are converted to Christianity they will no longer open their mouths; to assert the merit of their own works (as the elder Brother does in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, Luke xv. 29), and seek to establish their own righteousness (Rom. x. 3). And Jerusalem will no longer trust in her own beauty, as formerly she did (v.15), but she will be confounded by an overwhelming sense of sin in having rejected Christ, and will humble herself in penitential self-abasement. “And,” adds an ancient Father here, “let us also hence learn, that when, by the mercy of God, we have received the everlasting covenant of the Gospel, and when the Law, and the Law that has been reconciled to us in all that we have done, we ought yet ever to cherish the remembrance of our own former sins; for not by any works of our own, but by grace we are saved” (S. Jerome; and so also Jerem. here). There is a godly and penitential confessing in this life, which is necessary for us, in order that we may not be confounded for ever hereafter (S. Augustine).
Thus saith the Lord God: "A great eagle with great wings, longwinged, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar: 4 he cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffic; he set it in a city of merchants. 5 He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field; he placed it by great waters, and set it as a willow tree. 6 And it grew, and became a spreading vine 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.

7 There was also another great eagle with great wings and many feathers: and, behold, this vine did bend her roots toward him, and shot forth her branches toward him, that he might water it by the burrows of her plantation. 8 It was planted in a good soil by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine.

9 Say thou, Thus saith the Lord God: Shall it prosper? 8 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. 10 Yea, behold, being planted, shall it prosper? 8 shall it not utterly wither; when the east wind toucheth it? it shall wither in the burrows where it grew.

11 Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 12 Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these things mean? tell them, Behold, 8 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 and hath taken of the king’s seed, and made a covenant with him, 8 and hath 8 taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the might of the land: 14 that the kingdom might be a base, that it might not lift itself up, 8 but that by keeping of his covenant it might stand.

The two Great Eagles, Babylon and Egypt. The Humiliation of the Family of David in the Two Kings of Jerusalem, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah; and its Future Exaltation in Christ, the Everlasting King.

Ch. XVII. 3. A great eagle] Rather, the great eagle; the great King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, who is represented as a lion with eagle’s wings in the vision of Daniel (vii. 4; cp. Jer. xlviii. 40; xliv. 22). 4 Great wings, longwinged, full of feathers, which had divers colours] Great in its wings, long or stretched out in its plumage—with which it soars and flies (Isa. viii. 8)—full in its plumage, which had divers colours; signifying the great variety of nations which served in its armies against Jerusalem. See Isa. xxix. 6. Jer. iii. 18, and on xiv. v. 10.

— came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar] Plucked the topmost branch of the cedar of Lebanon; that is, took captive Jehoiachin (Jecomon, or Coniah), King of Jerusalem. See v. 12, and Jeremiah xxxii, 23, 24 (to which these words are an echo): "O inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars, how glorious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, the pain of a woman in travail! As I live, saith the Lord, though Coniah the son of Jehohakim, king of Judah, were the signet upon My right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence."


Zedekiah.

5. He took also of the seed of the land] Zedekiah. See on vv. 7 and 13. It is noted here, as an act of kindness on Nebuchadnezzar’s part, that he did not set a Chaldaean Prince on the throne of Jerusalem, but placed upon it one of the seed of the land. And thus it is suggested, that Zedekiah and Jerusalem ought to have been grateful to him for his clemency, which is further indicated by the words, "he placed it by great waters," which would have nourished it; that is, Nebuchadnezzar afforded to Zedekiah ample means of prosperity, if he would be obedient to him, according to his oath.

6. whose branches turned toward him] Rather, in order that his branches should turn towards the eagle-king, in dependence upon him, and in obedience to him.

7. another great eagle] Pharaoh Hophra (Apries), King of Egypt, to whom the Vine brought her roots (as with craving hunger, Gesen. 410), and shot forth her branches; that is, to whom Jehoiachin’s uncle and successor, Zedekiah—placed on the throne by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxiv. 17, and e. 9 here)—looked for succour against Babylon; and to concur with him peradventure broke the oath of allegiance which he had taken to Nebuchadnezzar. See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. Jer. xxxvi. 5—8; xlix. 30; lii. 3. 8. he might water it by the burrows of her plantation] Rather, the land that is stretched forth from the roots from the plantation (Gesen. 653) of her own plantations (that is, she stretched herself from the garden-beds at Jerusalem, in which she had been planted by Nebuchadnezzar, and where she had nourishment enough, see vv. 5 and 8), toward the Eagle of Egypt, that he might water it from the Nile.

9. it shall wither in all the leaves of her spring] Rather, all the fresh leaves of her springing forth shall wither: the combination of the verb singular with the plural noun shows the sudden simultaneousness of the withering of the whole, as with one scourching blast.

10. in the burrows] Or parterres. See v. 7.

11. hath taken on oath] See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13, "Zedekiah rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God," i.e. by Elohim, the divine name of God, revered by Israelite and Babylonian. Cp. on v. 7.

12. but that by keeping of his covenant it might stand] Or, that it might keep his covenant, so as to stand firm; that the covenant might stand firm.
Zedekiah's perjury.  

**EZEKIEL XVII. 15—23.**  

**Restoration in Christ.**

15 But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. 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 in the place where the king dethlath that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die.  

17 Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company provide for him in the war, by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons: seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape.

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.  

And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me.  

21 And 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 the Lord have spoken it.

22 Thus saith the Lord God: I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon a high mountain and eminent: in the

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**Sanctity of Oaths.**

15. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such things? These indulgent words of God against the king of Jerusalem, Zedekiah, who broke his covenant with Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, may be regarded as offering a protest against the treacherous teaching of some Christian Theologians, and even of Christian Churches, such as the following: In the Third Lateran Council, under Pope Innocent III. A.D. 1179, it was decreed that oaths are not to be called oaths, but perjuries, if they are contrary to the advantage of the Church (of Rome), who is to be the judge whether they are contrary to it or no.

In the Council of Constance (which sat from A.D. 1414 to 1418) it was decreed, that faith is not to be kept with heretics to the injury of the Church (of Rome). And these principles are embodied in the Roman Canon-Law (see Decret. ii. Pars C. 11. ch. v. pp. 617, 618; ed. Lips. 1889), where the Bishop of Rome asserts his own power to absolve subjects and soldiers from their oaths to their Sovereigns, and affirms that no subject owes any allegiance to persons who are excommunicated by himself; and that he gives power to ecclesiastics, that they are not bound by oaths of allegiance to their Sovereigns, but may freely resist him in defence of the rights and honours of the Church (Decret. Greg. IX. lib. ii. tit. xxiv. 27. vol. ii. pp. 358—360).

The Prophets of the Lord, Ezekiel and Jeremiah, respond to one another in many passages, and put the least in teaching the sanctity of Oaths; and their words, in this respect, are fraught with solemn warning and instruction to the Christian Church and to all nations. See v. 18; and above, on Jer. iv. 2.

16. in the midst of Babylon he shall die] See xli. 13.

18. he had given his hand] Zedekiah has pledged his word, he has given his hands, in token of entering into covenant with Nebuchadnezzar. See Isa. xii. 13.

19. mine oath] The oath of allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar (although he be a heathen sovereign) is called the oath of Jehovah Himself (cp. Eccl. viii. 2), and the breach of it is called a trespass against God (v. 20).

20. I will spread my net upon him] See above, on xii. 13.

The net in which Zedekiah was taken by the Chaldeans is called the net of God; and he was caught in it because he dared to break the oath of God (v. 19).

21. his fugitives—shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered] See on xii. 14.
23. in the mountain of the height of Israel | On the lofty mountain of Israel; that is, on “the holy hill of Zion,” exalted above the tops of the mountains, to be the throne, centre, and origin of the kingdom of heaven, the universal Church of Christ. See below, xx. 40; and above, on Ps. 1. 6; and on Isa. ii. 3, 3; I liv. 17; and lxil. 17; and xii. 6. and Jerusalem. 

As our Blessed Lord says: “It” (the mustard-seed of the Gospel) “becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air” (all nations of the world) “come and lodge in the branches thereof” (Matt. xiii. 22. Luke xiii. 19. 20.) The Lord God, the Almighty Father, Who spake to Ezekiel, took a shoot of the royal stock of David, and planted it on the lofty hill, of which He spake by the Psalmist, “I have set My king upon My holy hill of Zion” (Ps. ii. 6). That shoot sprang up and bare fruit, and has enveloped all the cœlars of Lebanon; and all the flowers of the air lodge in its branches. And as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, so it will gather all nations under its shelter, that all the trees of the forest may know that He is the Lord (Z. Jerome, Theodore). These words of God speaking through the Prophet, like those in the preceding chapter (see on xvi. 5, 4), may be applied also to every Christian soul. The foregoing chapter described what the soul was by its natural birth (xvi. 3, 4); the present represents what it is by its spiritual engraving in Christ. 

Then went a dry and low tree by nature, but God has made thee to flourish, and has exalted thee in Christ. “I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do it.” Let us, therefore, pray for grace to our Lord Jesus Christ and to the Father, that we may be able to bring forth fruit, and may not be again a dry tree, but may be ever a green tree, and that the axe may not be laid to our roots, and we be hewn down thereby (Origen).

Retrospect. The foregoing chapter displays a sublime specimen of Ezekiel’s Divine Inspiration applied to the noble purpose of cheering his countrymen and the world. He, an exile and a captive at the banks of Chebar, is enabled to foresee the destinies of the distant capital of Judah and of its king Zedekiah. He foretells their destruction by the King of Babylon punishing them for their treachery and reliance on Egypt; and in the far-off future he beholds the withering of the green and lofty tree of Babylonian dominion, and of all other mighty trees of the forest of this world; and the flourishing forth, and exultation of the dry and solitary shoot of the cœlars of Judah in Christ, the exalted Ezekiel—the Lord our Righteousness. See above, on Jer. xxiii. 6. He sees the royal house of David emerging from the depths of darkness in which it was plunged, and rising in Christ to more than all its pristine glory and splendour, and exercising a beneficent sway over all the nations of the earth.

The Righteous Dealings of God. Ch. XVIII. 2. What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel? Ye captns of Israel, why do ye repine and murmur against God, and ascribe the miseries of your exile and captivity in Babylon to the sins of your fathers? Doubtless your fathers have sinned (as was shown at length in chap. xvi.), but ye have sinned also in following their example, and have not repeated of your own sins; and your punishment is the proper retribution for your own sins. Therefore repent, and ye shall be saved (ev. 30—32). It is nowhere said in the Old Testament (as some have imagined) any more than in the New, that God visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, except where the children obstinately persist in imitating the iniquity of their fathers. See above, the notes on Exo. xx. 5.; and Deut. xiv. 16, “The children shall not be put to death for the fathers;” and below, v. 20, it is distinctly said that “the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father.”

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 under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. 24 And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the Lord have spoken and have done it.

XVIII. 1. The word of the Lord came unto me again, saying, 2 What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge?

3 As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.
Sons are not punished

EZEKIEL XVIII. 4—22.

for fathers’ sins.

4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: * the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

5 But if a man be just, and do † that which is lawful and right, 6 and hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbour’s wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman, 7 and hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment; 8 he that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, 8 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 live, saith the Lord God.

10 If he beget a son that is a robber, 9 a shedder of blood, and ‡ that doth the like to any one of these things, 11 and that doth not any of those duties, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour’s wife, 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 committed abomination, 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; * his blood shall be upon him.

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, 15 † that hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour’s wife, 16 neither hath oppressed any, † hath not withheld 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. 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 9 he shall die in his iniquity.

19 Yet say ye, Why? † doth not the son bear 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 * The soul that sinneth, it shall die. * The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: * the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, 9 and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

21 But † 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 * 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. 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?

24. But 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? 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.

25. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. 

Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?

26. 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.

27. Again, 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. 

29. 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?

30. Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. 

XIX. Moreover take thou up a lamentation for the princes of Israel, and say, What is thy mother? A lioness: she lay down among lions, she nourished her whelps among young lions. And she brought up one of her whelps: it became a young lion, and it learned to catch the prey; it devoured men. The nations also heard of him; he was taken in their pit, and they brought him with chains unto the land of Egypt.

5. Now when she saw that she had waited, and her hope was lost, then she took another of her whelps, and made him a young lion. 

23. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? No. See v. 32. God will inflict all men to be saved; and willeth not that any should perish. See 1 Tim. ii. 4, and 2 Pet. iii. 9.

30. Repent! Cesse to imitate your fathers in slinking, and ye shall not suffer for their sins. It is not hereby meant that the captivity which was due to their sins would immediately cease; but it would be turned into a blessing; it would wean them from this world and prepare them for a better; they would enjoy God's favour, and have a blessed hope of life eternal from His fatherly love.

31. Make you a new heart and a new spirit! Rely not on external rites and ceremonies of worship, but make you a new heart and spirit. All the Prophets proclaim the necessity of inward and spiritual religion, as distinguished from outward ceremonial observances, which they disparage in comparison with it (Isa. i. 11, 12. Jer. vii. 22. Hos. vi. 6. Mic. vi. 6—8;) and they raise the mind beyond temporal blessings and crosses to the glories of a future life. See the foregoing note, and re, 9, 19, 27; and cp. on Isa. xxvi. 14—19; Isvi. 24. Ezek. xxxvii. Dan. xii. 2. In both these respects the Prophets were pioneers of the Gospel. Almighty God promises to give a new spirit (xxxxv. 20;) and He also says, Make you a new heart and a new spirit: and thus He declares the freedom of man's will as well as the freedom of Divine Grace, and He proclaims the need of the co-operation of the human will with the gift of Divine Grace. Cp. Jer. xxxii. 8. Phil. ii. 12; and Ps. ii. 10, where David unites prayers for a clean heart with confession of sin (Ps. i.—5.)

34. He was taken in their pit. Hebr. shakath: as a lion is taken. Cp. Ps. xxxv. 7; xciv. 13.

5. when she saw that she had waited, and her hope was lost: Or, when she saw that her hope, which she had been made to hope, was lost. See Gesen. (under the word achat, to delay;) or it may mean, that her hope being made sick, had failed (Puerus, 340, 563). Cp. Ewald and Keil, who derive the word from chul, to faint.

—— another of her whelps. Some suppose that this is Je-
The young lion.  EZEKIEL XIX. 7–14.  

The Vine.

up and down among the lions, 4 he became a young lion, and learned to catch the prey, and devoured men. 7 And he knew their desolate palaces, and he laid waste their cities; and the land was desolate, and the fulness thereof, by the noise of his roaring.

8 Then the nations set against him on every side from the provinces, and spread their net over him: 9 he was taken in their pit. 10 And they put him in ward || in chains, and brought him to the king of Babylon: they brought him into holds, that his voice should no more be heard upon the mountains of Israel.

10 Thy mother is 1 like a vine || in thy blood, planted by the waters: she was fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters. 11 And she had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule, and her 2 stature was exalted among the thick branches, and she appeared in her height with the multitude of her branches.

12 But she was plucked up in fury, she was cast down to the ground, and the 3 east wind dried up her fruit: her strong rods were broken and withered; the fire consumed them. 13 And now she is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground. 14 4 And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, which

The true "Lion of the Tribe of Judah" is Christ (Rev. v. 5). He is called "a lion's whelp" by the Patriarch Jacob. See on Gen. xlix. 9. He delivered the prey from Satan's hands (Matt. xii. 29. Mark iii. 27), and saved men. "From the firm, my son, thou hast gone up," says the Patriarch (Gen. xlix. 9). He comforts the fatherless and the widow, and restores the cities of Israel. And though He was taken in the pit (Ps. lxx. 16; lxviii. 3), yet He overthrew the old lion in that pit (cp. 2 Sam. xxi. 23) and the 'Red of Himself' from the corn of Nebuchadnezzar, and destroyed the spiritual Power—the ghostly Enemy—of whom the great earthly kingdoms of Egypt and Babylon, as far as they warred against God, were instruments and types.

10. Thy mother is 1 like a vine || in thy blood! Or rather, thy mother was like a vine in thy blood; that is to say, when thou wast first born, according to the expression in a foregoing chapter, "I said, when thou wast in thy blood, Live!" (see vii. 6, and v. 22, when thou wast polluted in thy blood. The metaphor is less harsh in Hebrew, where the juice of a vine is called in Scripture the blood (Gen. xlix. 11). There is no cause for altering the text, as some critics have desired to do; or for inventing new meanings for the Hebrew word dam (blood) here. See Calovius and Fairbairn, p. 204. Ezekiel seems to be referring to the Psalmist's words, "Then hast brought a vine out of Egypt: then hast cast out the heathen and planted it," &c. See Ps. lxxx. 8—12.

11. among the thick branches] Rather, among the thick clods (Gen. 508; Keil, 162).

13. now she is planted in the wilderness] In captivity, in the days of Jeconiah, when Ezekiel himself was carried captive. See i. 1—3, and 2 Kings xxiv. 12—16. This was more fully accomplished in the days of Zedekiah.

14. And fire is gone out of a rod] Or, of the rod; that is, from Zedekiah, King of Judah, who, by his tyranny and revolt, destroyed the spiritual power) the cause of the burning of Jerusalem. See xvii. 15, 18, 19.

The Vine of Judah.

Observe, that fire went out of the Rod, or Sceptre of the Vine, in the days of Zedekiah, King of Judah, and consumed the fruit of the Vine, so that she had no longer a Rod for a Sceptre. Such was the fate of Israel, and of the royal house of Judah, through the sins of her last kings, Jehoiachin, Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah. The Vine was burnt down by the fire which burst forth from herself. But how great and glorious is the contrast in Christ! When the Vine was burnt down to the ground, He, Who is the "Rod of His Ancestor," sprang out of all her roots; and He says to His Disciples, and to all nations in every age, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit" (John xv. 1—5).

h i Or, their widows.

Before C.B. 1147 B.C.

1 ch. 17. 6. 2 ch. ver. 4.


k ch. 6. 2.

h a 2 Kings 24. 20. ch. 17. 18.

i b 2 Kings 24. 19.

j 1 ch. 17. 16. Hos. 15. 12.
hath dowered her fruit, so that she hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule.

5 This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.

XX. 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 inquire 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 inquire of me? As I live, saith the Lord God, 4 I will not be inquired of by you.

5 Wilt thou judge, son of man, wilt thou judge them? 6 cause them to know the abominations of their fathers: 7 and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, 8 I am the Lord your God; 9 in the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, 10 to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, 11 which is the glory of all lands: 12 then said I unto them, 13 Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: 14 I am the Lord your God.

15 But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not even every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt:

Then I said, I will pour out my fury upon thee, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.

16 But 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.

17 ...
Therefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. 11 And I gave them my statutes, and showed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. 12 Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.

But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them.

"But I wrought for my name’s sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, in whose sight I brought them out.

Yet also 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, which is the glory of all lands; because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my sabbaths: for their heart went after their idols.

Nevertheless mine eye spared them from destroying them, neither did I make an end of them in the wilderness. 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: I am the Lord your God; I walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.

Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me: they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my sabbaths: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness.

Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand, and wrought for my name’s sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth.

I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries; because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my

Before CHRIST about 520.


Ps. 149, 20. 

Exod. 20, 8. & 31, 13, &c. 

Ezek. 20, 5, 12. 

Deut. 5, 10, 15. 

Ps. 103, 18. 

Rom. 15, 7, 8. 

Gal. 3, 12. 

Exod. 20, 9. 

Ps. 103, 18, 19. 

10. **The wilderness.** Observe also the repetition of this word, **wilderness**, seven times in vs. 10—23. In the comparison which follows, the **sojourn in the wilderness** is employed as the symbol and type of Israel’s moral and spiritual probation, in their dispersion in all lands, even to this day (see vs. 31, 32), after its idolatrous or Egyptian state, before they are received into God’s favour in Christ. See above, on v. 8.

11. **Which if a man do, he shall even live in them.** Literally, which the man (ho-Adam) that doth live shall by them. Another phrase repeated, vs. 13, 21. Our Lord Himself reiterated this declaration of the Law (Lev. xxi. 5), when He said, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments” (Matt. xix. 17). Cp. Luke x. 28. “This do, and thou shalt live.” (Mark x. 15. Luke xviii. 20). And St. Paul says, “Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the Law, that the man which doeth these things shall live by them” (Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 12).

But it is not implied that life could be obtained by doing these things irrespectively of faith in a Redeemer. For St. Paul himself affirms that “Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” (Rom. x. 4.) and that “the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Gal. iii. 24). And he asks, “Do we make void the Law through faith? Yes, we establish the Law?” (Rom. iii. 31).

So again, while it is to be maintained on the one side, that faith in a Redeemer is the moving principle of the Law itself, rightly understood, it is no less necessary to understand that Christ, in taking away the curse of the Law, did not take away the Rule of the Law, or cancel the obligation of the Moral Law, but confirmed it by new sanctions, and stimulated its performance by new hopes, and enabled men to perform it by new spiritual powers, and by the cheer ing attraction and inviting guidance of His holy prophets, and His own perfect example. See below, the note on Gal. iii. 15.

12. I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign. Not that the sabbath was then first appointed, but that it was consecrated with new sanctions and new obligations for Israel. See above, on Gen. ii. 2, 3. Exod. xii. 1.; xx. 8—11. Deut. v. 14.

13. I lifted up mine hand. Even in the wilderness God swore that He would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries (Lev. xxvi. 33. Deut. xxviii. 61), for their correction and moral probation, so that the dispersion might serve the same purposes as their wandering in the wilderness.
EZEKIEL XX. 25—30.

Before Christ 593.

25. Therefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live: 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. And 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 me, in that they have committed a trespass against me. For when I had brought them into the land, for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to them, then 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 sweet savour, and poured out there their drink offerings. Then || I said unto them, What is the high place whereunto ye go? and the name thereof is called Bamah unto this day. 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 your gifts, when ye make your sons to pass through the fire, ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day: and shall I be inquired of by, O house of Israel? As I saith the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you. 32 And that 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.

33 As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, and 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 will gather you out of the countries where ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. 35 And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face.

36 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. 37 And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: 38 and 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 they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God: Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me: but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols.

For 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 will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things.

The Dispersion of the Jews.

The Dispersion of the Jews in the Wilderness of Nations. Their Future Restoration in Christ.

30. Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? Do ye, who are now exiles and captives, pollute yourselves in the way of your fathers? Yes. Ye obstinately persist in their sins, even to this day. How, therefore, can ye expect favour from Me? I will not be inquired of by you.

32. We will be as the heathen.] Such was Israel's infatuated resolve. Cp. above, on Jer. xlv. 25. But God mercifully interposes to prevent its consummation, by delivering them, as He had mercifully delivered them from Egyptian idolatry, by bringing them into the wilderness.

33. With a mighty hand—and with fury poured out, will I rule over you.] Since ye presumed upon My love, and made it an occasion for sin, therefore I will change My method of treating you, and will endeavour to reclaim you by the discipline of affliction.

The Dispersion of the Jews in the Wilderness of Nations. Their Future Restoration in Christ.

34. I will bring you out from the people.] Literally, from the peoples. As I brought your fathers out of the bondage of idolatrous Egypt into the wilderness of Arabia, for their moral trial, and correction, and improvement, in order that they might be prepared by salutary discipline to enter into the land of Promise under Joshua, so will I bring you forth from the nations; that is, I will separate you from your idolatry, and I will bring you into a wilderness of the people; I will bring you into the desert of probation (see v. 39), in which ye may be chastened and purified, in order that ye may be qualified to be admitted into the spiritual Canaan, the heavenly inheritance of the Church of God, under the true Joshua—Jesus Christ. See the note below, on v. 44.

Ezekiel calls their moral probation a wilderness of the peoples, in order to distinguish it from a literal wilderness, such as the Arabian wilderness in which their fathers were, which was not inhabited by people; and in order to mark that their dispensation among the peoples of the world would serve the same purposes of moral trial and correction which were served by the Arabian wilderness in the case of their fathers.

Vol. V. Part II.—201

Before CHRIST

Ch. 20. 35, 36. d Num. 27. 29. d See Num. 11. 21. 22. 23. 25. 29 b Jer. 27. 22. b Jer. 33. 13. f Or, a delivering. ch. b Jer. 21. 5.

34. I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: 35. 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 they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

39. As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God: Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me: but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols.

For 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 will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things.

The Good Shepherd.

37. And I will cause you to pass under the rod: I will make you to pass like sheep under the pastoral rod (see Lev. xxvii. 32. Jer. xxxiii. 13) of the Divine Shepherd, Jesus Christ. Who will inspect and examine you one by one as His sheep; "for He knoweth all His sheep by name." See John x. 14. He is the One Shepherd Whom I will set over you. See below, xxxiv. 23; xxxv. 24, which afford the best comment on these words; and He shall gather you and feed you as His flock.

38. I will bring them out of their spiritual Egypt, by separating them from the idolatrous nations, and I will bring them into the moral probation of a wilderness of people, but they shall not enter the land of Israel, the Church of God, ve. 40. 42, because they are rebels.

39. Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, and hereafter also.] Go ye, if ye will, and serve your idols every one his own. There is here a pause: but hereafter, if ye will not hearken unto Me. As much as to say, I am fully persuaded, that after the due term of moral probation and salutary affliction in the spiritual wilderness of your dispersion, ye will hearken unto Me (see Genesis 50), and ye will not pollute My holy Name any more with your gifts and idols.

An Almighty God looks forward with confident joy to the time when Israel will renounce their idols, and turn to Him in Christ.

40. For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel] No longer as it is, to this day, in your own self-chosen baalim (or high place), but in My holy mountain, on the high hill of Israel, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve Me: and there will I accept them; that is, in the Church of Christ Universal, which will spread forth from Zion and Jerusalem, and will enfold the World, and make the whole Earth to be a Land of Promise, a Land of the Lord God of Israel. See above, on Isa. ii. 2; lv. 1—7; lxi. 1—9; lxv. 17—25; lxvi. 20—23; and see the note below, on v. 44, and S. Jerome here, and S. Lopide.

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you with your "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 And ye shall know that I am the Lord, 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 there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed. 44 And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have wrought with you '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.'

45 Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 46 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; and say to the forest of the south, Hear the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree: the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from

The Restoration of Israel.

44. and ye shall know that I am the Lord] That the true Restoration of Israel is a spiritual one, and that the true return of the Jews is to be effected by their reception of the Gospel, and by their incorporation into the Church of Christ, having its origin and well-spring in Zion, and diffused from Jerusalem into all the world, is evident from the foregoing language of the Prophet Ezekiel, ver. 34—44. God has said that He will bring His people out from the nations (v. 34), as He brought their forefathers out of Egypt, and that He would bring them into a wilderness of the nations, as He brought their forefathers out of Egypt into the Sinaiitc wilderness (v. 32); that is, He will separate them from the idolatry of the nations, as He delivered their fathers from idolatrous Egypt by their Exodus; and will subject them to a moral probation and spiritual trial, as He pleaded with their fathers in the wilderness; that He will cause them to pass under the rod, as a shepherd does when bringing his sheep into the fold, and take them out and examine them, and that He will bring them into the bond of the covenant, as He brought their fathers into covenant with Him at Sinai; and will purge and winnow them, as He did the Israelites of old in the wilderness; and will reject the rebels and transgressors, as He rejected the evil-doers there; and after this moral probation and penitential discipline, He will accept them in His holy mountain, and there they will serve Him, and they shall remember their evil doings, and loathe themselves for them, and know that He is the Lord.

These words are not capable of a literal interpretation, but when spiritually expounded, they become perfectly clear. The idolatrous heathenism of Israel, even in Palestine itself, is compared to the wilderness and the people of the heathen, in expressing the scattering of Israel. The bringing them forth from their idolatry by means of their dispersion (which had a salutary effect in weaning them from that sin (see Introd. to Ezra, pp. 298, 299), and which is called a wilderness of the peoples (see on Ezr. 31, 35), is compared to the Exodus of the wilderness of Egypt into the wilderness of Ezion-geber. The Ezion-geber of the Exodus of Israel from Egypt was not an Ezion-geber, or entrance, into Canaan. Their state in the wilderness was a state of trial, and many of them failed and died there.

Similarly, it is not the scattered People of Israel have been brought from the nations into a wilderness of the Nations, that is, are brought from heathenish idolatry into a state of probation in all parts of the world, they have not yet come to the Promised Land; they must repent, and be brought under the pastoral rod of the Divine Shepherd, Jesus Christ, and enter into covenant with Him; and then they will find themselves at home in their own land,—the Church of Christ.

Ezekiel XX. 42—47. in the Church of Christ.
the south to the north shall be burned therein. 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?

XXI. 1 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, 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. 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: 5 that all flesh may know that I the Lord have drawn forth my sword out of his sheath: it shall not return any more.

6 'Sight therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of thy loins; and with bitterness sigh before their eyes. 7 And it shall be, when they say unto thee, Whereforeniest thou? that thou shalt answer, For the tidings; because it cometh: and every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit shall faint, and all knees shall be weak as water: behold, it cometh, and shall be brought to pass, saith the Lord God.

8 Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 9 Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord; Say, a sword, a sword is sharpened, and also furbished: 10 it is sharpened to make a sore slaughter; it is furbished that it may glitter: should we then make mirth? or it commeth the rod of my son, as every tree. 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 the slayer.

12 Cry and howl, son of man: for it shall be upon my people, it shall be upon all the princes of Israel: || terrors by reason of the sword shall be upon my people: k smite therefore upon thy thigh. 13 || Because it is a trial, and what if the sword contemn even the rod? m it shall be no more, saith the Lord ||

what then shall thy not also belong to the despising rod? 1 J e b 9. 23. 2 Cor. 8. 2. 1: ver. 19.

Prophecy against Jerusalem.

Cp. XXI. 3. I—will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.) This is not inconsistent, as has been alleged by some, with the Vision in ix. 4, where the righteous are sealed and spared; but, when combined with that Vision, this prophecy teaches the doctrine of a future state of rewards, when the righteous, who are taken away with the wicked in this world, are sealed to eternal life. See Rev. xi. 8, compared with v. 14, where the sealed are said to have "come out of great tribulation."

5. it shall not return) The sword of the Lord shall not return to its sheath (v. 30) till it has executed His sentence against Judah and Jerusalem. Cp. Jer. xlvi. 6, "O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? Put up thyself into thy sheath, rest and be still." 10 to make a sore slaughter) Literally, to sing a slaughter. Hebr. tehak (ver. 15. 28). — that it may glitter) Literally, that there may be glittering (Hebr. barok, lighten) to it. He adopts the words of Deut. xxxiii. 41, "If I whet my glittering sword,"—literally, the glittering, or lightning (barokh) of my sword. Cp. below, ver. 15. 28, where the word barokh is repeated; and Hab. iii. 11, "At the light of thine arrows they went, at the shining of thy glittering spear;" and Zech. ix. 14, "His arrow shall go forth as the lightning;" where the same word is used.

12. Or, they are thrust down to the sword with my people. 1 Or, When the trial hath been, should we then make—every tree] Rather, or shall we rejoice (saying), the sceptre of my son despiseth every tree. This is a hypothetical reply to God's warnings, and is made in the name of the house of Judah, to which God Himself,—speaking by the patriarch Jacob (Gen. xlix. 10, where the word sheket, sceptre, is used, as here) and by Balaam, who uses the same word, shebet (Num. xxiv. 17); and speaking also to David,—had assured perpetual permanence and supremacy (see on 2 Sam. vii. Prelim. Note); so that, relying on the Divine Word, it might despise every tree. The trees of Judah might be consumed (see xx. 47); but they imagined that the Rod, or Sceptre, in the hands of the King of Judah, whom they, adopting God's words, call His Son (cp. 2 Sam. vii. 12, 14, Ps. lxxxix. 29), would be indestructible; see also v. 13, where it is said that the sword will come even on the rod or sceptre (shebet, the same word as here), that despiseth men and God; and see also xix. 11, 14, where the same word is used in connection with the royal house of Judah. Cp. Amos i. 5, 8, where the same word is used; and see De Wette, Schmieder, Kliefoth, and Keil here.

15. Or, what if the sword—even the rod) Or rather, what if the royal sceptre, which despiseth others, should not escape? See v. 10, whence this word "despising." Hebr. mobeth, is used.
Divination in Ezekiel 21:14–24 of the King of Babylon.

God. 

14 Thou therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say thus: 

Hands 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 privy chambers.

15 I have set the point of the sword against all their gates, that their heart may faint, and their ruins be multiplied: ah! it is made bright, it is wrapped up for the slaughter.

16 Go thee one way or other, either on the right hand, or on the left, whithersoever thy face is set. 

17 I will also smite mine hands together, and I will cause my fury to rest: I the Lord have said it.

18 The word of the Lord came unto me, 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 Rabbath of the Ammonites, and to Judah in Jerusalem the defended.

21 For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination: he made his arrows bright, he consulted with images, he looked in the liver.

22 At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem, to appoint captains, to open the mouth in the slaughter, to lift up the voice with shouting, 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, to them that 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, 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.

— he made his arrows bright] Rather, he shook his arrows in the quiver (cp. Hector shaking lots in the helmet, Homer, II. iii. 310); the arrows having the names of Rabbath, Jerusalem, distributed on them respectively; and that which came out first decided him on the line of march he was to take (S. Jerome, Pococke, Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 329; Pfeiffer, Dub. 413; Kittel, pp. 318, 319).


— he looked in the liver] He inspected the liver of the sacrifice, to see what success it portended to his undertaking—a Babylonish custom (Diod. Sic. ii. 29), as well as a Roman ( Cicero, De Div. vi. 13).

22. At his right hand was] Or, At his right hand it came forth (Tarquinius, Sept.). Two arrows were in the quiver (c. 21); one with the name of Rabbath, the other with that of Babylon; and he took one out with his right hand, and the other with his left; and the arrow that came into his right hand was to direct the course he was to take.

God overruled even Babylonish divination to His purposes; as he guided the milch kine of Philistia (1 Sam. vi. 7–18).

— to appoint captains] Rather, to set battering-rams (Hebr. carim). Cp. iv. 2, where it is so rendered (Gen. 41.22). — to open the mouth in the slaughter] To raise the war-cry of death against the besieged.

23. And it shall be oaths] This is the result of this divination guiding Nebuchadnezzar to Jerusalem, will be like a divination of unlightness (a false divination, and therefore to be slighted and despised) in the eyes of swearers of oaths (oaths of vassalage to Nebuchadnezzar, which they, namely, Zedekiah, king of Jerusalem, and his princes, have perfunctorily broken. See ch. viii. 12, even to them—trustors, as they are. Such is the infatuation of Jerusalem and of her King.

— he will call to remembrance] God—the God of oaths—remembers their treachery, and will call them to account. See above, xvii. 18–21.
Contrast in Christ. 

EZEKIEL XXI. 25—32. XXII. 1—3. Ammon and Zion.

25. And thou, a profane wicked prince of Israel, b whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, c end thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: e exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. 27. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: e and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.

26. And thou, son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord God, e concerning the Ammonites, and concerning their reproach; even say thou, The sword, the sword is drawn: for the slaughter it is furnished, to consume by the glittering: 29. whiles they see vanity unto thee, while they divine a lie unto thee, to bring thee upon the necks of them that are slain, of the wicked, % whose day is come, when their iniquity shall have an end.

30. || shall I cause it to return into his sheath? i will judge thee in the place where thou wast created, k in the land of thy nativity. 31. And I will pour out mine indignation upon thee, I will "blow against thee in the fire of my wrath, and deliver thee into the hand of || brutish men, and skilful to destroy. 32. Thou shalt be for fuel to the fire; thy blood shall be in the midst of the land; thou shalt be no more remembered: for I the Lord have spoken it.

XXII. 1. Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 2. Now, thou son of man, a wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge b the i bloody city? yea, thou shalt j shew 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

Him the kingdom and Priesthood will be raised to an everlasting duration and universal supremacy. See above, on Gen. xlix. 10; and Isa. ix. 6, 7; xiii. 1. Jer. xxviii. 15; xxix. 17. Rev. xi. 15; xix. 16; and especially Zech. vi. 12, 13, "He" (the Branch, the Messiah) shall build the Temple of the Lord, and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne, and He shall be a Priest upon His throne." PROPHETIC AGAINST AMMON EXULTING OVER THE FALL OF JERUSALEM.

28. their reproach] Or scorn of Jerusalem. Cp. Jer. xlix. 1. Zeph. ii. 8. 29. to bring thee, upon the necks of them that are slain] To bring thee, O Ammon, upon the necks of them who are slain; that is, to cast thee also upon the heaps of the wicked Jew, over whose slaughter thou art malignantly exulting.

30. Shall I cause it to return] Let it (the sword) return into its scabbard.


32. shall be no more remembered] Observe the difference, marked in this chapter, between God's dealings with Israel and with Ammon—the type of the enemies of His Church. The latter is to be utterly destroyed; the former, after severe chastening, is to be restored to Christ (ver. 26, 27). Cp. Isa. xxvii. 8. Jer. xxx. 11; xlv. 23.

JUDGMENT ON JERUSALEM.—DESCRIPTION OF HER NOBLES AND PEOPLE.

CH. XXII. We have here a moral portrayal of the last days of Jerusalem, before her destruction by the Chaldeans. The picture drawn by St. James (the Christian Ezekiel and Jeremini) of her spiritual condition, on the eve of her capture by the Romans, is in many respects like a transcript of the same dark inscriptions and features of sin and misery, showing that she was then ripe for the vengeance of God. See James iv. 1, 2. Cp. v. 1, 2.

Other nations may take heed from the warnings which are presented by these divinely-inspired representations. This chapter, to v. 16, is read as an Haphtarar to Lev. xvi.—xxvii. 30. See on xx. 2.

2. son of man, wilt thou judge] Wilt thou not pronounce judgment? See on xx. 4, and xxiii. 36.

— the bloody city] Literally, the city of bloods.
maketh idols against herself to defile herself. 4 Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou hast shed; 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: 5 therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the heathen, and a mocking to all countries. 6 Those that be near, and those that be far from thee, shall mock thee, which art † infamous and much vexed.

Behold, 6 the princes of Israel, every one were in thee to their † power to shed blood. 7 In thee have they † set light by father and mother: in the midst of have they † dealt by oppression with the stranger: in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow. 8 Thou hast † despised mine holy things, and hast † profaned my sabbaths.

In thee are † men that carry tales to shed blood: 1 and in thee they eat upon the mountains: in the midst of thee they commit lewdness. 10 In thee have they † discovered their fathers’ nakedness: in thee have they humbled her that was † set apart for pollution. 11 And † one hath committed abomination † with his neighbour’s wife; and † another † hath † lewdly defiled his daughter in law; and another in thee hath humbled his † sister, his father’s daughter.

12 In thee † have they given gifts to shed blood; † thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and † hast forgotten me, saith the Lord God.

13 Behold, therefore I have † smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee. 14 † Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? 15 And † I will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries, and † will consume thy filthiness out of thee. 16 And thou † shalt take thine inheritance in thyself in the sight of the heathen, and † thou shalt know that I am the Lord.

17 And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 18 Son of man, 6 the 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 † dross of silver. 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 † As 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. 21 Yea, I will gather you, and † blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. 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 † poured out my fury upon you.

23 And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 24 Son of man, say — they eat upon the mountains] See xviii. 6. 10. set apart unto the mountains] Set apart as unclean. See xviii. 6. 12. taken usury] See xviii. 13. 13. I have smitten mine hand] In anger against thee (xxi. 17). 16. And thou shalt take thine inheritance in thyself] Rather (see in the margin), thou art polluted by thyself; i.e. by thine own sin, and thus art the cause of thine own destruction. See ev. 3, 4. The verb here used does not come from nachal, to inherit (Gen. 5:8), but is the niphal from chalal, to pollute (Genesis 29:1).
unto her, Thou art the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation. 25 "There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof. 26 "Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no 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 princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. 28 And "her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken.

29 "The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.

30 "And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. 31 Therefore have I poured mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord God.

XXIII. 1 The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother: 3 and they committed whoredoms in Egypt; they committed whoredoms in their youth: there were pressed that they might fall under, and there they bruised the teats of their virginity.

4 And the names of them were Aholah the elder, and Aholibah her sister: and 5 they were mine, and they bare sons and daughters. Thus were their names; Samaria is Aholah, and Jerusalem Aholibah. 6 And Aholah played the harlot when she was mine; and she doted on her lovers, on the Assyrians her neighbours, which were clothed with blue, Captains and rulers, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding upon horses. 7 Thus she committed her whoredoms with them, all them.


25. a conspiracy of her prophets] Of her prophets, not My prophets. The false prophets have conspired together to deceive Jerusalem; and, so great is their power, and of so little account are God's prophets with her, that the false prophets alone are regarded by her as prophets; she regards her priests; she will not hearken to Me, speaking by My prophets.

26. Her priests have violated my law] Her priests do violence to My law; they not only break it, but wrest it aside for their own selfish ends (Fairly).

27. have hid their eyes from my sabbaths] Her priests have connived at the profanation of the Sabbath by the people. Cp. Jer. xxvi. 19. How different is this priestly laxity from the fervent zeal of the godly layman Nehemiah in behalf of the Sabbath! See on Neh. xiii. 15—22.

28. her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar] Her prophets have plastered with whitewash (see xlii. 10) for her priestesses. They, who ought to have boldly declared God's Law, and have reproved the King and the Princes of Jerusalem for their sins, have flattered them in their disobedience with glowing words of specious sophocly and have plastered over the rotten wall of courtly vices with falcon whitewash.


3. committed whoredoms in Egypt] Israel committed idolatry there, which is spiritual adultery. See xx. 7. 8. (They bruised the teats) "Ill" (i.e. her spiritual paramours) "ubera impudicè contrata" (Gesen. 658). "There they served idols, and were corrupted in their ways (Targum). The heinousness of the sin of idolatry, in the sight of God, is displayed by this and other prophetic descriptions. See below, on v. 20; and we are prepared for the language of the Apocalypse concerning the superstitious and idolatrous practices of the corrupt Church of the latter days. See below, on Rev. xxi. 15. pp. 295. 296). On the other hand, we have there a striking contrast in the beautiful picture of the chaste and faithful Church, espoused to Christ in mystic wedding (Rev. xxi. 2).

Aholah—Ahohah Rather, Oholah and Oholibah. See Sept. and Targ. here. The former word means her tent or tabernacle; because Israel, in the days of Jeroboam, set up a separate place of worship of her own devising (see on Kings xi. 26, p. 51). In opposition to His Tent (obi. Gesen. 17), or Tabernacle, which God had established for the House of Jerusalem, in which He had placed His Name, and to which He commanded all to resort for sacrificial worship (1 Kings viii. 29). mine] Literally, under me. See xvi. 32. she doted on her lovers, on the Assyrians her neighbours] Instead of relying on God, Israel resorted to Assyria for help (see 2 Kings xv. 19); and made them who were her enemies to be her neighbours—instead of drawing nigh to God. Cp. Hos. viii. 9. with blue] In purple. horsemen riding upon horses] Riders riding upon horses; not, like the humbler natives of Israel, riding on mules, asses, or camels. Cp. Isa. xxxi. 7.
9. I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians, upon whom she doted: I have punished Israel by means of Assyria, whom she preferred to Me. The Assyrian kings, who carried Israel captive, such as Pul (1 Chron. v. 26), and Tiglath Pileser (2 Kings xv. 29), and they who destroyed Samaria (namely, Shalmaneser and Sargon (2 Kings xvii. 6), were instruments in God's hands for executing His judgments upon her, for her sins against Him.

10. She became famous: literally, she became a name—a by-word, a reproach, a warning among women (see xvi. 14; xxxvi. 3; below, r. 40)—she, who was formerly celebrated for her beauty, when she served God.

11. when her sister Aholibah was more corrupt! Jerusalem did not take warning from the punishment of Israel and Samaria, but surpassed her sister in disobedience and idolatry, op. xvi. 47. 51. Jer. iii. 8—11, whose words Ezekiel imitates here: "Her treacherous sister Judah saw it, yet her treacherous sister Judah had not turned unto Me. And the Lord said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah."

12. She doted upon the Assyrians! Especially in the days of Ahaz (2 Kings xvii. 7—11. 2 Chron. xxxviii. 10—23. Isa. vii. 20; viii. 9.

14. men prowtrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldeans porrayed with vermilion! Probably emblazoned on brick upon the walls of the Temples and Palaces of Babylon, which seem to have been brilliantly adorned. See Rawlinson, Anct. Mon. iii. 382, 383. 404—407.

15. Girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads! With overhanging coloured hair on their heads. See Fairb. 222; Keil, 203; and the picture of the Chaldean king, with his lofty and richly adorned headdress, in Rawlinson, iii. 400.

17. her mind was alienated from them! Because the King of Babylon oppressed her, and took and plundered the city; and therefore she rebelled against Babylon, and sought for succour from Egypt (v. 19; and see xvii. 7, 15).

20. she doted upon their paramours—horses! Jerusalem polluted herself with the idolatries of Egypt; she committed spiritual harlotry with Egypt, whose greedy lust after the foulest idolatry (the worship of oxen, cats, dogs, and reptiles) is described here in the strongest terms of censure and execration. Jerusalem adopted the foul, debasing, and bovine idolatries of Egypt; and this adoption was the principal cause of God's hatred of her, and of her destruction. See viii. 10; and compare the similar passage in Jer. ii. 23, 24 v. 8; and xiii. 27.

The language of the Prophet here is very strong; and some readers may recoil from it with horror and aversion. It was doubtless designed to excite such feelings as these, and has a solemn and seasonable warning, especially for times like our own, when there seems to be a growing tendency towards a sensual religion, in lieu of a spiritual one, and to the obscene pomp of creature-worship and idolatry.

The soul, especially the Christian soul, is espoused as a Bride to God in mystical wedlock (2 Cor. xi. 2); and if she faithfully observes her pledged troth to Him, and is loyal in her allegiance to her Divine Lord and Husband, then she is raised to divine dignity and heavenly glory. But if she is false to Him, if she is guilty of spiritual harlotry, by bartering away her affections and her worship to any creature in the place of God, then she is degraded from her high spiritual estate, she forfeits the chaste beauty and the holy purity of spousal union with Her Divine King, and is desolated to the foul and loathsome pollution of bestial cohabitation; and she may see her guilt and misery poured by the Holy Spirit in the dark colouring of such terrible passages as the present, and even in those awful words of the Levitical Law, Lev. xviii. 23; xx. 16.

21. then called it to remembrance! By thine intercourse with
22 Therefore, O Aholibah, thus saith the Lord God; '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, 'Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them: "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 the 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 fraudiously 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. 26 They shall also strip thee out of thy clothes, and take away thy \( \uparrow \) fair jewels. 27 Thus \( \uparrow \) will I make thy lewdness to cease from thee, and thy whoredom brought from the land of Egypt: so that thou shalt not lift up thine eyes unto them, nor remember Egypt any more.

28 For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will deliver thee into the hand of them \( \ast \) whom thou hatest, into the hand of them \( \ast \) from whom thy mind is alienated: 29 and they shall deal with thee hatefully, and shall take away all thy labour, and \( \ast \) shall leave thee naked and bare: and the nakedness of thy whoredoms shall be discovered, both thy lewdness and thy whoredoms. 30 I will do these things unto thee, because thou hast \( \ast \) gone a whoring after the heathen, and because thou art polluted with their idols. 31 Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister; therefore will I give her \( \ast \) cup into thine hand.

32 Thus saith the Lord God; Thou shalt drink of thy sister's cup deep and large: 'thou shalt be laughed to scorn and had in derision; it containeth \( \ast \) much. 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 \( \ast \) 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.

35 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because thou \( \ast \) hast forgotten me, and I cast me behind thy back, therefore bear thou also thy lewdness and thy whoredoms.

Egypt under Hezekiah, thou hast renewed thine old Egyptian idolatry. See e. 3.

22. I will raise up thy lovers against thee—alienated] Thy former Babylonian paramours, against whom thou hast rebelled. See vs. 16, 17.

Pekod, Shoa, and Koa. 23. all the Chaldeans, Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa] Or, all the Chaldeans of Pekod, Shoa, and Koa. These three latter names are probably symbolic of the Chaldeans, as the former "lovers of Judah" (Aholibah), but used by God as His instruments of vengeance against her. Thou hast thought fit to abandon Me, and to visit (pokad) Babylon (see v. 16, and cp. the word pokad in v. 21), therefore Babylon shall be to thee the land of visitation—peked.

This interpretation is confirmed by Ezekiel's brother Prophet, Jeremiah, who designates the King of Babylon, and Babylon itself, respectively, by the symbolic names Shakedeh (Jer. xxv. 26; li. 41), Mehatith, and Pekod (Jer. 1. 21), where there is an allusion to the verb pokad, to visit, to punish, which is used in v. 18, and to pokaddah, visitation, which occurs in v. 27 of the same chapter. Thus Jeremiah expounds Ezekiel.

Similarly we have other symbolic names in the Canticles (see Introdx, p. 125), such as Bethel, Ammimudah, Bathrobin, and Baathamon; and in Jeremiah we have Gareb and Goath. See note on Jer. xxxi. 39, and in Hosea v. 13; x. 6, King Jareb, or Hostile King, i.e. Assyria, see Gesen. 757; and in Nahum (ii. 7) we have Hezzen for Nineveh.

Shoa, another symbolic name used here, signifies a cry for help (Isa. xxii. 5. Gesen. 811; Forsnt, 1359). Thou didst trust in Babylon rather than in God; then didst cry for help to Babylon rather than to Him. He will bring that people of thy lovers upon thee, and then thou wilt cry for help in vain. Cp. Jer. xlv. 11—14.

Koa means properly a male camel for breeding. See Gesen. 729; Forsnt, 1229. It seems to be also a symbolic name for Babylon, as the spiritual paramour of Judah. Cp. the metaphor in v. 29. Thou hast degraded thyself from the condition of a chaste bride of the Lord God of Israel; thou hast debased thyself to a coarse animal idolatry. Compare the similar passage of Jeremiah (li. 23), where Judah, in her idolatrous lust, is compared to a courtesan; literally, a female camel. Thou hast become like the beasts that perish, and I will bring them against thee to punish thee with their princely power.

32. cup deep and large] Isa. lii. 17. Rev. xiv. 9, 10. 33. pluck off thine own breasts] The occasions of thy spiritual harlotry (Re. 3. 8, 21.). Cp. above, on Cant. vii. 8.

E o
Ye shall know that I, am the Lord GOD.

35 The Lord said moreover unto me; Son of man, wilt thou judge Aholah and Aholibah? yea, declare unto them their abominations; that they have committed adultery, and blood is in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery, and have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire, to devour them. Moreover this also have they done unto me: they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and have profaned my sabbaths. 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. 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, and satest upon a stately bed, and a table prepared before it, wherupon thou hast set mine incense and mine oil. 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? 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.

And the righteous men, they shall judge them after the manner of adulteresses, and after the manner of women that shed blood; because they are adulteresses, and blood is in their hands.

46 For thus saith the Lord God; I will bring up a company upon them, and will give them to be removed and spoiled. And the company shall stone them with stones, and dispatch them with their swords; they shall slay their sons and their daughters, and burn up their houses with fire. Thus will I cause lewdness to cease out of the land, that all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness. And they shall recompense your lewdness upon you, and ye shall bear the sins of your children: and ye shall know that I am the Lord God.

XXIV. 1 Again in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day...
EZEKIEL XXIV. 2—16. The pot to be burnt.

of the month, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day. 3 And utter a parable unto the rebellious house, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: 4 Set on a pot, set it on, and also pour water into it: 5 gather the pieces thereof into it, even every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder; fill it with the choice bones. 6 Take the choice of the flock, and | burn also the bones under it, and make it | boil well, and let them seethe the bones of it therein.

Wherefore thus saith the Lord God; Woe to 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 | lot fall upon it. 7 For her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the top of a rock; 8 she poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust; 9 that it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance; 10 I have set her blood upon the top of a rock, that it should not be covered.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Woe to the bloody city! I will even make the pile for fire great. 11 Heap on wood, kindle the fire, consume the flesh, and spare it well, and let the bones be burned. 12 Then set it empty upon the coals thereof, that the brass of it may be hot, and may burn, and that the filthiness of it may be molten in it, that the scum of it may be consumed. 13 She hath warethed herself with lies, and her great scum went not forth out of her: her scum shall be in the fire.

In thy filthiness is levordness: because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee. 14 I the Lord have spoken it: it shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent; according to thy ways, and according to thy doings, they shall judge thee, saith the Lord God.

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 shall

that this vision was found to be true, and that therefore his mind was illumined by the Holy Spirit of God. Compare above, that other striking specimen of his prophetic vision, in ch. 14. 10. 2. set himself against] Literally, lay against, pressed upon. 3. Set on a pot] Literally, set on the caldron: Hebr. sir, the word used above by the profane scoffers at Jerusalem. “This city is the caldron, we are the flesh” (xl. 3; see the note there, and Jer. i. 13). Now, the city was, indeed, to be destroyed, and fire was to be put under it; and the vision of Jeremiah (i. 13), which they had made an occasion of seerious sneer and godless jest, was to be realized. 4. every good piece] The princes and nobles of Jerusalem. 5. burn also the bones under it] Literally, and also a pile of the bones under it. Make the bones—the strong men of Jeru- salem themselves—to be fuel for burning the city. 6. “Woe to the bloody city, to the pot whose scum is therein” Literally, woe to the city of bones, to the pot whose rust is in it. The word rendered scum is chelach, from chalas, to be covered or smeared over, to be encrusted as with rust (Ezech. 4:15); and therefore the word is translated redigo by Fuerst, and S. Jerome, and so Keil, Hengst. It does not mean the scum floating on the surface of what is boiled in it, but the deeply-encrusted verdigris and rust in the pot itself, which is of copper. See 2. 11. It represents the inverteate wickedness of Jerusalem, which has not been burned and smeared by any process of divine discipline, as is expressed in ver. 12, 13; “her great scum (rust) went not forth out of her. I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged.” The only purification now possible for Jeru- salem is by fire (ver. 12). — bring it out piece by piece] Bring Jerusalem out piece by piece. Cp. v. 4. The king and principal men of the city shall be brought out by the Chaldeans, and be afterwards slain. See xl. 7. 9. Jer. xxxix. 6—8.

211
Before CHRIST
Heb. 49. 2.
Heb. Be silent.
Jer. 16, 17. 1.
Lev. 10, 6.
2 Tim. 2.
2 Sam. 15, 30.
Micah 3, 7.
Heb. upper lip.
And so ver.
Lev. 12, 45.
ch. 12, 9.
37, 18.

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, 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, I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword. 22. And ye shall do as I have done: ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men. 23. And your tires shall be upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet: ye shall not mourn nor weep; but ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one toward another. 24. Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: and when this cometh, 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 their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters, 26. that he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears?

27. In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is of Israel, now scattered through the world. They will not weep and wall any more, as now they do, for the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the armies of Titus, and their own dispersion; but all their sorrow will be merged in grief for their own sin, in their rejection and Crucifixion of the Son of God, which caused these afflictions. See Zech. xii. 10—14. Then, in answer to the fountain of tears shed by them, a fountain of grace and pardon will flow to them from the pierced side of the Son of David (Zech. xiii. 1).

No Hebrew Prophet excels Ezekiel in two great moral qualities of a Preacher of righteousness; viz.

(1) In bringing the soul to a sense of its own personal responsibility in the sight of God. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (xviii. 4, 20). Even the greatest saints of God, Noah, Daniel, Job, shall deliver only their own souls, but neither son nor daughter (xiv. 14, 20).

(2) In showing the sinfulness of sin. The destruction of our own Jerusalem—the desire of our eyes—is not to be the cause of mourning, but our own sins, which are the cause of it. See above, Introduction, pp. 155, 156.

24. a sign] A wonderful portent. Cp. xii. 6. 11; below, v. 27.

—when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord God] Ye shall acknowledge My Godhead, in having revealed these things to My Prophet, and in having executed them by My power, according to his prophecies, received from Me.

25. shall it not be in the day? Or, behold, in the day. The interrogative ha—lo, has often this sense, and is paraphrased by hinneh, behold! Hence the Targ. has ever here. Cp. Geen. 426.

26, 27. that he that escapeth in that day? Or, in that day he that escapeth from Jerusalem shall come unto thee, to bring tidings to the ear; in that day shall thy mouth be opened. Hitherto, Ezekiel was to be silent, except when God spoke to him by a special revelation (see iii. 26, 27), and he was now to remain in silent sorrow till the messenger came to him from Jerusalem, to announce its fall and the fulfilliment of his own prophecies to the people of the captivity. "Ut quaeque propheta ventura praedixerat, illae univercae jam perfecit." (S. Jerome); and then he was to be no longer dumb, but to open his mouth to the people, and to declare the righteousness and mercy of God. See below, xxxii. 22; xxxiv. 23—31.
Ezekiel a sign.  

EZEKIEL XXV. 1-4.  Prophecy against Ammon. 

Ezekiel a sign.  

27. a sign] Cp. v. 21. Ezekiel was a sign and wonder to Israel; a portent, calling for the atten·tion of God's dealings, by his acts, as well as by his words, which were verified by the result, and which proved him to be a true Prophet; and exhorting them to repentance, and ministering consolation to them, with promises of immediate and eternal salvation in Christ, if they would repent and believe.

Ezekiel was a sign of Christ. He was a sign of the “Sox of Man,” Who is Himself a sign, and a portent to the world. He, like Ezekiel, delivered prophecies by word and deed. For a season He seemed to be dumb. But the hour came when the message of the fulfilment reached the ears of the world. Such were the tidings of the fulfilment of Christ's prophecies concerning the taking of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews; then His Voice sounded forth and spake in solemn tones. And how awful will be that sound, when the sign of the Sox of Man appears in the heavens (Matt. xxiv. 30), and the announcement of the truth of all His prophecies concerning Death and Resurrection, Heaven and Hell, is declared in a voice in a lightning flash, by His own Coming to Judgment!

PROPHECIES CONCERNING HEATHEN NATIONS WHICH EXCITED OVER THE FALL OF JERUSALEM.  

CH. XXV.] Here begins a new series of prophecies, delivered in the time when Ezekiel was commanded to keep silence with regard to Israel. See xxiv. 27.

They occupy eight chapters, and concern those heathen Nations that rejoiced in the destruction of Jerusalem, which has just been described.

The heathen Nations supposed that the God of Israel had been compelled by Babylon, ailed the deities which they worshipped; and such was the imagination of Babylon herself (see Daniel v. 1-4. 23); and this opinion was probably shared by some of the Jews.

Therefore, the God of Israel, in His mercy to His people, and even to the heathen themselves, commissioned His prophet Ezekiel, at the river Chebar, as He had commissioned Jeremiah at Jerusalem (xxvi.-xxx.), to foretell the future destinies of those Nations.

He enabled Ezekiel to foresee and foretell, that they who exulted over Jerusalem, taken and destroyed by the arms of Babylon, would be subdued by the same Power.

He also commissioned Ezekiel, living among the captives of Israel at the river Chebar, to declare that He had given those Nations into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, because that king had executed His purposes in punishing those who were disobedient to Him (xxix. 17-21).

To this it must be added, that God enabled Ezekiel's brother-prophecy, ISAIAH, the description of Babylon, for her pride and rebellion against Him (Jer. i. 11), and to pre-announce the Restoration of Israel to their own land, after seventy years (Jer. xxv. 12; xiiix. 10. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21, 22. Ezra i. 1).

But the beginning of these prophecies, the supremacy of the God of Israel, as the God of all Nations, was vindicated and displayed to the World.

The following prophecies of Ezekiel may be fittedly introduced by a reference to the predictions of Jeremiah, to which they form a sequel, on the same subject, and which were mercifully designed to instruct these great Nations in the truth of the Universal Supremacy of the Lord God of Israel; and also to deliver them from the destruction hanging over them, through the power of Babylon, if they would listen to the warnings of His voice. These prophecies, by their fulfilment, gave clear evidence of the Divine mission of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, not only to Israel, but to the greatest heathen Nations of the Earth.

And thus saith the Lord, saying, Thus saith the Lord to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck, 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 Tyre, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah; and command them to say unto their masters, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say unto your masters; 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 have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto Me:

"And now have I given all these lands into the hand of king Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.

"And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the times of the fulness of the years of my nation, which is seventy years." (Jer. xxvii. 4-11).

SPIRITUAL MEANING OF THESE PROPHECIES AGAINST HEATHEN NATIONS, IN REFERENCE TO ISRAEL, THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

All these prophecies have a literal sense, and are to be expounded literally from the history of the several Nations which they concern, in their relation to Israel the people of God.

But they have also a spiritual significance, and are to be interpreted spiritually; and they have a bearing on the history of the Christian Church, and are fraught with instruction to her. Each of these Nations has a symbolical character, peculiar to itself. Cp. above, on Isaiah, Prol. Note to chap. xiii.

We shall have occasion to enlarge further upon this statement in the notes on the prophecies as they occur in their proper order. In the meantime, it may suffice to remark that AMMON, MOAB, and EDOM (chap. xxvi.), are, in various respects, types of Christian powers and persons behaving in an unbrotherly and perilous manner to the Church of Christ. PHILISTIA represents neighbours of the Christian Sion, who exult with her foes in her misfortunes. TIRE symbolizes a spiritual Power, once exalted with great spiritual gifts and graces, vanquishing its universality, and destroyed by its pride. See note after xxvii. 10. ZIDON is the idolatrous phase of the same power. See xxviii. 22. EGYPT symbolizes the Worldly Power, to which the Christian Church too often looks for succour and support instead of relying on God; and which fails her in the hour of her trial (see on chap. xxxix.), and is itself broken by God.

PROPHECIES AGAINST AMMON, MOAB, EDOM, AND PHILISTIA.  


213
Before
CHRIST
590.

EZEKIEL

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Job

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Arabia.

Ps.

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&c.

Job

27.

Mar.

2.

&c.

Zeph.

2.

8, 10.

Zeph.

2.

8, 9.

ch.

35.

Or, ment.

k Isr. 15, & 16.

Jer. 18, 1, &c.

Amos 2, 11.

ch. 35, 2, 5, 12.

† Heb. shoulder of Moab.

m ver. 4.

|| Or, against the children of Ammon.

n ch. 21, 32.

5. Rabbah] See Deut. iii. 11. 2 Sam. xii. 26.


23. Jer. xlviii. 27. Lam. ii. 15.

On this savage joy of Ammon and Moab, and God's anger on account of it, see Zeph. ii. 8—10, and cp. Ps. lxxiii. 7, 8.

7. a spoil] Lit. food (beg; see Geen. 101; Eueret, 178); or, if the kiri is adopted, boc, a spoil.


9. I will open the side of the Moab] I will lay open their side (lit. shoulder) to the Chaldæan invaders.


— Beth-jeshimoth] Probably in the Jordan valley, on the N. of the Dead Sea (Num. xxxii. 40).

— Baal-menal] More inland, to the S. of Bethshimon, and now called Mifyun, about two miles S. of Heshbon (Num. xxxiii. 38).


10. Ammonites] May not be reckoned among the Nations.

The name of Rabbah, the capital of Ammon, was changed by Ptolemy Philæphus (n.c. 255—247) into Philæphila (S. Jerome). By Origens (in Job, lib. i.) the Ammonites are included in Arabia.

The name of the Moabites disappeared even before that of the Ammonites (Keil, 224; Eueret, 276).

11. I Edom] Concerning her bitter and barbarous enmity to Judah, and her malignant insults over her in the hour of her afflictions, see above on Ps. lxxxvi. 7; and see note on Isa. xxxiv. 5; and below, on Obadiah,—throughout.

13. Teman—Dedan] Or, from Teman and to Dedan—i.e. 214

they, and make their dwellings in thee: they shall eat thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk. 5 And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couching-place for flocks: and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

6 For thus saith the Lord God; Because thou hast clapped thine hands, and stomped with the feet, and rejoiced in heart with all thy despite against the land of Israel; 7 behold, therefore I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for a spoil to the 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 Moab and Seir do say, Behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the heathen; 9 therefore, behold, I will open the side of Moab from the cities, from his cities which are on his frontiers, the glory of the country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-menal, and Kiriataim, unto the men of the east with the Ammonites, and will give them in possession, that the Ammonites shall not be remembered among the nations. 10 And I will execute judgments upon Moab; and they shall know that I am the Lord.

12 Thus saith the Lord God; Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and avenged 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 they of Dedan shall fall by the sword.

14 And 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.

15 Thus saith the Lord God; Because the Philistines have dealt by vengeance, and have taken vengeance with a despicable heart, to destroy it for the old hatred; 16 therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Chereaths, from the south, even to the northern region of Edom. Cp. Jer. xlix. 7. Amos i. 12.

The Spiritual Sense. 14. And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel] This prophecy began to be fulfilled by the conquests of the Marœbeæs in Idumea. See 1 Mac. v. 3, and 2 Mac. x. 16, 17, and see on Jer. xlix. 7. But it is not to be limited to those victories; it has a deeper, spiritual meaning. Edom (as has been already observed on Isa. xxxvi. 6, and on Isa. xxvii. 1; cp. Amos ix. 12; Obad. 1—7) is a representative of all the treacherous and malignant enemies of God's Church; and the vengeance to be wrought upon Edom by the hand of His people Israel, is a spiritual victory achieved by Christ, the Head of all the true Israel of God, and by His faithful people over the ghostly enemies of the Church. See S. Jeromine here, who characterizes Edom as the Flesh warring against the Spirit. Cp. note above, on Balaam's prophecy concerning the Messiah (Num. xxi. 17—19), 'There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall suite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth (or of tuwm). And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city;' and see Keil p. 225, here.

15. the Philistines] Cp. Ps. ix. 8, 9; evii. 9, 10; and Isa. xi. 14, where Philistia is joined with Edom, Moab, and Ammon, as enemies and future vassals of Israel; and see Isa. xiv. 25—32, on the enmity of Philistia to Israel, and its future subjection.

—for the old hatred] Or, in eternal hatred.

16. I will cut off the Chereaths] Literally, I will cause to
Prophecy against Tyre,*

EZEKIEL XXV. 17. XXVI. 1-6. her total overthrow.

and destroy the remnant of the sea coast. * And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; * and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.

XXVI. 1 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, 2 Son of man, * because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, * Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste: * therefore saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. * And they shall destroy the walls of Tyre, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and * make her like the top of a rock. * It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God: and * it shall become a spoil to the nations. * And her daughters which are in the field shall be slain by the sword; * and they shall know that I am the Lord.

PROPHECY AGAINST TYRE.

Ch. XXVII.] This prophecy began to be fulfilled when the insular Tyre was taken (b.c. 586) by Nebuchadnezzar, after a thirteen years' siege, in the year after the taking of Jerusalem. See the note above, on Is. xxiii. 1, and Josephus, Ant. x. 11. 1; c. Aphiol. i. 20. This opinion has been fully established by Hengstl., Hitzlerck, Drechtler, Movers, Phainius. ii. 427; Ditzsch. Puezy on Daniel, 257; Keil here, pp. 255—258; Fairbairn, 290—293; Rawlinson, Anc. Mon. ii. 194.

PROPHETIC FORESHORTENING.

That Nebuchadnezzar did not reduce Tyre to that state of desolation which is here predicted, is certain. Two centuries and a half afterwards, Tyre made a strenuous resistance to the arms of Alexander (Diad. Sic. xvin. 40); Arrian, Exp. Alex. ii. 17; Q. Curtius, iv. 2—4; and even after its reduction by him, it still enjoyed considerable prosperity.

But it is the characteristic of the Divine Prophecy, to behalf the distant results of any great event in the same glance as the event itself. This is an attribute of inspiration, derived from God Himself, with whom "a thousand years are as one day," and Who sees and declares "the end from the beginning" in the twining of any.

The capture of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar was the first blow which shook it on its rocky fortress, and it never recovered the shock. The final desolation in which we now see it, was a consequence of that event. And Ezekiel, with divine foresight, describes by a common process of prophetic foresightening, that desolation as a consequence of that event, just as Isaiah and Jeremiah represent the utter destruction and desolation of Babylon, lying like a mass of broken columns and the stagnant inundations of a vast dreary wilderness, tenanted by deformite creatures, in the immediate background of the prophetic picture of Babelzitter's Feast, and of the capture of the city by Cyrus in that night of revery, although some centuries intervened between that capture and her total desolation. Cp. Hitzlerck here, and Keil, 260, and Fairbairn, 289—291.

1. in the eleventh year, in the first day of the month] The eleventh year of our captivity; the year of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of its king Zedekiah, and its princes by Nebuchadnezzar. Jerusalem taken in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, and was burnt in the fifth month in the tenth day of the month. See above, on Jer. xxxix. 1—7; li. 4—14.

2. the year and day of this prophecy are mentioned, but the month is not specified; but from the context, referring to the capture of Jerusalem, it may be inferred that it was delivered in the month following that event, viz., the fifth month.

3. Tyre] Hebr. tor, a rock; the same as Tore (Genes. 706). The Prophet, as already observed, is speaking specially of the island rock (see v. 5), though his prophecy extends also to the city on the mainland, as it does also to Zion (xxix. 21).

4. the gates of the people] Jerusalem might be well called by this name, as attracting a great influx of people, especially at their three great yearly festivals, and receiving them within her gates; literally, her folding gates, opening to admit them.

5. she is turned unto me] If the tide of population and of traffic is turned away from Jerusalem to Tyre. 6. many nations] The army of Nebuchadnezzar. Cp. Jer. i. 15; xxxiv. 1; li. 27.

7. as the sea causeth his waves to come up] A happy poetical figure, especially as applied to Tyre; Thou, on thy island rock, art, as it were, to laugh at the Lord, the Lord of the sea, and beating on thy cliffs; but thou wilt be overwhelmed by the sea of Nations dashing upon thee in the Chaldean army.

8. I will also scrape her dust] I will sweep even her dust from her, so as to leave her only a bare rock.

9. the top of a rock] Rather, a bare rock; a rock parched up by the heat of the sun, so as to be dry and bare (Genes. 707; cp. Eueret, 1180). On the present desolate condition of Tyre, see Robinson, Palestine, ii. 463—467, and Dr. Thomson, "The Land and the Book," chap. xxxiii. p. 178. The former describes the island as about a mile in length; the part which projects beyond the isthmus (constructed by Alexander the Great) to connect the city with the mainland, is about a quarter of a mile broad, and unoccupied except by fishermen, "as a place to spread nets upon." The island was about half a mile in breadth. Dr. Thomson adds, that "there yet remains one solitary specimen of Tyre's great sea-wall. At the northern end of the island is a stone nearly seventeen feet long, and six and a half thick, still rests just where Tyrian architects placed it thousands of years ago."

The number of granite columns that lie in the sea, particularly in the north of the island, is surprising. The east wall of the inner harbour is entirely founded upon them, and they are thickly spread over the bottom of the sea on every side. Tyre must have been a city of columns and temples. The whole north end of the island is a steep and unapproachable snow-washed rock. The land along the western shore, and the entire south half of the island is now given up to cultivation, pastureage, and the general cemetery of the town; and here are found the remains of those splendid edifices for which Tyre was celebrated.

The entire south half of the island city is buried beneath ruins of columns and marble floors.

6. her daughters which are in the field] The daughter towns of Tyre.轮转的海沿海

The prophecy against Tyre was fulfilled when Nebuchadnezzar took the city after a thirteen years' siege.
For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people. He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field: and he shall make a fort against thee, and cast a mount against thee, and lift up the buckler against thee. And he shall set engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers. 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, as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach. 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. And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandize: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water.

And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease; and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard. And I 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.

Thus saith the Lord God to Tyrus; Shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee? Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their broderied garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble at every moment, and be astonished at thee. And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed, that wast inhabited of seafaring men, the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which cause their terror to be on all that haunt it! Now shall the isles tremble in the day of thy fall; yea, the isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure.

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; when I shall bring thee down with 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 in the land of the living: 21 I will make thee terrors, and thou shalt be no more; 22 though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God.

XXVII. 1 The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, 2 Now, thou son of man, take up a lamentation for Tyrus; 3 and say unto Tyrus, O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea, which art a merchant of the people for many isles, Thus saith the Lord God; O Tyrus, thou hast said, I am of perfect beauty. 4 Thy borders are in the midst of the seas, thy builders have perfected thy beauty. 5 They have made all thy ships boards of fir trees of Senir: they have taken cedars from Lebanon to make masts for thee. 6 Of the oaks of Bashan they have made thine oars; 7 the company of the Ashurites have made thy benches of ivory, brought out of the isles of Chittim. 7 Fine linen with brodered work from Egypt was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail; 8 their mariners were in thee, were thy pilots. 9 The ancients of Gebal and the wise men thereof were in thee thy 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 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 Arad 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 thy beauty perfect. 12 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. 13 Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy merchants: they traded the persons of men and vessels of brass in thy market. 14 They of the house of Togarmah traded in thy fairs with horses and horsemen and

—— I shall set glory in the land of the living] Thou, O Tyre, wilt be reckoned with the dead; but I will set glory in the land of the living, especially in the land of My People Israel, who will revive in Him Who is the Life, namely, in Christ.

LAMENTATION OVER TYRE.

Ch. XXVII. 3. at the entry of the sea] At the inlets and outlets, i.e. the harbours, of the sea. Here is another proof that he is speaking of the insular Tyre, rather than of that on the main land. The former had two harbours; one on the north, called the Sidonian; the other on the south-east, called the Egyptian; the former still subsists, the latter is covered by sand (Movers, Phoen. ii. 214). Dr. Thomson (p. 180) doubts whether there was ever a harbour on the south, and supposes that the two harbours were on the north.

4. in the midst of the seas] Literally, in the heart of the sea.

This phrase is repeated in vs. 25—27.

5. ship boards] Literally, double planks, i. e. on each side of the ship.

6. the company of the Ashurites have made thy benches of ivory] Or, they made thy benches, or decks, with ivory inlaid in box-wood (Hebr. tLisa'asubrin). See Is. xii. 19; ix. 13, where the word is rendered box-tree. Cp. Gen. 455; Priest 1450; Bochart, Phal. iii. 5; Keil, 237; and Virg. (Een. x. 137)—

"Qua leuant per artem Inclusum hse, aut Oriet terebintho Lucet obsr."

7. Chittim] Cyprus and other islands and coast-lands of the Mediterranean. See Is. xii. 19; ix. 13, where the word is rendered box-tree. Cp. Gen. 455; Priest 1450; Bochart, Phal. iii. 5; Keil, 237; and Virg. (Een. x. 137)—

"Qua leuant per artem Inclusum hse, aut Oriet terebintho Lucet obsr."

8. that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail] Or, was thy sail to be for thee a banner (Hebr. nes). On the many-coloured sails of Phoenician vessels, see Movers, ii. 3. 165.

9. Lamentation in Greece (see Gen. x. 4). The name seems to be connected with Eli in the Peloponnesus. Leocina was famous for its purple (Horat. 2 Carm. xviii. 8; Plin. ix. 36), or, as is suggested by others, with Eólia.


13. they traded in thy fairs] Literally, they made thy profits.

The word rendered profits is from azab, to let go (Gen. 617), and is used seven times in this chapter (ver. 12. 14. 16. 19. 22. 27. 33); and it seems to mean what is left or allowed to a merchant as his gain, commission, or profit, in any commercial transaction. See Scalvold, Hübner, Reinmair, Keil.


15. Tubal, and Meshech] The Tiberiense and Moschi, between the Caspian and Black Sea. See Gen. x. 2.


17. Togarmah] Armenia (Gen. x. 3). 

18. horsesmen] Riding horses (Genes.).
The traffic of Tyre.

The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market: and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious in the midst of the seas.

26. Thy rowsers have brought thee into great waters: the east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas.

27. Thy riches, and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all men of war, that are in thee, and in all thy company which is in the midst of thee, shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin.

28. The suburbs shall shake at the sound of the cry of thy pilots.

29. And all 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; and shall cause their voice to be heard against thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they shall lament over thee.

25. The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee. The ships of Tarshish were thy merchantmen (Hebr.); literally, thy walls. Cp. Job xxxiv. 11. Jer. v. 10. Ezra iv. 13. The metaphor seems to be the same as that adopted by the Athenians (when their city was burnt) calling their ships their "wooden walls." Some render it caravans (e.g. KJV 246). See "in the midst of the seas." In the heart of the sea. Observe the contrast. Tyre was once like a noble ship, and reigned as a Queen in the heart of the sea (see on v. 4); she is now wrecked and plunged into it, as Jonah into the heart of the sea (Matt. xii. 40); but differing from Jonah in this, that she is never more to rise (v. 36; xxvi. 21).


The Spiritual Tyre.

30. cast up dust upon their heads.] See Rev. xviii. 18. With the words in vs. 30—32 we may compare Rev. xviii. 17—19, "Erech, shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her candlestick! for in one hour is she made desolate." The words of Ezekiel's prophecy against Tyre, being
Prophecy against EZEKIEL XXVII. 31—36. XXVIII. 1—12. the King of Tyre.

wallow themselves in the ashes: 31 and they shall make themselves utterly bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee with bitterness of heart and bitter wailing. 32 And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, saying, What city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea? 33 When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many people; thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise.

34 In the time when thou shalt be broken by the seas in the depths of the waters thy merchandise and all thy company in the midst of thee shall fall. 35 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. 36 The merchants among the people shall hiss at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt be any more.

XXVIII. 1 The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord God; Because thine heart is lifted up, and a thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, 2 in the midst of the seas; c yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God: 3 behold, thou 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: 5 and thy great wisdom and by thy traffick hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches:

6 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; 7 behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. 8 They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die of the deaths that are slain in the midst of the seas. 9 Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee.

10 Thou shalt die of the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God.

11 Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 12 Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God:

adopted in the Apocalypse, suggest the belief that it (like the foregoing one concerning Edom) is not to be limited to the literal Tyre, but has also a spiritual significance for Christian times, and is to be extended to a peculiar form of enmity to God, which is symbolized by Tyre in its traffic. On this subject, see the note below, after xxviii. 19.

shall wallow themselves in the ashes? Shall bestow themselves—their heads especially—with ashes (Sept., Vulg.).

33. thy wares went forth out of the seas They sprang forth from the sea as a field which belonged to thee, and was ploughed by thee, and yielded its harvests to thee.

36. and never shalt be any more] According to the Divine warning (xxvi. 21).

PROPHETCY AGAINST THE KING OF TYRE.

Ch. XXVIII. 2. say unto the prince of Tyre The prince (Hebr. nāgīd, Gezer. 531), called king (meleē, v. 12); at that time Ittībahu (Josephus, c. Anton. i. 25).

32. and never shalt be any more] According to the Divine warning (xxvi. 21).

lifted up, and thou hast said, A God am I, and in the seat of God I sit, in the midst of the seas. And the Prophet adds below, v. 6, thou set thine heart as the heart of God— the heart is in Hebrew psychology the seat of all intellectual powers as well as of the affectional. Thou deemest thyself to be equal to God in intelligence and wisdom, and aspirest to be above Him. St. Paul seems to have had this prophecy in his mind when, describing the Lawless One, he says that he "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." See below, v. 10.

10. Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised] The word uncircumcised (Hebr. 'ărāḇī) is used by Ezekiel in a spiritual sense, to signify what is represented as ungodly by God; and "to die the deaths (plural) of the uncircumcised," is to come to the miserable end of the ungodly. Cp. xxxii. 18, and xxxiii. 19; xliv. 7, 9.

12. a lamentation] Cp. xxvii. 2, and on vv. 29—36, compare the lamentations over the mystical Babylon in the Apocalypse (Rev. xviii. 9—19).
Ezekiel, once in Eden; Ezekiel xxviii. 13—19.

Before CHRIST
k ch. 27. 3. 27. 36. 1 Heb. terrae.
ver. 3. 20. 40. 21. 25.

Ch. 27. 8, 9. 25, 26.

Or, ruby.
Or, chrysolite.
Or, chrysopras.

m ch. 26. 15.

n See Exod. 25. 20. 16.
ver. 16.
o ch. 20. 49. 15.

13. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carnelian, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. 14. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; 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.

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, 0 covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. 17. 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. 19. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.

— Thou seest up the sun, full of wisdom] Rather, thou art the sealer of a perfect structure. See Gen. 1:4; and Keil, 251, and below, xlix, 10, the only place where the word (tocharis) occurs, and where it is rendered pattern. Thou art the consummation of a model of perfection. The king of Tyre, who was the head of the Tyrian community, and completed and crowned its organization, was like a seal which gave perfection to it.

13. Thou hast been in Eden] Rather, in Eden, the garden of God, thou wast. The full of the prince of Tyre is compared with the fall of Adam in paradise.

Here is another feature which suggests to the reader, that the prince of Tyre is a type of some Personage endued originally with great spiritual and intellectual powers and privileges by God. See below, e, 19.

On the meaning of this and other figurative expressions which follow, see note after e, 19.

evcry precious stone was thy covering] As in Eden; enriched with precious stones (Gen. ii. 11, 12).

14. Thou art the anointed cherub] Rather, a cherub of honour, an angel-form, anointed with the unction of God, as a Priest and King. This also points to some sacred as well as royal Personage in the Church of God. See what follows.

that covereth] Like the cherub over the mercy-seat of the Ark in the Holy of Holies, to which God’s special presence was vouchsafed. See Exod. xxv. 26, and 1 Kings vii. 27; and see above, ix, 3; x, 4; below, xli. 18.

upon the holy mountain of God] In the Church of God. See xx. 40, and Isa. ii. 3.

Here is another reason for supposing that the fulness of this prophecy reaches onward to Christian times.

thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire] Precious stones, glowing with fire; emblems of the living members of God’s Church, who glow with fire of love and zeal, and who are compared to jewels (Mal. iii. 17). Cp. Cant. vii. 1, Isa. xli. 10. Cp. xiv. 16.

18. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries] Here is another presumptive proof that the Prophet is here speaking of a degenerate and corrupt Potentate in the Church of God.

will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee—in the sight of all them that behold thee] Here is another point of resemblance between the Prince of Tyre in this part of the prophecy and the mystical Babylon of the Apocalypse. See Rev. xvii. 16, and xviii. 9. “The kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning.”

19. Never shalt thou be any more] So ends the Prophecy concerning Tyre. And it is said in the Apocalypse concerning the mystical Babylon, “Thus with violence shall the great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all” (Rev. xviii. 21).

On the Spiritual Sense of this Prophecy concerning the Sins and Punishment of Tyre and the King.

It has already been submitted as a question for the learned reader’s consideration, whether this Prophecy of the Holy Spirit of God, speaking by Ezekiel in Holy Scripture for the edification of all ages of the world, can be rightly said to have been exhausted by the destruction of the king of the literal insular Tyre, and whether it does not reach onward to Christian times, even to these latter days. See on xxviii. 30.

Other prophecies of Ezekiel and of other Hebrew Prophets have this character; they have had a literal fulfillment, but they also extend to other Nations and Cities symbolized by Edom, Philistia, and Babylon, and are to be applied to spiritual and moral Powers typified by those Nations and Cities. They have a spiritual overplop, and appear to be even now in course of fulfillment.

With regard to this prophecy concerning Tyre, it may further be observed, that it is followed immediately by a prophecy connected with the last times, but which has not yet been fulfilled—the conversion of the Jews (cp. 25, 26).

It may be reverently but confidently affirmed, that there are expressions in the foregoing prophecy concerning the King of Tyre (cp. 1—19) which cannot be applied in their literal sense, without great violence, to a heathen and idolatrous prince like the King of Tyre, but demand some other application.

They pre-announce the dominion sway of a spiritual Per-
sonage or Power who is elated by pride, engendered by his relations with various Nations of the Earth, doing homage to him, and ministering to his aggrandizement and wealth; and he lifts himself up presumptuously against heaven, and claims the honor of God (v. 6).

In confirmation of this opinion, it may be observed that this inference forced itself upon the minds of almost all ancient readers and Expositors of this prophecy. They felt that it could not be applied to any other than the beast, whose breadth and depth to a heathen and idolatrous king; and that it looked farther and higher, and concerned a Spiritual Potentate.

Many of the ancient Fathers applied it to Lucifer himself. See Orig., Homil. xiii. in Ezek.; Tertullian, c. Marcion. ii. 10; S. Ambrose, de Parad. (v. 6); S. Jerome, in Ezekii, Evang. and Epist. 146; S. Augustine, de Genesi ad Lit. xi. 32, who says that it is to be explained of his army of rebel angels. See also S. Gregorius, Moral. xviii. 18; Villalpanda, A Capode, Estilo, vii. 8; and others.

But there is a strong objection to this view. According to it, this portion of Scripture would not be a prophecy, but would refer to a past event—the fall of the Evil One from heaven. At the same time, it may be readily allowed that this prophecy looks forward to the fall of Lucifer working in the Power which is here symbolized. Cp. 2 Thess. ii. 9.

Accordingly, we find that some other ancient Expositors apply it to what was still future; namely, to the domination and rule of the Beast, as expressed by See S. Hippolytus, de Christo et Antichristo, §§ 18, 53.

The best Interpreter of the prophecies of Holy Scripture is Time. The ancient Fathers did not possess the means which have been afforded to us, for the interpretation of this prophecy. On such matters as these let us speak with humble reverence. After careful examination of this prophecy, and after a diligent comparison of it with the spiritual phenomena of Christendom, we may perhaps give our assent to the judgment of the learned Fielteiga (in his note at the end of his exposition of Isaiah, chap. xxiii., vol. i., pp. 705—708), that this prophecy of the Holy Spirit of God, speaking by Ezekiel, has not only a literal reference to Tyre, but has been fulfilled in part, and is in course of complete fulfilment, in the supreme head of the Church of Papal Rome. In this view, all that otherwise was obscure becomes clear. Tyre excelled in the miseries of Jerusalem, and looked for an increase of her commerce from its fall (xxvi. 2, 3). The Church of Rome seems to feel an uncharitable and envying conscience in the prosperous state of other Churches, and does not scruple to express a hope of deriving a large accession of prolesytes from their misfortunes. The description of the Prince of Tyre finds its special counterpart in the Bishop of Rome. The word Tyre (Hebr. tarshish) signifies rock. The Bishop of Rome asserts that he and his see are the Rock on which the Church is built; see on Matt. xvi. 18. No one can doubt that he sets himself up in the seat of God, and claims to be addressed as God. See v. 2, and compare note below on 2 Thess. ii. 8, and 1 Pet. ii. 7.—The Church does not suffer him to claim this dignity, and he is charging himself for the attribute of Infallibility. He also vaunts his wisdom, and claims to pronounce confidently on the most mysterious questions. He has lately put forth a new dogma—that of the Immaculate Conception. According to his own opinion, there is no secret that is hidden from him (v. 3). Cp. on Rev. xviii. 234. He has amassed worldly wealth by spiritual Traffic and Commerce with other nations, and his heart is therefore lifted up (v. 5). Cp. Rev. xviii. 4, pp. 252, 253. It is also repeatedly allowed that the Bishop of Rome may be said to have been once in Eden, like Adam before the Fall. He was placed in the Garden of God, the Christian Church, to keep it and to dress it. He was like an angel of God; he was anointed with spiritual unction, as a cherub spreading his wings and sweet incense in the Holy of Holies, the Church of God (p. 14). The early Bishops of Rome were richly endued with spiritual gifts and graces, and they adored the true God with pure and holy worship. They were set high on the holy mountain of the Church of God (v. 14), and they walked among the lively stones and precious jewels of God's house, as St. Paul testifies: the "faith of the Church of Rome was spoken of with praise and joy throughout the whole world" (Rom. i. 8). And the history of the Church records that many of the ancient Bishops of Rome, like Adam after his Fall, did not repent, and preserved of his former glory. He resembles a fallen angel. He has deified his own sanctuaries (v. 18) by corrupt doctrine and worship; therefore his destiny is declared by Ezekiel, vv. 17—19, and by the Apocalypse, xvii. 16; xviii. 9.

This prophecy concerning the fall of Tyre and the destruction of its prince, is followed by a prophecy pre-announcing the Conversion of the Jews. See vv. 25, 26. There is good reason to believe—and the Jews themselves entertain that opinion—that the fall of Tyre will be followed by great blessings from heaven to the Ancient People of God. See below, the notes on Rev. xvi. 12, pp. 246, 247.

ZIDON.

21. Zidon] Destroyed also by Nebuchadnezzar (xxxii. 30. Jer. xxv. 22; xvii. 4). Zidon had ministered to Tyre (see xxvii. 8); and since the days of Ahab (1 Kings xvi. 31), and even of Solomon (1 Kings x. 9), she had infected Israel with her idolatry; and the worship of Thammuz at Jerusalem, in the days of Ezekiel (viii. 14), was imported from Zidon.

The reason why a prophecy against Zidon, as distinct from Tyre, was added by Ezekiel, seems to have been this—that, while Tyre represents a Power relying on its own wisdom and wealth, derived from its own extensive traffic, and from the homage of dependent States, Zidon exhibits another phase of the same Power—that of idolatry.

And there shall be no more a prickling brier unto the house of Israel] See Num. xxxiii. 55, to which these words refer.

Conversion of Israel.

25. Thus saith the Lord] This prophecy, which began to be fulfilled in the return of the exiles from Babylon, awaits its complete accomplishment in the latter days. The Church of Christ, which has sprung forth in Zion, will be extended, so as to enfold the Jews as well as the Heathen in her pale. See above, xi. 17; 20; xx. 41; xxxvi. 23. As is well said by a recent Commentator on Ezekiel, "The Lord did bring back Israel to their own land" (in the days of Zerubbabel and Ezra) "and they were permitted to dwell in comparative peace. But this prophecy of Ezekiel should not be limited to that temporary and partial fulfilment. We see its full extent and compass only when we contemplate Israel rising in Christ, and in the Church of the New Testament, to be the head and centre of all that is great and good in the world, before which all that is
are scattered, and shall be 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 dwell safely therein, and shall build houses, and plant vineyards; yea, they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that despise them round about them; and they shall know that I am the Lord their God.

XXIX. 1 In the tenth year, in the tenth month, in the twelfth day of the month, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt: 3 speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself. 4 But I will put hooks in thy jaws, and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales, and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers, and all the fish of thy rivers shall stick unto thy scales. 5 And I will leave thee from among the wild beasts of the field, and I will give thee to the beasts of the field among the fowls of heaven. 6 And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel. 7 When they took hold of thee by thy hand, thou didst break, and rend all their shoulder: and when they leaned upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand.

3 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will bring a sword upon thee, and cut off man and beast out of thee. 9 And the land of Egypt shall be desolate and waste; and they shall know that I am the Lord: because he hath said, The river is mine, and I have made it. 10 Behold, therefore I am

adverse to it must fall. The heritage of Jacob is now no longer the narrow strip of territory which was given to the seed of blessing as a temporary and earnest, but the whole ransomed Earth, which, to its utmost bounds, is the destined possession of Christ and His Israel offspring. Till this consummation is reached, the prophecy still waits for its full realization (Dr. Fairbairn, p. 380). 26. shall build houses, and plant vineyards] See above, on Isa. lxv. 21.

PROPHETCY AGAINST EGYPT, THE GREAT WORLDLY POWER, TO WHICH ISRAEL LOOKED FOR HELP, INSTEAD OF TRUSTING IN GOD.

Ch. XXIX.] This chapter, from v. 1 to v. 21, is the Hopharath to Exod. vi. 2—ix. 35. By this appointment, the Hebrew Church instructs us to regard these prophecies against Egypt as a continuation of God's denunciations against that country in the days of Moses for its rebellion against Him. Homer, the first king of the ancient Egyptians, was a grandson of Sin, the first king of Egypt, and encountered the King of Tyre in an engagement made by sea (Herodotus ii. 161), and recovered much of the influence which Egypt had lost since its defeat at Carthage by Nebuchadnezzar, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxxiv. 7, Jer. xxxi. 2). He was elbowed by his conquerors, and it is reported to have said that "no god could deprive him of his kingdom," so firmly did he imagine it to be established (Herodotus ii. 169). The kings of Judah looked to Egypt for help against Babylon. Pharaoh Hophra was the king on whom Nebuchadnezzar, the last king of Jerusalem, relied for succour, instead of trusting in God, and who by a temporary relief deluded him, and deserted him in his distress. See Jer. xxxvii. 5—8. Thus Egypt was a cause of the destruction of Jerusalem, and eventually was subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, from whose hand it had promised to deliver Jerusalem. "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life" (his own subjects, according to Herodotus, ii. 161, 9), "as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon his enemy, and that sought his life." See above, on Jer. liv. 30. Cp. Jer. xliii. 25, 26.

3. the great dragon] The emblem of Egypt. See above, on Isa. xxvii. 1; li. 9. — My river is mine own] Compare the boast of Pharaoh Hophra, in the note on n. 2.

4. the fish of thy rivers] Thy people.

5. upon the open fields] Upon the face of the ground.

6. because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel] Because Egypt is a staff no stronger than a reed to Israel, which leant upon it for support, instead of relying on God; cp. Isa. xx. 5, 6; xxx. 3, 5; xxxi. 3; xxxii. 16. Jer. ii. 36.

7. When they took hold of thee—stand] This verse is parenthetical; and the sentence began in v. 6, because, &c., is continued in v. 8. Therefore, &c. Cp. Keil, p. 265.

8. by thy hand] The Prophet uses the word hand, in order to remind the reader that he is not speaking literally of a reed, but of human help, which stretched forth its hand with a promise of support. This is a common practice with Ezekiel. Cp. xxvi. 26, 27 with ver. 9 and 11, where Tyre is described as a noble ship, and yet as having towers and walls, then didst break] Egypt professed help to Jerusalem, but forsook her in the hour of peril. See Jer. xxxvii. 5—7; above, xvii. 5.

— to be at a stand] Rather, to shake or totter. Cp. Ps. lxxix. 25. Sept., Vulg., Syriac, Genis. 638; Fuerst, 1653.

9. I will give a sword upon thee] The sword of Nebuchadnezzar. See v. 19, and xxxii. 13. It has been supposed, with much probability, that Nebuchadnezzar was encouraged by the revolt of Amasis against Pharaoh Hophra, to invade Egypt, and was enabled to subdue it with greater ease. See Wilkinson, Anc. Egypt. i. 176—178; Fairbairn, 328, Herod ii. 162—169; note above, on Jer. xlix. 30.
against thee, and against thy rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate; from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia.

No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years.

And I will make the land of Egypt desolate 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.

Yet thus saith the Lord God; At the end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the lands where they are scattered among the nations.

The Forty Years of Egypt’s Humiliation; its Recovery; Historical Uses of Sacred Prophecy.—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel.

12. I will scatter.] See the foregoing note, v. 2, and Jer. xlv. 19, foretelling Nebuchadnezzar’s conquest of Egypt: “O thou daughter dwelling in Egypt, furnish thyself to go into captivity: for Noph shall be desolate and without an inhabitant. Destruction shall come to the city, and to the temple.”

13. forty years.] This portion of the prophecy, specifying the period forty years as the duration of Egypt’s humiliation, has been supposed by some to have had no fulfilment in fact. It is said by others (as Ewald), that the phrase forty years means merely “forty years of captivity” (Hitze); or that it points to a period of desolation before the death of Pharaoh Hophra (Pusey, Daniel, p. 275). Others suppose that it is only a prophetic symbol of a time of distress, like the forty years’ captivity of Israel and Judah, to be regarded as an image of Egypt’s desolation (Hitzig); or that it points to a period of desolation before the death of Pharaoh Hophra (Pusey, Daniel, p. 275). Others suppose that it is only a symbol of forty years of desolation, which it is certain was suffered by Egypt.

Doubtless, Egypt is a type of such a Power, and is presented to us by the Prophet as such; but it has also an historical reality, and this number must have, in its primary sense, a literal value.

If we were to regard such numbers as these as symbols, when the Prophet is not describing things in an ideal sphere, and “in the visions of God” (as below, xl. 2), and when the Prophet is not like a metaphorical personage in a figurative representation (as above, iv. 5—8), but is foretelling events in the history of nations, we should mark the harmony and uniformity of the prophecy, and introduce confusion into it. A symbolical Egypt may have a typical chronology, but a real Egypt, such as we have seen above, did not. Ezekiel’s forty years as symbolical, it might be fairly alleged that Jeremiah’s seventy years (Jer. xxv. 12; xxix. 10) are symbolical also. But we know from Divine authority (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23; Ezra i. 1, 2) that the seventy years of Jeremiah are to be understood literally, and it seems most reasonable to regard the forty years of Ezekiel as real also.

The Egyptian history of Herodotus gives us no information of such a period of time. But, as has been well observed by Scaliger’s other (as Ewald, on Daniel, p. 275; Keil, p. 290) Herodotus received his information concerning Egyptian events from the priests of Egypt, who were biased in favour of their own nation, and were careful to disguise everything that might lead to the reality, and give a partial colouring to their narrations. We have already seen a striking example of this in the pages of Herodotus, in the transfer of the scene of the discomfiture of Sennacherib’s army, from Jerusalem to Pelusium in Egypt, and in the ascription of the victory obtained by the prayers of Hezekiah to the favourable acceptance of the applications of an Egyptian king. See above, on Isa. xxxvi. 16.

If we were to refuse credit to Ezekiel’s prophecy concerning this term of forty years, because it is not mentioned by Herodotus, we should be obliged, on the same ground, to disbelieve the fulfilment of the prediction of Nebuchadnezzar’s conquest of Egypt, which is authenticated by Jeremiah (xliii. 10; xlviii. 13), and by secular historians (such as Megasthenes and Berosus, in Josephus, Ant. x. I. 11; contra Apion, i. 19; cp. Euseb. Prep. Evang. iv. 40, 41; and see Basileios, iii. 456), but is not mentioned by Herodotus (pp. 230, 231; iv. 40, 41). This prophecy probably took place between B.C. 580 and B.C. 570; and the expiration of the forty years would nearly coincide with the capture of Babylon by Cyrus.

It is therefore substantially for the reader’s consideration, whether the forty years of Egypt’s humiliation, and the captivity of its people by Nebuchadnezzar, predicted by Ezekiel, may not be illustrated by the seventy years of the humiliation of Jerusalem, and the captivity of its people by the same Monarch, predicted by Jeremiah.

There is good reason to believe that Cyrus was acquainted with the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel; see above, on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21—23, and on Ezra i. 1, where it is said, “Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, and he made a proclamation throughout his kingdom,” for the restoration of the Jews to Jerusalem, and for the rebuilding of the Temple.

The Lord’s generosity to the Jews, whose captivity extended only thirty years, and the restoration of the Jews by Cyrus was a consequence, under God, of his knowledge of those prophecies. May not the Egyptian captives also in Babylon have been restored by Cyrus when he took possession of Egypt? This may have been more probable from the facts (see on xxx. 6), that among these captives from Egypt were many Jews, whom Cyrus would be willing to restore to their homes.

The great conqueror Cyrus, whose name was pronounced with marks of reverence by the God of Israel, speaking by his Prophet Isaiah, about a century and a half before his birth (see above, on Is. xlv. 28; xlv. 1), in a prophecy doubtless known to Cyrus himself, may perhaps have been willing to show his grateful reverence for the Lord of Hosts, whose Prophet Isaiah (as we learn from his history) was the leading his aid to the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah’s successor, Jeremiah, who foretold that the captivity of the Jews would last seventy years, and that then they would be restored; and his edict, issued for their restoration, may have been the result of this prophecy. See above, on Ezra i. 21—23. And, in like manner, may not the benefit of liberation to Egypt after forty years, have accrued to it, from a desire on the part of Cyrus to do homage to God, speaking by Ezekiel, the great Prophet of Israel, in whose time Egypt’s captivity was, after forty years the Egyptian captives should be restored to their own land? And may he be not thus have shown his reverence for the God of Israel, whose Prophet Ezekiel was, and whose gift Cyrus piously and gratefully ascribed his own possession of the land of Egypt? See on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23, and on Ezra i. 2.

Perhaps, as the decree of Cyrus for the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem was, “after having been long lost,” professedly discovered at Elephantine (Ezra vi. 1—5), so the time may come, when the researches of travellers and archaeologists, which have brought to light so many hidden treasures of ancient lore at Nineveh and other cities of the East, may reveal an edict of Cyrus for the restoration of the Egyptians, and cast new light on the prophecies of Ezekiel. It is an interesting reflex-
Egyptians from the people whither they were scattered: 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 habitation; and they shall be there a base kingdom. 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. And it shall be no more the 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.

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, Son of man, 'Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it: 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 take her spoil, and take her prey; and it shall be the wages for his army. I have given him the land of Egypt for his labour wherewith he served against me, because they wrought for me, saith the Lord God.

21 In that day will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth, and instead of helping Israel, is only a remembrancer before God of Israel's guilt, in preferring Egypt's protection to that of the Most High. Therefore the "Helper and the helpers" are both humbled by God, executing His judgment upon them by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar.

18. every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled] In the hard labour of the Babylonian soldiery, making a causeway from the mainland to the island of Tyre, in the thirteenth years of the siege, in order to take it by assault. Cp. xxvi. 10 (S. Jerome) — yet had he no wages for the service] No wages equivalent to the service. On account of the length of the siege of Tyre, and by reason of her insular position and the number of her ships, Tyre was enabled to provide a large portion of her gold and silver, and other treasures, into other countries; and when the city was taken, Nebuchadrezzar found little in it to recompense the pains he had taken in besieging it (S. Jerome and Cyril, in Eccl. xxvii. 18).

If God rewarded such a monarch as Nebuchadrezzar, who was unconsciously an instrument in His hands, for working out His purposes, how much more will He recompense the labours of faithful Sovereign Rulers, who knowingly and deliberately exercise their power in advancing His kingdom, and promoting the cause of the Gospel of Christ! See Ep. Sanders, iii. 27.

PROMISE TO ISRAEL IN DISTRESS.

21. In that day] When all hope of help from Egypt is taken away in consequence of her humiliation, and even Jerusalem itself is reduced to ruins, then I will not leave My people without succour. Worthy hopes will have failed, and this failure of earthly support will excite them to look up for heavenly. I will then open thy mouth in words of comfort to them, and they will listen to thee and to the voice of the goodly company of Prophets. Cp. xxiv. 27; xxxii. 22, and Thedoreet here. Then I will cause the horn of their strength to bud forth (words adopted from 1 Sam. ii. 1. Ps. cxxxi. 17), when the horns of all worldly support are broken.

This prophecy is ever being fulfilled, when the Church of God, feeling the vanity of all her hopes for support from the Egyptians of worldly protection, and seeing all her anticipations of
I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them; and they shall know that I am the Lord.

XXX. 1 The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord God; 3 Howl ye, Woe worth the day! 4 For the day is near, even the day of the Lord is near, a cloudy day; it shall be the time of the heathen. 4 And the sword shall come upon Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundations shall be broken down. 5 Ethiopia, and Libya, and Lydia, and all the mingled people, and Chub, and the men of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword.

6 Thus saith the Lord; They also that uphold Egypt shall fall; and the pride of her power shall come down: 7 from the tower of Syene shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord God. 8 And 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 destroyed. 9 In that day shall messengers go forth from me in ships to make the careless Egyptians afraid, and great pain shall come upon them, as in the day of Egypt: for, lo, it cometh.

Thus saith the Lord God; 1 I will also make the multitude of Egypt to cease by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon. 1 He and his people, 2 the terrible of the nations, shall be brought to destroy the land: 3 and they shall draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with the slain. 12 And 1 I will make the rivers dry, and 1 sell the land into the hand of the wicked: and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the Lord have spoken it.

Thus saith the Lord God; 1 I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; 2 and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: 3 and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt. 14 And I will make Pathros desolate, and will set fire in |Zoan, 1 and will execute judgments in No. 15 And I will pour my fury upon Sin, the strength of Ethiopia. 8 They also that uphold Egypt shall fall[1] Egypt professed to uphold Jerusalem; and Jerusalem looked to her for support; but Egypt will not be able to uphold herself, nor will any be able to uphold her. Such will be the fate of all worldly Powers relying on themselves, and rebelling against God. — from the tower of Syene] Rather, from Migdol to Syene. See xxix. 10.

Judgment upon Egypt.

Ch. XXX. 3, a cloudy day] Compare Joel i. 13, 15; ii. 2.
— the time of the heathen] Literally, a season of heathen, when their power is broken. Cp. Obad. 15. Egypt is the representation of Heathendom in a particular respect; namely, of worldly heathen powers, made a ground of trust by the Church, preferring them to God. See above on xxix. 21.
4. in Ethiopia] Allied with Egypt (see e. 9; and cp. Jer. xlvii. 9); also resorted to by Israel for succour. See on Isa. xviii., Prelim. Note.
6. the mingled people] The mercenary forces of Egypt from various nations.
— Chub] The site of which is unknown; perhaps Coba, in Mauritanian (Hin. Antonin. p. 18), or Coban, in Morocca (Ptolem.); or Cobe, in Ethiopia (Everset, 641).
7. the land that is in league] Literally, the sons of the land of the covenant. Perhaps Bashen (Gen. xlii. 34), or the Jews (Vox. v. Part II., 229).
Ezekiel 30

Before Christ 522.

15, 16. And I will set fire in Egypt: Sin shall have great pain, and No shall be rent asunder, and Noph shall have distresses daily. 16. The young men of Aven and of Pi-beseth shall fall by the sword: and these cities shall go into captivity. At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be darkened, and I shall break there the yokes of Egypt: and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her: for as her, a cloud shall cover her, and her daughters shall go into captivity.

Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt: and they shall know that I am the Lord.

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, 21. Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and lo, it shall not be bound up to be healed, to put a roller to bind it, to make it strong to hold the sword. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will break his arms, the strong, and that which was broken; and I will cause the sword to fall out of his hand. And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries. 23. 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. But I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down; and 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. And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries; and they shall know that I am the Lord.

XXXI. 1. 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; 3. Whom art thou like in thy greatness?

Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs. 4. The waters made him great, the deep set him up high with her rivers running round about his plants, and sent out her little rivers—"the yokes of Egypt" the yokes imposed by her on other nations. Cp. xxiv. 27.

21. a roller A bandage.

23, 24. I will scatter the Egyptians—Babylon. These paragraphs, taken together, show that the captivity here foretold of the Egyptians was to be in the kingdom of Babylon. Cp. xxix. 13.

The Fall of Assyria, a Foreshadowing of the Fall of the Power of Egypt. Ch. XXXII.] Assyria, as has been already observed, was a representative of the worldly infidel Powers relying on their own strength, opposed to God and His Chrieh, and defying and blaspheming Him. It was distinct from Babylon, Edom, Tyre, &c., which are characterized by hostility of a different character. It was, therefore, the fittest of all powers to be coupled with Egypt, as it is here. Besides, it has a resemblance to Egypt in another respect. Israel and Judah on many occasions showed their want of faith in God by forsaking Him, and resorting to the ungodly Power of Assyria for help (see 2 Kings xvi. 7—10. Isa. ivii. 9. Jer. ii. 18. Hos. vii. 11; xiv. 3, as they did to Egypt (Isa. xxx. 2. Jer. ii. 18). 3. the thick boughs, the clouds (Sept.). "Capit inter umbila condit" (Virgil). Cp. xix. 11.
Unto all the trees of the field. Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long because of the multitude of waters, when he shot forth. All the 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. Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches: for his root was by great waters. The cedars in the garden of God could not hide him: the fir trees were not like his boughs, and the cheesnut trees were not like his branches; nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty. 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.

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 his heart is lifted up in his height; I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the heathen; he shall surely deal with him: I have driven him out for his wickedness.

And strangers, the terrible of the nations, have cut him off, and have left him: 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. Upon his ruin shall all the fowls of the heaven remain, and all the beasts of the field shall be upon his branches: 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 stand up in their height, all that drink water: for they are all delivered unto death, to the nether parts of the earth, in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit.

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 to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him. I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them.

It has been alleged by some expositors, that their princes (i.e. princes of trees) is a senseless phrase; but, in reply to this allegation, it may be observed that trees here represent princes, as often in Scripture; and that what Ezekiel wishes to make clear is, that he is not speaking literally of trees, but of princes symbolized by them, and who are therefore called their princes; and thus he prepares the way for what immediately follows:—They are all delivered unto death, to the nether parts of the earth, in the midst of the children of men with them that go down to the pit. These words are not applicable to trees; but they are applicable to princes, symbolized by them. And it is very usual with Ezekiel to pass from the symbol to the thing symbolized, in order that the meaning of the symbol may be clear. Cp. below, v. 16.

5. when he shot forth] Literally, in his shooting forth. Wherever he shot forth, waters followed him, and nourished him.

10. the thick boughs] The clouds. Cp. v. 3.

11. I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the heathen] Rather, Therefore will I deliver him. The Almighty goes back to a time before the fall of Nineveh, and delivers His decree from that point; and then He makes a sudden transition to the past tense, the act being already done. The destruction of Nineveh was His work.

The destroyer of Nineveh is called the mighty one (El) of the heathen. Cp. xxxii. 21 (Genesis 45).


14. thick boughs] Clouds. — neither their trees stand up in their height, all that drink water] Of the various interpretations which have been given of these words (and which may be seen in Keil, p. 284), that which seems preferable is, that none of their princes (the word of is repeated from v. 11) may stand up in their own height; that is, that none of them may lift themselves up proudly, as if their height was due to themselves; whereas they are all drinkers of water; that is, they all depend for their stature, their foliage, and their fruit, on the water which is supplied to them by God, and without which they must wither and die.

This is the lesson which God deduces from the destruction of Nineveh, and of Egypt, and which He teaches to Kings and Nations by these and similar events.

227
Take up a lamentation 

EZEKIEL XXXI. 17, 18. XXXII. 1—8. for Pharaoh.

Before CHRIST

p Isa. 14. 5.
q ch. 32. 21.
r Lam. 4. 20.

ver. 2.

ch. 24. 19.

ch. 28. 10.
32. 19, 24, 25.

557.


shall be comforted] The ungodly Powers of this world, when they are brought low, even to the shades of Sheol, are represented as even deriving pleasure from the humiliation of other Potencies, glad to be their number. This is an accurate representation of the want of sympathy among mere worldly men and worldly rulers. True sympathy is a gift of God, and can only subsist among those who love God; cp. Isa. xiv. 9—11, where the deceased Potencies of this world are represented as welcoming the King of Babylon to their dark abode.

18. of the uncircumcised] See on xxviii. 10; and xxvii. 19.

This is Pharaoh] This picture presents Pharaoh. Compare Nathan’s “Thou art the man” 2 Sam. xi. 7; and below, xxviii. 31: “Ye, my flock, are men.” Pharaoh may see himself,—his own pride and fall,—in the King of Assyria: “Mutato nomine de Te fabula narratur.” Israel may thence see its own infatuation, in resorting for help to worldly powers, instead of trusting in the Lord.

The Fall of Pharaoh, the Representative of Ungodly Powers of this World.

Ch. XXXII. 2. Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt! The Dirge that follows is evidently designed to be the counterpart to that of the foregoing chapter concerning the King of Tyre, Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre (xxviii. 12).

As the prophecy concerning Tyre had not only a literal meaning, but overflowed its banks (if we may so speak), and assumed a symbolical significance (see above, note after xxviii. 19), so it is with this prophecy concerning the king of Egypt. It reaches beyond the domain of Egyptian history. This is evident from the fact, that whereas it is foretold that Egypt should be a base kingdom (xix. 14, 15), the king of Egypt is represented as suddenly hurled down from a proud supremacy and cast into the pit. See xx. 2—18. In brief, it may be observed, that as the king of Tyre is a figure of a great spiritual Power proudly opposing itself to God, and assuming divine attributes, and elated by its supposed universality, and hurled down to destruction in its self-exaltation (see xxviii. 9), so the king of Egypt is a type of secular and ungodly Powers relying on their worldly strength, and despising, resisting, and defying God, and destroyed by Him in the height of their prosperity. The fall of the king of Egypt symbolizes the prostration of worldly powers before Him at the latter day. Cp. Keil, 289.
Egypt will fall, EZEKIEL XXXII. 9—23. like Assyria.

9 I will also 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 amazed at thee, and their kings shall be horribly afraid for thee, when I shall brandish my sword before them; and they shall tremble at every moment, every man for his own life, in the day of thy fall.
11 "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, "the multitude of the nations, all of them; and "they shall spoil the pomp of Egypt, and all the multitude thereof shall be destroyed. 13 I will destroy also all the beasts thereof from beside the great waters; "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. 15 When I shall make the land of Egypt desolate, and the country shall be "destitute of that whereof it was full, when I shall smite all them that dwell therein, 
16 "then shall they know that I am the Lord. This is the "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. ·

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, 18 Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt, and "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. 19 "Whom dost thou pass in beauty? "go down, and be thou laid with the uncircumcised. 20 They shall fall in the midst of them that are slain by the sword: "she is delivered to the sword: draw her and all her multitudes. 21 "The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him: they are "gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword. 22 "Asshur is there and all her company: his graves are about him: all of them slain, fallen by the sword: 23 "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 "caused terror in the land of the living.

14. will make their waters deep, and cause their rivers to run like oil! I will make their waters to sink, and (instead of water) I will make their rivers to flow as oil; that is, I will make the worldly power—represented by the waters in which it gloried—to subside, and in its stead I will diffuse the grace of the Spirit, typified by oil (Ps. xiv. 7). See on Rev. vi. 6. This is a prophecy of the diffusion of the Gospel among the Nations of heathendom, so that their rivers run like oil which nourishes, not secular power, but true spiritual light. See S. Jerome here, Ewald, and Keil. The subsidence of the proud waters of temporal and turbulent power makes way for the clear flow of the pure oil of spiritual grace.

16. daughters of the nations] Of the heathen; the inhabitants of Gentile kingdoms opposed to God.
17. fifteenth day of the month] Probably the twelfth month (ch. 1:1).
19. whom dost thou pass in beauty?] Thou dost commend thyself to be the fairest of kingdoms; but is there now any kingdom, however feebly, which is surpassed by thee?
— uncircumcised.] This word, uncircumcised, is repeated ten times in this chapter (ver. 19, 21, 24—30, 32), and always in connexion with death and destruction. It is more remarkable as applied to Egypt, some of whose inhabitants were not literally uncircumcised. See above, on Gen. xvii. 10, 11. But this prophecy is to be interpreted spiritually. As S. Jerome and Theodoret observe, the uncircumcised in this chapter are worldly and godless men, who have not the circumcision of the spirit (Rom. ii. 28, 29. Phil. iii. 5. Col. ii. 11), but are "uncircumcised in heart and ears (Acts xi. 5), and die in their unbelieving and impiety. Here is another echo to Jeremiah; see his spiritual use of the word "uncircumcised" (ix. 25, 20).
20. slain by the sword!] This is another phrase which is often repeated in this chapter; slain or fallen by the sword. See chs. 21—26, 29—31. No doubt it is intended to be significant; and, with reverence be it said, it was providentially adopted by the Holy Spirit, so as to prepare the way for Ezekiel for the further development of this prophecy by St. John in the Apocalypse, where he describes the proud, insidious enemies of God and His Church as slain by the sword of Christ. See Rev. xiv. 21.
21. Asshur] The great empire of Assyria—a type of worldly, infidel, and blasphemous powers and persons, and associated as such with Egypt, in punishment.
22. set in the sides of the pit!] In the lowest depths of the pit as our Lord said of Capernaum, "Then, that art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell" (Matt. xi. 23).— which caused terror in the land of the living!] This terror, terror—the land of the living, is repeated six times in this chapter (ver. 29—37, 32), in which last place is a contrast,
There is Elam and all her multitude round about her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which are gone down uncircumcised into the nether parts of the earth, which caused their terror in the land of the living; yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit. 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.

There is Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude: her graves are round about him: all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword, though they caused their terror in the land of the living. And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to hell 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. Yea, thou shalt be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised, and shalt lie with them that be slain with the sword.

There is Edom, her kings, and all her princes, which with their might are laid by them that were slain by the sword: they shall lie with the uncircumcised, and with them that go down to the pit.

Pharaoh shall see them, and shall be comforted over all his multitude, even Pharaoh and all his army slain by the sword, saith the Lord God. 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 be slain with the sword, even Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord God.

see note there), and is doubtless designed to be very significant. The land of the living is paraphrased in the Targum by the Land of Israel; and by ancient Christian Expositors it is supposed to designate the Church of the living God, the land in which God glorifies His name, the world where the worldly persecutors and oppressors who cause terror in it, by their wicked and cruel deeds, are reserved by Him for eternal death.

Elam] Once an ally of Babylon (Isa. xxii. 6), and afterwards united with the forces of Media against Babylon (Isa. xxi. 9). Cp. Jer. xlix. 34.

Meshech, Tubal] Here joined together in one. Cp. xxvii. 13; and see below, xxviii. 5, where they are represented as a northern nation warring against the kingdom of God. This prophecy prepares the way for the further development of it in that chapter, where the enemies of God are displayed as rising in rebellion against Him, and as routed in a final and full overthrow. Cp. below, on v. 30.

And they shall not lie with the mighty] These proud, rapacious enemies of God and His Church, shall not lie with the ancient heroes, who are gone down to Sheol with their weapons of war in their hands, and men have laid their swords under their heads in a noble funeral. Cp. 1 Macc. xii. 20; and Verg. Aen. vi. 282; “At plus Xenus ingenti mole securam Imponit, maque arma vico.”

Cp. Arrian, i. 5; Dioit. Sic. xviii. 26.

The heroes of antiquity, such as Hector and Achilles, Mithridates and Themistocles, the Decii and the Scipios, are to be distinguished from these ungodly persecutors and oppressors, who, like the Titans of old, and like Caiphas and Mezentius of Greek and Roman story, relied presumptuously on their own strength, and defied God. The heroes of old have had an honourable burial, and are remembered by men with gratitude. But the proud and godless ones of this world, who war against God and His Church, whether by physical force or by political power, will be with their iniquities inveterately riveted like a racking torture in their bones, though they were a terror of the mighty in the land of the living. Cp. A Lapide here, W. Louth, M. Henry, and Keil.

Edom] Compare xxxv. 12.

princes of the north] Here is another preparation for a further development of the prophecy in chapters xxxviii. 6, 15; xxxix. 1. Cp. above, on v. 26.

the Zidonians] See above, xxviii. 22.

This prophecy specifies seven powers as specimens of God’s worldly foes leagued together against Egypt on the south of Palestine; Ashur in the north; Elam to the east; Meshech, Tubal, and the powers of the north, in a more distant northern direction; and two in the immediate neighbourhood of Israel, Edom on the southern and Zidon on the northern frontier. Thus they symbolize the distant and nearer foes of God’s Church.

shall be comforted] Compare xxxi. 16.

my terror] Observe the contrast. My terror. These proud and godless powers have caused their terror in the land of the living. See above, on v. 23. But the day is coming (God says) when I will cause My terror in the land of the living; and all infamous enemies will lie together in the pit of destruction. Cp. Isa. lxi. 10. Jer. xxx. 33. Rev. xix. 17—21.

Therefore the moral is, “Be not afraid of their terror, but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” (1 Pet. iii. 14, 15).
Duty of the watchmen  

EZEKIEL XXXIII. 1—10.  

of Israel.

Comfortable Assurance to Israel on its Repentance, after the Destruction of Jerusalem.

Preliminary Note to Chapters XXXIII.—XLVIII.

Ch. XXXIII.] This portion of Ezekiel's prophecies, from the present chapter to the end, may be compared with that part of the prophecies of Isaiah, which begins with the fortieth chapter ("Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem"); and is continued to the close of that Book. Isaiah had foretold Jerusalem's destruction and Israel's captivity at Babylon; and he had ministered comfort by anticipation to those who would see and suffer those calamities; and he had assured Israel of a future restoration in Christ.

Ezekiel completes the work of Isaiah. He himself was one of those whom Isaiah had foreseen in the spirit; he was among the exiles and captives of Babylon; he there received tidings of the destruction of Jerusalem (xxiii. 21). At the crisis his prophetic commission was renewed; his mouth, which had been closed for a time, was opened afresh (xxxiii. 22), and he pours forth a strain of admonition and consolation to the mourning captives, and shows that if they receive God's penal chastisement with the proper dispositions of repentance, faith, and hope, then these national calamities will be occasions of great spiritual benefit; then their exile and captivity will make them seek for a home in the heavenly Jerusalem, which can never be destroyed.

The seething discipline of Israel and Judah, scattered in the valley of dry bones (chap. xxxvi.), ought to make them aspire to the time of their blessed conjunction and resurrection; the temporary triumph of the enemies of Jerusalem ought to lead them forward to the time when God's foes, represented by Gog and his army,—will be routed for ever (chaps. xxxviii., xxxix).

The destruction of their earthly city and temple ought to prepare them for the joy and bliss of the Universal Church of Christ, revealed in that magnificent vision which completes the roll of Ezekiel's prophecy (chaps. xli.—xlviii).

Thus the arrival of the tidings of Jerusalem's downfall and destruction becomes the starting-point for the building up of the everlasting City; and Ezekiel reiterates and amplifies the Evangelical prelude of Isaiah:—"Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God." (Joel 3:1). This section is followed by an exposition of the practical results of Israel's return to the Lord. Ezekiel tells them that their new condition is the result of the Lord's activity; and he tells them that, as a consequence, the world's testimony of them will be the same as if they had never been. This is a great confirmation of the truth of the doctrine of the atonement. It is also a confirmation of the doctrine of the second coming of Christ. For the doctrine of the atonement is the doctrine of the second coming of Christ. The Lord will come again to reward those who believe in Him, and to judge those who do not. This is the doctrine of the atonement. It is the doctrine of the second coming of Christ.
Promises to the penitent.

EZEKIEL XXXIII. 11—22. "The city is smitten."

I. Titus Yet Our and turn Why that but The he "

12 Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, 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. 13 When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; "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.

14 Again, "when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; 15 if the wicked 

\[\text{v.} \quad \text{v.} \]

...restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. 16 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.

17 "Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal. 18 "When the righteous turneth from his righteousness and committh iniquity, he shall even die thereby. 19 But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live hereby.

20 Yet ye say, "The way of the Lord is not equal.

O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways.

21 And it came to pass in the twelfth year 

...of our captivity, in the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month, that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, "The city is smitten.

22 Now the 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; and my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb.

303. Ye rightly put this question, and I will answer it. The words of comfort are not introduced by a rebuke, but by a recognition of the reasonableness of the inquiry: Our sins are upon us, and we are pining away in them, according to the words of God in the Law (Lev. xxvi. 39; and see above, xxiv. 23), which are now verified, how then can we hope to live? I will answer you with words of consolation. See the cheering assurance which follows:

"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." But I have pleasure "that the wicked turn from his way, and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

Here is a declaration of God's desire that all men should be saved, which may be joined with the Evangelical promises in Christ; see John iii. 16. Rom. viii. 32. 1 Tim. ii. 4. 6. Titus ii. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 9, asserting that God desires all men to be saved, and has shown that he saved, in the most approving manner, by giving his own Son for the salvation of all.

11. As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked—turn ye, turn ye. Why do you ask, Is it good to repeat or not? Why do you doubt? God commands it. Nay, He not only commands, but exhorts, and invites, and encourages with a promised reward, saying with an oath, As I live, "Capit erci sibi. O beatos nos, quorum eant Deus iuncti? O misererrmos, si nec iunxit Deo ercedus tuum!" (Tertullian, De Penit.)

14—16.] Here, and in another memorable passage (Jer. xviii. 7, 8), Almighty God plainly teacheth us that we ought so to conceive all His threatenings, be they never so peremptorily set down, as that He may reserve to Himself a power of re-vocation, in case the parties so threatened repent.

The examples make it plain. Abimelech shall die for taking Sarah (Gen. xx. 3). Understand it, "unless he restore her." Forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed (Jonah iii. 10). Understand it, with this reservation, "Unless they repent;" and so of the rest (Bp. Sanderson, iii. 42).

TIDINGS OF THE FALL OF JERUSALEM.

21. It came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity, in the tenth month—The city is smitten] The city was taken in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the successor of Jehoiachin, in the fourth month, in the ninth day of the month (Jer. xxxix. 1. 2. 2 Kings xxv. 1—4). The tidings were brought by one who had escaped, and who arrived at the river Chebar (i. 3), more than a year and four months after its fall. It is not said, that Eschekil did not know before this time that Jerusalem was taken. No; that event had been revealed to him by God at the very time when it happened. See xxvi. 1. 2. And now the truth of that revelation is proved by the arrival of one who had seen the destruction of the city with his own eyes.

—The city is smitten] A gentle expression of a deep sorrow in him who speaks, and who feels for them to whom he comes. The city is smitten; it is utterly destroyed: Jerusalem is no more.

22. My mouth was opened] When the people were struck dumb with sorrow, at the sad tidings of the event which
Ezekiel had foretold, but which they, being deceived by false prophets, had deemed to be incredible (xi. 3; xii. 22); and when the truth of his prophecies was proved, and he would therefore obtain a more ready hearing from them, then God graciously opens the Prophet's mouth, to comfort them with gracious assurances of love, and with merciful promises of joy.

24. **those wastes of the land** The land of Israel, wasted by the fire and sword of the Chaldaans. See v. 27; xxxvi. 4.

— Abraham was one Only one. Cp. Isa. ii. 2. If Abraham, a single person, had the promise of inheriting the land, how much more may we, who are many, and who are already settled there by God, look to remain in it?


— Ye lift up your eyes towards your idols *In admiration.* See xviii. 6.

26. Ye stand upon your sword *Ye rely on your power to effect objects of cruelty. Might is right; and ye rule by force and violence.* Cp. Wisd. ii. 11. I Esd. 3. and D. 187—190.

30. are talking against thee *Rather, are talking about thee.* The fulfilment of Ezekiel's prophecies, the truth of which was now manifested to the exiles at Chebar, would naturally have made him a subject of general conversation. The Prophet would have become famous, and would be an object of general resort.

But let him not be elated with this notoriety. Let him not flatter himself with the belief that his ministry has therefore been successful. Many of them would come to him out of idle curiosity, or for gratification of the sense, as men go to a picture-gallery, or to a theatre or concert, and would receive only a temporary pleasure and excitement from listening to his words, but would derive no real profit from them. They would show no good fruits of his teaching, in repentance and amendment of life.

How many persons flock to sermons of celebrated Preachers Vol. V. Part II. 283

**EZEKIEL XXXIII. 23—33. as a lovely song.**

23. Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 24 Son of man, 25 that inherit those wastes of the land of Israel speak, saying, 26 Abraham was one, and he inherited the land: 27 but we are many; the land is given us for our inheritance.

25. Wherefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: 26 Ye eat with the blood, and 27 lift up your eyes toward your idols, and 28 shed blood: and shall ye possess the land? 29 Say thou thus unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: As I live, surely 30 they that are in the wastes shall fall by the sword, and him that is in the open field *will I give to the beasts † to possess, and they that be in the forts and ‡ in the caves shall die of the pestilence. 31 For I will lay the land † most desolate, and the *pomp of her strength shall cease; and † the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through. 32 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.

30. Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking † against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and † speak 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. 31 And † they come unto thee † as the people cometh, and † they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: *for with their mouth † they shew much love, but † their heart goeth after their covetousness. 32 And, lo, thou art unto them as † a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasing voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not. 33 And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then † shall they know that a prophet hath been among them.

In this temper of mind ! And how many Preachers are tempted to imagine that they have wrought a religious reformation, because they have attracted large congregations to listen to their words! Even one of the greatest Preachers of ancient Christendom, S. Augustine, was in his youth, as he himself confesses, v. 13, a hearer such as is described by the Prophet. When he was at Milan, he used to frequent the sermons of the Bishop of that city, S. Ambrose: "I was wont to hear his public preaching, but I did not listen to it with due attention. I went to Church in order to try whether his eloquence corresponded to the report I had heard of it. I hung upon the words which he uttered; but I stood there near the pulpit in careless indifference and contempt with regard to the things which he expounded to us." A great Bishop and Preacher of the Church of England thus writes:—"Alms are played, prayers are played, and sermons go away with it now. The Church is full, and God knows a few true hearers: the rest are but a sort of sermon hypocrites. The scene is in the thirty-third of Ezekiel (xx. 20). "O let us go hear the word;" and the Prophet adds, so was the fashion then; for fashion it was. And thither they come, and here sit they; but their heart is wandering where they will it is but as they hear a song of one that hath a pleasing voice, and no more comes of the sermon than of the song" (Bp. Andrewe, i. 407; v. 198).

31. they come unto thee as the people cometh *Rather, they come to thee as a large assembly come; they flock in great numbers to hear thy preaching.*—for with their month they show much love! Rather, for they will do the things which are sweet (Hebr. 36.15 plea- sures: see v. 32; Gesen. 614; Freest. 1011; and see Keil, p. 500) in their own months. They will not practise the teaching which comes forth out of Thy mouth, but will do what is pleasant to their own. Cp. Gesen. xxv. 28.

— but their heart! And their heart goeth after their gain. 32. a very lovely song *Literally, a song of pleasures. Hebr. 36.15 pleasures. See on v. 31.*
XXXIV. 1 And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, prophesy against the *shepherds* of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds: 3 Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? 4 Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. 5 The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. 6 And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. 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 became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, 9 but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; 10 therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; 11 Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and they shall cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.

The False Shepherds and the True Shepherd.

Ch. XXXIV. 2, prophecy against the shepherds of Israel]
Or. Prophecy to, and upon, and concerning the shepherds (Sept., Vulg., Keil); that is, all those who are invested with the duties, whether civil or ecclesiastical, of ruling, tending, and feeding the flock of My people.

The Prophet passes from the metaphor of a watchman, in the foregoing chapter, to that of a shepherd in the present, because the latter had now become more appropriate, when the walls of the City of Jerusalem had been destroyed, and its inhabitants were scattered like sheep on the mountains.

The Prophet addresses himself to the shepherds of Israel, that is to say, their princes and governors, and such as in our Lord's age were the Scribes and Pharisees and rulers of the Jewish Nation.

In Gospel times we may understand by shepherds the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons of the Church, and such as are called Angels of the Churches in the Apocalypse.

For an excellent exposition of this chapter, with a doctrinal and practical application to Christian Pastors, the reader is invited to refer to the two Sermons of S. Augustine (Serm. 46 and 47, vol. v., pp. 320–352).

Woe—towards the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves]
The faithless shepherds "seek their own, not the things which are Christ's" (Phil. ii. 21). But the faithful Pastor says, "I seek not yours, but you" (2 Cor. xiii. 14); and the Good Shepherd "seeks which is lost, and gives His life for the sheep." 3. ye kill them that are fed] That which is fatted ye kill for yourselves. Cp. Zec. xi. 16.

4. The diseased] The weakly; those who are still enfeebled from the remnant effects of sickness, and who are distinguished from those who are actually sick; the former need to be strengthened, the latter to be healed.

drive away) Or strayed (Deut. xxii. 11), where the same word is used.

In a spiritual sense, this is to be applied to Christian Pastors, especially Christian Bishops, who do not endeavour to retrieve those who have fallen into sin, and have been led astray by heretical teachers (S. Jerome).

which may be set against the teaching of some modern "Masters of Israel," who say that the Church of Christ, when she has admitted the children of heretical or schismatical parents into her Schools, ought to forego all attempts to instill into their minds the true Catholic Faith, lest she should be liable to the charge of "proselytizing." "Some sheep," says S. Augustine, "are wilful and refractory, and are angry with us if, when they stray, we try to bring them back to the fold. They say that they are aliens from us, and they ask us, 'What do you want with us? Why do you seek for us?' As if the very fact that they are alien from us, and are wandering astray, is not reason enough why we should seek for them! 'If I am in error, if I am perishing' (they say), 'what have you to do with me?' Quid me visis? Quid me queritis? They ask. I answer, 'Quia in errore es, revocare volo; quia peristi, invenire volo.' They reply, Sic volo errare, sic volo perire.' But I rejoin, 'Sic vis errare! Sic vis perire! Quanto melius ego volo!' I fear the Divine Voice, which says to the shepherds, Them which had strayed ye did not bring back. I fear that Voice more than I fear thee. Thou canst not overturn the judgment-seat of Christ, and set up a schismatical judgment-seat in its place. We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. Therefore, whether you will or no, I will endeavour to bring back the sheep that are astray. Let the briars of the thicket tear my hands when I am seeking them, I will go after them. As far as the Lord gives me strength, I will force my way through them all. I will seek for that which is astray, I will recover that which is perishing.

Sic et pati non visi, noli errare, noli perire.'"

What would S. Augustine have said to the modern theories of "Conscience Clauses"? What would he have said to those who would change "Christ's" thus: "the Church who pro
tice"? What would he have said to those who speak thus to her who has received a divine commission to go and teach (make disciples of) all Nations? (Matt. xxviii. 19) And what would Ezekiel have said to such suggestions as those?

with force and with cruelty have ye ruled] Contrary to the Law of Moses (Lev. xxv. 43, 46).

My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill] In a spiritual sense this is true of those who wander on the mountains of philosophical pride, which exalts itself against the knowledge of God (S. Jerome).

— none did search or seek after them] Rather, none did inquir after them, or seek for them. Cp. v. 11.

10. I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock and cause them to cease from feeding the flock] Here is a prophecy, that God would take away the pastoral office from the Jewish shepherds, such as the Scribes and Pharisees; and He goes on to declare that He would transfer it to Christ and His Apostles. See vv. 11, 12, 23–31.
For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. 12 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 the cloudy and dark day. 13 And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and will feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. 15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. 16 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 the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I judge between the one and another, between the shepherd and the sheep, between the herdsmen and their flock. 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? 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.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God unto them; Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle. 21 Because ye have eaten up my pasture, and剪 down my leaves, and fed yourselves with the fat cattle, and filled yourselves with drink; and ye have treaded upon my pasture, and have fouled my leaves. 22 Therefore I will make a blade for you, and a sword shall devour you, and it shall judge between the one and another among you, even as I have judged among them. 23 And I will make a covenant with them, that I will enter into a new covenant with them, and will put my Spirit within them, and will cause them to enter into my rest.
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 I will judge between cattle and cattle.

23 And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, 24 even my servant David: he shall feed them, and they shall be his sheep. 25 And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.

26 And 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 broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them. 27 And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid. 28 And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more \\

## Christ the One Shepherd.

**EZEKIEL XXXIV. 22—29.** **He is the Divine David.**

23. and are bound to follow charity, and to avoid giving offence to any; that is, not to put a stumbling-block in a brother's way (1 Cor. x. 31), and to receive one another (Rom. xiv. 1), and to bear the inimitabilities of the weak, not pleasing ourselves, but each pleasing his brother, to his edification (Rom. xv. 1, 2), and not to look every one to his own things, but every man also to the things of others (Phil. ii. 4), as the great Apostle who became "weak to the weak," and made himself a servant of all (1 Cor. ix. 19), and was all things to all men, not seeking his own profit, but the profit of many that they might be saved (1 Cor. x. 33). And therefore, a thing, whether in practice or in religious worship, be allowable so, and though it be agreeable personally to ourselves, yet we ought for the sake of charity, without which nothing profiteth (1 Cor. xvii. 3), and lest we wound the weak conscience of our brethren, which Christ died, and so sin against Christ (1 Cor. viii. 12), to abridge ourselves of our own liberty, and to forbear the doing of it. See below, on 1 Cor. x. 31, 32; and Bp. Sanderson, l. 347, p. 51. Here is a profitable lesson for our own times. Let us take heed, brethren, not only to live well, but to edify others; and not only to have a good conscience with regard to ourselves, but to do nothing that may scandalize a weak brother. Otherwise, we war the pasture, and fuel the waters, and incur the anger of Him Who says, "I judge between cattle and cattle" (S. Augustine).

24. If we rely on our own spiritual strength, and do not charitably and patiently bear with the weaknesses of our brethren, we become like the cattle of whom the Prophet speaks, who thrust with side and with shoulder, and push the diseased (or feeble, see n. 4) with their horns, till they have scattered them abroad; and the schisms in the Church are due to our want of charity. See S. Augustine here.

25. Christ, the One Shepherd, the Divine David, the Prince and Servant.

23. **I will set up one shepherd** Before this, God had said, "I will feed My flock" (v. 15). Now He says, "I will set up One Shepherd over them, and He shall feed them, even My servant David; and he shall be their prince and shepherd; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, and My servant David a prince over them." Here we see the separate offices of God the Father and God the Son, and a prophecy of the Incarnation of Christ. God the Father feeds, and sends the Son to feed. The Son took our nature, "in the form of a servant" (Phil. ii. 7); and this servant, David, is called "David, a Servant," and is the Shepherd of the flock, and the Prince of the People of God.


If we contend for the literal interpretation of this prophecy, then we must hold that David will be raised from the dead to feed all the sheep of the house of Israel, scattered throughout the world; and we must say that Christ has no place here. Cp. Fairbairn, p. 380.

On the pastoral office of Christ, as foretold by ancient prophets, see Isa. xi. 11.

25. God says here He will set up One Shepherd. One Shepherd for Gentiles and Jews (Theodore); and thus He prepared the way for the saying of Christ: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold (flock); them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold (flock), and One Shepherd" (John x. 16). 26. A covenant of peace. In Christ, Who is our peace, and Who made peace (Ephes. ii. 14, 15. Cp. Jer. xxxi. 31. Theodore) — the evil beasts Compare Lev. xxvi. 6.

26. I will make — the places round about my hill a blessing: God's hill is Zion (Isa. ii. 2. Jer. xxxii. 12). Zion is the origin of the Universal Church of God. At Jerusalem Christ suffered; there the Holy Ghost was given. Thence the Apostles, who were all Jews, went forth to evangelize the world. Every Christian is regarded in Scripture as being born in Zion (see Ps. lxxvii. 5, 7), and all places in the Universal Church of God are regarded as the temple of God, and are called Zion, as their center: all the faithful are dwellers in Zion, and partake of the spiritual blessings which flow forth from it. — showers of blessing Spiritual graces poured forth from heaven, in the covenant which was the shedding down of the Holy Ghost, as a gracious rain on God's inheritance, refreshing it when it was weary (Ps. lxxxviii. 9).

27. When I have broken the bonds of your yoke: This prophecy was fulfilled in a primary sense, by the deliverance of the Jews from their captivity at Babylon, by Cyrus; but in a more larger sense it is verified in their redemption and ours, from the bondage of Satan and Sin, by Christ (Theodore).

28. A plant of renown Father, a planting for a name. Cp. Is. i. 21, where Israel is called the branch of God's planting, and ix. 3, the planting of the Lord.

The word rendered plant is a collective noun, and in a spiritual sense it signifies the Messiah, not merely as the Branch, or "the Rod of the stem of Jesse" (Isa. xi. 1) singly, but as the growing up of a large number of shoots, springing
Men are God's flock. **EZEKIEL XXXIV. 30, 31. XXXV. 1—11. Desolation of Edom.**

**SUMMARY**

1. Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, **set thy face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it,** 3 and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God; **Behold, O Mount Seir, I am against thee,** and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee ✡most desolate. 4 I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord. ✡Because thou hast had a ✡perpetual hatred, and hast ✡shed the blood of the children of Israel by the ✡force of the sword in the time of their calamity, ✡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: ✡sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee. 7 Thus will I make Mount Seir ✡most desolate, and cut off from it ✡him that passeth out and him that returneth. 8 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 I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return: ✡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 ✡possess it; ✡whereas ✡the Lord was there:** 11 Therefore, **as I live, saith the Lord God,** I will even do ✡according to thine anger, and according to thine envy which thou hast used out of thy heart.

**The Desolation of Edom, and the Restoration of Israel.**

Ch. XXXV.] The two following chapters form a prophetic contrast. The present foretells the desolation of Edom; the following predicts the restoration of Israel. The one announces the overthrow of the unrighteous, treacherous, and malignant enemies of God and His Church, represented by Edom (see on Isa. xxxiv. 6; and above, xxv. 12; xxxii. 29); the other declares the future blessedness and glory of the Israel of God.

At the time when Ezekiel wrote these two prophecies, Jerusalem was in ruins, Israel and Judah were captives and exiles, and Edom was existing in their misfortunes, and hoped to become master of the Holy Land. See v. 10, and xxxvi. 2, 5. But Ezekiel was enabled to foresee and foretell the future. He predicts total desolation to Edom and restoration to Israel. Here is a consolatio for the Church of God in the hour of her distress, when her enemies triumph over her. "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (says her Divine Master), but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world! (John xvi. 33.)

2. **Mount Seir**] In Edom. See vi. 2. Mount Seir is the antithesis of Mount Zion. The one is the spiritual Ebal, the mount of cursing; the other is the spiritual Gerizim, the mount of blessing. See on Josh. vii. 10—35.

5. and hast shed ✡calamity? Rather, and hast poured out the children of Israel (like water, in weakness and abundance) upon the hands of the sword, devouring them in the day of their need, when Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans. See Ps. cxxxvii. 7; cp. Jer. xvii. 21 — in the time that their iniquity had an end] Literally, in the time of iniquity of end; "in tempore iniquitatis extrema" (Fulg.) in the season of the iniquity which ended itself and then in their destruction.

6. I will prepare thee unto blood] Literally, I will make thee (Edom) to blood (damn). I will change thee from Edom into Zion. Cp. Isa. xxvi. 11, where is another paenonymia on Edom.

sith thou hast not hated blood! This is the correct rendering. See Keil, p. 321.

With this unmediation on Edom compare Isaiah's prophecy xxxiv. 12-15, and the notes there.

10. These two nations—the Lord was there] Edom hoped to take to himself "the houses of God in possession" (Ps. lxxiii. 12), and to make himself master of the two nations of Israel and Judah; and he imagined that those two lands had become his own, whereas the Lord was there, and the Lord was more welcome. And the last words of this Book of Ezekiel, where it is said that the name of the Church glorified is, "The Lord is there." This prophecy is directed against all those who sacrilegiously lay their hands upon what belongs to others. If we may venture to make an application of it to contemporary events, may we not say that it is a solemn warning against the Edomitic spirit which is endeavouring to despoil the Churches of the two nations, and of the two countries, Ireland and England? But their comfort may be, as of old, "The Lord is there."
The true return

EZZEKIEL XXXV. 12—15. XXXVI. 1.
of Israel.

Before
CHRIST
q P. 2. 15.
ch. 6. 7.

† Heb. to dower.
† Heb. magnified.
r I Sam. 2. 3.
Rev. 13. 6.

The love of God; 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, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us † to consume.

Thus said the Lord God; When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate. As thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so will I do unto thee: thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it: and they shall know that I am the Lord.

XXXVI. 1. Also, thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel,

14. When the whole earth rejoiceth] When the whole earth rejoiceth on account of the diffusion of the Light of the truth of the Gospel, then the worldly Edom, the land of blood, the land of bitter hatred and of dark malignity against the Church of God, yes, then all Idumea, that is, all those who—being connoted by neighbourly or consanguineous ties to the Church of God, as Edom was with Israel—are animated by an Edomitic spirit towards it, will be made desolate. As S. Jerome says, "When all the land of the living rejoices, and when the land of the saints and kings to lands, connected to this the service of God, then thou, O Mount Seir, and all Idumea, that is, all ye Powers of this World which delight in blood, shall be desolate, and shall know that I am the Lord."

Retrospect of the foregoing Chapters, and Preliminary Note to the following Prophecy on the Land of Israel.

The true Restoration of Israel to their own Land.

Observe the order here. The Prophet, having been constituted a watchman to the house of Israel, and having been commanded to warn his people of the sure consequences of sin (xxiii. 1—10), and to assure them that God desireth not the death of a sinner, but that he should turn from his sin and live (xxxiii. 11), had declared that every one would be righteously and mercifully dealt with by God (xxxiii. 12—20).

Having also received the tidings of the fall of Jerusalem, he had declared that this calamity was due to the sins of his people, and that "the mountains of Israel would be desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed" (xxxiii. 29). By his lips God had reproved the rulers of Israel, civil and ecclesiastical, whom he represented as selfish, selfish, and cruel shepherds (xxiv. 1—10); and had denounced their punishment; and had declared that He would take the sheep out of their hands, and transfer them to the pastoral care of the One Shepherd, Jesus Christ, Whom He calls David (xxxiv. 23, 24).

He also addresses Himself to the people, whom He represents as sheep, some feebler, and some stronger among them; and He promises that He will seek the lost sheep, and bring back those that had strayed, and strengthen the weak, and heal the sick. And He announces to them that He will judge each of them according to the temper and dispositions which they had shown toward the members of the same spiritual flock; and that He will give them green, quiet, and safe pastures, and would cause the places round about His hill to be a blessing (xxiv. 26); and would rain down showers of blessings upon them, and would deliver them out of captivity (r. 27); and would raise up for them a planting to be a Nunn (r. 29); and that they should know that the Lord their God was among them, and they, the house of Israel, are His people; and that they, who by nature are Adam (r. 31), will by grace become the flock of God.

He next proceeded to prophesy against Mount Seir, the strong mountain of Edom. Edom was allied by descent with Israel through Esau, but had rejoiced with unbrotherly exultation in the fall of Jerusalem, and had hoped to lay hands on Palestine. Edom is therefore threatened with desolation. And Edom is a symbol of all those who, being connected with the Church of God by some ties of neighbourhood and affinity, exult in her miseries, and endeavour to despise her, and to derive profit to themselves from her misfortunes. Against all such the Prophet has denounced God's wrath and indignation (xxxv. 1—15).

These considerations will prepare us for the exposition of what now follows.

In interpreting these prophecies concerning "the mountains of Israel," and "the land of Israel" (xxxvi. 6, 35), and their future desolation also in the round of the history of the land of the house of Israel, and their restoration to the land of Israel, and their union in one monarchy under David their king (xxxvii. 11—24), and the setting up of God's sanctuary among them for evermore (r. 26); we must be carefully on our guard against hasty errors, and endeavour to steer our course steadily between them; (1) On the one hand, we must avoid the error of those who explain these prophecies in a literal sense and in no other. (2) On the other hand, we cannot equally shun all predictions which are not to be limited to such a meaning, and are not to be expounded literally, in all particulars, is equally clear from a careful examination of them.

For example, it is said in these prophecies, that "David will be the King of all the house of Israel and will be their prince for ever" (xxvii. 24, 25). This cannot be expounded literally. All the ancient Christian Interpreters apply these words to Christ. Again, it is promised that God's sanctuary will be in the midst of Israel for evermore (xxxvii. 26, 29). This cannot be interpreted as referring to the Temple rebuilt by Zerubbabel, which is in ruins, or to any earthly material fabric. All ancient Expositors recognize here a description of the Church of Christ Universal. See below, S. Jerome's exposition of this chapter.

This conclusion is confirmed by what follows.

The prophecies of Ezekiel become more and more spiritual in their meaning as they advance onward. Like a beautiful mountain range, which in its lower regions becomes more and more troubled in its waters, but becomes more pure when it has passed over them, so the stream of his prophecy, as it flows onward, deposits the sediment of earthly admixture, and is clarified into the pure, lucid, and crystalline transparency of a river of God, such as that described in the Apocalypse (Rev. xxi. 1), as it approaches the heavenly City.

No one, it may be supposed, will contend that the last great battle of the Church against Gog, on the mountains of Israel, in the following chapters (xxxviii. and xxxix.), in the vision of the Temple, and the City, and the Land of Israel, in the last chapters of Ezekiel's prophecies, are to be understood literally. See the Retrospect at the end of this volume.

Again, it can hardly be doubted by careful students of prophecy, that the predictions of the Old Testament concerning the latter days are amplified and illuminated in the New. Not a single prophecy can be quoted from the New Testament, even from those parts of it which speak specially of God's favour to the Jews (see especially Rom. v. 1—11), in which there is any mention of a personal return of the Jews to Palestine. "It must be conceded" (says Hengstenberg, Christol. iii. 64, English translation), "that we have no right to appeal to the letter of the Old Testament for support of such theories. The return of the Jews to Canaan; a practice which is the more indefensible, as the New Testament is altogether silent on the subject of any such return. This would be unaccountable, if God had designed such a thing. The prophecies of Holy Scripture become clearer and clearer as they advance from the domain of the Old Testament into the New. And if such a return were intended in the Old Testament, and were yet to be expected, it is certain that we should have distinct predictions of it in the New Testament. Nor is this all. Not only is the New Testament silent as to any such return, but it even looks with an air
Lord God; Because the enemy hath said against thee, Aha, even the faithfulness of the Lord is profited nothing...
The mountains of Israel will shoot forth on all sides.

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 rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken, which became a prey and derision to the residue of the heathen that are round about;

5. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Sure in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea, which have appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all their heart, with despitful minds, to cast it out for a prey. Prophesy 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 borne the shame of the heathen:

7. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; I have lifted 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 Israel; for they are at hand to come. For behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown: and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded: and I 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: and ye shall know that I am the Lord. Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of men.

13. Thus saith the Lord God; Because they say unto you, Thou land devourest up men, and hast bereaved thy nations; therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nations any more, saith the Lord God. Neither will I cause men to hear in thee the shame of the heathen.

you, as a wild beast after his prey. See Job v. 5. Ps. iiv. 1, 2; ivii. 5. — ye are taken up in the lips of talkers! Ye have been made to come up to the lip of the tongue: that is, to the lips of those who are men of tongue (Ps. cxl. 12), vain talkers.

5. all Idumea] xxxv. 15. — with despitful mind! With contempt of soul (xxv. 6). — to cast it out for a prey! Or, that they may spoil it for prey (Gesen. 181; Keil, 324). Others render it, that they may plunder its produce, or pasturage. So Hitzig; Ewald, 769; Fairb. 387. The former interpretation, which is confirmed by the Targum, the Arabic, Targum, appears to be preferable.

6. to the rivers] The watered valleys (Gesen. 71). I have lifted up mine hand] I have sworn (xx. 5). — they shall bear their shame! The shame which they cast on you shall recoil on themselves.

8. ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel!] Ye mountains of Israel will shoot forth your branches, by growing with living expansion into the Catholic Church—the Mountain of the Lord. See on Isa. ii. 2. Mischiv. 1. — they are at hand to come! My promises are at hand to be accomplished. Cxii. 23, where the same verb, karab, is used; and Isa. iiv. 1. So Targ., Vulg., and Keil. Others apply it to the return of Israel. So Syrian, Arabic, and Kiefoth. The former interpretation appears to be the best. Cp. Rev. i. 3; xxi. 10.
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.

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, 

18 Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it: 19 and I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: 

20 And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of his land.

21 But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.

22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name’s sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. 23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, 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 sanctified in you before their eyes.

24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and will gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A 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.

The reading, “before your eyes,” is authorized by many MSS., and most ancient Versions, and by the ancient Masora. Cp. xx. 41; xxviii. 25. The other reading, “before your eyes,” has most MS. authority. 24. I will take you from among the heathen—and will bring you into your own land: this promise was also partially fulfilled in Israel’s return to Jerusalem from Babylon; but it has its full accomplishment in the restoration of Israel, and of all the children of Abraham by faith, to their own home in Christ and His Church.

25. The loftiness of prophecy (says S. Augustine) passes imperceptibly from the literal Israel to the spiritual; and we ought not to understand these words of Ezekiel as spoken carnally of the Israel after the flesh, but of the spiritual Israel. The Churh of God is the land of the holy one, etc. the land of the living—the land promised to the fathers, and given to them by God’s unchangeable will; and of this land the prophet here speaks (S. Aug., De Doctr. Christ. iii. 49).

The preceding part of this prophecy may be applied to those Jews who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel to Jerusalem; but what follows is to be referred only to those who received the Gospel of Christ (Theodoret).

25. I will sprinkle clean water: The prophecy rises and expands itself to the full height and breadth of Evangelical blessings. This promise received its fulfillment in the commission of Christ to His Apostles, to go and baptize all nations (Matt. xxviii. 19. Theodoret); and the earnest of its fulfillment for Israel was seen in the baptism of the devout Jews out of every nation under heaven on the Day of Pentecost. See Acts ii. 58—41, where St. Peter says, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized.” 26. A new heart: See above, xl. 19. Jer. xxxi. 33; xxii. 39; and S. Ireneaus, iv. 66, who says, referring to this prophecy, that all the ancient Prophets were members of Christ, and prophesied of what He would do in the Gospel; and so Theodoret here.
And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. 26 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. 27 I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. 28 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. 29 Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.

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.

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, and the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. 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: I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it.

Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock.

As the 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.

XXXVII. 1 The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, 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.

The Valley of Dry Bones.—The Revival of Israel.

Ch. XXXVII. 1. in the midst of the valley. In the midst of the valley, or the depressed plain (Hebr. be'okah), where God had revealed Himself to Ezekiel (see iii. 22, 23, and see viii. 4, where the same word is used, and is translated plain; it does not occur any where else in this book), and where God had first given him a vision of the future destruction of Jerusalem (chaps. iv.—vii.). That revelation is continued here. God, having given to the Prophet there a vision of the Death and Burial of Israel, now gives to him a vision of Israel's Resurrection.

God shows by the ensuing Vision, that He is able to raise the dead, and to make the scattered bones of the bodies of that vast multitude of slain to coalesce, each bone with its proper bone, each sinew with its proper sinew, in each several body; and thus He teaches that He can do an easier thing, namely, that He can restore Israel (Theodoret, on ch. v. 2 and v. 14).

In the prophecies of Isaiah, Jerusalem itself is called the Valley of Vision. See above, on Isa. xxii. 1. And in that particular prophecy will: designates Jerusalem by that name, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans is foretold. Thus Isaiah prepared the way for Ezekiel, and Ezekiel continues the prophecy of Isaiah.

2. caused we to pass by them: Or, over them round about. The bones were lying, like bones of men slain in a battle (see v. 9), parched and bleached by the sun, in the low plain; and
3 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.

4 Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. 5 Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

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: 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 beheld 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.

9 Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the || wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, q and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

11 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.

12 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God Behold, 1 O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and 2 bring you into the land of Israel. 13 And ye shall breathe life into the dry bones of Israel, was foreshown by the commission to Ezekiel to prophesy upon them, and the breath came upon them from the Lord, and they stood up.

13. Before the advent of Christ, as well as the Resurrection of the Body, the Resurrection of the Soul and the Life Eternity which is their Consequence. The Prophecy was delivered by Ezekiel, and it was no doubt predicted for the fulfillment of these three

Spiritual Revival and Restoration of Israel.

These words ("God stirred up the spirit," and "there was a voice," kōl; an utterance, an edict, a proclamation) lead us on to the spiritual meaning of this vision.

Cyrus, "the Shepherd," "the Anointed" of God, the Conqueror of Babylon, and the Liberator of Israel, was a type of Christ (see above, on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, and Pseudo-Note to Isa. xi.); and the voice, or proclamation, of Cyrus for the restoration of Israel, was a prelude to the Voice of Christ, speaking in the Gospel, and sending John the Baptist, "the Voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord"—Prepare ye His Way, Who comes to raise Israel to spiritual life, and to restore them to their spiritual inheritance, promised to their fathers in the Seed of Abraham, which is Christ.

This had been already displayed in a clear and striking manner by the Evangelical Prophet Isaiah, who passes immediately from prophesying of Cyrus, to prophesy of the Voice of the Baptist and the Voice of Christ. See above, on Isa. xi. 1-11.

The spiritually dead are raised from the grave of sin, as Lazarus was from the tomb, by the Voice of Christ, saying, "Lazarus, come forth" (John xi. 24, 38, 44). As our Lord Himself said to the Jews at Jerusalem, "The hour is come, and now is, when the dead (in sin) shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live" (John v. 25).

Resurrection of the Dead.

Thus also we are brought to consider this passage, in reference to the doctrine of the future General Resurrection of the Dead.

St. Paul asks, when he speaks of the Conversion of Israel to Christ, "What shall their receiving be, but life from the dead?" (Rom. xi. 15).
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 I shall 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, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the 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: 17 and join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.

18 And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these?

19 Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take 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.

The Ancient Christian Fathers referred to this passage, as teaching the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead. So St. Justin Martyr, Apol. i. 52; S. Irenæus, v. 5; S. Ambrose, De Spiri. Sunt. iii. 11; Cyprian, xxx. 29; S. Augustine, de Genesis ad Literam, x. 8. De doctr. Christ. l. 34; S. Cyril Hierosol. Catech. 18; S. Hilary, in Ps. iii. 6.

Doubtless, the primary purpose of the Vision was to comfort the Hebrew People, who mourned over their Nation, as dead and buried, with a future of revival and restoration.

But there seems to be good reason for the remark of Tertullian (de Resurr. c. 30) that a Resurrection of dead bones would not have been used here, as an emblem of the Restoration of Israel, unless a Resurrection from the dead was a thing to be believed. And since this Vision of that Restoration of dry bones was designed to assure them that their own Restoration was certain, therefore it may be inferred, that the Resurrection by which it was symbolized is certain also. "Non posse resuscitari figura sepe, si non id reviviscat et resursum eventurum esse. De verno similitudine non competit; de nullo parabola non convenit. Ita oportebit eis quoque credi resurrectionem et resurrectionem qualsis dictari, de qua possit exprimi Judaearum rerum reformata et cum afferentia." S. Jerome here follows Tertullian, and says, "Ezekiel is here not writing expressly of the Resurrection, but, by means of a parable of the Resurrection, he is foretelling the Restoration of Israel, which was then captive at Babylon. But by this assertion I do not give any advantage to heretics (who deny the Resurrection). For the similitude of the Resurrection would never have been added by the Prophet in order to symbolize the Restoration of Israel, unless the Resurrection were a reality, and were an established Article of Faith. No one confirms uncertainties by means of non-entities."

The phraseology of Scripture in this prophecy, and in the history of the stirring up the spirit of Cyrus, and of the proclamation of the media (the Voice) here foretelling the Restoration of the Jews, finds a remarkable counterpart in the language of Scriptural revelations of the general spiritual resurrection of Israel by the Gospel. The Voice of Christ, preached in the Gospel of His Word, stirs the dead bones. And John xiv. 16; does He say, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit," said our Lord to Nicodemus, "he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John iii. 5). The Voice of Christ awakens the dead in trespasses and sins. As He Himself says, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the living God," (speaking in the Gospel), "and they that hear shall live." "He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life" (John xiv. 25). And He couples this promise of spiritual revivification with a prophecy of the Resurrection from the dead. "The hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves, shall hear His Voice, and shall come forth." (John v. 25). The Spirit (ruach) is described as having His part in that work. Christ is declared to have been raised from the dead by the Spirit of holiness" (Rom. i. 4); and if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you (Rom. viii. 11).

We know that the same spirit, that animated the Jews, animated the Christians, that the same symbol, which the Lord revealed to Ezekiel, He also revealed to Paul. So in the Thessalonians there is the same "great sign," that the same voice "shall sound," and that the same "proclamation" shall be made. (1 Thess. iv. 16). And so, in the Book of Revelation, there is the same voice, "that maketh all nations drink of the wine of wrath." (Rev. xvi. 10). And the same spirit, that quickened the Jews, quickened the Gentiles. And the same voice, that brought the Jews out of Egypt, brought the Gentiles out of every place. The same Spirit, that quickened the Jews, quickened the Gentiles. The same voice, that called the Jews out of Egypt, called the Gentiles out of every place. The same power, that raised up the Jews from the dead, raised up the Gentiles from the dead.
And the sticks wherewith thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes.

And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, 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: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the land of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: that they may serve the Lord their God, and they shall defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.

And David my servant shall be king over them; and all they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. 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 for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.

My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.

The Voice of Prophecy declared from the mouth of the Lord that the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah would be joined in one, and that the two scepters would no longer be held by two hands, but by one hand—this is a type of Whom the angel Gabriel said, that God would "give Him the throne of His father David, and of His kingdom there should be no end" (Luke i. 32, 33). God will set His sanctuary in the midst of thee for ever; a prophecy which cannot be applied to the literal Temple, which was restored under Zerubbabel, and has now been burnt by the Romans, but is fulfilled by Christ in His Church, where He has become our God, and we are His people for evermore (S. Jerome).

21. 22. My tabernacle shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.

23. 24. David my servant shall be king over them; one shepherd. See above, xxiv. 23. The prophecy, as usual, rises in its progress to a higher elevation, and extends itself to a wider range, and merges itself in Christ and His Church. After the Captivity, to speak literally, Israel and Judah had no king (see Intro. to Kings, pp. xvii, xviii); and one of the uses of that evanescence of the monarchy was, that it weaned the minds of the faithful from the literal sovereignty, and prepared them for the spiritual Monarchy of Christ. All these things agree with what is said of Christ in the Gospel. He is a Shepherd—the Good Shepherd; the One Shepherd (John x. 1—16. 1 Pet. ii. 25, and v. 4). He is David, a king for ever on His throne (xxxiv. 23); and He is a servant, because, when He became Incarnate, He took upon Him the form of a servant (Phil. ii. 7); and yet He is the Only Begotten Son of the Father. He is the High Priest, and it is glorified; He overthroweth idolatry, and united Israel and Judah under one King and one Shepherd, Who teaches them to acknowledge their Lord and their God (Theodoret).

25. 26. My tabernacle shall be in the midst of them for evermore. As the disappearance of the external pomp of the literal sovereignty of Judah, after the restoration from Babylon, led the faithful to fix their eyes on the heavenly glory of the eternal monarchy of David in Christ, so the inferiority of the second Temple at Jerusalem in external beauty, and eventually its destruction by the armies of Rome, has raised the eyes of all faithful Israelites to the Universal Church, whose origin is in Sion, whose limits are co-extensive with the earth, in its militant state, and whose duration in a Church triumphal will be coeval with eternity.

The Divine David.

The Prophecy declared from the mouth of the Lord that the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah would be joined in one, and that the two scepters would no longer be held by two hands, but by one hand—this is a type of Whom the angel Gabriel said, that God would "give Him the throne of His father David, and of His kingdom there should be no end" (Luke i. 32, 33). God will set His sanctuary in the midst of thee for ever; a prophecy which cannot be applied to the literal Temple, which was restored under Zerubbabel, and has now been burnt by the Romans, but is fulfilled by Christ in His Church, where He has become our God, and we are His people for evermore (S. Jerome).

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frequently repeated by Ezekiel. See xxxiv. 24; xxxvii. 26; xxxix. 17; xlii. 7. 9. Cp. xvi. 10; xviii. 8. 10; and above, note on Ism. xvi. 17.

Ezekiel xxxviii. 1, 2. and Magog.

Gog musters his forces against Israel.—The final conflict and victory of the Church over her enemies. Gog and Magog.

Ch. XXXVIII. There is a gradual advance and rise in these prophecies of Ezekiel. Jerusalem has fallen; her people have been slain, or carried captive (chap. xxxii.) in the days of sorrow, the month of the Prophet, who was an exile among captives in Babylon, was opened to minister comfort to them. He revokes the false shepherds of Israel; he rebukes the unrighteous among the flock, and he gives them the promise of the Good Shepherd, Who would gather them and feed them for ever in the land of Israel (xxxiv. 23—31).

He also pronounces God's judgments on the Edomite enemies of Jerusalem, who had exulted in her fall, and then takes examples from the destruction of all such foes of the people of God (xxxvi.).

He then reveals the blessings which are in store for Israel, first by their Restoration from the captivity of Babylon under Zerubbabel; and, next, their spiritual return and Return to their home in the kingdom of Christ (xxxvi.).

He next proceeds a step farther. He concedes Israel, then captive and dispersed, and in their own opinion no better than dead, with a Vision of future Revival, Resurrection, and Reunion under Christ, Whom they ignore, and who is the King of the Jews.

Who, he declares, shall be a King for ever over them; and they shall walk in God's judgments, and dwell in the promised land, and He will set His Sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore (xxxvii.).

In the chapters which now follow, is another ascent.

The Church of God (which had its origin in Zion, and went forth from Jerusalem by the commission of Christ to the Apostles to evangelize all Nations) will dwell safely for ever under the Christian Wolf; and they will dwell for ever; but though, as the Prophet here foretells, they will be assailed by a powerful Confederacy of Enemies from different quarters in the latter days, yet those adversaries will be utterly overthrown in the victory of God and His people will be complete (xxxviii.—xxix.).

This is what is now revealed in the prophecy concerning God and His army.

In the following chapters David was a symbolic name; it represented Christ. See xxxvi. 23, 24; xxxvii. 24, 25. So in these two chapters Gog is a symbolic name; it represents Antichrist.

It need not be denied that there was a subordinate literal application—e. g. a reference to the invasion of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, persecuting the literal Israel, and a sign type of Antichrist. But that this was not an adequate fulfilment of this prophecy, every careful reader of it will allow.

Gog symbolizes Infidel Powers assailing the Christian Church in the last days.

We have already seen many examples of the use of symbolic names, partly already existing, and partly formed anew, to express ideas. They abound in that wonderful prophecy concerning the Church of God, the Book of Canticles, or Song of Solomon.

There the names Solomon, Sheshonk, Bethel, Lebanon, Ammon, Shechem, Hermon, Ammonahab, Heshbon, Bath-rabbim, Raddahamon, some of which are names of real places and persons, and others coined anew, are all used symbolically. See above, Introdot., to Canticles, or Song of Solomon, p. 125.

Ezekiel has already supplied us with a specimen of such a symbolic name. On the names of those men, Zebadiah, Zedek, Sophon, and Xon, Jeremiah also calls Babylon by symbolic names, Pekod (l. 21), and Sheshach, and Merathaim (see above, xxv. 26; li. 41); and he employs other symbolic names, e. g. Gareb and Goath, as significant of certain moral qualities. See on Jer. xxx. 30. The prophet Nahum uses Nineveh Huzzaab (Nah. ii. 7.). And if we turn to that Book of the New Testament which reveals the future fortunes of the Church of God— even to the day of doom—namely, the Apocalypse, we there recognize examples of the same process. The names Jeru-

Salem, Sion, Babylonia, Sodoma, Egypt, Apollyon, Abaddon, Armageddon, some of which already existed, and others were formed anew, are all symbolical. See below, Introdot., to the Apocalypse, p. 149. To this it may be added, that the Apocalypse also abounds in the symbolic names of Ezekiel, 23, 24, etc. It supplies the clue for interpreting it. After describing the destruction of the mystical Babylon, and of the beast and the false prophet who assisted him, St. John proceeds to predict the historical fulfillment of the prophecies of Ezekiel, and he uses these words: "When the thousand years shall have been finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go forth to deceive the nations" (literally, the heathen, the Tybr, Heb. גָּוִים—that is, Infidel Powers opposed to God's Church, with whom Satan will be united in the same way as in the Book of Daniel—"together to the battle, namely, the Gog and the Magog"—see the different articles in the original here—the Gog, the Magog, the battle; i.e. the enemies supposed to be already known to the reader, from this prophecy of Ezekiel, as gathered together for the battle described here by the Prophet, "of whom the number of them" (St. John uses a Hebrewism here, וּלְקֹל הַשֵּׁפָר קַלָּה, in order to remind his reader that he is referring to a Hebrew prophecy, that of Ezekiel, and not the mundane detail of the gathering of Ten Tribes in the breach of the earth") (here uses another Hebraism derived from Isaiah's prophecy of Sennacherib's invasion, Isa. viii. 8. See Sept., whence St. John derives the word σαταρος. Cp. Ezekiel here, 9. 10,); and may compass the camp of the saints about, and the belted city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them; and the devil that deceiveth them (σαταρος σαταροις) was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are the beast and false prophet.

In the Apocalypse, Gog and Magog are the representatives of all hostile powers gathered together against the Church of God.

In the prophecy of Ezekiel, Gog's immense army is represented as falling on the land, and buried during a space of seven months (xxxix. 4—16) in a place called Hamon-gog, or multitude of Gog; while a fire comes down on Magog (v. 6).

In the Apocalypse a fire comes down from heaven, and consumes the forces of Gog and Magog.

These slight varieties between Ezekiel's prophecy and the Apocalypse, serve the purpose of showing—what is indeed evident from all the features of this prophecy (see, for example, the words in xxxvi. 8—11, which do not admit of a literal interpretation)—that these predictions are not intended to represent any single and local conflict, but to mislead a great moral, intellectual, and spiritual struggle of Antichristianism, in various forms of Iniquity and Injustice, rising up simultaneously in closed and open warfare from Gog and Magog against Christ, and against His Church in the latter days.

S. Jerome, in his exposition of Ezekiel, contends with great force and success against those who assign a literal sense to this prophecy; and he regards it as forecasting a great combination of Antichristian forces against the Church of God. And, inasmuch as Gog is not represented as having among his allies any nations connected with Israel, it is clear that Gog represents Infidel powers.

We may adopt here the words of S. Augustine (de Civ. Dei, xx. 11.): "The Insurrection of Gog" (he says) "is the last persecution which the Church will endure throughout the world, from the universal city of Satan."
This is further evident, not only from the position of this struggle in the Apocalypse, but also from the words of the prophecy of Ezekiel. It refers to the last times (vv. 8, 16); and God says to Gog, “Art not thou he of whom I have spoken in my prophets?” (Ezek. xxxix. 2). Gog was clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords; Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer, and all his bands; the prince of Rosh (whence perhaps the name of Russia). So Sept. Symmachus, Theodoret, S. Jerome, and most modern Expositors. Meshech and Tubal; the Moschi and Tiberiæni, between the Exune and the Caspian. See xxviii. 13; xxxii. 26. Isa. lxxvii. 6.

The names of the nations in this prophecy are distinguished by diversity of race (some belonging to the family of Japheth, others of Shem, others of Ham); and greatness of distance from one another and from Palestine, such as Scythia, Cimmerians, Araraxians, Persians, Ethiopians (vv. 2—6), and Africans brought into union with tribes of Arabia and Spain (v. 13).

No Nation which is near to Palestine and hostile to Israel (such as the Philistines, the Egyptians, and the Babylonians) had any stock of Israel by consanguinity, such as Edom, Moab, and Ammon, all which would have been likely to take advantage of a local irruption into Palestine, as their history shows, nor even Babylon itself, is mentioned in the prophecy as taking any part in this heterogeneous league, and in this terrible warfare against the people of God.

The reason of this is clear. We are not to imagine an actual confederacy of nations against the literal Israel. These nations represent a combination of infidel and impious Powers very diverse from one another—as far as the poles asunder—like the Pharisées and Herodians plotting against Christ, and Herod and Pontius Pilate joined together to destroy Him; and not connected with God’s people by any articles of belief, and all leaning together in destruction and antichristian rebellion against God and His Church.

Compare what is said below, on Rev. xx. 8, “Satan shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, to gather them together to battle” (against Christ); “the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.” This prophecy pre-announces a great gathering and general Insurrection against Christ, as indeed is declared by the additional assertion that their number will be as the sand of the sea. All Nations called Gog and Magog, representatives of the enemies of God. Magog was the second son of Japheth (Gen. x. 2), the father of the Gentiles, as distinguished from the race of Shem; and Gog is called in Ezekiel the chief Prince of Meshech and Tubal, and who also of the race of Japheth (Gen. x. 2). In the prophecy of Ezekiel (xxxviii., xxxix.), which is continued and consummated in this Vision of the Apocalypse, other Nations are represented as allied with Gog against Israel (xxxviii. 5—29; xxxix. 1—5); and with Magog (xxxix. 6). The battle is then described, and the defeat and burial of Gog and his multitude (xxxix. 11—16), and the sacrifice of God’s enemies (vv. 17, 18), and the full and final triumph of His cause, and the sanctification and glorification of His people.

On the whole, it is evident, that the names of Gog and Magog are used here to signify worldly and godless powers leagueing together under the banner of Satan, and opposed to God and the Christian Israel, and the heavenly Jerusalem. This is clear from the fact that they are described as existing in the four quarters of the earth, going over the breadth of the earth, and being as the sand of the sea (rev. 8, 9).

The defeat and burial of Gog and his hosts in the Vision of Ezekiel, is explained by this Vision of the Apocalypse to be prophetic of the destruction of the Church, and his Conspirates, and of their condemnation to the Lake of Fire.

4. I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws! Here God repeats by Ezekiel the words He had already used by Isaiah to Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, the invader of Judah in the time of Hezekiah (Isa. xxxviii. 8). Gog is described by Ezekiel, in xliii. 12, in precisely the same words as the army of Gog here. Cp. below, on xxxix. 2.

5. Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya. See xxvii. 10; xxx. 5.

house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee. 7 Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them.

8 After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. 9 Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like 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 think an evil thought: and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwatered villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land. 13 Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all 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; in that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shall thou not know it? 15 And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: and thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

17 Thus saith the Lord God; Art thou of whom I have spoken in old time,


--- north quarters] Sides of the north; its extremities.


10. against the mountains of Israel] That is, against the Church of God (S. Jerome), which had its origin in Sion, and enfolded the world; and is thus brought into contact with the forces of Gog, which are represented as rising against it from all points of the compass. See above, Prelim. Note to chap. xxxvii.

11. the land of unwatered villages] Helam of перазох. See Esther ix. 18. Cp. Dnt. iii. 5. Judges v. 7, 11. 1 Sam. vi. 18. Zechar. ii. 14. Gezer. 898. This seems to show that in the days of this antichristian rupture the Church of God will not have been careful to maintain her walls and defences of sound doctrine; and will be dwelling securely without "bars and gates." Cp. Dan. iv.

12. cattle] Substance generally, not cattle only (Gen. xxxi. 18; xxxiv. 23; xxxvi. 6. Gezer. 504).

13. Sheba, and Dedan, and—Tarshish] Nations far removed from one another; Sheba and Dedan in Arabia, and Tarshish in the far-off west. Here is another proof that the Prophecy is not describing a local attack upon Palestine, but that these names are symbolical, and that these words represent the reflections of spectators of the great struggle of diverse anti-christian Powers leagued against the Church of God. Even the Shebas and Tarshishes of this world—great commercial countries which may seem to be influenced by love of gain—they will be surprised by the inordinate covetousness and ambition which prompt Gog to make war upon the Church.

14. shalt thou not know it?] Will thou not observe the security of the Church, and the advantage of it, to make an assault upon it? See on v. 11.

15. all of them riding upon horses] Another characteristic specified already by the Prophet himself of Assyria, a precursor of Gog. See xxvii. 6, and Mesch. 4—7.

17. Art thou of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days? Gog, the Infidel Antichrist, mustering his forces in the last days against the People of God, is the consummation of all prophecies against his precursors and types, especially Pharaoh in Egypt, and Sennacherib, king of Assyria, whose invasion of Judea, and the marvellous destruction of whose army at Jerusalem is the subject of so large a portion of the Book of Isaiah (see above, on Isa. x. 13—19. xxv. 23—34; iv. 24—27; xvii. 12—14; xxv. 1—5; xxvi. 12—21; xxxii. 1—24; xxxvii. 36); for this reason, among others, because Sennacherib was a figure in his pride, his blasphemy, his power, his covetousness, and his fall, of the Infidel Antichrist of the last days. Consequently, Ezekiel uses here throughout the language of Isaiah; and it is
I am against thee, EZEKIEL XXXVIII. 18—23. XXXIX. 1—8.

O Gog,

† by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in these 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 in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, † Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; 20 so that m the 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, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. 21 And I will c call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God; c every man’s sword shall be against his brother. 22 And I will p plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. 23 Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord.

XXXIX. 1 Therefore, † thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshek and Tubal: 2 and I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the 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 c Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: 4 c I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. 5 Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God. 6 c And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the Lord. 7 c So 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: c and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel.

8 c Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God; this is the day whereof I have spoken.


remarkable that he refers to the writings of the prophets as one well-known integral volume. Cp. Psalms on Daniel, p. 309.
20. so that the fishes of the sea.] The overthrow of Gog shall be like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, and like the convulsion of the plain in which they were, subsiding into the Dead Sea. See on Gen. xix. 24. Cp. here v. 22. And the sense may be, that all classes of men, represented by various members of the animal creation, will be agitated by the antichristian insurrection of the last days. Cp. S. Jerome here, who refers to Acts x. 12, St. Peter’s sheath, and 1 Cor. xv. 39.
21. c against his brother] See below on xxxix. 3, 4.
22. great hailstones] As on the army of the kings of Cushan, flying before Joshua at Beth-horon (Josh. x. 11), whose victory over those kings was a type of the victory of Jesus over all opposing earthly Powers. See the notes above on that history.

Ch. XXXIX. 1. Gog, the chief prince] Gog, prince of Rosh. See above, xxxvii. 2.

VOL. V. PART II. — 20

2. and leave but the sixth part of thee] Rather, I will lead thee. The verb here used is not from shésh, six, but from, shésh, to lead. Cp. Sept., Vulg., Arameic, Syriac, and Targum. Gog will rush forward to the conquest against God’s people, as if he were irresistible; but God will turn him back, and lead him according to His own will, and make all his furious assaults the manifestation of His own glory (ver. 21, 22). — upon the mountains of Israel] Here again we are reminded of God’s denunciations of judgment against Sennacherib, the type of the infidel Antichrist. See above, on xxxviii.
4. c I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot */ (Isa. xxv. 5."
5. I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles] This overthrow of antichristian powers will arouse the careless from their lethargy, and excite them to fear God.
7. the heathen shall know] Another resemblance to Sennacherib’s overthrow. See on v. 9.
8. it is come— it is done] Compare Rev. xvi. 17; xxi. 6.
9. 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 handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn 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 shall burn the weapons with fire: 11 and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord God.

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 noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of || Hamon-gog.

And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, "that they were checked in their furious career, and are there overthrown, and find only a grave (c. 11); and this is called the valley of the passengers, or passers through, that is, of those who had hoped to pass through the land without resistance, and despise it, but were frustrated in their confident expectations.

In this word “valley”—valley of passengers—there is a striking contrast to that other valley described by Ezekiel—the valley of dry bones—representing the “whole house of Israel,” which vanished in the dead and silent out was revived by the breath of God. See above, xxxvi. 1—11.

The latter symbolizes Christ and His Church, as compared with Antichrist and his army. Christ dies, but he rises again on the third day and conquers all His enemies. His Church may even be defeated and buried; but the resurrection by the Spirit’s breath, she will rise from her valley of dry bones. Antichrist dies, and is buried in his valley of passengers; and unless the Church should be careless in her work (see vv. 14, 15), he will lie in his grave without hope of resurrection.

Also in this word “the passers through,” there is another reference to the language of Isaiah describing Senacherrib’s invasion of the land of Judah in the days of Hezekiah. The word here used by Ezekiel, and rendered passengers, is obernias, the plural part, poed, from abar, to pass through, or to pass. This word is repeated here emphatically three times. And this word is used several times by Isaiah to describe the march of the proud Assyrian invader. See Isa. viii. 8, “He shall pass through Judah, he shall overspread and go over, and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth” (Sept. αὐτού, the word used by St. John in the Apocalypse, xx. 8, describing the invasion of Gog). Again, Isa. xx. 25: “He is passed to Migron—through his place he came to Ar.” The passage is literally: “The passers through scourge shall pass through.”

Or, in front of the sea (see Foreset, 1139, and Keil here); i.e. the Dead Sea—the grave of Solom and Gomorr—an appropriate place for the burial of Gog.

— it shall stop the noses of the passengers: Rather, it shall stop the passengers, or passers through: they shall be arrested in their campaign by defeat and death, and shall find a grave there which will stop their course; as the Assyrian army did when they passed through Palestine, halted with spoil from Egypt to Ethiopia, and the people fled and had the permission to pass and the people captive in triumph to Assyria. See on Isa. xxxvi. 36.

— Hamon-gog—i.e. Gog’s multitude and tumult; this word hamon is also used by Isaiah to describe Senacherrib’s invasion: "Woe to the multitude (hamon) of many peoples which make a noise like the noise of the sea." See on Isa., xvii. 12—14. And again, “At the noise of the tumult (hamon) of the Assyrians, the people fled.” But he adds, “your spoil shall be gathered.” See on Isa. xxvii. 9, 4.

This symbolical word, hamon-gog, stands in striking contrast to a symbolical word in the Canticles, Baal hamon, i.e. the place of a multitude, which signifies the Universal Church. See on ver. 3. There is also the word of the vineyard of Solom; and that vineyard is there said to be at BAAL-hamon, the place of a multitude; and there also is the grave of Antichrist, Haamon-gog.

12. the house of Israel] the house of Israel shall bury their enemies. Usually the survivors of an army bury their own dead; but here the rout is so complete, that the house of Israel

The Victory of Christ and of His Church over all Adversaries, in the Last Days.

— the valley of the passengers] Or, of the passers through.

The ruthless and rapacious invaders had hoped to pass through the territory of the people of God, and to slay its inhabitants, and to plunder and pillage it without let or hindrance; but

The Right of God’s Enemies.

— and shall set on fire and burn—the shields—the bows and the arrows—the spears, and they shall burn them with fire—The dwellers in the cities of Israel—that is, the faithful in the Church of God—will utterly destroy the weapons of the adversaries of the truth. The faithful will not take to themselves and use the arms of war, but will totally consume them. They themselves will fight with other weapons (S. Jerome).

Here is another resemblance to the destruction of Sennacherib’s army. See v. 5, and see Ps. xlii. 9, written probably on the occasion of Sennacherib’s overthrow: “He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, and burneth the chariot in the fire.” The effect of which is thus described at the close of the Psalm: “Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen.” See above, c. 7. — seven years] This number, seven years, as that in v. 12, seven months, is doubtless symbolical. Seven is a number of rest and perfection (see below, on Rev. xi. at the end of the chapter, p. 230); and it signifies that the work will be done completely. Cp. S. Jerome, who observes that their burial will be like a sabbatical year to the faithful; and see Keil here, p. 368; Fairbairn, 420. S. Jerome observes, that the Pass-over was in the first month, and the Feast of Tabernacles in the seventh.

The features of the prophecy show clearly that it is not to be understood literally, but spiritually.

The wood of the weapons of Gog’s host will serve for fuel for Israel for seven years. And “the house of Israel, ye all the people of the land,” are to be employed in burying the slain for seven months. According to the literal interpretation, supposing that all the people of the land amounted to only a million souls, and each buried only two bodies a day, the number buried in the seven months would have been about three hundred and seventy millions—an impossible number.

Such considerations as these, which may be much enlarged, show that this prophecy is not to be interpreted literally, but spiritually. And all the things have their great and sacred uses, as warning us in solemn tones that we must expect a terrible outbreak of Infidel Antichristianism in the latter days.

10. they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them—Another resemblance to the history of Senacherrib, who had spoiled Judah and came to spoil Jerusalem, but was spoiled. See Isa. xvii. 12-14. “This is the portion of them that spoil vs, and the lot of them that rob vs;” and Isa. xxvii. 10, “Woe to thee that spoilest—your spoil shall be gathered.”

11. I will give unto Gog a place there of graves] I will give him a place for a grave, where he expected only a triumph and a glorious rich spoil.
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 "I shall be glorified, saith the Lord God. 14 And they shall sever out †men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers that remain upon the face of the earth, †to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. 15 And the passengers that pass through the land, when any seethe a man's bone, then shall he †set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. 16 And also the name of the city shall be || Hamonah. Thus shall they cleanse the land.

17 And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God; †Speak †unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, †Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my ⩪sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice ⩪upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. 18 Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of ⩪goats, of bullocks, all of them ⩪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 Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God. 21 And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and ⩪my hand that I have laid upon them. 22 So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward.

bury the corpses of their foes. The same appears to have been done by them to Sennacherib's army. See Isa. xxxvii. 36, 37.

8. †shall be to them a renown] The whole Church shall derive honour from cleansing the land from the corrupt and polluting remains of Antichristianism, and shall be glorified.

14. †they shall sever out men of continual employment] They shall set apart men of continuance, that is, who shall be engaged perpetually (Hebr. †tamiud) in this work of cleansing the land from all vestiges of the dead carcases of antichrists. Compare the phrase, the †continual burnt-offering (Num. xxviii, 6), where the same word, †tamiud, is used.

The Church of God must have an appointed order of men, who are to take care that no relics of antichristian impurity, as to doctrine, practice, or worship, shall remain.

— passing through the land to bury with the passengers [those that remain upon the face of the earth] Rather, men appointed to this continual work, are to be perpetually passing through the land (i.e. exploring it) to bury the passengers, that is, the dead army of Gog (see on e. 11), namely, those that remain unburied, so that they may clear them away from the face of the earth, and the land be thoroughly purified.

— after the end of seven months shall they search] During which the people of God shall have been engaged in burying. These appointed men shall continually pass through the land after the harvest is harvested, in order to see whether any corpses or bones of Gog's army remain unburied. This shall be their constant occupation.

This is symbolic of the perpetual duty of Christ's Church, to search whether any antichristian errors remain in her communion, and to examine, whether any errors, which may seem to have been exploded, dead, and buried, may not start up, as it were, from their graves, to contaminate it. 15. the passengers] That is, the men of continual employment, in the [latter] part of the phrase, who explore the land; and they bury those enemies who imagined that they would pass through, and despise it. See e. 11.

— when any seeth a man's bone] Hebr. elstah. So called from atsam, to be strong. The bone represents any remnant errors of Antichristianism on which it relied for its strength in overcoming the people of God.

Observe the contrast. The bones of the sinners of Jerusalem have been represented by Ezekiel as burnt in the caldron of destruction (xxiv. 4, 5, 10); and the bones of Gog's army are buried, lest they pollute the land; but the dry bones of the house of Israel have been represented as rising from the grave (xxvii, 10, 11).

9. †Hamanah] Or rather, And also the name of the city shall be Hamonah. A city shall be called Hamonah for multitude, to commemorate the invasion of the forces of Antichristianism, which in the Apocalypse are thus described,— the number of whom is as the sand of the sea (Rev. xx. 8).

17. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth] Compare on Isa. xxxiv. 6. Jer. xvi. 10. Zeph. i. 7; and the language of the Apocalypse, which is derived from this passage (Rev. xix. 17—21); and which foretells the future triumph of Christ and His Church. See the notes there.

18. of rams, of lambs—Bashan] Symbolizing various classes of men, who are represented as sacrificed for their sins.

20. Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men] Such language as this, like other portions of this prophecy, is employed, in order to remind the hearer that it is not to be interpreted literally, but has a symbolic character. No one can imagine that horses, chariots, and men are to be served as food at the table of God.

Conversion of the Jews—Its Effects on the Heathen.

22. 23. the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God—And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity] Here is a prophecy of the conversion of the Jews, and of its effects upon the rest of the world. When the Jews, who are now scattered abroad, shall acknowledge God, and shall confess their sin in rejecting Christ, then God will pour special blessings upon them in the sight of many nations, and the Gentiles will acknowledge God's righteous dealings towards them, and will see a new argument for His truth, constancy, and justice, and on behalf of Christianity.
Conversion of Israel. Ezekiel XXXIX. 23—29. XL. 1—5.

Ezekiel's Vision.

23. d And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword. e 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; b Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name; f after that they have borne their shame, and all their transgressions whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid. g When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; h then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, i 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. i Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.

XL. 1. In the fifth 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 the city was smitten, in the sevenscore and second year of 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, 1 by which was 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, 1 and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate.

4. And the man said unto me, b 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: 2 declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel.

5. And behold a wall on the outside of the house round about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits long by the cubit and an hand

— the frame of a city on the south j Of the city toward the south. See xlv. 6.

3. a line] Hebr. pīqót. This word, rendered line, in Exod. xxi. 43; xxvii. 31; and in other places wàrē, rīḥaḏ, and thread, occurs only here in the prophetic books. See below, xxvii. 3.

— of flax] Or, lines. Hebr. pisḥēth. This word recurs in the dress prescribed for the Priests (xlv. 17, 18).

— a measuring reed] Literally, the reed (Hebr. qānāḵ) for measuring; six cubits and six handbreadths long. See on v. 5. The word mēḏāḏ, measure, is constantly repeated in these descriptions, to show the exactitude with which the dimensions of the Temple and its parts were ordered. See vs. 5, 10. 21, 22, 24, 28, 29, 32, 35, in all which places this word mēḏāḏ recurs. See also xlvii. 16—19; and below, on v. 24.

5. And behold a wall. Behold a wall (went) outside the house (the Temple) round about; and in the man's hand was the measuring-reed of six cubits by the cubit and an hand breadth; that is, the reed was on the whole six cubits and six handbreadths; and if we reckon the cubit (the measure from the elbow to the end of the middle finger) at twenty-one inches, and the handbreadth, or palm, at three and a half inches, the measuring-reed was about twelve feet long.

On the spiritual significance of this Reed, see below, the Retrospect.

— an hand breadth] Hebr. tōpēḥ (the open hand, from tōpēḥ, to expand). See vs. 43; and xliii. 13; and Exod. xlv. 22
breadth: so he measured the breadth of the building, one reed; and the height, one reed.

Then came he unto the gate 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. And

The east gate.

EZEKIEL XL. 6, 7.

The measuring reed.

In no case, where the reed is mentioned in the measuring of any thing in the Temple, is the thing which is measured either more or less than the one reed. In the outer court the measurement of each of the four sides is 500 reeds (xli. 10—19). In no other passage of the Vision is the reed mentioned.

THE BUILDINGS AT THE EASTERN GATE OF THE COURT OF THE TEMPLE.

6. The threshold] Or sill, to which they had mounted by the stairs.

— and the other threshold] Rather, namely, the first

THE TEMPLE OF GOD,

AS SEEN IN THE VISION OF EZEKIEL (XL.—XLVI).

A The outer Gates, approached from without by seven steps.
B The three Gates of the inner Court, approached by eight steps. Concerning their Tables, see xl. 39—42.
CC Corner Courts (xlvi. 19, 22).
CH The Holy Place.
HH The Holy of Holies.
P Place for Priests.
S Side Chambers (xlvi. 19).
T Four Tables.

25; xxxvii. 12. The cubit or ell (aona) is called ammon in Hebrew. The reed was for the measuring of the lesser dimensions; the line (which was graduated into reeds) for the greater length.

— the breadth of the building] The thickness of the structure of the wall of the court of the Temple; not the large outermost wall (described in xlii. 9), but the court in which the Temple was. The wall of this court was a reed (about twelve feet) in breadth (observe the solidity of it), and a reed (twelve feet) high.

— one reed] This dimension prevails throughout the building. See vv. 6 (twice), 7 (twice), 8; xli. 8.

In no case, where the reed is mentioned in the measuring of anything in the Temple, is the thing which is measured either more or less than the one reed. In the outer court the measurement of each of the four sides is 500 reeds (xli. 10—19). In no other passage of the Vision is the reed mentioned.
Ezechiel.  

8 And every little chamber was one reed broad, and one reed length; and between the little chambers were five cubits; and the threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate within was one reed.

9 He measured also the porch of the gate within, one reed. Then he measured 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 space 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 And he made also posts of threescore cubits, even unto the post of the court round about the gate. And from the face of the gate of the entrance unto the face of the porch of the inner gate were fifty cubits.

15 And there were narrow windows to the little chambers, and to their posts within the gate round about, and likewise to the arches: and windows were round about inward: and upon each post were palm trees.

16 Then brought he me into the outward court, and, lo, there were chambers, and a pavement made for the court round about: thirty chambers were upon the pavement. And the pavement by the side of the gate over against the length of the gates was the lower pavement.

17 Then he measured the breadth from the forefront of the lower gate unto threshold (or sill), which was one reed broad. There was a second threshold, which is mentioned in v. 7.

7. And every little chamber] Rather, and the chamber, or guard-room (Hebr. nqm; cp. 1 Kings v. 28. 2 Chron. xii. 11). The word little, inserted in our translation before this word, in vv. 12, 13. 16. 21. 29. 33. 36, would be better omitted. These chambers were guard-rooms,—rooms for those who kept the door of the Temple. Our translators added the epithet little, in order to distinguish these chambers from those mentioned below. See v. 17. The word here used is translated Wachstube, or guard-room, by Keil.

8. within] Toward the Temple. This is repeated three times. Cp. vv. 31. 34. 37.

9. the posts] Pillars or columns. Each of the pillars was two cubits in diameter. Cp. v. 14, where it is said that they were sixty cubits high. See v. 8, 9.


11. the entry] The doorway.

12. the length of the gate] The extent of the gate; not the height. The word oré, here used, which occurs about forty times in these chapters, "signifies height," and is supposed to be the length of the vestibule which led to the gate. So Böttcher, Hitzig, Hävernick, Keil. But the word oré is used for height, as compared with breadth, in Exod. xxvi. 2. 8. 13. 16; xxxvi. 9. 15. 21; and it seems to signify height here. So Lyra, Villalabadus, Kliefoth.

13. the space] Rather, a barrier, or boundary, to protect the chambers or guard-rooms.

14. He measured] He measured the gate from the roof of the chamber to the roof of the other (corresponding chamber), five and twenty cubits, door against door.

15. And from the face of the gate of entrance, to the front of the vestibule of the inner gate, were fifty cubits.

16. narrow windows] Closed, or latticed windows (see margin), like network (Sept.). Cp. 1 Kings vi. 4. The word here used is the participle from átum, to close (see Ps. liv. 4. Prov. xvii. 28; xxi. 13. Isa. xxxiii. 15); and it occurs in xli. 16. 26, where it is rendered narrow, as here in the text. It signifies "closed windows, with latticed shutters, the bars of which, being let into the wall, could not be opened or shut at pleasure" (Gesen. 35; Fuerst, 67).

17. to their posts] There were windows at the side of the pillars which flanked the entrance.

18. palm trees] See below, on xli. 19.

The Court of the Temple.

17. chambers] The Hebrew tsé-kh, always rendered chamber by our Translators, except 1 Sam. ix. 22, where it is rendered parlor, is connected with lsháh, to lie down, to rest, to abide (Fuerst, 755), and is specially applied to rooms attached to the Temple (1 Chron. ix. 26. 33. Neh. x. 37; xiii). It occurs about twenty times in this present description of the Temple. See vv. 38. 44—46; xil. 10; xii. 1. 4. 5. 7—13; xiii. 19; xvi. 19, holy chambers. These chambers were for the Priests and Levites, and for the tithes and offerings to the Temple.

— thirty chambers] Probably ten on each of three sides of the court, in clusters of five chambers on each of the sides of the three gates (Keil, 386).

— upon the pavement] For the pavement, which went round the outer court, on the inside of it.

18. over against the length of the gate] Corresponding to their length.

— was the lower pavement] Or, namely, the lower pavement. It was lower than that of the inner court of the Temple.
the forefront of the inner court || without, an hundred cubits eastward and northward.

20 And the gate of the outward court † 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 || arches 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 beheld 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;

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.

30 And the arches round about were five and twenty cubits long, and five cubits † broad. 31 And the arches thereof were toward the outer court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof: and the going up to it had eight steps.

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.

24. these measures] Those specified before, with regard to the posts or pillars of the northern and eastern gate.

28. by the south gate] Through the south gate.

29. the gates] These gates were the eastern, southern, and western gates of the Temple. 30. and the arches] And there were bays, or projections round about.

The North Gate and South Gate of the Outer Court.

These were similar in arrangement to the East Gate, already described. See vv. 6—16.


— arches] Bays, or juttings forth from the wall (v. 16).

— length—fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits] This measurement recurs frequently. See vv. 23, 29, 33, 36.

22. their windows] Its windows.

23. the gate of the inner court] There were three gates (east, north, and south) into the inner court, corresponding to, and approached by, a direct line, 100 cubits long, from the three gates (east, north, and south) of the outer court.
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.

And he brought me to the north gate, and measured it according to these measures;

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.

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.

And the chambers and the entries thereof were by the posts of the gates, where they washed the burnt offering.

And in the porch of the gate were two tables on this side, and two tables on that side, to slay thereon the burnt offering and the sin offering and the trespass offering.

And at the side without, || 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.

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.

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.

And within were | hooks, an hand broad, fastened round about: and upon the tables was the flesh of the offering.

And without the inner gate were the chambers of 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.

And he said unto me, This chamber, whose prospect is toward the south, is for the priests, || the keepers of the charge of the house.

And the chamber whose prospect is toward the north is for the priests, || the keepers of the charge of the altar: these are the sons of Zadok among the sons of Levi, which come near to the Lord to minister unto him.

So he measured the court, an hundred cubits long, and an hundred cubits broad, foursquare; and the altar that was before the house.
43. 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.

49. The length of the porch was twenty cubits, and the breadth eleven cubits; and he brought me by the steps whereby they went up to it: and there were two pillars by the posts, one on this side, and another on that side.

XL. 1. 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 door was ten cubits; 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 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. And the side chambers were three, one over another, and thirty in order; and they entered into the wall which was of the house for the side chambers round about, that they might have hold, but they had not hold in the wall of the house.

7. And 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.

8. I saw also the height of the house round about: the foundations of the side chambers were 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

48. the porch] Or vestibule of the Temple. Cp. 1 Kings vi. 3, where the same word (ulam) is used.

49. breadth eleven cubits] The breadth does not agree with that of Solomon’s Temple (1 Kings vi. 3), the length does.

— and he brought me by the steps] Rather, and to the steps; that is, it measured eleven cubits unto the steps of the ascent.

The Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.

Ch. XI. 1. the temple] The Holy Place, to which we have come from the foul-court. The measurement begins from the east wall, where the entrance was. This wall had pillars six cubits broad, and between the pillars a door ten cubits broad, with door-posts five cubits broad on each side; so that the whole breadth of the wall was thirty-two cubits (KdL).

— the tabernacle] Heb. ḫel; the only place in this description, or in the prophecies of Ezekiel, where this word occurs. There seems to be no other rendering possible than that in the text; and by this word Ezekiel seems to connect this ideal Temple with the Tabernacle of the Wilderness, the breadth of which, being formed of eight boards, a cubit and a half each, would be twelve cubits, as here (See Exod. xxvi. 16. 22. 23), as he had connected it with the Temple of Solomon, and thus to show the substantial unity of all three fabrics, and of the dispensations symbolized by them (Hävernick, Fairbairn). On the symbolical character of the number 12, see below, in the Retrospect at the end of this description, and on Evolution, at end of chap. xi.

2. the length thereof] That is, of the Holy Place.

3. then went he inward] Into the Most Holy Place the Angel went alone; the Prophet stood without.

Vol. V. Part II.—257

4. twenty cubits] As in Solomon’s Temple, 1 Kings vi. 20. 2 Chron. iii. 8.

— before the temple] In front of the Temple, or Holy Place, in which the Prophet was.

The Side Chambers.

5. the breadth of every side chamber] The collective fabric of the side chambers. Cp. 1 Kings vi. 5. 8, where the same word (tellā), properly signifying a rib, is used. The word is repeated in Ex. 6—9. 11. 26.

6. the side chambers were three] Literally, were chamber or chamber, three; that is, in three stories; that is, a succession of thirty side chambers in three tiers; thirty chambers in each tier, connected by an inner winding staircase, as in the Temple of Solomon, 1 Kings vi. 8.

— and they entered] They approached to the wall of the house, which was toward the side chambers round about, so as to hold on to it, but they did not lay hold of it.

These words show that they involve a mystical meaning. See below, at the end of these chapters, and compare notes on 1 Kings vi. 5. 6. 8, and the Retrospect at the end of this Volume.

7. the breadth of the house] Rather, the house had an enlarging upward, and so the lower chambers mounted upward to the higher, through the middle one.

8. six great cubits] Rather, six cubits to the joining.

9. the side chamber] The collective structure of the side chambers.

—and that which was left] Rather, and so also was what was left free to the side chambers of the house. See v. 11.
was left was the place of the side chambers that were within. And between the chambers was the wideness of twenty cubits round about the house on every side. 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.

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.

So he measured the house, an hundred cubits long; and the separate place, and the building, with the walls thereof, an hundred cubits long;

Also the breadth of the face of the house, and of the separate place toward the east, an hundred cubits.

And he measured the length of the building over against the separate place which was behind it, and the galleries thereof on the one side and on the other side, an hundred cubits, with the inner temple, and the porches of the court; the door posts, and the narrow windows, and the galleries round about on their three stories, over against the door, cieled with wood round about, and from the ground up to the windows, and the windows were covered; to that above the door, even unto the inner house, and without, and by all the wall round about within and without, by measure.

And it was made with cherubins and palm trees, so that a palm tree was between a cherub and a cherub; and every cherub had two faces; 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. From the ground unto above the door were cherubins and palm trees made, and on the wall of the temple.

The posts of the temple were squared, and the face of the sanctuary; the appearance of the one as the appearance of the other.

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 the table that is before the Lord.

**The Separate Place.**

12. (the separate place) Hebr. gizrah, which signifies parted off (Gen. 107; Farnst, 278, 270).

The design of this Gizrah is not evident. It has been supposed by some (Kilefoth, Keil) to have been a place separated as a receptacle for all the outsprings and refuse from the Temple, which were cast thither. Cp. the meaning of the cognate word in Lev. xvi. 22. But this opinion seems hardly reconcilable with the fact, that this Gizrah was included in the measurement of the outer court of the Temple, and was in immediate juxtaposition with the Holy of Holies, and it had on its north and south side holy chambers for the priests (xlii. 19). Also its square form seems to symbolize something holy.

On the whole, it seems more probable that the Gizrah was a separate place for religious meditation and prayer, like a large cloistered oratory. Cp. note above, on Lamm. iv. 7, the only other place where the word occurs.


15. (the galleries) The Hebrew word attek occurs here, and Ex. 16, and xlii. 3, 5, and nowhere else. It is rendered peristyle by Sept., and terraque by Gesen., who derives it from notak, to cut away; the rendering galleries, or balconies, seems to be correct. See xlii. 3, and Keil, 411.

**Summary of the Measurements, the Forms and the Ornaments of the Principal Parts of the Temple.**

16. (The door posts) Thresholds, or sills. — narrow windows) Closed windows. — over against the door—covered] Over against the threshold was wall-covering round about, and the ground-floor up to the windows; the windows were covered—all these measured. See v. 17.

17. (to that above the door) The space above the doors was by measure. The sacred writer in these verses means to lay stress on the fact that every detail, however small, in the building, was by measure, literally, measured.

18. (cherubins and palm trees) See 1 Kings vi. 29, 32, 35; vii. 36. 2 Chron. iii. 6.

19. (it was made) So it was made throughout the house: cherubins and palm-trees were repeated throughout.

There were only palm-trees in the other part of the sacred structure, described in xl. 16. 22. 29. 31. 34. 37; but here in the Temple cherubins are combined in each case with palm-trees (vv. 18—20, 25), except in r. 26, which describes the windows.

21. (the temple) The Holy Place.

22. (the face of the sanctuary) The front of the Holy of Holies.

23. (The altar of wood) Cp. Exod. xxx. 1. The altar of incense in the Tabernacle was a cubit long, and a cubit broad, and two cubits high, and it was to be overlaid with gold.

— of wood] No gold is mentioned as overlaying it. This shows that no incense was to be burnt upon it, as in the Tabernacle.

— table] Cp. xlv. 16.

— before the Lord] As the Altar of Incense was before the veil of the Holy of Holies, where was the Divine Presence over the Ark.
And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors. And the doors had two leaves apiece, two turning leaves; two leaves for the one door, and two leaves for the other door. 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.

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.

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.

Before the length of an hundred cubits was the north door, and the breadth was fifty cubits.

Over against the twenty cubits which were for the inner court, and over against the pavement which was for the utter court, was gallery against gallery in three stories. And before the chambers was a walk of ten cubits breadth inward, a way of one cubit; and their doors toward the north.

Now the upper chambers were shorter: for the galleries | were higher than these, || than the lower, and than the middlemost of the building. 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. 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. For the length of the chambers that were in the utter court was fifty cubits: and, lo, before the temple were an hundred cubits.

And || from under these chambers was || the entry on the east side, || as one goeth into them from the utter court. 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. And the 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. 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.

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 shall eat the most holy things: there shall they lay the most holy things, and the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the
15. *The inner house* [The Temple and the chambers belonging to it.]

16. **five hundred reeds** [About 6000 feet, about one mile and a seventh of a mile,—a proof that this description cannot be understood literally, as applicable to any building to be erected on the site of Jerusalem.

On the whole we have this general outline:—

(1) The Area of the Temple buildings, with their two outer courts, 500 cubits square.

(2) This is placed in a larger Area surrounding it, 500 reeds square.

(3) Outside this larger Area, a strip of ground, surrounding the Area on all sides, and fifty cubits broad (xliv. 2).

The Glory of the Lord returns and fills the House.

**Cxxl.** I. the *gate—toward the east* [The gate of the outermost court. See xlv. 1.]

2—5. **behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east—and filled the house** [The Glory of the Lord, which the Prophet had before seen quitting the Temple, and going to the mountains of the East, the Mount of Olives (the Mount of Christ's Ascension into Heaven), now returns from the East, and fills the Temple. See above, on xl. 23.]

After the Lord's entrance, this gate was shut. See xlv. 2.

2. **his voice was like a noise** (or, voice, the word is repeated) of many waters. [As the Voice of Christ is described in the Apocalypse (Rev. i. 15).]

3. **when I came to destroy the city** [See ix. 1. 5. A striking proof of the Prophet's inspiration. He speaks of himself as doing what God did; because God was in him. Cp. above, on Jer. i. 10.]

—*river Chebar* [See i. 3; iii. 23.]

5. **the glory of the Lord filled the house** [As in the Dedication of the Temple of Solomon (1 Kings viii. 10).]

6. **And I heard him speaking** [Or, I heard one speaking to me.]

—the man [A man.

1. **the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet** [A reference to the Ark and the Mercy-seat, where God sat enthroned between the Cherubim. See above, on Lam. ii. 1; and Isa. lx. 1; lvii. 1.]

But there is no Ark in the Temple of Ezekiel. God fills the whole of His glory, and it is everywhere diffused. See here v. 2, and v. 12.

—the carcases of their kings in their high places [Rather, the dead bodies of the kings, the high places;—their high places, where they worshiped idols, instead of the living God, were their carcases. Cp. Lev. xxvi. 30. Isa. viii. 19. Jer. xvi. 18; and Hengst. 247.]

—in their high places [There ought only to be a comma after these words; the sense runs on.]
and there was only a party-wall between Me and them. They made their dead deities and the Living God to be next door neighbours—σαροιγοις.

10. let them measure the pattern] The model which I have given thee.

12. Upon the top of the mountain] On the high mountain, on which the whole fabric is set. See above, xl. 2. The whole area bounded by the wall round it (see xlii. 15—20) is a Holy of Holies.

This is the Law of the House—the Church Universal of God. See the Retrospect at the end of this Volume.

The Altar of Burnt-Offering.

13. after the cubits] According to cubits. The cubit is one and a half cubits.

— the bottom] A ground-setting, bosem, or lap (for the Altar).

— a span] Heb. šārēth. This is the only place in these chapters where this measure occurs.

15, 16. So the altar] Literally, and the mountain of God (Heb. Har-El) shall be four cubits; and from the lion of God (Heb. Ariel) and upward the four horns; and the lion of God twelve cubits long by twelve cubits broad, squared in its four sides.

The Altar, regarded as to its height, is called Har-El, the Mountain of God; and in its area, or upper surface, is called Ariel, the lion of God, or, as some render it, the heart of God, as consuming the sacrifices. See Isa. xxix. 1, 2. Cp. Keil, 486. 201

And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, they shall turn every man from his evil, and from all the transgressions in all their wickedness; and so shall they be ashamed of their iniquities. And let them measure the pattern: and if they be ashamed of all their iniquities, then let them turn every man from his evil; and so shall they be ashamed of all their iniquities.

This is the law of the house: Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.

And these are the measures of the altar after the cubits: the cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth; even the bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about shall be a span: and this shall be the higher place of the altar. 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. So the altar shall be four cubits; and from the altar and upward shall be four horns. And the altar shall be twelve cubits long, twelve broad, square in the four squares thereof. 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 his stairs shall look toward the east.

And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord God: These are

The Har-El is four cubits high; and it has four horns; and the square surface on the top is twelve cubits.

17. the settle] The ledge, which was at the bottom of the Altar, and on which the Altar rested.

— his stairs] The steps of the Altar. Here is another proof that the sacred writer does not intend to revive the Levitical Ritual. According to it, he was unlawful to approach the Altar by steps (Exod. xx. 26).

The Consecration of the Altar.

If we compare these directions with those concerning the consecration in the Levitical Tabernacle (Lev. viii.), we find the following differences:—

In the Levitical Tabernacle, the ritual begins with the consecration of the Priests (Lev. viii. 1—10). Here the Priests are supposed to be already consecrated. See on v. 26.

In the Levitical Tabernacle, the consecration of the Altar is begun by anointing it with holy oil (Lev. viii. 11). Here there is no anointing with oil.

In the Levitical Tabernacle, the Priests are Aaron and his sons. Here they are only from one line of Aaron, that of Zadok. Cp. xl. 46; xlv. 15.

In the Levitical ritual for the consecration of the Altar, a bullock was to be offered for seven days in succession, as a sin-offering (Exod. xxix. 36). Here only once; and for the other days a kid of the goats.

In the Levitical ritual, the blood of the sin-offering was to be sprinkled on the horns of the Altar (Exod. xxxii. 12. Lev. viii. 16). Here it is to be sprinkled on the horns of the Altar, and the corners of the ledge, and on the lower border of the Altar.

In the Levitical ritual, the burnt-offering consists of a ram. Here of a ram and a young bullock.

Here salt is mentioned, as to be added to the burnt-offering (v. 21). This is a special characteristic.
the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and to * sprinkle blood thereon. 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. 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. 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. 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. 26 Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall † consecrate themselves. 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 || peace offerings; and I will i accept you, saith the Lord God.

XLIV. 1 Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary | which looketh toward the east; and it was shut. 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. 3 It is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to | eat bread before the Lord; d he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same. 4 Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house: and I looked, and, e behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord: f and I fell upon my face. 5 And the Lord said unto me, g Son of man, † mark 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. 6 And thou shalt say to the | rebellious, even to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; O ye house of Israel, 1 let it suffice you of all your abominations. 7 k In that ye have brought into my sanctuary † strangers, m uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to

26. they shall consecrate themselves] Rather, they shall consecrate it; literally, fill its hand (cp. on Exod. xxix. 9. 22; on Lev. viii. 22; xxl. 10. So Vulg. Cp. Targum; cp. Keil, 445)—a strong expression, but very significant. The priests are supposed to be already consecrated; and they consecrate the Altar.

27. the eighth day] See above, on Lev. ix. 1.

Ch. XLIV. 1. he brought me back] He brought me back in the way to the outer gate of the sanctuary. From the inner fore-court, where the Altar of burnt-offering was, he is brought to the eastern gate of the outermost court, looking to the Mount of Olives (see on xliii. 2); and it was shut, because the Lord, the God of Israel, had entered thereby (xliii. 4), and no man must pass through it.

3. for the prince] The royal head of the holy nation. The word here used for Prince throughout these chapters (xliv, xlv, xlvii, xlviii, in which chapters it occurs about sixteen times) is nasi, the same as the word in xxiv. 24 (my servant David, a prince); xxxvii. 25 (my servant David shall be their prince), which evidently speaks of the Messiah.

The Prince here is more than man; for no man (ich) was to enter by it; but the Prince, and the Prince alone, goes in and out thereby; by the way of the court (or vestibule) of the gate he shall go in, and by the way thereof he shall go out. Cp. below, xlv. 1, which speaks of the east gate of the inner court, and see Keil, p. 417.

In the Temple of Solomon the east gate of the outer court was the usual access of the people; this is reversed here.

Degradation of Unfaithful Priests.

4. the north gate] Probably of the outer court; thence the glory of the Lord was seen, filling the Temple.
pollute it, even my bread, when ye offer "my bread, ° the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations. 8 And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things: but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves.

9 Thus saith the Lord God; ° No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel. 10 ° 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, ° having charge at the gates of the house, and ministering to the house: ° they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and ° they shall stand before them to minister unto them. 12 Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and ° caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; therefore have I ° lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord God, and they shall bear their iniquity. 13 ° And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me, nor come near to any of my holy things, in the most holy place: but they ° bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed. 14 But I will make them ° keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein.

15 ° But the priests the Levites, ° the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary ° when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me, and ° they ° shall stand before me to offer ° the fat and the blood, saith the Lord God: ° they shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to ° my table, to minister unto me, ° and they shall keep my charge. 16 And it shall come to pass, ° that when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, ° they shall be clothed with linen garments; and no wool shall come upon them, whiles they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within. 18 ° ° They shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, and shall have linen breeches upon their loins; they shall not gird themselves ° with anything that causeth sweat. 19 ° And when they go forth into the utter court, even into the utter court to the people, ° 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 ° not sanctify the people with their garments.

THE FAITHFUL PRIESTHOOD.

15. ° the priests— ° the sons of Zadok] ° Zadok, of the line of Eleazar (1 Chron. vi. 3, 4. 8, 49, 53), remained faithful to David when Absalom his son rebelled against him; and anointed Solomon king, in opposition to Adonijah (2 Sam. xv. 24. 1 Kings i. 32), at which time Abiathar was disloyal to the house of David (1 Kings i. 7. ii. 25—27), and was deposed by Solomon (Keil); and see the note above on 1 Sam. ii. 35, and on 1 Kings ii. 27, on Zadok's figurative relation to Christ, Whose children all faithful priests are.

PRIESTLY DRESS AND DUTIES.

17. ° linen garments— ° wool] ° Linen, from its purity, is prescribed. See above, on xl. 3, and on the "linen girdle" in Jer. xiii. 1; and below, Rev. xv. 6.

— with it. Literally, toward the house.


19. ° they shall not sanctify ° the people with ° their garments] ° By their garments. According to the Levitical Law, the touching of holy flesh had a hallowing effect (Lev. vi. 11. Cp. Ezek. xlv. 20. Exod. xxix. 37. xxx. 29). The priests are
DUTIES OF THE PRIESTS.

EZEKIEL XLIV. 20—31. XLV. 1.

The holy portion.

Before CHRIST

n Lev. 21. 5.

Ch. 19.

20. Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long; they shall only poll their heads.

21. Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into the inner court.

22. Neither shall they take for their wives a widow, nor her that is put away: but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow that had a priest before.

23. And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. And 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; and they shall hallow my sabbaths.

25. And they shall come at no 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. And after he is cleansed, they shall reckon unto him seven days.

27. And in the day that he goeth into the sanctuary, unto the inner court, to minister in the sanctuary, he shall offer his sin offering, saith the Lord God. And it shall be unto them for an inheritance: I am their inheritance: and ye shall give them no possession in Israel: I am their possession.

29. They shall offer the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering; and every dedicated thing in Israel shall be theirs. And the 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 shall also give unto the priest the first of your dough, that he may cause the blessing to rest in thine house.

31. The priests shall not eat of any thing that is dead of itself, or torn, whether it be fowl or beast.

XLV. 1. Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land for inheritance, ye shall offer an oblation unto the Lord, an holy portion of the land: the 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.

not to go out in their holy attire with a view of imparting holiness to the people. This is forbidden, as confounding sacred with secular things, and as obliterating the distinction between them; and as a work of supererogation and superstition; and as exposing the priests themselves, and their sacred ministry, to profanation.

20. Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long] Prohibitions derived from the Levitical Law against heathenish practice (Lev. xx. 6; xxii. 5). Long hair was a mark of effeminacy (1 Cor. xi. 14).

— poll their heads] Cp. note above, on 2 Sam. xiv. 26; below, on Acts xviii. 18, and on 1 Cor. xviii. 18.

21. Neither—drink wine] Another Levitical prohibition (Lev. x. 9). These references to the Levitical Law in the present and following chapters, confirm the statement (made above in the Introduction to Leviticus, and in the notes on that Book) that the Levitical Law had a moral and spiritual meaning, of permanent application, in all ages and of the world; and that what appears to be a rule, or command, is to be read as the evidence of care and reverent attention from Christians.

22. Neither shall they take] What a prohibition for the high priest in the Levitical Law (Lev. xxi. 7. 13. 14), is here extended to all priests.


24. In controversy they shall stand in judgment] The Priests in the Christian Church are to have judicial authority in controversies concerning Divine Truth. Cp. Deut. xvii. 8—11, and above, on 2 Chron. xix. 11.

25. They shall come at no dead person] Lev. xvi. 1—4.

26. They shall offer the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering; and every dedicated thing in Israel shall be theirs. And the 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 shall also give unto the priest the first of your dough, that he may cause the blessing to rest in thine house.

31. The priests shall not eat of any thing that is dead of itself, or torn, whether it be fowl or beast.

THE HOLY OBLATION OF LAND; THE APPORTIONMENT TO PRIESTS, Levites, the Prince and the City.

Ch. XLV. 1. OBLATION] Literally, heave-offering. See note on Exod. xxv. 2; xxix. 24—27. Lev. vii. 14. 32—34. Num. xxv. 20.

This word is often repeated in the present and forty-eighth chapters; xiv. 6. 7. 13. 16; xviii. 8—10. 12. 18. 20. 21; and it intimates that a portion of the land itself was, as it were, raised up and presented as a heave-offering to God.

— an holy portion] Literally, holiness.

— five and twenty thousand reeds] That the word reeds—of twelve feet each (xvi. 5)—and not cubits, is rightly supplied in our Translation, is inferred from xiii. 16 compared with v. 2, which refers to the same measurement, and which is expressly called 500 reeds in that passage; also, where cubits are meant they are expressed, as in v. 2. So S. Jerome, Rashi, Keil.

— ten thousand] The Sept. and Arabic have twenty thousand; not Syriac, nor Targum.

2 Of this there shall be for the sanctuary five hundred in length, with five hundred in breadth, square round about; and fifty cubits round about for the || suburbs thereof. 3 And of this measure shalt thou measure the length of five and twenty thousand, and the breadth of ten thousand: 4 and in it shall be the sanctuary and the most holy place.

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.

5 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 twenty chambers.

6 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.

7 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.

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.

9 Thus saith the Lord God; 'Let it suffice you, O princes of Israel: ch. 44. 6. remove violence and spoil, and execute judgment and justice, take away m Jer. 22. 3.

2. for the sanctuary] See xlii. 15—20. He is describing the square of the outermost court.

— suburbs] Or void place, outside the outermost court; this interval was designed to prevent any secular contact with the area in which the Temple stood.

3. And of this measure] Rather, and of that measured space or holy portion described in v. 1. In and in it shall be the sanctuary] In the midst of the sacred portion. Cp. xviii. 10.

4. The holy portion] Shall be occupied in part by the priests and their dwellings; and a part of it (described in v. 3) shall be for the Sanctuary. See below, xviii. 11—14.

5. for a possession for twenty chambers] Literally, for a possession, twenty chambers; so Vulg., Syriac, and Targum; but Sept. and Arabic have, as cities to dwell in; and this reading is confirmed by Num. xxxiv. 2; and so Hitzig. Cp. Keil, 458.

The chambers here mentioned were probably groups of chambers (cp. xlii. 6), and there were twenty of these groups arranged in different parts of the sacred portion.

6. city five thousand] It was four-square. See below, on xviii. 16, 17.

— for the whole house of Israel] See xlviii. 19.

The Portion of the Levites, the Priests, the Prince, and the City.

7. for the prince] The arrangement was this,—

1 In the midst was the Temple and its courts. This strip, running from east to west, belonged to the priests.

(2) North of it, and parallel to it, and of equal breadth and length, was a portion for the Levites.

(3) South of it, and parallel to it, was another strip for the city, which was four-square.

(4) On the east and west of these three parallel strips, at right angles to them, so as to flank and defend them all, was the land of the prince. See xviii. 21; cp. below, 8—14.

The whole was four-square, each side being 25,000 reeds, or about sixty miles. See xviii. 20. It was thus subdivided:—10,000 in breadth to the Levites; 10,000 in breadth to the Priests; 5000 to the city. Each of these portions was 25,000 reeds from east to west. Compare below, xviii. 8—14.

This arrangement may be illustrated by the accompanying diagram:

Vol. V. Part II.—265
your exactions from my people, saith the Lord God. 10 Ye shall have just 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. 12 And the 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: 15 and one 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 peace offerings, to make reconciliation for them, saith the Lord God. 16 All the people of the land shall give this oblation 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 sabbaths, in all solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare the sin offering, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace offerings, to make reconciliation for the house of Israel.

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 cleanse the sanctuary: 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. 19 And so thou shalt do the seventh day of the month for every one that erreth, and for him that is simple: so shall ye reconcile the house. 20 In the first month, in the fourteenth day

11. the bath] The bath, not mentioned in the Pentateuch, but in 1 Kings vii. 26–28. 2 Chron. ii. 10; iv. 5. Isa. v. 10, and here ex. 10, 11, 14 (and in no other passages) appears to have been fluids what the ephah was in dry measure. Each contained the tenth of an homer, or chomer.

This has been supposed to mean either,—
(1) That the mina (or pound) was to be such as to consist of 20 + 10 + 5 = 60 shekels; or—
(2) That there were to be different kinds of mina of various fineness, represented by each of these numbers of shekels.

See Gen. 486; Fuerst, 831.

But neither of these opinions seems tenable. See Keil, 461, 462.

If we look at the original words of the text, as literally rendered above, and if we bear in mind that the word maneh properly signifies a weight (Fuerst, 831), portion, or number (Genen. 485), from midath, to divide, to count, it may be submitted for the consideration of the reader, whether the sacred writer is not specifying the different pieces of coin which were to be current in the holy city, viz. a shekel, and pieces, respectively, of five shekels, of ten, of twenty, of twenty-five shekels. The number five is the standard. We have $5 \times 5 = 25; 2 \times 5 = 10; 2 \times 2 = 4; 2 \times 1 = 2; 2 \times 0.5 = 1; 2 \times 0 = 0$. On the symbolical meaning of this, see the Retrospect at the end of the Book.

The Oblation or Heart-Offering of the People. 13–17. The following verses describe the contribution to be made by the people, for the oblations to be offered by the prince (v. 17). These contributions were to be the sixtieth part of corn, the one-hundredth part of oil, the two-hundredth part of cattle.

cor] A name not found in the Pentateuch, but in

Laws for the Prince

EZEKIEL XLV. 10—21.

and the Priests.
of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten. 22 And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock for a sin offering. 23 And 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; 7 and a kid of the goats daily for a sin offering. 24 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 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.

XLVI. 1 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.

2 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. 4 And the burnt offering that the prince shall offer unto the Lord in the sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish, and a ram without blemish. 5 And the meat offering shall be an ephah for a ram, and the meat offering for the lambs 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 shall attain unto, and an hin of oil to an ephah. 8 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.

9 But when the people of the land 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. 10

The Passover, and Feast of Tabernacles.

21. a feast of seven days] Literally, a feast of weeks of days,—a remarkable expression, which shows that while the writer is grounding himself on the language of the Levitical Law, he is not speaking of a literal passover, which alternates only seven days, or one week, but of a continual passover, a feast of weeks of days. And this is realized in the Christian Church, which ever celebrates the memory of the Offering of the true Passover. It is observable that there is no mention of the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, nor of the Feast of Trumpets on the first day of the seventh month, nor of the Day of Atonement on the tenth day of the seventh month. 22. prepare] Literally, make. See x. 17.

23. In the seventh month, in the fifteenth day of the month] The Feast of Tabernacles; the name is not mentioned here,—the festival which symbolized the Incarnation. See above, on Lev. xxi. 34. Cp. on Isa. xlii. 3. Zech. xiv. 10—19.

Offerings daily, and on Sabbaths and New Moons.—The Order of the Going in and Going out of the Court.

Ch. XLVI. 1. The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut] Compare what is said concerning the eastern gate of the outer court (xlv. 1, 2). 2. the priests shall prepare his burnt offering] See above, on xlv. 17—19.

4. the prince shall offer] Literally, shall bring near,—a sacrificial word (kérab), often applied to a priestly act (Lev. vii. 33; xvi. 1), and also to that of an Israelite generally (Lev. i. 2, 3; ii. 1).

The Prince and the People.

9. the people of the land] May not return by the gate through which they have come, but by the gate opposite to it; so that there may be no disturbance between the comers in and goers out; and no one is to turn backward; and the prince is to be in the midst of them when they go in and go out. Yet it is ordered that the prince shall go in by the east gate, and go out by the same (re. 2, 8).

10. the prince in the midst] As David describes himself: "I had gone with the multitude, I went with them into the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday" (Ps. xiii. 4). Christ, the Prince of Peace, is "in the midst" of His People.
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 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.

12 Now when the prince shall prepare a voluntary burnt offering or peace offerings voluntarily unto the Lord, 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.

13 Thou shalt daily prepare a burnt offering unto the Lord of a lamb of the first year without blemish: thou shalt prepare it every morning. 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. Thus shall they prepare the lamb, and the meat offering, and the oil, every morning for a continual burnt offering.

14 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. But if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall be his to the year of liberty; after it shall return to the prince: but his inheritance shall be his sons' for them. Moreover 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.

15 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. Then said he unto me, This is the place where the priests shall boil the trespass offering and the sin offering, where they shall bake the meat offering; that they bear them not out into the utter court, to sanctify the people. Then he brought me forth into the utter court, and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court; and, behold, in every corner of the court there was a court. In the four corners of the court there were courts joined of forty cubits long and thirty broad: these four corners were of one measure. 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. Then said he unto me, These are the places of them that boil, where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifice of the people.

XLVII. 1 Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward:

13. Thou shalt daily prepare] This is addressed to the Nation, regarded as one man.
--- every morning] In the Levitical Law it was to be offered also on every evening (Num. xxviii. 3, 4). Not so here.

The Prince's Right to the Disposal of his Inheritance.

16—18.] The prince may give of his own inheritance, not of that of the people, to his sons as a freehold, but not to his servants; but what he gives to his servants shall revert to the prince, like a property sold under the Levitical Law (Lev. xxv. 10; xxvii. 24) at the year of Jubilee. Thus it is provided that the inheritance should never be alienated from the family of the prince. See the Retrospect, at the end of the Book.

The Dressing of the Oblations for the Priests and the People.

19. on the two sides] Rather, on the farthest side westward.
20. courts joined] Closed courts, clusters (Gesen.).
21. it was made with boiling places] Cooking places (or, hearthes) were made. These cooking-places for the people were in the outer court; those for the priests were in the inner court, and have been described before (Lev. 19, 20; xlii. 1—10).

The Stream of Living Waters flowing from the Temple.

Ch. XLVII. 1. waters issued out] The prophet Joel (iii. 18) had already described the time when, after the victory achieved
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. 2 Then brought he me out of the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side. 3 And when 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 waters were to the ankles. 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, 6 and the river shall carry to swim in, a river that could not be passed over. 

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 bank of the river were very many 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 valley; and the waters shall be healed. 9 And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the river 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. 10 And it shall come to pass, that the fishes shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim; they

by God over His heathen enemies in the valley of Jehoshaphat, should there be a similar outpouring: Ye shall know that I am the Lord, theselving of My holy mountain; then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim": (in Moab, Num. xxv. v.). Cp. Isa. xii. 3; xliv. 8. Zech. xiv. 8. Rev. xxii. 1. 1. The Prophet Joel, taking occasion of the fact in nature, that there was a fountain under the Temple at Jerusalem, which carried off the blood of the sacrifices, and, carrying it off, was intermingled with that blood—the image of the All-atoning Blood—speaks of a fountain flowing forth from the House of the Lord, and watering the valley of Shittim, whither by nature its waters could not flow. He first describes the holiness to be bestowed upon Mount Zion; then, how, from the Temple—the centre of worship and of revelation, the place of the shadow of the Atoneement—the stream should gush forth, which, pouring on beyond the bounds of the land of Judah, should carry fertility to a barren and thirsty land (for in such lands the shittah grows). To this picture Zechariah (xiv. 8) adds the permanence of the life-giving stream, and its perennial flow, in summer and in winter shall it be. Ezekiel, in his full and wonderful expansion of the image (xvii. 12), adds the idea that the gradual increase of those waters of life, their exceeding depth, the healing of all which could be healed, the shedding desolation where those waters did not reach; and the trees, as in the garden of Eden, yielding food and health. He in a manner anticipates our Lord's prophecy, ye shall be fishes of men. St. John takes up the image (Rez. xxi. 1-5), yet as an emblem of such fulness of bliss and glory, that, amid some things which can scarcely be understood except of this life, it seems rather to belong to life eternal" (Dr. Pusey, Intro. to Joel, p. 109).

3. And when the man Rather, And as the man went forth to the east, he had a line in his hand. The word here rendered a line is kâ'â, and is not found in any other place in Ezekiel. Cp. above, xi. 3, where a different word is used, but it seems to signify the same thing.

This word is found in Isa. xvii. 2; xxvii.; xlvii. 10. 13; xxxiv. 11. 17; xiv. 13. Jer. xxx. 59. Zech. i. 16; the two latter passages specially illustrate the present— brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles. Rather, brought me through the waters—waters to the ankles. There is no article in the last clause; and so in v. 4 twice.

5. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was] The words "and it was," not in the original, would be better omitted. There is an apposition here, as in the foregoing note.

9. east country. The eastern gelilah, or circular borderland of Jordan (Josh. xxiii. 1).— go down into the desert] The araphb, or plain of Jordan, above the Dead Sea; the Ghor. — and go into the sea] The Dead Sea; called the sea of the araphb (Deut. iii. 17. iv. 49).— which being brought—be healed] Or, and they will enter the sea, being brought into the sea, and the waters will be healed.

1:2-10 See these and the notes on Gen. xix. 24; and on the symbolical meaning of the present description, see the Retrospect at the end of this Book.

9. which moreth] That creepeth; or, of which it swarmeth (Genes. 850; Keil, 476).— the rivers] Literally, the double streams, or two streams (nachalaim); two holy and fertilizing streams—contrasted with the two Assyrian streams, the symbols of the enemies of God's people—the Euphrates and Tigris, which formed Mesopotamia. — the image which could not live in the physical Dead Sea, but will abound in this symbolical Dead Sea, when its waters are healed by the living waters flowing from the Temple. See below, the Retrospect, p. 296.

10. And it shall come to pass] Or, And it shall come to pass, the fishers shall stand upon it; from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim shall be a stretching forth of nets. — En-gedi is on the western, or Israelitish side of the Dead Sea, near the middle of its coast. See Josh. xvi. 22; 1 Sam. xxiii. 29. 2 Chron. xx. 2. Cant. i. 14. The site of En-eglaim is unknown; probably it is a symbolical word. See v. 15. En-gedi means the fountain of the kid; and En-eglaim means the fountain of the two calves or heifers (Genes. 660); and a heifer seems to have been a symbol of Moab, the bitter enemy of Israel. See Jer. xliv. 31. Cp. Judg. iii. 12 on the name Eglon, and Judg. iii. 29 on the acts of Ehud.

On the symbolical sense, see below, the Retrospect at the end of this Volume, p. 274—286.
shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.

11 But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.

12 And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, they shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth 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 for medicine.

13 Thus saith the Lord God; This shall be the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel: Joseph shall have two portions.

14 And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another: concerning the which I have lifted up mine hand to give it unto your fathers: and this land shall fall unto you for inheritance.

15 And this shall be the border of the land toward the north side, from the great sea, the way of Hethlon, as men go to Zedad; Hamath, Berothah, Sibraim, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; the coast of Hauran. And the border from the sea shall be Hazar-enan, the border of Damascus, and the north northward, and the border of Hamath. And this is the north side.

16 And the east side ye shall measure from 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.

17 And the south side southward, from Tamar even to the waters of strife in Kadesh, the river to the great sea. And this is the south side southward.

18 The west side also shall be the great sea from the border, till a man come over against Hamath. This is the west side. 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, and to the strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you: 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. And it shall come to pass, that in what tribe the stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give him his inheritance, saith the Lord God.

XLVIII. 1 Now these are the names of the tribes.

— the great sea] The Mediterranean.
12. new fruit] Rather, ripe fruit.
— the leaf thereof for medicine] Cp. Rev. xxii. 2.

The Allotment and Boundaries of the Land.
17. 1 Chron. v. 1.
18. one as well as another] In equal portions. Another proof (like the 12,000 sealed of each tribe in the Apocalypse, vii. 4—5) that this description is not literal, but spiritual — lifted up mine hand] To swear (Gen. xxiv. 22. Exod. vi. 3. Dan. xii. 7. Rev. x. 5.).
15. Hebron] Probably near Zedad, mentioned in Num. xxxiv. 8, as on the northern border of Canaan. This name occurs in Num. xxxiv. 8, 9, 10, with Ziphon and Hazar-enan. See below, Retrospect.
17. Berothah] Supposed by some to be the Berothah mentioned in 2 Sam. viii. 8 as belonging to Hadadezer, king of Zobah, the Syrian enemy of David; and connected there with Hamath. See the note there.
— Sibraim] Literally, the double hill; probably a Syrian citadel (Puerest, 967); perhaps the same as Zibron in Num. xxxiv. 9.
— Hazar-hatticon] The middle town (Genes. 300. 863).
— Hazar-enan] Beyond Jordan; situated eastward of Gilead, and extending from Jabbok to the territory of Damascus, and called Hazar from its caverns (Genes. 207).
19. Tamar] Hazozen-Tamar, the same as Engedi (2 Chron. xx. 9).
— waters of strife] Or Meribah, in Kadesh (Num. xii. 12; xil. 16; xx. 1—10); even they are comprised in the spiritual Holy Land.
— the river] Wady-el-Arish, the river on the south of Palestine. See on Num. xxxiv. 5, where it is called the river of Egypt.
— strangers that sojourn among you] Are to be treated as Israelites with respect to inheritance. In the Levitical Law the land was reserved to Israelites alone (Lev. xxv. 10. Num. xxxvi. 7). and Moabites were specially excluded (Deut. xxiii. 3).

The Partition of the Land among the Tribes.
Ch. XLVIII.] In this division of the land,—
(1) The allotments of the Tribes are in parallel strips from east to west; see the Diagram, p. 265; and Retrospect, p. 280.
The portions of the Tribes.  EZEKIEL XLVIII. 2—15.  The holy portion.

Before CHRIST 274.

† Heb. one portion.

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; † a portion for Dan.

2 And by the border of Dan, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Asher.

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 the offering which ye shall offer of five and twenty thousand reeds in breadth, and in length as one of the other parts, 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.

11 ¶ It shall be for the priests that are sanctified of the sons of Zadok; which have kept my charge, which went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, as the Levites went astray.

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. 14 ¶ And they shall not sell of it, neither exchange, nor alienate the firstfruits of the land: for it is holy unto the LORD.

15 ¶ And the five thousand, that are left in the breadth over against the five thousand, and twenty thousand, shall be a profane place for the city, for dwelling, and as the Levites went astray.

(2) All the Tribes are supposed to be in Canaan proper, and not, as in the Levitical division, two tribes and a half separated from the rest by the river Jordan.

(3) About one-fifth of the whole is allotted for the Holy Portion, which comprised the Levites' Land, the Priests' Land, including the Temple, and the City,—the Land of the Prince flanking the Holy Portion on each side. See p. 265.

The allotments of five Tribes (Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zabulon, and Gad) are on the south side of the Holy Portion. The lots of seven (Judah, Reuben, Ephraim, Manasseh, Naphtali, Asher, and Dan) are on the north of the Holy Portion.

(4) The Temple, City, and Holy Portion are not in any particular Tribe, but appertain to all.

1. From the north—Hethlon] See xvii. 15. — for these] And these.

2. a portion for Dan] Literally, Dan, one lot.

8. the sanctuary shall be in the midst of it] This solemn injunction is repeated (c. 10): "The Sanctuary of the Lord shall be in the midst thereof;" and v. 21.

9. The oblation that ye shall offer unto the Lord] Literally, the house-offering, i.e. the holy portion of land. See xlv. 16.

five and twenty thousand] Reeds of about twelve feet long each. See above, on xl. 5, and xlv. 1—5, where this holy oblation (literally, house-offering) of land is described.

11. the priests—the sons of Zadok] See on xlv. 15.

13. the Levites] See on xlv. 7.

15. And the five thousand] The five thousand. The reader is supposed to remember that the whole of the portion allotted to the Levites, the Priests, and the City was 25,000 reeds square. The two parts of 10,000 each in breadth, allotted to the Levites and Priests, have been described; there remain 5000 to complete the breadth. The 5000 reeds that are left in the breadth, are parallel to the 25,000 reeds of the Priests. This space was in breadth only half that of the Priests and of the Levites, each of which was 10,000 reeds from north to south.

a profane place for the city] A common place for the city, on the south of the land of the Levites, which was to the south of the land assigned to the Priests, in the midst of which
for suburbs: and the city shall be in the midst thereof. 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 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 And they that serve the city shall serve it 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 And the residue shall be for the prince, on 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; and the sanctuary of the house shall be 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 a 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.

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 the waters of strife in Kadesh, and to the river toward the great sea.

was the Temple. But this was not profane, in the ordinary sense of the word; for the whole 25,000 square is called an oblation, or heave-offering (Hebr. terumah), and a “holy oblation,” in xlvi. 20.

suburbs [Literally, a free and open place for driving and pasturing of cattle (Gen. 44:9), and specially applied to the open space attached to the Levitical cities (Lev. xxv. 34; Num. xxxv. 2)].

— the city shall be in the midst The city was to be in the midst of the common land, as the Temple was in the midst of the holy land (v. 8).

16. these shall be the measures thereof The city is foursquare, each side being 4500 reeds. Cp. Rev. xxi. 16; and below, v. 20; and above, xl. 47.

17. the suburbs [Or free place, being a slip parallel to each side of the city, and extending from it in breadth 250 reeds on each side; so that the total area of the city, with the suburbs, was also four-square, viz. a square of 5000 reeds. Cp. xliv. 6; xlviii. 30.]

18. the residue in length [That is, the space lying to the east and west of the 5000 reeds, of which the city and suburbs consisted (cp. xlv. 6); and this residue being 10,000 to the east, and 10,000 to the west of that 5000, made an area of 25,000 reeds parallel on the south to that of the sacred oblation allotted to the Priests, in which the Temple was.

19. they that serve the city] They that labour in it, and for it, especially in cultivating the land, shall be of every tribe; for the city belongs to all Israel (xlv. 6).

20. All the oblation shall be five and twenty thousand (foursquare) See above, on xlv. 7. Observe, even the city itself (described v. 15), and its suburbs, are called “an oblation”—“a holy oblation.” All is dedicated to God.

22. Moreover] So what is, or extends from the possession of the Levites (that is, what extends from it to the Jordan on the east, and the Mediterranean on the west), and what is, or extends from, the possession of the city (which city or possession is in the midst of that which belongs to the Prince), from between the border of Judah (on the north), and of Benjamin (on the south), shall appertain to the Prince; that is, the Prince’s portion shall extend from the boundary of Judah, on the north of the Holy Portion, to the border of Benjamin, on the south, so as to flank the Holy Portion on the east and west, and to fill up what lies between it and the Jordan on the east, and between it and the Mediterranean on the west.
This 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.

And these are the goings out of the city on the north side, four thousand and five hundred measures. And 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. 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. 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. 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.

It was round about eighteen thousand measures:

And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there.
RETROSPECT OF EZEKIEL, CHAPTERS XL.—XLVIII.

ON THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF EZEKIEL'S VISION OF THE TEMPLE, CITY, AND HOLY LAND; AND ON ITS DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH UNIVERSAL.

Nihil absque ratione et mensurâ in Templo Dei (S. Jerome).

Ezekiel, the Priest and Prophet, an exile at the river Chebar, in Babylonia, in the twenty-fifth year of his captivity—that is, when the seventy years, foretold by Jeremiah for the desolation of Israel, were nearly reaching their middle point, and when the Temple and City of Jerusalem were lying in ruins, and there seemed to be no prospect of restoration and recovery to the people of God,—was enabled to behold a Vision of a glorious Temple and City which he has described in the last nine chapters of his prophecy.

This Temple and City were built in the land of Israel (xl. 2); and though it is remarkable that the names of Jerusalem, Sion, &c., do not occur in these chapters (for reasons which will appear in the sequel), yet the Vision is intimately connected with the ancient city of God.

Doubtless this Vision was intended in the first instance to minister comfort to the exiles of Israel. It taught them, that although the material Temple and City lay prostrate on the ground, yet that the City and Church of God were indestructible, and did not depend on what was local and visible. Being grounded on the promises of God to Abraham and to David, they had a glorious future.

It revealed that the Church of God would revive at Sion in greater glory, and would become universal in time and place; and that it would be filled with the glory of the Lord, which had quitted the material Temple; and the name of the City would be, "The Lord is there." Ezekiel did in a fuller sense for the exiles of Chebar what was done in a later age by Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi for those who returned to Jerusalem. He consoled and cheered them with a vision of a Temple and City at Sion; and he did more than this; he excited them to look forward from that material Temple and City to the Universal Church of Christ.

Hence it is that this Vision is inserted after the description of the discomfiture of the army of Gog in chapters xxxviii. and xxxix., which symbolizes the future overthrow of the enemies of Christ's Church. We have seen a Vision of the destruction of the foes of the Spiritual City; we now behold here a Vision of the City itself.

That this Vision does not represent, as its adequate fulfilment, any future Temple or City of Jerusalem in the literal sense, is evident from such considerations as the following:—

(1) The Temple described by the Prophet is on a very high mountain (xl. 2), which the literal Sion was not.

The outer Court of the Temple alone is more than four and a half miles in circumference; being 500 reeds square, and the reed being equal to about twelve feet (xl. 5; xlii. 16—20); whereas the whole circuit of the city of the literal Jerusalem was not more than three and a half miles.

This is well expressed by Dr. Lightfoot thus,—

"If any one will take up the full circuit of the wall that encompassed the holy ground, according to our English measure, it will amount to half a mile and about one hundred and sixty-six yards. And whosoever likewise will measure the square of Ezekiel (chap. xlii. 20), he will find it six times as large as this (chap. xl. 5), the whole amounting to three miles and a half, and about one hundred and forty yards—a compass incomparably larger than Mount Moriah divers times over; and by this very thing is showed that that is spiritually and mystically to be understood."

"The description of the Temple and City that Ezekiel hath given in the end of his Book, as it

1 See xliii. 5; xlv. 4.

2 xlviii. 35.
was a prediction of some good to come, so was that prediction true thus far, according to the very letter, namely, that there should be a Temple and a City newly built: and so it was a promise and a comfort to the people then in captivity, of their restoring again to their own land, and their enjoying Jerusalem and the Temple again, as they had done in former time, before their removing and captivating out of their own country. But as for a literal responsibility of that City and Temple to all the particulars of his description, it is so far from it, that his Temple is delineated larger than all the earthly Jerusalem. And thereby the scope of the Holy Ghost in that Ichneumography is clearly held out to be, to signify the great enlarging to the spiritual Jerusalem and Temple, the Church under the Gospel, and the spiritual beauty and glory of it” (Lightfoot's Works, vol. i. p. 1051).

(2) The Temple in the Vision of Ezekiel is entirely separated from the City: the Temple stands in the middle of the land allotted to the Priests (xlv. 1—5; xlviii. 8. 10). The City stands in the midst of a different portion, on the south of it (xlviii. 15). Here is another proof that the description is not literal.

(3) A miraculous stream gushes forth from under the threshold of the Temple, on that very high mountain, and it goes onward in a continually deepening channel, till they flow into a desert and to the sea—the Dead Sea—and heal its waters, and give life to what is therein; and on its banks grow many trees, whose fruit is for food, and their leaves for medicine (xlvii. 1—12).

Such imagery as this belongs to the times of the Gospel, and carries the thoughts onward to the Apocalypse of St. John, where it recurs in enlarged proportions and more vivid colouring; see Rev. xxii. 1—14.

This Vision of Ezekiel occupies a middle place between the descriptions of the different fabrics which typified the Church of God; namely the Ark of Noah, the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, the Temple of Solomon, and the description of the Church glorified as revealed in the Apocalypse. It follows the three former and precedes the latter.

The Vision of Ezekiel represents the Church of God planted at Jerusalem, and going forth from Sion into all nations to enfold the world, by preaching the Gospel of Christ and baptizing them into the Name of the Ever-Blessed Trinity (Matt. xxviii. 19). St. Jerome, in his exposition of the Vision, represents the sense of the ancient Church, when he says, “Nos hæc ad Christi referimus Ecclesiam, et quotidie in sanctis Ejus edificari cernimus.”

Considered in this light, the Vision of Ezekiel is fraught with spiritual uses;

It gave a cheering assurance to the Hebrew Exiles of Israel in Babylon and the East, that whatever might be the condition of the literal City and Temple of Jerusalem, a spiritual Sion should arise there, and be universal and eternal.

This Vision is also like an instruction from Christ Himself (see vv. 3, 4) to all ages, on the building up of the Church of God. It shows what the Church is, in the Divine Mind, and what it ought to be in reality. It is like a divine homily on Ecclesiastical Doctrine and Discipline.

The Vision of Ezekiel is an advance on the description of the Ark, the Tabernacle, and the Temple,—which were like successive developments, each more glorious than the preceding one, of one grand purpose, the reunion of Man to God in Christ and His Church. It eclipses them in the clearness of its Evangelical promises; but it does not rise to the glory of the Apocalypse, which reveals the splendours of the Church triumphant; though it prepares the way for them, as the way had been prepared for Ezekiel's Vision by the Ark, the Tabernacle, and the Temple, in the Old Dispensation. A common design runs through them all, which is expressed in the recurrence of the number three, foreshadowing the preaching of the true faith, as fully declared in the commission given by

1 See above, on Gen. vii., Prelim. Note.
2 See note on Exod. xxv.
3 See notes on 1 Kings vi., Prelim. Note, and on 1 Kings vi. and vii.
4 See likewise S. Gregory, Lyra, A. Lapide, Luther, Calvin, Pfeiffer, Calvinus, W. Leech, M. Henry, H. Wricke, Heygut. (Christology, iii. 58, English ed.), Fairbairn, whose preliminary remarks to chapters xl.—xlviii. deserve careful consideration, and others.
5 See on Gen. vi. 15, 16. The Ark was 3 x 10 cubits long, 3 x 10 cubits high; and in three stories.
6 The Tabernacle was divided into three compartments: its height was 5 x 3; and the Holy of Holies was ten cubits in three dimensions, i.e., a cube of ten cubits.
7 The entrance to both the Tabernacle and the Temple was to the East. The rising sun shone upon it. Christ, the “Day-spring from on high,” “the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings,” dwans upon the Church by His Incarnation, and

warns her by His orient beams. It is observable that the number three recurs continually in the description of the Temple of Solomon.

The Temple is formed of three compartments—the Porch, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies. The length of it was three times twenty cubits; its height was three times ten cubits; the height of the Porch was three times forty cubits. Each of the three sides was flanked by an aisle or lean-to, formed of three stories equal in height; and the Holy of Holies was of three equal dimensions, i.e., a perfect cube.

Surely these arrangements were not fortuitous. May we not say, that in this building, erected by the wisest of Kings to the glory of the LoRD,—a building which was preparatory to, and typical of, the Church built by the Divine Solomon, JESUS CHRIST, to the glory of the ETERNE GOD,—we have mysterious foreshadowings of the great doctrine preached by the Church in every Baptism which she administers: the doctrine of the ETERNE TRINITY? n 2
Christ to His Apostles, to baptize all Nations into the One Name of the Triune God. This design is exhibited in the form of the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle, and in the Temple. In each case the Holy of Holies was of three equal dimensions; that is, a perfect cube.

This design is consummated in the Apocalypse. In its revelation of the Church glorified there is no Holy of Holies properly speaking. “I saw no temple therein—for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it.” The whole heavenly City of the Apocalypse is a Holy of Holies. And it is of three equal dimensions; it is a perfect Cube; being all perfectly filled with the glory of the Ever-Blessed Trinity.

The same design is foreshadowed in other arrangements of the Tabernacle and the Temple, which were preparatory to the Revelation of St. John.

Three is the symbol of the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity.

Four is the Scriptural symbol of all space, and shows itself in such expressions as “the four winds,” “the four corners of the earth.”

The multiplication of Three into Four, producing Twelve, represents the communication of what is Divine, especially the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, to the Four corners of the earth, by the true Israel of God, represented by the Twelve Patriarchs; and, in Christian times, by the Twelve Apostles, symbolized by the Twelve Wells at Elim, and by the Twelve Jewels on the Breastplate of the High Priest, and by the Twelve Stones taken up from Jordan by Joshua. And the Apostolic Church is represented in the Apocalypse as having Twelve Stars on her head, and as having Twelve Foundation Stones, and in these the names of the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb.

This work of Apostolic evangelization is displayed in the Tabernacle, the Temple of Solomon, the Temple of Ezekiel, which were preparatory to the Apocalypse.

Around the Tabernacle the host of Israel, ranged in its Twelve Tribes, was encamped in a quadrilateral form, so as to guard its four sides; and on each of these four sides there were three tribes of Israel with their standards.

In the Temple the Brasen Laver which contained the water for ablation, and whose brim was wrought about with lilies, and which, when full, contained 3000 baths, was placed on the back of Twelve Oxen, types of God’s ministers, looking to the four quarters of the globe; three looking to the north, three to the west, three to the south, three to the east; and it symbolized the preaching of the Gospel of Christ and the baptizing of all Nations by the Twelve Apostles and by an Apostolic Ministry, into the one Faith in the Three Divine Persons and one God.

It would be a great error to imagine, that the Elect of God are limited to so small a number. Indeed, the Apocalypse itself forbids us to do so; it declares them to be innumerable. The number twelve times twelve thousand is not to be taken literally. It does not express a quantity, but a quality. It teaches us the important truth, that this great, this innumerable, company of all true Israelites, are united in one Faith, that is, in the Faith taught by the Twelve Apostles of Christ. See on Rev. vii. 4—9.

The same truth is taught in the Vision of the faithful Church, who is represented as a Woman having on her head a crown of Twelve Stars; that is, as crowned with the Diadem of Apostolic Doctrine and Discipline (Rev. xii.). And it appears in the structure of the heavenly Jerusalem, or Church glorified, which is described as having “Twelve foundations, and in them the names of the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb” (Rev. xvi.). Thus this number Twelve in the Apocalypse communicates in a significant manner the doctrinal and practical truth, that it is necessary to avoid the error of those, on the one side, who would have only one Universal Bishop; and of those, on the other, who despise Apostolic discipline; and it teaches the duty of holding fast that faith and regimen, and that form of sound words and holy living which was delivered by the Twelve Apostles to the world, in order that all men might thereby come to the rest and glory of the heavenly Jerusalem.

(3) On the number one Thousand, the cube of ten, see below, Rev. xx. 2.

1 See the preceding note.
2 Rev. xxi. 22.
3 Rev. xxi. 16.
4 See above, on the Revelation of St. John, p. 220 (note at end of chap. xi.).

(1) The number Four seems to have the same relation to space, that the number seven has to time; it signifies completeness, universality. It rests on a natural basis, that is, on the idea of space considered in reference to the four cardinal points.

Thus, in the ancient Scriptures, we find the expression “the four winds of heaven” as significant of all space (Dan. viii. 8, 9, 14), and this is adopted by our Lord Himself in the Gospel (Matt. xxiv. 31. Mark xiii. 27).

In the Apocalypse, the number four appears often in this sense. Thus, just before the final consummation we see four Angels standing on the four corners of the Earth, that the wind should not blow on the Earth (Rev. vii. 1. Cp. xx. 8). And this consideration may serve to explain such phrases as the following, “the blood from the winepress flowed to four times four hundred furlongs” (Rev. xiv. 20), that is, the victory was universal.

(2) The Number Twelve (4 x 3) bears a similar relation to mankind, that seven has to time, and four has to space; and this reference is one which belongs to mankind considered in union with each other, on Matt. x. 2.

In the old dispensation, we see this Number Twelve in the Twelve Sons of Israel, the Fathers of the Twelve Tribes of the People of God. In the Gospel it reappears in the Twelve Apostles, the Saffron of the Spiritual Israel. (See on Matt. x. 2.) “These Twelve are the labourers who were to be sent by Christ, and who were to baptize the four quarters of the World into the Faith of the Three Persons of the Godhead.” Aug. (In Ps. xc. Cp. Matt. xxviii. 19).

Accordingly, in the Apocalypse we see that the whole body of the Saints of God, the true Israelites who are admitted as citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, are represented as consisting of Twelve Thousand out of each of the Twelve Tribes of the children of Israel (Rev. vii. 4—9) = 144,000.

2 See above, on Exod. xvi. 27.
3 See above, on Exod. xxviii. 15—21.
4 See on Josh. iv. 1—3, and 9.
5 Rev. xxi. 1.
6 See on Num. ii. 34.
7 See on 1 Kings vii. 25, whence the following may be transcribed.

"What was the spiritual significance of this Laver, or Sea, borne on the Twelve Oxen, looking out to all the points of the compass, three to each quarter of the world?

“The Laver was One, there is one only fountain opened in
The Holy City is a square: in each of its four equal sides, which look to the North, East, South, and West respectively, are three gates, named from the Twelve Tribes of Israel; and its Name is "The Lord is there!".

Again, in the Temple of Ezekiel (representing the Catholic Church on earth) there are three similar and equal Gates (East, North, and South—no West Gate) to the Outer Court, and three similar Gates to the Inner Court; and each of these three Gates of the Outer and Inner Court has three similar and equal side chambers on each hand; and the Temple itself has three times ten equal and similar side chambers of three stories.

This recurrence of three gates represents that the entrance to the Church is by the doctrine of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, and the repetition of three chambers symbolizes that he who dwells in the Church of God must abide in that doctrine.

So likewise in the Apocalypse, the Holy City is four-square, and each of the four equal sides has three gates (three on the East, on the North three, on the South three, and on the West three); and at the Twelve Gates are Twelve Angels, and the names are written thereon of the Twelve Tribes of the Children of Israel. The Twelve Gates (named from the twelve tribes), three on each of the four sides of the city, looking to the four corners of the earth, represent the same idea (with some circumstantial modifications) as the Twelve Standards of the Twelve Tribes, three on each of the four sides of the Tabernacle; and as the Twelve Oxen, three on each side of the Molten Sea or Laver of water in the Temple, looking to the four points of the compass. In the Standards there is the idea of a courageous conflict for the faith; in the Oxen there is that of patient labour in maintaining it; in the Gates of the City there is that of going forth to proclaim it to all parts of the world.

The same great principle embodied in these symbols is expressed in those mysterious numbers which elect the elect of God. It is expressed in the 144,000 of the Apocalypse; and in the miracle of our Lord after His resurrection, where they who are saved are represented by the 153 great fishes. This number 153 is formed of 144 + 9. The number 144 is the square of twelve, the Apostolic number, and signifies the universal diffusion of the Apostolic faith. The number 144,000 (12 x 12,000) is the number of the elect, scaled on their foreheads in the Apocalypse, and represents the entire company of all faithful people in all generations. It represents all, in all the four corners of the earth, who have been baptized into the faith of the Blessed Trinity, preached by the Twelve Apostles, and who hold it firm in heart and life to the end.

The number 153—that of the great fishes—is made up of 144 and 9; that is of 12 squared and 3 squared. The number 3, as already observed, symbolizes the Blessed Trinity; the number 12 (= 3 x 4) represents the true Catholic Faith in the Ever-Blessed Trinity preached in the four quarters of the globe by the Apostles and their successors. Thence we may explain the adoption of the number 153 in St. John's Gospel, describing the miraculous draught after the Resurrection.
of Christ \((= 12 \times 12 + 3 \times 3)\) as an exponent of those who are saved. It is the number of the good fish who are drawn in the Evangelic net, by Apostolic hands, to the shore of everlasting Life.

Bearing in mind these principles, let us now proceed to an analysis of the prophecy before us.

**EZEKIEL XL.**

The Prophet Ezekiel is brought to the land of Israel, to a very high mountain. The Catholic Church of Christ (as S. Jerome here observes) has its roots in the soil of Sion, but it is elevated, as it were, upon a very high mountain above it, so as to be visible to the whole world; and (as we shall see in the sequel) it is extended far beyond the site of the literal Temple. In it the Hebrew Church is catholicized. As Isaiah says, \"It shall come to pass in the last days\" (the days of the Messiah and of the Gospel) \"that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem\".\footnote{1}

In v. 2, the City in Ezekiel is on the south, being separated from the Temple;\footnote{2} which was never the case in the literal Jerusalem, but is the case in the Christian Church, where there is a definite distinction of powers spiritual and secular, though (as we shall see represented in the Vision) they are both to be sanctified by dedication to God, from Whom all authority flows through Christ, and they are to be applied to the maintenance of His worship, and to the promotion of His glory.

The City is on the south. The Temple, which stood in the centre of the portion allotted to the Priests, is on the north of it. In prophetic imagery, the North is that quarter from which evil comes. The Temple protects the City from its enemies.\footnote{3}

In v. 3, the Prophet beholds a Man whose appearance was like the appearance of brass. This Man thus described is supposed by the ancient Expositors to be no other than the Son of God Incarnate, Who is described in similar terms by Daniel and in the Apocalypse.\footnote{4} He has in his hand a line of flax or cord of linen, the emblem of priestly sanctity,\footnote{5} and also a measuring Reed which was the standard of all measurements, and according to which the line was graduated.

The \textit{reed} is six cubits and six palms, or handbreadths, in length (v. 5).

What does this Reed represent? It symbolizes that which measures everything, both in faith and practice, in the Church and City of God. It is the Canon of Holy Scripture.

This interpretation is confirmed by the similar vision in the Apocalypse.\footnote{7} There the Reed is

2. Cp. xlv. 6; xlvii. 15.
3. Cp. on Lev. i. 11, \"He shall kill it on the side of the altar northward;\" and on Ps. xlvi. 2. This was strengthened by the fact that Babylon, the great enemy of Sion, lay to the north.
4. Jer. i. 15, 14, 15; vi. 1, \"Evil appeareth out of the north,\" xv. 12. See also Ezek. i. 4.
5. Dan. x. 6. Rev. i. 15; ii. 18.
7. Called in Hebrew \textit{kāneh}, whence the words \textit{canus}, cane, canus, a rule.
8. See S. Gregory here. \textit{Calamus measurans potest Scriptum sancta intelligit.}\footnote{6} See also below, on Rev. x. 2. \"There was given me a Reed like unto a Rod, and the Angel stood saying, Rise and measure the Temple of God,\" where is the following note: \"This Vision of St. John has a parallel in the prophecies of Ezekiel, where the Prophet sees an Angel measuring a Temple and a City on a mountain in the land of Israel, purified from idolatry and hallowed anew (xiii. 7—12). The Angel measures them with a measuring reed (Ezek. xl. —xlii.), and when they have been measured, the Glory of the Lord came upon them from the East (the type of Christ, Luke i. 78; above, vii. 2; below, xvi. 12), and His Voice was like the noise of many waters, and the Earth shone with His glory, which filled the House (Ezek. xiii. 1—5).\" A similar Vision was displayed to Zechahria. \"I lifted up mine eyes and behold, and beheld a Man with a measuring line in his hand; then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem. And another Angel went out to meet the Angel that talked with me, and he said, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited; for I, with the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and shall be the Glory in the midst of her\" (Ezech. B. 1—6).

This Vision of Zechariah, like the Vision of Ezekiel, undoubtably referred to the Christian Church, and displayed the Divine Presence over her, and prepared the way for the Vision of St. John.

The Exposition, which recognizes the Holy Scripture here as the Reed like unto a Rod, by which the Church is to be measured by St. John, is sanctioned by many ancient and modern interpreters. \"In Virgâ rectiūdō Scripturae intelligitur,\" says Aquinas. \textit{So Agnus in Apoc. xxi. \"Per Arvamduum aures intelligitur Sacer Scriptura\".}\footnote{6} So Berengaudus (Rev. iv. 24), \"Virga ferea Evangelium figurat, quo ennis error destructus est,\" and so Vitriuga, Anacrisius, p. 453, \textit{Calummos measuravit, quo dimensionem persaganda est, habu dubi est Verbum Dei, Lex et Testamentum, Lex regni Christi, unicus Canum et norma vera.}\footnote{6}

In the words of Bp. Cosin (Canon of Scripture, p. 1), \"The Books of Scripture are therefore called Canonic, because they have in all lines been acknowledged by God's Church to be the Infallible Rule of our Faith.\" Cp. Credner (Geschichte des Kanons, Halle, 1847, p. 6), \"Das griechische Wort \textit{ekken}, verwundet mit \textit{xara}, \textit{Rhôr} (\textit{Reed}), entspreche dem alt-"}

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put into the hand of the Evangelist St. John (who completed the Canon of Scripture), that he might measure the Church of God thereby.

The Reed in the hand of Christ consists of six cubits and six palms. The 
\textit{cubit}, or "stretched-out arm," is the emblem of \textit{power}; the \textit{palm}, or open hand, is the symbol of \textit{grace}.

\textbf{Six} is the symbol of work, being the number of the \textit{Hexameron}, or the days of God's \textit{work} in creation, followed by the sabbath of rest.

It will be found, that the sixth link in a series is usually in Holy Scripture the crisis of labour and suffering, leading to a seventh day, or sabbath, of rest.

The sixth day of the week was the day of Christ's great work and suffering before His \textit{sabbath} in the grave. And throughout the Apocalypse the sixth period, in the groups of seven, is the time of severest trial. It is, as it were, the eve of the end; the Day of Preparation before the Sabbath, to the good; the hour of brief triumph before condemnation, to the evil. Thus the \textit{sixth seal} represents the time of severest suffering to the Church (Rev. vi. 12). The \textit{sixth trumpet} displays a prelude of the last Judgment to the wicked (Rev. ix. 14—21). The \textit{sixth vial} is the signal for the battle of the great Day of God (Rev. xvi. 12), and the precursor of the final voice, "It is done" (Rev. xvi. 17).

The \textit{eighth} day is the Day of Resurrection after the sabbath of the grave.

In Ezekiel's Temple there are seven steps to the Outer Court, and eight steps from it into the Temple. The former symbolize a transition from labour to rest; the latter symbolize a transition from rest to glory.

The Reed in the hand of Christ, which measures everything, whether of doctrine or practice in the Church, is the Canon of Scripture, which represents the completeness of God's work toward men, both in the outstretched arm of power, and in the opened palm of grace.

In v. 5, the wall of the Outer Court of the Temple is measured by Christ \(^1\); it is a reed high and a reed thick. The Church of God is not only \textit{measured} by the Canon of Scripture, but is \textit{protected} by a wall which is built according to Scripture, and exactly corresponds to it.

This measurement of the one reed is repeated as of special importance in the construction of the Eastern Gate of the Outer Court of the Temple (v. 6), and of the chambers there, and of the porch of the gate within (v. 7).

\textbf{The Outer Court} (see the Diagram on p. 253).

In v. 6, Christ begins with the Outer Gate on the \textit{East} \(^2\), "Oriens Nomen Ejus." Christ is the Dayspring from on high (Luke i. 78), the Sun of Righteousness arising with healing on His wings (Mal. iv. 2)\(^3\).

There were three equal and similar Gates leading into the Outer Court of the Temple. Each of these three equal and similar Gates had three equal and similar Chambers, distinct from each other, on each side of the Entrance (\textit{vvs.} 7—10), which was flanked by pillars of three times twenty cubits. This recurrence of the number three symbolizes that the entrance of the Church of God is by faith in the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, into which all Nations are to be baptized \(^4\).

Each of these equal and similar Chambers had latticed windows (v. 16), which seem to signify that the light which we now enjoy with regard to divine mysteries, especially that of the Blessed Trinity, is comparatively dim. We now see through a glass darkly; but hereafter we shall see face to face; we now know only in part, but hereafter we shall know even as we are known \(^5\).

This is further signified by the fact that there were also ten times three chambers on the pavement of the Outer Court (v. 17). It is not enough for us to enter into the Court by faith in the doctrine of the Trinity; we must dwell on the solid pavement of a firm profession of that doctrine, and we must be firmly settled upon that foundation in our daily life and conversation \(^6\).

In v. 15, the length (inward) of the vestibule was fifty cubits. Fifty is the number of remission \(^7\), and of Jubilee, after seven times seven, or forty-nine, which brings with it rest preparatory to joy. Cp. vv. 21 and 29, where the same measure recurs.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[(1)] See S. Jerome here.
\item[(2)] \textit{Perspicuum est, Domini Salvatorem, Qui versus Architectorum est, probable lapides qui possunt ponit in Templi fundamentis} (S. Jerome).
\item[(3)] See the \textit{Plan} inserted above, p. 253.
\item[(4)] See S. Jerome here. "\textit{Ingreditur Vir, cui Oriens Nomen est, per portam Orientalem, ut illuminet eos quos in prim\textit{a vestibuli fronte repererit.} So S. Gregory here.
\item[(5)] See above, note on the recurrence of the number \textit{three} in the Ark, Tabernacle, and Temple, p. 275.
\item[(6)] I Cor. xiii. 12. Cp. S. Jerome in cap. xli.
\item[(7)] "\textit{Quinuaginta cubiti (ut septem diebus) remissionis signi\textit{ficat Sacramentum}" (S. Jerome).
\end{footnotes}
In v. 16, it is said that each side of the posts or pillars of the gate were palm trees—the emblems of joy and victory; and these were repeated in the other gates (v. 22, 26); and these were symbols of the triumph and glory reserved for those who maintain the true faith to the end.

In v. 20 he describes the outer gate toward the north.

In v. 22 the access to these gates leading in from the Outer Court, is by seven steps, which is the sabbatical number, the number that leads to rest after labour. The same number recurs in v. 26. See also below, v. 31.

In v. 23 a distance of a hundred cubits leads across the Outer Court from the Eastern Gate of the Outer Court to the Eastern Gate of the Inner Court; and this was the same with the other two Gates of the Outer Court, “Centenarius numerus (says S. Gregory), quia decies per denarium ducitur, perfectionem denotat.” The progress of 100 cubits across the Court from the outer Gate to the Gate of the Inner Court of the Temple symbolizes the consummation of the Christian life.

In v. 24 he describes the outer gate toward the South, which is similar to the eastern Gate of the Outer Court.

The Inner Court (see the Diagram on p. 250).

In v. 31 the inner Court is approached from the outer Court by eight steps. The Outer Court had been approached from the external world by seven steps, which brought the worshipper to a state of rest (see v. 22), but now he mounts higher, and ascends by eight steps to a state of joy.

It is well said by S. Gregory, here “Eterna dies, qua expleta septem dierum vicissitudine sequitur, octava est.” “For (he adds) Christ suffered on the sixth day of the week; on the seventh day He rested in the grave; on the following day, the Lord’s Day (the octave of the first day) He

1 “Quid per palmas nisi præmia victoriam designaret?” (S. Gregory). See above, on I Kings vi. 29, and Neh. vii. 15; below, on John xii. 13. Rev. vii. 9.
2 Cp. ev. 31. 34. 37, and xii. 18, 20. 25. 26.
3 See below, on Rev. xii. Freiligr. Note.

ON THE NUMBER SEVEN.

This number is composed of 3 + 4. The number Three is a divine number; the number of the Ever-Blessed Trinity. We find it in the Old Testament in the Trine Benediction (Num. vi. 24—26); and in the Seraphic Trisagion (Isa. vi. 3).


The Number Seven expresses completeness; especially complete rest after labour.

The clue to this meaning is presented by the Scriptural History of the Work of Creation of the world by God: “In six days God made Heaven and Earth, and on the seventh Day he rested” (Exod. xxxi. 17). Cp. Gen. ii. 2. And this rest of God was a type of that eternal rest (αιωνιομενον) which “remaineth to the People of God” (Heb. iv. 9).

The Seventh Day in the History of the Creation differs from all the other six Days. They all have an Evening. “The evening and the morning were the first day.” And so it is said of each of the other five days. But it is not said of the Seventh Day that it has an Evening. It is a type of that Rest which has no end.

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, did not die, but was translated (see Jude 14. Heb. xi. 5). He was like a personified Sabbath. He was a type of the faithful who walk with God, and do not see death, but rest in Christ (Matt. xvi. 28. John viii. 51. Rev. xiv. 13).

Thus in the beginning of Holy Scripture, we see the number Seven consecrated as a symbol of Rest after work done in a preceding series of Six.

In almost all the Holy Days of the Levitical Law we see the predominance of this element of Seven e.g. in the Sabbath, the Passover (Exod. xii. 15. 16); the Pentecost (Deut. xvi. 9); the Feast of Tabernacles (Deut. xvi. 13. 15).

We see the same symbol in the entrance to Canaan, the type of Heaven, promised to the true Israelites.

Six Times Seven Stations brought the People through the Wilderness to the promised land. See Num. xxxi. 1—50; and S. Jerome de xlii. Manualibus in Erono.

For Six successive days the Great City Jericho was encompassed, and on the Seventh it fell, and the people entered in with a shout of victory. See above, on vii. 2—6.

In the Creation we see similar principle. In the Genealogy with which St. Matthew’s Gospel begins, there are Six Sevenths, which bring us from Abraham to Christ; in Whom all the faithful have Rest. See on Matt. i. 17.

In St. Luke’s Genealogy of Christ (iii. 23—38), ten times Seven Generations bring us from Christ through Adam to God. Thus then we see that the sacred purpose of the number seven is to signify rest after toil. This is its meaning in the Apocalypse.

The Seven Seals exhibit the sufferings of the Church in her pilgrimage through the world, and lead her to her eternal Rest (Rev. vi. 1; viii. 1).

The Seven Seals proclaim all God’s judgments on her enemies and the enemies of Christ, till the end, when the Kingdom of this World becomes “the Kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ.” (Rev. v. 2; xi. 15. 17. 18).

The Seven Vistas pour out all God’s wrath on a particular form of wickedness which rebels against Him (xv. 7; xvi. 17).

Other Septenary combinations there are, all expressive of completion; all terminating, after a successive series, in some great consummation, just as the Hexæmeron of Creation ended in the Sabbath of the World (cp. Rev. xxi. 1—5).

4 Cp. the note below, on Matt. xxviii. 1. The first day of the week is the day after the Sabbath, or Seventh Day, and is therefore the Eighth Day; and consequently it is said by the Fathers that on this day Christ arose from the dead; see Rom. xvi. 25. Indeed, as the number Seven is the Sabbatical number, or number of Rest, in Holy Scripture, so Eighth may be called the Dominical number. Seven is expressive of Resurrection to new life and glory in Christ.

The Eight is the number of the Feast of Circumcision (cp. Luke i. 59. Phil. iii. 5)—the type of Christian Baptism,—the Sacrament of Resurrection,—in which we rise from the death of sin to newness of life in Christ.

Our Lord received the name Jesus on the eighth day (Luke ii. 21); He as our Jesus, Joshua, Saviour, brings us to the heavenly Canaan,—to the glory of the Resurrection.

The Name Jesus, Saviour, given to Him on the Eighth Day, makes in Greek, the universal language (HITOT), the Number eight in hundreds, tens, and units—888. See Irenæus, adv. Hær. i. 14. 6, and ii. 24. 2. Cp. below, on Rev. xiii. 18.

The great Day of the Feast of Tabernacles—the type of His Incarnation—was the Eighth. See on John vii. 53. And in His Sermon on the Mount He proclaims eight Beatitudes describing the way that leads to the fruition of heavenly glory. See on Matt. v. 3.

Hence also we find, that the Transfiguration—which was a figure and a glimpse of the future glory of the bodies of the Saints after the Resurrection—Is mentioned as having taken place eight days after our Lord had said, “There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Kingdom of God” (Luke x. 27). As S. Ambrose says there, “Quia est quod sic. In deo die quo?” Quid quæ verbis Christi multis, et crediti, Resurrectionis tempore gloriam Christi videbit, Octavæcennium die facta est Resurrectionis. Unde et plerique Psalmini in Octavecan in inscribuntur.”
rose from the dead. The struggle of our present life on earth is like a sixth day of the week; we hope for the rest of the sabbath, and for the Resurrection to Eternal Glory, as on the eighth day, when Christ rose.

This arrangement is repeated with reference to the Eastern Gate into the inner Court; and also with regard to the Northern Gate into the inner Court. Each also of these Gates had eight steps (see vv. 34. 37).

Near these Gates leading into the inner Court they washed the burnt-offering.

The burnt-offering (v. 38) sacrificed once for all, is Christ; but we need to wash that offering with the tears of our own repentance, in order that it may be availing for our acceptance with God. All our own burnt-offerings are tainted by some impurity, and need to be cleansed at the Gate of the Temple before they can be offered on the altar. "Let us wash our burnt-offerings with our tears\(^1\); wide is the bosom of the mercy of our Creator, to receive the weeping of the humble."

"We must wash our hands and hearts, our spiritual sacrifices, and so compass God’s altar."

In vv. 39—41 are mentioned eight tables (probably of wood), being distinguished from four other tables which were of stone (see note on v. 42); on these eight tables it is said they slew the burnt-offering, sin-offering, and trespass-offering.

It is remarkable that they are not called altars, but tables\(^2\), and that they are eight in number. In the Tabernacle and Temple there was only one altar of burnt-offering; but to mark the increase of sacrifices in the Catholic Church, and to signify that her sacrifices are spiritual, here we have eight tables\(^3\).

It is observable also that in v. 42 are four other tables of hewn stones for the burnt-offering (olath). Following a suggestion of S. Jerome, we may suppose that these tables being in length one and a half cubits, and in breadth one and a half; that is, in breadth and length taken together three cubits, and in height one cubit, and being built of hewn stones, and being four tables in number, represented the whole company of the faithful built together as lively stones, into the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, to offer sacrifices to God, in all the four parts of the world\(^4\). And they declare that all our sacrifices and all the instruments by which we offer them (our bodies, souls, spirits, and estates), must, in order to be acceptable, be laid on the Altar of the Triune God.

Thus we gain another step in our progress. We have entered by seven steps from the outer world into a vestibule which has three chambers, symbolizing the reception by Baptism in the Name of the Blessed Trinity into the Church of God. We have rested in those chambers, whose windows are bedimmed because we saw as through a glass darkly; we have come into the outer court and have rested in the ten times three chambers on the pavement; and have been settled and grounded on the faith in which we have been baptized; we have crossed the outer court, and have ascended by eight steps into the vestibule of the inner court, and there we have also had windows in the chambers, but it is not said that those windows were closed; and at the entry of the inner court of the Temple we have seen the eight tables where sacrifices were offered, and the four tables of hewn stones representing those who have not only entered by Baptism in the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, and who have not only been settled in that doctrine, but have become like lively stones built up in Christ the Corner Stone, an holy Priesthood (as the Apostle speaks\(^5\)) to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Christ Jesus.

In v. 43 are the hooks by which such sacrifices are to be fastened, like victims tied to the horns of the altar.

The gladness with which these sacrifices are offered by the faithful is represented by the mention of the chambers for the singers, who are also priests, and are keepers of the charge of the altar, and come near to the Lord to minister unto Him (vv. 44—46), and are called sons of Zadok, as being faithful to Christ, the Divine David\(^7\).

The inner Court, like the outer Court, is four-square, denoting that it is for all nations from the four winds of heaven.

Thus we are brought through the outer Court, and through the inner Court, to the Temple itself.

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1 S. Gregory.
2 Matthew Henry.
3 Heb. shalch'ōnah, the same word as is used for the table of shewbread (Exod. xxv. 23. 27. 28. 30, and passim), and Num. iv. 7, and the Psalmist (Ps. xlviii. 5). "Thou preparest a rest for me in the wilderness."
4 Compare below, on xlii. 22.
5 "Quod invenit quatuor mesae de lapidibus quadratis extruxerat, et hum ipse ad sacrificium et holocaustum, isti sunt Vol. V. Part II.—281

Vivi lapides . . . . longitudinal et latitudine habent numm cubitum et dimidium, quatenus juncta tres cubitos facunt, qui tres cubiti habent in altitudine cubitum nummum, ut mysteria Trinitatis unius eci tii, hoc est, divinae majestatis mensurae conservavit. Nomen autem Dei, quasi unus altitutidis cubitas est, qui tres habet proprietates, et holocaustu oblationum nostrarum semper assumit." Ccp. above, on xlii. 6, 7.
6 1 Pet. ii. 5.
7 See the note above, on the passage xli. 46.
RETROSPECT OF CHAPTERS XL.—XLVIII.

EZEKIEL XLII.

The Temple (see the Diagram on p. 253).

The Prophet is now led by the angel into the Holy Place. The superiority of this Temple to the Tabernacle of the Wilderness, is shown by the fact that the breadth of the two posts equalled the whole breadth of the Tabernacle.

The Angel—Christ—alone enters into the Holy of Holies and measures it. The Prophet remains without.

The Holy of Holies is four-square; twenty cubits on each side. The Temple is surrounded on all sides, except the East, where the vestibule is, by chambers ten times three in number, with three stories, connected by an inner staircase with one another 1.

Here is another step in advance. We see here a symbol of the same doctrine of the Ever-Blessed Trinity which has been already presented to us in the preceding parts of the Vision.

But there are here new degrees of elevation and amplification for the devout worshippers who have been received into the Church by Baptism into that doctrine, and have been firmly settled and grounded in it, and have passed to a further ascent of knowledge by nearer approach to God in His house, and have cheerfully made an oblation of themselves—a spiritual holocaust—to the Triune God, and have rejoiced in doing so; they are now admitted to dwell with Him in His Holy place, and to rise, as it were, by a spiritual ascension (a mystery already foreshadowed in the Ark of Noah 2 and in the Temple of Solomon), and by a spiritual enlargement also, represented in the form of the chamber—by God the Holy Ghost, through God the Son, to God the Father of all.

Beyond the Holy of Holies to the west was a building which fenced off the Temple on that side, and which enclosed what was called the Gizrah, or separate place 3, which seems to have been designed for religious meditation and for quiet study and prayer, and to have been assigned to the Priests. This suggests a lesson to the Christian Priesthood that they should have separate times and places reserved for such purposes.

On the Temple itself are not only palm-trees but Cherubim 4. Each Cherub has the face of a man, and each face is toward a palm-tree. The palms of heavenly victory are not to be gained without the wisdom of a man joined to the courage of a lion 5. The altar before the Holy of Holies (which corresponds to the altar of Incense in the Temple) is of wood; it is not covered with gold, as the altar in the Temple was, and it is called a Table 6. It seems to indicate that the incense to be offered in the Church of Christ is spiritual—the incense of prayer, as in the Apocalypse 7.

In v. 21 it is said that the appearance of the door of the Holy of Holies was like that of the Holy Place.

In the Tabernacle and Temple the door of the Holiest Place was narrower than that of the Temple; but in the Church of Christ, the door of the true Holy of Holies, that is of heaven itself, has been widened by the ascension of Christ. “When Thou hast overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.”

There is no Veil before the Holy of Holies in this Temple; the Veil has been rent in twain, and an entrance has been made into the Holiest by the Blood of Christ (Heb. x. 19).

No Ark nor Mercy Seat is mentioned in this Temple of Ezekiel. The Presence of the Lord is diffused through the whole. Cp. xlviii. 33.

The Temple is covered with Cherubim outside; but there is no localized presence of Cherubim within the Holy of Holies, as in the Tabernacle and Temple of Solomon.

EZEKIEL XLII.

We have now a description of the Chambers 8 to the north and south of the Gizrah, or separate place.

They have three stories, and are easily accessible from the Gizrah, and were to the n.w. and

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1 See the note above on the passage, xli. 5—7.
2 See above, on the three stories of the Ark; note at Gen. vi. 16, and on the three stories of the thirty side chambers (connected together by an inner winding staircase) in the Temple; the note on 1 Kings vi. 8. S. Jerome says, “Tricentorum cubitorum Area Noe habit longitudinum et triginta cubitorum altitudinem qua consummatior in seo cubito,” and he regards this as a symbol of the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity.
3 See on xli. 12.
4 “Post scientice multitudinis victoria intrantibus praebetur” (S. Jerome).
5 “Indigemus facie hominis et leonis, id est prudentia et fortitudine, ut pulvis celestis obtineamus” (S. Jerome).
6 Compare above, xl. 39—41.
7 Rev. v. 8.
8 See note above, on chap. xlii. 1.
RETROSPECT OF CHAPTERS XL.—XLVIII.

s.w. of the Holy of Holies. These are holy chambers for the Priests who approach unto the Lord; and "there they eat the holy things, there they lay the most holy things, for the place is holy."

When we consider the connexion of these chambers with the Gizrah, and with the most Holy Place, and also observe that they have three stories like those on the side of the sanctuary', we may suppose that these chambers symbolize the duty of the Christian Priesthood, not only to retire to the Gizrah of religious meditation, but to feed habitually with devout reverence on the sacred food of spiritual doctrine, especially the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity.

In these Chambers the Priests lay up their holy garments, in which they minister.

By religious meditation and prayer, and by spiritual feeding on holy doctrine, the Christian Priest prepares himself for the sacred work of preaching the word, and for ministering the Sacraments in the Church of God.

They may not mix with the people in these holy garments; they must reserve sacred things for sacred places and times; and teach the difference between what is secular and spiritual.

Cp. xliv. 19.

In ev. 15—20 we learn that the Outer Court is a square, each side being 500 reeds, or more than a mile.

As the Christian Church is elevated on a very high mountain in the land of Israel (xl. 2), above all the hills of that country, so as to be visible from afar, so it extends far beyond it, even unto the four corners of the earth. This is symbolized by the fact that the Outer Court here of the Temple is represented as greater than the whole City of the literal Jerusalem.

The Catholic Church springs up from the soil of Sion, and extends itself from thence to enfold the world.

It has been already noticed that there is no Ark in Ezekiel’s Vision of the Temple, that is, of the Christian Church Universal, because God’s Presence is diffused through the whole, which is most holy (xliii. 12). And it is remarkable that there is no mention of one High Priest who is to govern all. Ezekiel mentions “the Priests” frequently (xlii. 13, 14; xlii. 19. 24. 27; xliv. 15. 21. 22. 30. 31; xlvi. 4. 19. 20; xlviii. 10. 11. 13), but no High Priest. He recognizes the Priesthood in the Catholic Church, but he knows nothing of any one Supreme Vicar of Christ who is to govern all.

EZEKIEL XLIII.

The Glory of the Lord, which the Prophet had seen and described as forsaking the courts of the literal Jerusalem, now takes possession of the new Temple—the Church of Christ—and fills it with His presence 4.

It comes from the East—that is from Christ 4. To Him all the glory of the Church is due, His Voice is like the sound of many waters. The Gospel is Christ’s Voice; it goes forth into all lands, and the earth is filled thereby with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Isa. xi. 9. Habak. ii. 14); and therefore it is said here, “The earth shined with His glory” (v. 2). The Voice of God Himself is heard speaking from out of the sanctuary, and declaring that idolatry was the cause of the abandonment of the Temple of Jerusalem by the Divine Presence, and calling Israel to repentance and to obedience. He then pronounces that the whole house and all the precincts thereof are most holy (v. 12), and He announces the measurements of the altar.

It is twelve cubits square, 144 cubits in its surface (on which the sacrifices are offered), symbolizing that the offerings of the Church of God are from all parts of the world joined together in the doctrine of the Apostles 4.

It is raised on a settle or ledge, which was a square of $14 = 2 \times 7$, a sabbatical number. The Altar is approached by stairs from the east (v. 17). The solemnities of the sacrifices for the cleansing and dedication of the Altar are then described (ev. 18—27): first, by a young bullock for a sin-offering; then a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin-offering; then a young bullock without blemish and a ram without blemish for a burnt-offering; seven days a goat is to be offered daily for a sin-offering, and a young bullock and a ram out of the flock without blemish for a burnt-offering.

This is to be done for seven days; and on the eighth day the altar will have been consecrated, and will be ready for the consummation of all sacrifices—the pure offering in which the worshipper is admitted to be a guest with God.

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1 See above, on xli. 6. 7.
2 See the Retrospect above, on xl. 6.
3 See above, notes on xliii. 1—5.
4 See above, p. 277.
We have already seen that these various kinds of sacrifices, the sin-offering, the burnt-offering, and the peace-offering, are typical, in the order of their oblation, and in their character, of the One Offering made by Christ upon the Cross. Thus the Altar is consecrated.

Here we see a symbolic representation of the doctrine that every place in which the sacrifices of prayer and praise are offered in the Christian Church is to be purified and consecrated by the blood of Christ. The altars of our hearts are to be cleansed and sanctified thereby.

EZEKIEL XLIV.

The Prophet is brought again into the Outer Court of the Temple, and to the Gate where he had entered—the East Gate. It was now shut, because the Glory of the Lord had entered thereby; and it is added that on that account no one shall enter by it.

This is said with a reservation for the Prince, the Royal Head of God's People. He may sit in it to eat bread before the Lord—and it would seem that he on the Sabbath may enter and may go out by it.

Some of the ancient Fathers apply these words, "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it, because the Lord the God of Israel hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut," to confirm the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of the holy Mary, the Mother of Christ. The entrance of the Glory of the Lord into the Church was by the Incarnation of the Son of God; and this mystery is a Gate which no human reason can ever enter.

The Prince, the Royal Head and Representative of the People of God, is permitted to "sit and eat bread before the Lord;" and he "shall enter from the porch of that gate, and shall go forth from it."

He shall meditate and feed on the spiritual food of the Mystery of the Incarnation, in the presence of God, and make it the origin of his goings in, and of his goings out. It shall be the leading principle of all his acts. We shall have more to say concerning the Prince in the sequel.

Directions are now given to the Priests. They are warned by the sin and punishment of the Priesthood of the Hebrew Sanctuary (vv. 5–14), and are encouraged by the faithfulness and reward of those who remained loyal to God (vv. 15, 16). A charge is given to the Priests, that they should wear garments of linen (vv. 17, 18), and they must take heed to their attire. This direction is spiritualized and Christianized in the Apocalypse, where it is said, "They shall walk in white," and it represents the duty of the Christian Priesthood to take heed to their lives and conversation, and to walk in holiness and purity, sobriety and chastity, before God and man. They may not shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long. The Christian Priest is bound to avoid all that is superstitious, heathenish, and effeminate in his demeanour and attire.

They may not marry a widow,—except a widow of a Priest; nor a divorced woman.

They are to be teachers of sound doctrine (v. 23).

To them appertains the determination of controversies concerning sacred things.

They must keep God's statutes in all His sacred assemblies, and hallow His Sabbaths (v. 24).

Other directions are given on their duty to abstain from every thing that may defile them, and from a too passionate devotion to any earthly object of affection apart from God, particularly to earthly possessions (vv. 25–27); and they must cherish a spirit of penitential self-humiliation.

Directions are also given to the People to honour God with their substance and provide an adequate maintenance for His Ministers (vv. 29, 30); and they who comply with this command are assured that God's blessing will rest on their house (v. 30).

The Priests of God's Church are here supposed to be amply provided for; and they are commanded to abstain from all sordid means of supplying themselves with subsistence (v. 31).

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1 See above, on Levitians, Intro. p. iii, and the notes on Lev. ii. and iii.
2 On the true reading of v. 26, see the note above, on xiii. 26.
3 So S. Jerome here, and Theodoret and others quoted by A Lapide here, and see Bp. Pearson, Art. iii. 173; and whatever may be thought of this application, it shows their persuasion that those who are called "brethren of the Lord" in the Gospels, were not children of the blessed Virgin Mary. Cp. below, on Matt. i. 25; xii. 46.
4 See Rev. iii. 4, 5, 18; xix. 8, 14.
5 "Mundâ conscientiâ et mundis vestibus debemus tenere Domini Sacramentum" (S. Jerome).
6 "Non rasis capitibus debemus esse sicut Isidis sacerdotes nec rursum comam demittere, quod lusoriosum est, Rass capita habet superstitionis gentilis" (S. Jerome). It is singular that the Latin Church should impose that practice on its Priesthood.
7 Compare note above, on xlii. 21, and on 2 Chron. xix. 11.
EZEKIEL XLV., XLVI.

From a description of the Temple, the Prophet proceeds to describe the Land.

A holy portion, or oblation, literally a heave-offering, of land is to be set apart from all the Tribes. It is called a heave-offering, because it is, as it were, lifted up to heaven, and consecrated to God.

This holy portion of land is four-square. Each side is 25,000 reeds, that is, about sixty miles. This holy portion is divided into three parts parallel to each other.

The first part, that on the north, is 25,000 reeds from east to west, and 10,000 reeds from north to south, and is assigned to the Levites (xlv. 5).

The second part, to the south of the first part, is exactly equal to the first part, and is assigned to the Priests (xlv. 2—4).

In the middle of this part is the Temple (xlv. 4), which has been already described.

To the south of this is the third part, but only half of either of the two former; that is, only 5000 reeds from north to south, and 25,000 reeds from east to west (xlv. 6).

This is common to all Israelites; and in the centre of it is the City, which is a square of 4500 reeds, and is contained within a precinct (called the suburbs) which extends 250 reeds on each side of the square of the City, so that the City, together with the suburbs, is 5000 reeds square, and fills up the whole breadth of that portion, and leaves a length of 10,000 reeds to the eastward, and 10,000 to the westward of it in length (see below, xlvi. 15—18, and the Plan in page 265).

It is observable that this holy portion of 25,000 reeds square (divided into these three parts), does not stand in any particular tribe, as the Temple and City of the literal Jerusalem did. The reason of this is, that the sacred ordinances of the Christian Church, and the spiritual privileges of the Christian City, do not belong to any one race on the face of the earth, but to all the Twelve Tribes of the Israel of God, that is, to all Nations of believers, who are children of faithful Abraham, and are heirs of God's promise, in Christ.

Also, the Temple is not united to the City in this description, as it was in the literal Jerusalem, but is separated from it.

There is to be a distinct line of demarcation between sacred and secular things in the Christian Church. But yet there is to be an alliance between the two. This is represented by what follows;

The sacred oblation or portion of land is flanked and protected on both sides by two portions, one on the east, the other on the west.

These two portions are assigned to the Prince (xlv. 7). Cp. below, on xlvi. 21, 22.

The Prince is the Royal Head and Representative of the Nation.

As the Priesthood represents Christ in His spiritual Supremacy, so the Prince represents Christ in His temporal Sovereignty. But the Prince has not only a secular sway, but a spiritual charge. He is to be the Recipient, Guardian and Trustee of all the offerings of the people, who are commanded to make stated contributions from their substance, toward the maintenance and support of the public worship of God (xlv. 13—16).

The Prince is forbidden to abuse his power by acts of oppression, or by any encroachment on any other portion (xlv. 8. xlvi. 16—18); and he is commanded to take care that these offerings are made, and he is required to consign them to the Priesthood, and to see that they are properly applied (xlv. 17—25).

The Prince is also represented here as performing acts of personal religion (vv. 4—8), and is also displayed as going forth in the midst of the people, in order to give them a public example of piety and devotion, and to promote the good of the nation by acts of national oblation and homage to God (xlvi. 10).

We may recognize, therefore, in these two chapters a representation of the Divine will and design concerning the alliance of Church and State, and concerning their different functions, which

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1 See the Plan above, at xlv. 7, p. 265.
2 It is well said here by an English Commentator, who is often very successful in discovering the spiritual sense, and in making a practical application of the prophetic writings—Matthew Henry,—"It is the duty of Rulers to take care of religion, and to see that the duties of it be regularly and carefully performed by those under their charge, and that nothing be wanting thereto. The Magistrate is the keeper of both Tables, and it is a happy thing when those who are above others in power and dignity, go before them in the service of God."
3 This is also represented in the Apocalypse (xvi. 21): "The kings of the earth bring their glory and honour unto her."
are to be made ministerial respectively, in their several ways, to the attainment of one and the same end, the glory and worship of God, and the edification of His people. In ch. 9 there is a remarkable precept, that whosoever enters by the north gate, should go out at the south gate; and vice versa. In holy things no one must look back. At the close of the forty-sixth chapter, the angel describes the chambers near the Holy of Holies, and also at the four corners of the Outer Court, in which the offerings are to be dressed, on which the Priests and the people respectively are to feed.

EZEKIEL XLVII.

THE LIFE-GIVING WATERS ISSUING FROM THE TEMPLE, AND HEALING THE WATERS OF THE DEAD SEA.

The Prophet is brought to the eastern door of the Temple, and he sees a fountain of water issuing forth from under the threshold, and flowing at the south side of the Temple near the Altar of burnt-offering. This stream deepens more and more as it flows on, till it falls into the valley of the southern part of the Jordan, and into the Dead Sea.

On both sides of its banks grow many trees (v. 7), whose fruits yield food, and whose leaf never fades; and they bring forth fresh fruit every month, and their leaves are for medicine, because the waters by which they are nourished issued out of the sanctuary (v. 12).

The waters of the Dead Sea are purified and healed by the stream; and though, naturally, they destroy life, they now abound with all kinds of fish (vv. 8, 9), and fishermen spread their nets on their banks from En-gedi to En-eqlaim (v. 10).

But the miry places, called the marishes, are not healed, but are given up to salt and barrenness (v. 11).

This life-giving stream represents the Gospel of Christ; which flowed forth from Sion, and gushed out of the pierced side of the crucified Saviour on the Altar of the Cross.

The stream grows deeper and deeper; because the Gospel, proceeding forth from small beginnings (as our Lord declared in the parables of the grain of mustard-seed and the leaven), will be diffused throughout the world.

Fruit-bearing trees of all kinds, whose leaves never wither, and have a healing quality, being nourished by its fresh waters, grow along its banks on both sides; for wherever the waters of the Gospel flow, there trees of righteousness grow, which are the planting of the Lord, and the green leaves and salutary fruits of Christian graces and virtues abound, which owe all their beauty and fruitfulness to the living waters of divine grace.

These trees, which are nourished by the waters, bear ripe fruits on each of the twelve months of the year. This teaches that no part of the doctrine preached by the Apostles is to be neglected: all of it must bear its fruit in the Christian life. We must imitate Christ, Who died on the Cross, which became a Tree of Life to the World. The perfect consummation of this vision is revealed in the Apocalypse; “He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river was there the Tree of Life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”

The fishermen represent Christian Preachers and Missionaries, who draw the net of evangelical preaching through the sea of the world. Christians are symbolized by fish, being born again in the waters of baptism, and drawn in that net by evangelical fishers to the shore of everlasting life.

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1 It is remarkable, that in xlvii. 12, 13, 14, God speaks to the Nation, regarded as one man, and bound to unite as such in acts of worship, and says, “Thou shalt daily prepare a burnt-offering; thou shalt prepare it every morning, and thou shalt prepare a meat-offering;” and then he passes to the plural number, “they shall prepare.”
2 S. Jerome, who refers to Lot’s wife (Gen. xix. 17), and Luke ix. 62, and Phil. iii. 13.
3 See the notes above, on xlvii. 1–8.
4 “Admirabilis sanatio et mutatio maris mortui (i.e. pecutoris vivificatio) prœstitit ex ostio Sanctuarium, id est, a Christo, Qui est Porta Coeli, finitumque in latum dexterum, id est, per Christi Crucifixi latus lucis apertura et vulneratum; ex eo enim sanguis et aqua, atque Ecclesiarum Sancta, fluenterunt, ait S. Augstinius” (A Lapidis).
5 Cp. Ps. i. 3.
6 Isa. lv. 21.
7 See S. Jerome here. “Singuli menses singulis Apostolis deputantur.”
8 Cp. Rev. xxii. 2.
9 Rev. xxii. 1, 2.
10 See the notes on our Lord’s words, Matt. iv. 19; xiii. 47, p. 46, Luke v. 10.
11 “Nos pisciæ in aquâ nascimus” (Tertullian de Baptismo).
12 See the narrative of the prophetic and parabolical miracle of our Blessed Lord in John xxi. 11. The Fathers add another reason why Christians may be compared to fish, ἰχθύαι, as being 28
The nets are spread from En-gedi to En-glaim; that is, from a fountain (Hebr. en, or ayin) in the Holy Land, to a fountain in Moab, the enemy of Israel; because the Gospel of Christ is to be preached to all—Heathens as well as Jews.

The waters of the stream purify and heal the Dead Sea, and make it teem with life, because the Gospel of Christ heals the Dead Sea of the World.

The best commentary on this passage is supplied by the prophecy in xvi. 53. “I will bring again the captivity of Sodom and her daughters” (see the note there).

In a somewhat similar strain, the Prophet Jeremiah describes the Holy City of the Catholic Church of Christ as receiving within its precincts the hills Garab and Goath, the types of the leprosy and deadliness of Sin.

With regard to these waters, we may adopt the language of S. Jerome, “These waters flow forth from the Temple, to the east and to the south, and signify the doctrine of Christ our Saviour; according to the words of Isaiah, ‘Out of Sion shall go forth the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem’; and in another place, ‘The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.’”

The Prophet Joel had spoken of these waters when he said, “It shall come to pass on that day, that all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim,” i.e. the barren valley of the Jordan above the Dead Sea.

Zechariah prophesied concerning these waters, when he said, “It shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea.” Our Saviour speaks of these waters, when He says to the Samaritan woman, “If thou knowest who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water.” And again, “He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but it shall be to him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” And again, Isaiah says, “Ye shall draw water out of the wells of salvation.”

These waters (adds S. Jerome), which signify the waters of Christian Baptism and Christian Doctrine, issue forth from the Church of God; and if they flow in the channel of Apostolic Discipline, they heal and vivify the sterile and deadly elements of human corruption, as the salt cast in by the Prophet Elisha healed the waters of Jericho.

Not only do these waters irrigate and fertilize the desert, but they even heal the Eastern Sea, that is, the Dead Sea, which is called by the Greeks the “Lacus Asphalitites,” or of bitumen. “Mirum in modum aquis Evangelieis aqae sanaturn mortue.” S. Jerome (who dwelt in Palestine) thus describes the sterile and stern character of the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea. “Nothing” (he says) “lives in it, and if the Jordan, which flows into it, brings down fishes into the sea, they die, and their bodies float on the unctuous waters.” But in a spiritual sense, the Dead Sea of the World “which lieth in wickedness,” is healed by the waters of the Gospel, and abounds with life and joy.

“The miry places and marishes shall not be healed, but are given to salt.” They who love to wallow in the marily quagmires of uncleanness, shall receive no benefit from the waters of the Gospel, but shall be condemned to perpetual barrenness. “He that is filthy, let him be filthy still.” (Rev. xxii. 11.)

1 Isa. ii. 3.
2 The words of S. Jerome are remarkable:—“Hie aqua tumultus sabuli, steriles priscis et infertiles, faciunt esse frigoreos, et omnium plana atque deserta ibat irriugantur, ut exprimam in se Jerichuntini fluvii sacramento, quem Eileas evangelico et apostolico caravit sale, in taurum ut ubi praebet sterilitas et mors, ibi ubertas esset et vita.” Compare the notes above, on the spiritual meaning of that miracle of Elisha the Prophet, the successor of Elijah (2 Kings ii. 17, and 20–22).
3 “Stalina novicium et pingubis aqua superaman.”
4 That the Dead Sea in the Vision of Ezekiel does not symbolize the “Lake of fire,” the place reserved for the Devil and his angels, and for the unbelieving and impenitent (as it does in Jude 7; compare note there and above, on Gen. xix. 24; pp. 88, 89); and that this passage does not affect the question concerning the eternity of future punishment, is evident from the consideration that Ezekiel is here describing the condition and duties of the Visible Church on earth, in this present state of existence, and does not carry us beyond what is horribilis, and also that he expressly declares that some regions around the Dead Sea are not healed.

members of the divine ΛΧΩΤΣ (Ignorant Χριστος Θεος Υδας, Σωτηρ.; Cp. Angelus, De Clv. Dei, xviii. 18, and Theodoret here, who says, “Many there are in these waters who will be caught, as by the net of fishermen: and many there to whom this office of fishing is committed.” See also Vatilabus, Malolavitas, Plutus, Coloveus, and And Lapide here.
1 See the note above, on the passage xlvii. 10.
2 See the note above, on Jer. xxxii. 39.
3 A similar exposition might be quoted from an ancient Greek Father and Bishop, Theodoret; see his commentary here, beginning with these words, “Salvation has gone forth from the Jews to the Gentiles. Christ, the seed of David according to the flesh, from the Virgin’s womb, has given regeneration to the world by water and by the Holy Ghost.” See also Colovius, Matthew Henry, Hengst. (Christol. iii. 55–76, English Translation), and Fairbairn.
5 Isa. ix. 9.
6 Joel iii. 18. See the notes above, on xlvii. 1.
7 Zech. xiv. 8. See also Joel i. 18.
8 John iv. 10.
9 John iv. 14; vii. 37.
10 John iv. 1.
THE BORDERS OF THE SPIRITUAL ISRAEL.

The Christian Temple has been represented by Ezekiel, as built on a very high mountain in the land of Israel, and the area of the Christian Temple has been displayed by him as exceeding that of the whole literal City of Jerusalem. So the Tribes of the Christian Israel are now exhibited as occupying a territory far surpassing the limits of the literal Palestine 1.

The reason of this is, because they symbolize the Tribes of all the World brought into the Church of Christ.

The names specified in this description of the boundaries of the spiritual Israel are derived from the delineation of the Promised Land in Numbers xxxiv. 2—12, and are designed to show that the blessings which were promised by God to Israel, but which were not realized by them on account of their disobedience, are now recovered and more than fulfilled in Christ, and His Church.

It is also declared here, that all the Tribes shall have an equal share (v. 14), and strangers shall have equal rights of inheritance with Israelites (v. 22). There is no difference between Jew and Greek in Christ and His Church (Acts x. 35; xv. 9. Rom. iii. 22—29; x. 12. Gal. iii. 28. Ephes. ii. 13—16).

EZEKIEL XLVIII.

THE TRIBES OF THE SPIRITUAL ISRAEL.

In the following specification of the portion of the allotments assigned to the Twelve Tribes of Israel, that is, to all Nations of believers 2, we find that the north, the place whence evil comes, and the farthest from the Temple, is given to Dan 3 (v. 1).

Dan is a symbol of idolatry: see above, on Gen. xlix. 17. Judges, xviii. 30; and below, on Rev. vii. 4, p. 198; and this position of Dan indicates that idolatry is a cause of removal from the presence and favour of God; “without are idolaters,” Rev. xxii. 15.

Judah, the Tribe of Christ, is nearest to the sacred portion.

Next, it is that of Reuben; the first-born of Jacob. Cp. above, notes on xlviii. 31.

Next are Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, who encamped side by side in the wilderness (Num. ii. 18—20).

Next are Naphtali and Asher; two sons of the two handmaids of Rachel and Leah. Farthest off is Dan 4.

South of Judah is the Holy Portion, already described, 25,000 reeds square. See on xlv. 1—6. The most southern of the three parts into which the Holy Portion is divided is 25,000 reeds long from east to west, by 5000 from north to south; this is subdivided into three parts, of which the central part is 5000 reeds square, and contains the city with the suburbs (or open places) around it. See on xlv. 1—6.

The area of the City, like the area of the Temple Court, is a square; and is in no special Tribe, but belongs equally to all the Tribes of the spiritual Israel in all the four quarters of the earth.

The whole Sacred Portion is flanked on both sides by the Prince’s Portion (vv. 21, 22; cp. above, xlv. 7), and is protected by it, but is separated from it.

The Prince’s Portion is consecrated by its juxtaposition with the Sacred Portion, but neither of the two encroach on the other. The meaning of this is,—that according to God’s design, as here displayed, the State is consecrated by the Church, and protects the Church; but the Temporal Power may not encroach on the domain of the spiritual, nor the spiritual usurp over the temporal.

Next follows a description of the allotments of the rest of the Tribes, on the south side of the Sacred Portion. Then we have a specification of the gates of the City.

The City, as before mentioned, is four-square; and it has three gates on each of its four sides: and these gates are named from the twelve Patriarchs 5.

1 See the Map above, on xlv. 7, p. 265.
2 Dandelin Tribus sunt omnes Christiani, hi enim sunt veri Israelites (A. Lapidus).
3 See the Map of the ideal Holy Land, inserted above, xlv. 7.
4 These three Tribes encamped on the north side of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. See Num. ii. 25.
5 Compare the description of the Heavenly City, Rev. xxi. 12, 13, and see the notes there. The New Jerusalem has three gates on each of its four sides. The Heavenly City turns an equal face to each of the four quarters of heaven, showing the equality of God’s favour to all, and the Universality of the Church. Many will enter the Holy City from all the four quarters of the world. “Many will come from the East and the West, from the North and the South, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven” (Matt. viii. 11).
RETROSPECT OF CHAPTERS XL.—XLVIII.

Here is a symbolical representation of the divine commission of Christ to His Twelve Apostles to go forth into the four quarters of the earth, and to baptize all nations into the name of the Ever-Blessed Trinity. Fitly, therefore, may it here be said in conclusion, "The name of the city from that day shall be, THE LORD IS THERE." Thus the prophet Ezekiel anticipates the promise which the Lord made to His Apostles, after He had given them that commission: "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxxviii. 20).

Therefore, to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, Three Persons and One God, be ascribed all glory, honour, majesty, praise, and dominion throughout the whole Church of God, now and for evermore, Amen.

There are three gates on each side, as in the vision of Ezekiel (xlviii. 30—34). These three gates may signify (as some ancient Interpreters suggest) that the Entrance into the Church is by Faith, publicly professed in Baptism into the Name of the Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (Matt. xxviii. 19).

The number three bespeaks the number of Divine Persons in the Ever-Blessed Trinity; the number four represents all space lying within the four corners of the Earth (see note at end of Rev. xi.); and the number twelve, being the product of three multiplied into four, represents the Twelve Apostles and their lawful successors in an Apostolic Ministry, who were sent by Christ with a commission to "go and teach all nations" in the four quarters of the Earth, baptizing them in the Name of the Triune God. "These are the laborers (says Aug. in Ps. lxxix.) who were to be sent on a Mission to the four corners of the Earth, to bring them into the one Faith of the Ever-Blessed Trinity." See on Matt. x. 1, and xxviii. 19.

Therefore the Twelve Apostles are mentioned as the Twelve foundations of the Universal Church glorified in heaven.

The Heavenly City in the Apocalypse has twelve foundations, i.e., foundation-stones (so that there would be three on each side of the City, Rev. xxvii. 19, 20); and in them the names of the twelve foundations of the Lamb (Rev. xxi. 14). Compare the three standards of three of the Twelve Tribes on each of the four sides of the Tabernacle. See below, on Rev. iv. 4. On the eclipse of Nunu, cp. Eph. ii. 22.

This is the foundation of the Church glorified, the City which hath the foundations—that for which the Patriarchs looked—whose Builder and Maker is God (Heb. xi. 10).

Here is a proof that no one Apostle is the foundation-stone of the Church; much less can he be the foundation itself, which is Christ. See below, on 1 Cor. iii. 12, and Eph. ii. 20, and on Matt. x. 2, and xvi. 18. See also the description of the Church, displayed as wearing a crown of twelve stars, Rev. xii. 1: The names of the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb, engraved on the foundations of the new Jerusalem, show that the Twelve Apostles are the Patriarchs of the Tribes of the True Israel, and that the glory of Sion has passed into the Christian Church.

This truth is also exhibited by the quality of these Twelve Foundation-stones. They are Twelve precious stones; and they are mainly the same precious stones as those which adorned the sacred Breastplate of the High Priest, and on which the names of the Twelve Tribes of Israel were engraved, Exod. xxviii. 15—21. The breastplate of the Hebrew High Priest, garnished with its oracular gems, was like a beautiful garment which might be put off; but these Apostolic precious stones of the Twelve Tribes of the Israel of God are immovably set as the very foundation-stones of the heavenly Jerusalem, and are inscribed with the names of the Apostles, who are the progenitors and Fathers of the Spiritual Israel; because by preaching the Word, and by the life-giving Sacraments of the Gospel, they execute the ministry of Regeneration, by which Christ Himself is formed and born in all Nations of the world.

The Heavenly City is built on these Twelve Foundation-stones, Whosoever is not built on the foundation of Apostolic Faith and Disciple, is not a lively stone in the heavenly Jerusalem. 1

1 Civitas haec in quadrupos posit a, qua frumenta; et cui portus inferi prevaleat nequeat. A singulis lateribus habet tres portas, quia unicae a quatuor mundi plagis ad ilium concurrent gentes per fidem sanctissime Trinitatis (A Lapide).

SOLI DEO GLORIA!