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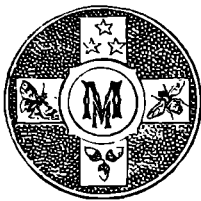
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COMMENTARY  
ON  
THE BOOK OF ISAIAH.



COMMENTARY  
ON THE  
BOOK OF ISAIAH

CRITICAL, HISTORICAL, AND PROPHETICAL ;

INCLUDING A

REVISED ENGLISH TRANSLATION

**With Introduction and Appendices**

ON THE NATURE OF SCRIPTURE PROPHECY, THE LIFE AND TIMES  
OF ISAIAH, THE GENUINENESS OF THE LATER PROPHECIES,  
THE STRUCTURE AND HISTORY OF THE WHOLE BOOK,  
THE ASSYRIAN HISTORY IN ISAIAH'S DAYS,  
AND VARIOUS DIFFICULT PASSAGES.

BY THE

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PROFESSOR OF MORAL THEOLOGY, CAMBRIDGE.

*SECOND EDITION, REVISED.*

**London :**

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## PREFACE.

THE following Commentary needs a few words of preface, to explain how it arose, and the form in which it appears, with some further and fuller remarks on its distinguishing features, and the objects which have been chiefly kept in view in its preparation.

In the spring of 1864, on the lamented death of Dr M'Caul, I received an earnest request from the Editor of the Speaker's Commentary, and also from the Archbishop of York, to undertake the Book of Isaiah, which had been allotted to that eminent scholar. An earlier request, to undertake some book or other of the Old Testament still unoccupied, had been declined by me a few months before. But this fell in so much with my own previous studies, and was so attractive in its own nature, from my strong hope that I could throw some fresh light on the internal harmony of the whole book, that I felt it my duty to accept the task. From April, 1864 to June, 1865 was devoted almost exclusively to its fulfilment. The MS. notes were then committed to the publisher and editor, as there was a delay I had not expected in the progress of the general work. I intended to give them a last revision, when the time drew near, and then to complete the introduction, and add some Appendices. Meanwhile I was called to other duties, and occupied partly with publishing three other works, designed for the defence of Christian truth.

In the spring of 1869 the Editor sent me a copy of his Excursus on Exodus for private criticism, and at the same time said that the first part of the Commentary would be ready at the close of that year. Soon after I applied to the Publisher for my MS., to give the notes a last revision, and conform them to some rules laid down by the conductors of the Commentary

since they were written. In a few weeks I received a brief note from the Editor, proposing to return it to me, as he did not think it suitable for the intended Commentary, because the notes were too much mingled with the text, and too homiletic. The engagement, in consequence of which, to my great regret, the labour of fifteen months had lain idle four years in his hands, thus came very suddenly to an end.

The disappointment, however, has been attended with a partial gain. I have been at liberty to mould the work, and complete it more freely, according to my own plan, in a form which I think more desirable than would have been permitted me before. There has been no change in the homiletic character of the notes, of which I am quite unconscious. But their mixture with revised renderings, which was difficult to avoid under the condition prescribed in the Speaker's Commentary, that no revision should appear in the text, has been easily remedied, the cause having ceased out of which it mainly arose, and the text itself being now given in a carefully revised form. The church, I trust, will have a double benefit, from the commentary of Dr Kay, my intended successor in the general scheme, as well as from my own. I feel deeply thankful to the Archbishop of York, whose kind urgency led me at first to accept a task, in the fulfilment of which I have found both profit and pleasure, and hope to be some help to the faith and knowledge of many Christian readers; while I cannot but regret the long delay of the Editor in forming his own decision, and thereby freeing me from the restraint of an engagement, entered into at his own earnest request, which had shut me out from any use of fifteen months' labour for four whole years.

I turn now to a more important subject than this brief explanation how the work arose, a statement of its plan and main features, and the objects chiefly kept in view in its preparation.

I. The work contains, first, the text of Isaiah in a carefully Revised Translation, as the natural and proper basis of every critical and exact exposition.

Our Authorized English Version of the Bible is doubtless one of the best ever made in any tongue. A wealth of associations has gathered round it in the course of three centuries, and its circulation has been wider than of any other book or version of the Bible in the history of the world. It leaves little to be desired for ordinary practical use by English Christians, and there can be no urgent need for a public change. No revision by one or more individuals, or by a single group of revisers, like those appointed by the Southern Convocation, can displace it, or ought to displace it in general use, till sifted and tried, revised, and perhaps re-revised, by a wider range of scholars and English readers. These last, as well as learned scholars, have a full right to be heard on all questions connected with the force, clearness, rhythm, and style, of an English version. Wide departure from the one actually in use would be a change for the worse, and no real improvement.

On the other hand, our Authorized Version, beyond doubt, is human, imperfect, and capable of being improved. It is the plain duty of those, who have learning and ability for the task, to give less learned Christians as correct, clear, and forcible a version of Scripture as possible, in their own tongue. A Critical Commentary is the natural occasion for such attempts at improvement. Such works are designed for those readers, who are not content with a loose and general knowledge of the word of God, but who seek to attain a clear view of the true scope and exact meaning of each part of the Divine message. The slightness of the total change, in a wise revision, will tend to strengthen, not to destroy, confidence in the substantial accuracy and excellency of the received version. But the effect will be like the removal of small spots and weather-stains from a window, through which we look out on some wide and goodly landscape. No feature of the prospect will be changed, but the view of every part will be clearer, and of some few, very perceptibly clearer than before.

Marginal readings alone, or the mention of a few changes in distinct type in foot-notes, cannot at all fulfil the chief object of such a revision. They leave all the spots and weather-stains

on the glass, to distract the eye, and obscure the view, and merely add a notice that they exist at such and such points, and that we can only see quite clearly when they are removed. The true aim should be that the translation may be a transparent medium, through which an English reader may perceive, as far as possible, the exact meaning of the original Scripture. But a few changes in the foot-notes alone, with nine-tenths of the readers, are practically the same as the absence of all revision ; while for those who consult them, and try to replace the old rendering by the new, there is a maximum of distracting attention fixed on the change, and a minimum of real improvement. Those slighter touches, which make up by their number for their separate minuteness, must, on such a plan, be passed by, and wholly sacrificed.

The plan, then, prescribed in the Speaker's Commentary, of keeping an unrevised translation in the text, and pointing out a few proposed changes, in conspicuous type, in the notes only, seems to me to sacrifice one main part of the benefit attainable in such a work. A version, made as good and faithful as the skill of the expositor can attain, is the proper and natural basis of every critical and exact exposition. And this should be presented at once to the eye of the reader, as the basis of the work ; and any notice of the changes, whether slight or more important, should be given separately, so as not to mar the simple impression of the inspired Scripture, when presented in a clear and accurate form.

The Revised Translation is here given in paragraphs, to follow as closely as possible the real transitions of thought ; but, for easier reference, its number is still prefixed immediately to each verse, and not placed at the side. The so-called metrical arrangement, often introduced, has been rejected, in the full conviction that it is a change for the worse, and no improvement. It introduces a number of unequal pauses to the eye, which have no counterpart in the sense, and no real warrant in the practice of Hebrew writing. The censure of Dr Alexander is very just, that "far from enhancing the effect of Isaiah's sentences, it greatly mars it, and converts a numerous prose into



the blankest of all blank verse, exciting expectations that are not realized, suggesting the idea of poetical metre in the strictest sense, and thwarting it by sequences inconsistent with the first principles of prosody." The system, in short, is the creation of false pauses to the eye, which involve by association pauses equally false to the ear also, and are enough to outweigh, in my opinion, the gain derivable from all possible improvements, in detail, on our noble version as it now stands. Let the reader take any page, for instance, of Dr Henderson's version, and read it with the pauses unavoidably suggested by this pseudo-metrical arrangement, and I think he will be convinced of the truth of these remarks. The plan is intolerable, unless the voice of the reader reverses the work of the editor, and restores the passage to its natural form.

Reasons for the Varied Renderings are given in many cases, but in others are omitted, since they would have added to the size of the work, without an equivalent gain to the reader. The departure from the Authorized Version is much less than in every purely critical version which I have compared; but I have omitted no change, however slight, which appeared to me, in the best exercise of my judgment, a sensible improvement, when accuracy, terseness, and rhythm or euphony, are all considered, which sometimes weigh in opposite scales. A seeming gain in accuracy may often be outweighed by a sensible loss in force of expression, or flow and freedom of style.

II. The second aim of the work is Direct Exposition. The works I have chiefly consulted and compared for this end are, among earlier writers, the learned and massive folios of Vitringa, and of the more recent, the Latin Scholia and Commentary of Rosenmüller, the German works of Drechsler, Hahn, Knobel, Stier, and Delitzsch, and in our own language, of Drs Henderson and Alexander. The last of these gives also very fully the views of other German writers, Gesenius, Ewald, Umbreit, Maurer, De Wette, and many others, in disputed passages. Several other works, of course, have been used

for occasional reference. My aim has been to give, in all cases, the results of a careful examination and comparison of the views of these different critics, which are sometimes widely divergent, but in the simplest form for the use of general readers. In more important cases of divergence the chief opinions have been given, with the names of their advocates, and the reasons of the view preferred.

The object I have sought to keep steadily in view is to make the direct meaning of the text, and the series and connection of the thoughts, plain to the attentive reader. I have forbore merely homiletic applications of the prophecy, except here and there in a passing sentence. On the other hand, I have aimed at continuous commentary, approaching so far to the nature of paraphrase; rather than at a series of unconnected critical remarks, which would leave one most important element of exposition, the sequence and structure of the prophecy, and the nature of its transitions, wholly unexplained. Thus, in some cases, results given in a few lines may be the fruit of hours and days of careful study; having been written out at first at greater length, and then compressed in one or two revisions, so as to meet the limit reasonably imposed at first on the scale and extent of the general commentary. In two cases only a conjectural change of reading has been preferred, from the authority of the LXX., or from internal evidence alone, Isaiah ix. 3, xxix. 13, involving the omission of Vau in one case, and the change of Yod to Vau in the other. With these exceptions the Masoretic reading, and generally the Masoretic punctuation, has been strictly followed.

III. A third main object of the work has been to unfold the structure of this Book of Isaiah, and the mutual relation of its parts, and thus to confirm the genuineness and unity of the whole prophecy, which have lately been so much assailed. Two Appendices of some length have been devoted to this topic, and condense, I think, an amount of internal as well as external evidence in confirmation of the constant faith of Jews and Christians for more than two thousand years, which

ought abundantly to satisfy every reasonable mind. The same subject enters largely into the headings of the different sections, and is kept in view continually in the notes themselves. The direct testimony of our Lord and his Apostles, in the New Testament, ought alone, with every Christian, to settle the question, and outweigh a thousand subtle fancies and guesses of modern sceptics, however eminent in Hebrew learning. But closer study, and the analysis of their objections, have greatly deepened these first impressions; and have revealed an amount of internal evidence for the Isaian authorship of the whole, which scarcely admits of sensible increase, from the variety of the elements of which it is composed.

There are some passages, on which I hope that new light will especially have been thrown in the present volume; the prophecy of Immanuel, the course of Assyrian progress, x. 27—34, the Burdens of Philistia and Moab, the Burdens of the South, and of the Valley of Vision, the main features of Sennacherib's campaign, and the whole structure of the Later Prophecies, in their relation to the peaceful close of Hezekiah's reign, and to the shades that gathered anew towards its close, and in the first years of Manasseh. The whole series of predictions is rooted firmly in the history of Isaiah's time, and throws a clear and strong light on that history in its turn.

IV. A fourth and last object has been to unfold this relation between Isaiah's successive Visions and the circumstances out of which they arose. The wonderful discoveries of the last thirty years at Nimroud, Kouyunjik and Khorsabad, and the progress of cuneiform interpretation, have given this subject a deep and growing interest. Striking confirmations of several main facts in the Bible history have thus been brought to light, and new vividness has been given to their portraiture of the conquests, pride, and arrogance of the Assyrian kings. On the other hand new difficulties have appeared. The conclusions drawn, by some of the ablest Syrologists, from the slabs and cylinders lately disintombed, clash, in some important particulars, with our present text of Scripture, and also, as

I think, with some vital and essential features of the Book of Isaiah, inwrought into the texture of its whole message.

It may seem bold to dispute the conclusions of such writers as Dr Hincks and Sir H. and Professor Rawlinson, in a field of research where the two former have won such deserved honour, and the last has the merit of digesting their conclusions, and presenting them in a clear and popular form. It is with sincere reluctance that I have felt compelled to renounce their supposed improvements in the chronology of those days; and, even on the ground of the evidence adduced by themselves, and on which they build, to vindicate the superior historical consistency of the Scripture narrative, as it now stands. But a scepticism is both allowable and wise with regard to recent inferences from half-deciphered remains of oriental despots, and from their boastful bulletins, engraven in stone, and buried in long oblivion along with the idol gods they so zealously worshipped, which is neither wise nor safe, when applied to the sacred oracles of the true and only God. All experience proves the wide contrast, remarked by Plato long ago, between the power of collecting new materials in any department of knowledge, and of drawing correct inferences from the materials so obtained. The very labour and skill involved in these recent discoveries, the learning they require, and the fascination of each successive step, in surmounting hindrances that seemed insuperable, tend to distort the view of their historical value, as compared with the clear, distinct, and truthful evidence that lies before us in this Book of Isaiah, and the sacred histories. When Sargon informs us, in his inscriptions, that three hundred and fifty kings of Assyria had reigned before him, and that not one of them had achieved what he had done, we are taught a lesson of wholesome distrust as to the truthfulness of other statements in these royal records.

The view adopted by Professor Rawlinson and others, in deference to the supposed authority of the Assyrian canon (which Dr Hincks himself does not hesitate to call the work of a blunderer, disproved in some main particulars by weightier evidence), distorts and reverses, in my opinion, that main feature

in the history of Hezekiah's reign, on which the whole structure of the Book of Isaiah really depends. I think I have shown that it is opposed to the plain laws of history, as well as to the text of Isaiah, and the Books of Kings and Chronicles. A different view, in full harmony with Scripture, agrees better, I believe, with the substantial testimony of the monuments themselves; and only requires us to admit such a partial disguise and falsification in Sennacherib's cylinders, as we may be quite certain, even from recent examples, so terrible a reverse would occasion in ancient days, no less than in our own. These bulletins of the kings of Assyria, though engraven on stone, were subject to no correction from a free press, and newspaper correspondence. They are steeped throughout in the spirit of idolatrous delusion and vainglorious pride. They are panegyrics rather than annals; and reliance on the perfect accuracy of their statements, when they come into conflict with the words of Scripture, and with the drift and scope of its most central book of prophecy, seems to me a serious error in the comparative estimate of different sources of historical evidence.

I now commend this work to the blessing of the great Head of the Church, and to the thoughtful and reverent students of the word of God. They will find in it, I trust, some real help towards full insight into this wonderful book, and certainly the fruit of earnest and careful thought, with the simple aim to unfold clearly, to English readers, the direct and primary meaning of those sacred visions. Other works, especially that of the Bishop of Lincoln, which has been published while the present notes lay dormant in other hands, have their peculiar excellencies, but I hope that this volume may also occupy, with some benefit to the Church, a place of its own. May He, who touched the lips of the prophet with fire from the heavenly altar, fill the minds of all its readers with light, and their hearts with love.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE author is thankful for the intimations he has received from many correspondents of the benefit they have derived from the perusal of his work.

This Edition is revised throughout. It differs from the first by the omission of the detailed notice of the minute variations from the Authorized Version, and the introduction in its stead in the general series of the notes, of the reasons for the more important changes, and other minor corrections. The First appendix has been further enlarged. An Eighth has been added on the Internal Evidence of the Isaian authorship of chh. lv—lxvi. on the two latest divisions of the whole prophecy. A Ninth on ch. lxvi. and the events of the Last Times. A Tenth and last on the three closing verses of the Book, and the Doctrine of Eternal Judgment.

CAMBRIDGE,  
*Whit Tuesday, June 11th, 1878.*

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# THE BOOK OF ISAIAH.

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## INTRODUCTION.

### § I. THE NATURE OF SCRIPTURE PROPHECY.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” These opening words of the Bible are a key to the true nature of all Divine revelation. Pantheism makes revelation impossible, since the Revealer and the persons to whom He reveals himself are then confounded together. It mingles together an unholy Deity and a deified creation, in a self-originated, self-developing universe. But the fact of creation establishes a deep contrast between the holy and almighty Creator, and the creatures He has made. It becomes the first premise in every just view of Divine Revelation.

The doctrine of the Fall comes next in order. This includes the great fact that men, in every age, are conscious of guilt and shame; that they shrink from the presence and voice of a holy God; and need to be recalled from their hiding-places by His powerful voice, before they can hold intercourse with their unseen Creator. These truths have first of all to be received, before the soul of man can find access to that sanctuary, where God reveals his work and ways to the humble and pure in heart.

A revelation from the holy God to sinful man must bring with it some clear marks of its Divine origin, before it can rightly claim to be received and obeyed. His power, wisdom



and goodness cannot indeed be fully revealed in every message ; but enough must be revealed to prove that its true source is not from men, but from God. Hence arise three kinds of evidence ; Miracles, or works of superhuman power ; Prophecy, or marks of superhuman foresight ; and Moral Beauty, or signs of a goodness, holiness, and moral excellence, truly Divine.

These three elements cannot indeed be wholly separated in any message of God. The attributes on which they depend all coexist in the fountain itself, and cannot be parted in the streams that flow from it. Yet still there is a natural order in their distinct and successive exhibition. For Divine Power is an attribute, of which the actings are open even to the senses of the ignorant and profane. Foreknowledge, that its evidence may be seen, requires some previous intelligence, some culture of the understanding, if not of the heart. But Moral Goodness, though it must make some impression, wherever the conscience is not wholly deadened and debased, exercises its chief influence and power of conviction on the good alone. Thus Miracles are first in order, but lowest in dignity, among the proofs of Divine Revelation. The prediction of things to come holds a middle place. The last in order, but the fullest and most conclusive to hearts prepared to discern it aright, is the evidence of Moral and Spiritual Goodness. For the moral recovery of sinful men is the main object of all Divine Revelation. And this recovery must have begun, and made some progress, before men can be competent to discern clearly the real harmony between the actual contents of God's messages, and the moral perfections of Almighty God, whose messages they are.

This order, which results from the nature of Revelation, is the same which meets us actually in the word of God. Sacred Histories, in which one main feature is the record of acts of almighty power, and of signal wonders wrought to confirm the authority of God's messages, come first in order. The Books of Prophecy come much later, where the record of miracles is replaced by a large revelation of things to come. At length, in the Gospels, we arrive at the full manifestation of Divine Love and Goodness in the person and work of the sinless Redeemer of mankind. And even here the same order reappears, and is repeated once more. Miracles of power, fulfilled prophecies, and the witness of the Spirit, revealing the moral

excellency of the Saviour, are three successive elements of that evidence, upon which Christianity itself is founded, and to which the appeal is made by the Apostles and first teachers of the Gospel.

These three forms of evidence, essential in all true revelation, are also closely interwoven, like the glorious attributes on which they depend. The miracles of Scripture, from the typical character which prevails in them, are virtual prophecies. They also consist mainly in acts of judgment or of mercy, and thus convey moral lessons of the most weighty and impressive kind. The Earlier Histories, though not directly predictive, still include many prophecies, the germs which blossom out in the later books of Scripture. They also abound in moral examples and warnings, the fertile seeds of every variety of moral teaching and spiritual truth. Again, the prophetic era begins with Elijah and Elisha, who have left no written work, but whose miracles almost rival those of the Exodus, which sealed and attested the earlier messages of God. Miraculous history is one integral part of the books of Isaiah and Daniel; while that of Ezekiel begins with a supernatural sign to the prophet himself, and contains another addressed to the children of the captivity. A high moral tone, it is no less evident, pervades this whole series of prophetic messages from first to last.

We have thus a plain and simple answer to the question,—what is the vital distinction of Scripture Prophecy? A high spiritual purpose it shares with all the messages of God; but its own especial feature, in contrast with other parts of Scripture, is the revelation of things to come. It does not consist of dim guesses at the future, made by good and holy, but fallible and dim-sighted men, in the exercise of their own spiritual faculties alone. It consists of predictions, which claim for their true Author the living God, “declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things which are not yet done.” Is. xlvi. 10.

This view of Sacred Prophecy results necessarily from the nature of God the Revealer, and also of man himself, to whom the revelation is made. It is also confirmed by many plain statements of the word of God. It is distinctly affirmed, at least a dozen times, in this one book of Isaiah alone. The later prophets resume the message of the earlier ones with this same

truth. Daniel "understood by books" the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prediction, that the captivity would last seventy years. Zechariah appeals to the double fact, that the fathers and the prophets were dead, but that the predictions to the fathers by those prophets had been fulfilled. Zech. i. 5, 6. An appeal to the prophecies of the Old Testament, as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, and forming a clear proof that He was the Messiah, is one conspicuous feature of the Gospels. It begins with their first sentences, and reaches, in Acts xxviii., to the very close of the sacred history. It begins and closes the two main Epistles of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, to the Roman Christians, and to his own believing countrymen. Rom. i. 2, xvi. 26, Heb. i. 1, xii. 26. And St Peter repeats and condenses the same truth in his Divine aphorism, that "prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." It stands out in clear relief at the opening and close of the great prophetic book of the New Testament, the crown and completion of all the rest, Rev. i. 1, xxii. 6, 10. All this magnificent array of seers and prophets, of heavenly dreams, extatic visions, and angelic messages, was never devised to give currency to imperfect and mistaken guesses of mere fallible men. The true aim was far higher and nobler, worthy of the sublime agency employed, when "the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants things which must shortly be done."

The criticism which starts from a denial of this essential character of Scripture prophecy, as it begins with unbelief, can end only in confusion and darkness. No secondary appliances of human learning can save it from a double sentence of barrenness and blindness. It wearies itself in vain, like the stricken Sodomites, to find the door. With a starting point so false, real insight into the contents and structure of the prophecies must be impossible. The dishonour done to the majesty of God's word recoils upon those who offer it. They seek to degrade it from its true dignity into the mere guess-work of man; and a chaos of hypotheses that exclude, and of guesses that contradict each other, is usually the final result of their most diligent and persevering labours.

Our knowledge of the manner in which truth was revealed to the prophets must be drawn, simply and entirely, from the

statements of the word of God. We are told that God spake "by them," Heb. i. 1, so that their message is stamped in every part with His authority; that they were "holy men of God," and "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Pet. i. 21. A higher Power controlled and guided their human faculties, as the horse is guided by its rider; and yet they were not passive, unconscious instruments. Their natural gifts and powers were used, not superseded or extinguished, in the messages they were chosen to convey. These messages were given *πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως*, in various portions, and different methods or styles. The varied occasions when they were given, and the diverse character of the seers or prophets, had their full reflection in the messages themselves. And yet the prophet's own knowledge did not measure the real extent and meaning of his prophecy: on the contrary, they often desired to gain fuller insight into their own predictions, and the nature of the visions they received, 1 Pet. i. 10—12. There were varieties, also, in the mode of revelation. Moses conversed with the Lord "face to face, as a man speaketh with his friend," but dreams and visions were the more usual mode of Divine communication, Nu. xii. 6—8. The words of the message were sometimes given by express dictation, Jer. vii. 1—16, but at other times prompted by an impulse from within, like a burning fire, Jer. xx. 9. At other times visions were presented to the eye of their mind, which they were simply to record as faithful witnesses and historians. But in every case they were "the Lord's messengers, speaking in the Lord's message to the people," Hag. i. 13. God's instruments were living men, with their natural gifts unimpaired; and they were "holy men of God," trained and fitted by spiritual discipline and experience for their high office. But also they were "borne along by the Holy Ghost;" and His perfect and prescient wisdom extended its control throughout the whole message. Thus it became that Scripture, which "cannot be broken." Even the Eternal Son of God would pour out His soul unto death, submit to the worst reproach and deepest agony, and be "numbered with the transgressors," rather than one single jot or tittle should prove mistaken, and remain unfulfilled, in these lively oracles, these true sayings of God.

## § 2. THE BOOKS OF THE PROPHETS.

The Books of the Old Testament from Isaiah to Malachi (except the Lamentations of Jeremiah and the Book of Daniel) are styled in the Jewish Canon "the Later Prophets," in contrast to the histories of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, which are called "the Earlier Prophets." The twelve Minor Prophets, from Hosea to Malachi, are reckoned in the same canon as one single book. The Book of Isaiah, as the earliest of the four greater Prophets, comes first in order in this prophetic division of the Old Testament, and takes precedence of the rest. It is desirable, then, to offer a few remarks on the common purpose and mutual relation of these books of Old Testament prophecy.

Sacred Prophecy, from Abraham to Christ, has four distinct and successive stages. Its main root and source is the promise, with which the New Testament begins, of the Seed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. In the first stage, from Abraham to Moses and Joshua, this promise was unfolded in its lower and outward sense, the historical pledge of what was deeper, and lay beyond. The seed of Abraham after the flesh, but still in the sacred line of the covenant, grew from a family into a nation, until all the tribes had come to occupy their predicted inheritance.

The second stage, reaching from Joshua to David and Solomon, was marked by the advance of the nation into a kingdom. Internal discord, and the strength of heathen adversaries, proved their need of a further gift beyond the inheritance of the land; a righteous King, who might be the Shepherd of the chosen people, and execute justice and judgment in the earth. The main subject of prediction, in this period, was the trials and deliverances of Israel, until the promotion of David, and the promise made to his line, and the reign of Solomon, in whom the typical kingdom reached its highest point of worldly greatness. The prophecies of the more distant future, during this second period, seem to have been in types alone. This typical character may be traced clearly in Moses and Joshua, in Barak and Gideon, and in Samson the Nazarite, whose victories, great in his life, were still greater in the hour of his death. But its

fullest exhibition is in David, the king after God's own heart, triumphant through bitter conflict ; and in Solomon, the Prince of peace, of surpassing wisdom, the Builder of the Temple of God.

The third period reaches from the death of Solomon to the Captivity, and the fall of the first temple. Here the type and antitype diverged, and began to stand in evident contrast. The typical kingdom was rent by the great schism of Jeroboam, and gradually declined, till the tabernacle of David was broken down, and became a ruin. But the promise of Messiah, the Son of David, and of the redemption of Zion and Israel, and of all nations through Him, came out into full relief. A new covenant was announced, and the first covenant, waxing old, was ready to pass away. The first prophecy of this period, given to Solomon as soon as the temple was complete, announced its future overthrow, and the fall of the kingdom. A second message, given by Ahijah to Jeroboam, foretold the division of the kingdom, the first main step in its downward progress. A third, in its mention of Josiah, and of his reformation shortly before the kingdom fell, limited and defined the platform on which a new and glorious structure of prophetic hope was to be reared. The miracles of Elijah and Elisha form an historical basis of this prophetic period, just as those of Moses are the foundation of the whole legal covenant.

At length, in the later times of the declining kingdom, almost midway between Moses and Christ, from Jonah to the Captivity, during a space of more than two hundred years, we enter on the main period of Old Testament prophecy. It begins, in the Book of Jonah, with a typical prophecy like those of the earlier period. Amidst repeated warnings of judgment coming upon the chosen people for their sins, the type withers and fades, that the antitype may shine out more clearly. At every step in the decay of the kingdom, the voice of promise grows fuller and louder, announcing Immanuel, the King from the stem of David, who would reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.

The fourth and last stage reaches from the Return to the close of the Canon, and onward to the Birth of Christ. In the Book of Daniel, which links the two periods, three new features appear ; a comprehensive view of the future history of the world,

great minuteness of historical detail, and a distinct definition of the time of Messiah's coming. Here the predictive character of God's message reaches its height, and forms the basis of all the later prophecies of the New Testament. The two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, revive the messages of the earlier prophets, renew the promise of the coming Messiah, and add fresh touches to the grand outlines of a picture already given, which revealed the humiliation and sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Malachi sums up the controversy of God with his rebellious people, renews the promise implied in the name, Jehovah, and proclaims the rising of the Sun of righteousness, the coming of the Angel of the Covenant, and of the messenger who would prepare His way. Then prophecy is silent, as stars wane before the sunrise, and revives only in the Song of Zacharias, which announces at length the bright dawning of the promised Dayspring from on high.

### § 3. THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ISAIAH.

The family of Isaiah is unknown. A Rabbinical tradition makes his father, Amoz, a brother of king Amaziah. But this seems like a guess from some resemblance of the names, and contradicts the chronology, since the difference of age is not less than eighty years. Kimchi states more honestly that we know not his race, nor to what tribe he belonged. Our knowledge must be gained entirely from the book itself, and the brief notices in Chronicles and Kings.

According to the inscription, he prophesied under Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. The total length of these four reigns is 113 years. The three last alone amount to sixty-one years. The dates in the book extend from the last year of Uzziah to the fourteenth of Hezekiah, a space, including the extremes, of forty-seven years. Beyond these limits we are left to inference alone. Assuming the whole work to be genuine, he must probably have survived the events of ch. xxxvi.—xxxix. several years, and have lived at least till very near the close of Hezekiah's reign. A Jewish tradition makes him survive that king several years, and suffer martyrdom under Manasseh by being sawn to death. This is rather unlikely, from the absence of Manasseh's name in the first verse, and from the length to

which his ministry would then extend, but we have no certain proof of its falsehood. It seems highly probable that the reign of Hezekiah and the life of the great prophet ended nearly together. In this case his ministry, if ch. vi. describes his first commission, must have lasted sixty-two years. This is a chronological reason for the opinion, held perhaps by the majority of commentators and critics, that the message in the last year of Uzziah was really his first prophetic mission. Supposing him to be then twenty-four years old, he would be eighty-six at the close of Hezekiah's reign, and about seventy at the time of Sennacherib's siege, and the deliverance of Jerusalem. Hosea, Amos, and Micah, and probably Nahum, were contemporary prophets. Of these Micah alone prophesied in Judah, the rest in Israel.

The Decline of the kingdom has three main periods. The first reaches from the Schism of Jeroboam to the judgment on the house of Ahab; the second, from the accession of Jehu to the fall of Samaria and the great overthrow of the Assyrian army; and the third, from that overthrow to the Fall of the Temple, B.C. 588. The public ministry of Isaiah, so far as it is clearly defined in his book, occupies forty-seven years, at the close of the second period; but probably continued about fifteen years into the third period, though the exact interval is unknown.

The reign of Uzziah was long and prosperous. But this prosperity brought with it great evils. Idolatry abounded even in Judah, and pride, worldliness, and selfish luxury, made fatal inroads. Under Jotham open symptoms of decay began; and when Ahaz succeeded, at an early age, there was an almost entire defection from sound morals and true religion. Heathen alliances were formed, heathenish rites were practised, and new forms of idolatry introduced under royal patronage. At length he sacrificed openly to the gods of Damascus, and closed the doors of the house of God. 2 Chron. xxviii. 24. In his reign Judah was brought very low, and invaded successively by Syria and Ephraim, by Edom and the Philistines, on every side.

Early in Hezekiah's reign, the Assyrians, having subdued the bordering lands, invaded Israel, and besieged Samaria. The help sought from Egypt proved wholly vain, and the city fell after a siege of three years. Sargon, under whose reign it fell,



afterwards invaded Egypt, and seems, both from Is. xx. and his own inscriptions, to have gained some decisive victories in the south. At length, in the fourteenth of Hezekiah, Sennacherib strove to complete the overthrow of Judah. He took Lachish, assaulted Libnah, and tried to terrify Jerusalem into surrender by the presence of a powerful host, and by mingled threats and promises. In their distress both the king and his people turned to God with hearty prayer. Isaiah, now in the height of his influence as a prophet, whose warnings, thirty years earlier, were being visibly fulfilled, was besought to intercede for them with God. A speedy answer was given. Before Sennacherib had rejoined the besiegers with the rest of his forces, the greater part of his army were destroyed in one night by the visitation of heaven. He fled hastily to Nineveh, where he perished, some years later, by the hand of his own sons. A message to Hezekiah, promising recovery from his mortal sickness, and a prophecy of the Captivity in Babylon after his death, are the last events of Isaiah's life distinctly revealed to us in the Sacred History.

#### § 4. STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK OF ISAIAH.

On this subject many controversies have been raised. The earliest view is that of Jerome, adopted by Michaelis and others, that the visions are placed almost or altogether in the order of time. Five notes of time occur: the last year of Uzziah, vi. 1; the expedition of Rezin early in the reign of Ahaz, vii. 1; the year of the death of Ahaz, xiv. 28; the expedition of Tartan, xx. 1—6; and the fourteenth of Hezekiah, xxxvi. 1. All these are in direct sequence, without any inversion.

But serious difficulties remain. The first chapter seems to speak of a present, actual desolation of the country by strangers, which does not agree with the reign of Uzziah. The account in ch. vi. reads like the prophet's first commission, and still five whole chapters come before it. In xvii. 1, the fall of Damascus seems still future, though it follows a mention, in xiv. 28, of the year of the death of Ahaz. Yet Tiglath Pileser slew Rezin, and led Damascus captive, early in the reign of that king. The vision, xxviii. 1, predicts the fall of Samaria, and yet it comes eight chapters after the mention of Sargon's expedition, when

Samaria had already fallen. The arrangement by time, then, must at least have some weighty exceptions, even if it does not need to be wholly set aside.

Others, again, have held that the arrangement is not by time, but by kindred subjects. This is open to equal difficulties in its turn, and is also far more vague in its own nature. A still larger class of modern critics have adopted what Drechsler calls "the theory of despair." They affirm that, from various causes, from interpolations, or the ignorance of transcribers, it has become impossible to trace in the book any consistent arrangement whatever. So Bertholdt, Koppe, Augusti, Knobel, Ewald, Davidson, and others. On the other hand, some of the latest and ablest German writers, Drechsler, Stier, Hahn, Delitzsch, maintain that a clear and consistent plan may be traced throughout the whole work. The following view, in the main, had been independently formed by the direct study of the prophecy, before acquaintance with their kindred solutions, though slightly modified by later comparison with their statements in some secondary details. It is in substantial harmony with the views of Drechsler, Stier, and Delitzsch; while it presents the subject, I believe, in a simpler form, and discloses more fully the connexion of the prophecies with the history to which they belong.

The life-time of Isaiah, then, is the first key to the true arrangement of his prophecies. During its course the Assyrian power rose to its height, scourged and wasted the nations, led Ephraim captive, afflicted Judah, dashed itself against the rock of God's promise to Zion and the house of David, and then began to decay, its chief mission being fulfilled. The prophet lived through the gathering of this thundercloud. He saw it burst over his country, was chosen to announce the fall of the destroyer, and survived till just before or after the peaceful close of Hezekiah's reign. Thus his prophecies fall naturally into two main divisions, contrasted in their character and tone, Assyrian and Post-Assyrian. To make this contrast plainer, and show the historical basis on which it rests, four chapters of direct history are interposed between them; which recount the Assyrian overthrow, the reprieve of the kingdom, and the Babylonian embassy. The Assyrian prophecies all converge on the great crisis of Sennacherib's overthrow. The Post-Assyrian diverge from

the brief warning of Judah's exile, occasioned by the message of Merodach, when all the royal treasures, and the royal seed of David, would be carried away to Babylon, xxxix. 6, 7.

Again, Isaiah's ministry before Sennacherib's fall includes three periods, marked by diverse characters. Twenty years, from the last of Uzziah to the third of Ahaz, saw the gradual advance of the Assyrian, through the reign of Pekah, till a first crisis, when Pekah was slain by Hoshea, and Rezin by Tiglath Pileser, and Damascus was sacked and almost ruined. To this corresponds a first series of visions, ch. i.—xii. Its main features are a stern warning, to Israel and Judah, of troubles at hand from the Assyrian; mingled with prophecies of Immanuel, the Prince of peace, the Rod from the stem of Jesse, in whom the Gentiles were to trust, and Zion was to rejoice for ever.

A second period of sixteen years reaches from the fourth year of Ahaz to the fourth of Hezekiah, when the siege of Samaria began. During its course Ephraim barely survived, and Judah was brought very low through the sin of Ahaz. The Assyrian went on confirming and extending his dominion in all the border lands, but had not resumed any direct aggression on the land of Israel. The Burdens on the Nations, a second series of visions, belong to this period, with a sequel in which warnings of judgment are followed by new messages of grace, ch. xiii.—xxvii. This series closes, like the first, with a full promise of the gathering of Israel, ch. xi. 11—16, xxvii. 12, 13.

The third period reaches from the siege of Samaria to the overthrow of the Assyrian host. It is marked by the fall of Israel, and the sore distress of Judah, followed by the speedy destruction of the Assyrian army. The visions begin with four Woes on Israel and Judah, mingled with promises of a signal deliverance. They continue with a Woe on the Assyrian spoiler, a message of judgment to all the nations, and a glorious prophecy of the good things to come, ch. xxviii.—xxxv.

The Later, or Post-Assyrian Prophecies, belong to the peaceful close of Hezekiah's reign. Hence their order and succession is fixed by no historical changes, but by the nature of that future to which the predictions belong. The Prophet, whose lips had so early been touched with heavenly fire, attains in his old age to a peaceful and lofty elevation, like that of Moses on Pisgah, whence his eye ranges far and wide over the landscape of ages

to come. Here also are three divisions, which, with the interposed history, complete a sevenfold structure of the whole book. Nine chapters, ch. xl.—xlviii., belong to the nearer future, and predict conjointly the Return from Babylon under Cyrus and the Time of Messiah. A second part, ch. xlix.—lx., unfolds the Person, Work, and Times of Messiah, from his first Advent in humility and suffering to the full redemption of Zion. A third portion chiefly expands the closing events of this series; and refers conjointly to the times of Messiah, and the final redemption of Israel, when the branches, long broken off, are to be grafted into their own olive-tree once more.

Let us now return to the Earlier Prophecies, and the difficulties in their arrangement.

The Temple Vision, ch. vi., has usually been held to describe the first call of Isaiah to his public work. Its date, the last year of Uzziah, is the earliest given. We learn, from ch. i. 1, that Isaiah began to prophesy in that reign, and since he survived it full sixty years, its last year is a more probable date for his prophetic calling than any much earlier year. The first mission of Jeremiah was marked by the touching of his lips in vision, and that of Ezekiel by an appearance of the cherubim. Here both features are combined. The analogy confirms the view that the words recount the first calling of Isaiah; and the question, Whom shall I send? further implies that he was now first set apart as the chosen messenger of God.

How, then, shall we explain the fact that five chapters come before it? The answer is quite simple. The voice, "Whom shall I send? and who will go for us?" implies a much fuller message than the two short verses that follow. These were only a private instruction to the prophet, to prepare him for the general neglect of his more public message. The words, "hear ye indeed, but understand not," point to the same conclusion.

Again, ch. ii.—v. describe a state of prosperous ease, which agrees well with Uzziah's reign. We may infer that they formed Isaiah's first public message, given in the year when his commission was received. The words "I saw also" will thus retain their most natural sense, and will imply that this Temple Vision dates in the same year with the previous chapters, though the event itself was slightly earlier. The prophet first gives his public message. He then records the solemn way in which his

commission was given, and the caution which had prepared him to expect the general unbelief with which it would be received.

The first chapter raises a question of still greater difficulty. Grotius, Coccius, and Hengstenberg refer it to the reign of Uzziah; Calvin, Lowth, and Hendewerk, to Jotham; Hensler, Gesenius, Maurer, Knobel, and Havernick, to Ahaz; and Jarchi, Vitringa, Michaelis, Paulus, Eichhorn, Umbreit, Bleek, Ewald, and Alexander, to the reign of Hezekiah. The description of the country as desolate, and the cities as burned with fire, could apply to the reign of Uzziah only by prophetic anticipation. This is Hengstenberg's solution, but the reasoning of Vitringa against it seems decisive. This earnest call to repentance, at the very opening of the book, must surely be based on present facts, and not on a vision of the future. And besides, however frequent may be the use of the prophetic present, its introduction here would set aside that law of progress, from history to prophecy, from the real to the ideal, from the present with its actual sins, to the future with its bright and glorious visions, which marks the whole book. The reason for this view from the place of the chapter loses all force, if we suppose it to resemble the preface of a modern work, and to have been prefixed by the prophet to a partial collection of the messages already given. Its date would then be that of the collection, and not of the earliest vision or message which the collection might include.

The real choice seems thus to lie between the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah. The stern rebukes of prevailing wickedness, and the picture of national distress, agree best with the former, but the mention of zealous temple-worship would rather suggest a date after Hezekiah's reformation. If the chapter were a preface to the whole book, it must be referred to the close of Hezekiah's reign, if not rather to the first years of Manasseh. But if prefixed at first to one portion only, then it will belong to the reign of Ahaz. The public ministry of Isaiah lasted more than sixty years. Is it likely that he would make no collection of his public messages till the close of his life? An opposite view is much more probable. The first series alone, ch. i.—xii., is longer than any one of the twelve minor prophets, and includes twenty years of his ministry. The Second Series is quite distinct in character, containing the Burdens of the Nations. It would be natural for the prophet to combine this first series in

a book, with their own preface, when once they were complete ; and this would be in the third or fourth year of Ahaz. The land had then been desolated by Syria and Ephraim, and by the inroads of the Philistines, Arabians, and Edomites, 2 Chr. xxviii. 5, 16—20. The moral corruption was deep and inveterate. The king and princes were openly profane. The faithful city might well be called a harlot, and a home of murderers. One feature alone, at first sight, seems hardly to agree, that the people are reproved for the number of their worthless temple-offerings. It is plain, however, from 2 Ki. xvi. 4, 13—15, that even after the conquest of Damascus Ahaz offered public burnt-offerings in the temple ; and the closing of its doors, 2 Chr. xxviii. 24, 25 ; xxix. 7, 19, must have been later in the reign. It is conceivable that Isaiah's stern and public rebuke of these formal services, as belied by their whole conduct, might lead Ahaz, in sullenness and pride, to close the temple altogether. It is plain, from Mic. iii. 9—11, that even in the days of Hezekiah there were grievous public sins. But when the king himself was eminently pious, when Eliakim had been raised to power in fulfilment of God's own promise, and a great outward reformation had been made, it is unlikely that so severe a message would be given, with scarcely an allusion to the marked revival of piety in the faithful remnant. But every feature in the chapter is satisfied, if it were the preface to a collection, in the third or fourth year of Ahaz, containing this first series of Isaiah's predictions alone. It would then, of course, include the names of three kings only, and that of Hezekiah would be added when the whole book, some forty years later, was committed to the custody of the faithful in its actual form.

The First Series, then, will include this opening chapter, and falls naturally, like the whole book of which it is part, into a sevenfold division : 1st, The Preface or General Introduction, ch. i. 2—31 ; 2nd, The Earliest Prophecy, ch. ii.—iv. ; 3rd, The Parable of the Vineyard, ch. v. ; 4th, The Prophet's Call, ch. vi. ; 5th, The Prophecy of Immanuel, ch. vii.—ix. 7 ; 6th, The Warning of Assyrian conquests, ch. ix. 8—x. ; 7th, The Times of Messiah, ch. xi. xii. Of these the second, third and fourth will belong to the last year of Uzziah ; and the rest will be considerably later, in the second and third years of Ahaz. A complete message of warning and promise would thus be given to

the people, almost thirty years before the great overthrow of the oppressing power.

The Second Series, ch. xiii.—xxvii., has only two express marks of time, xiv. 28, xx. 1—6. The former agrees well with the law of regular sequence. It would imply that one burden only, that of Babylon, had been revealed between the third and last years of Ahaz. Now since Babylon was the power ordained for the final overthrow of Judah, this burden would naturally take precedence of the rest. It might be given about the time of Shalmaneser's accession, when the Assyrio-Babylonian power resumed its career of conquest. The Burdens of Moab, Damascus, and Egypt, seem to have followed that on Philistia in quick succession. The opening of ch. xvii. need not refer back to the beginning of the reign of Ahaz, but may relate to a completion of the ruin of Damascus by Shalmaneser, and not to the earlier calamity at the death of Rezin. Again, there is no need, from ch. xx., to refer ch. xxi.—xxiii. to Sennacherib's reign, a view forbidden by several marks of time, xxi. 16, xxii. For ch. xx. is a natural supplement of the burden on Egypt, and may be placed after it for this reason only, though its proper date lies midway in the third series.

This second Series appears to be sevenfold, like the first, and may be thus arranged: 1st, The Burden of Babylon, ch. xiii.—xiv. 27; 2nd, The Northern Burdens on Philistia, Moab, and Damascus, ch. xiv. 28—xviii.; 3rd, The Burden of Egypt and its sequel, ch. xix. xx.; 4th, The Southern Burdens, ch. xxi.; 5th, The Burden of the Valley of Vision, ch. xxii.; 6th, The Burden of Tyre, ch. xxiii.; 7th, The Sequel of the Burdens, ch. xxiv.—xxvii. A marked unity of arrangement will be found to prevail throughout the series. It begins with a renewed statement of the authorship, "The Burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see;" and closes with promises of victory over death, the abasement of all worldly powers, and the blessedness and fruitfulness of that vineyard of the Lord, which forms one central figure in the former series.

The Third Series, ch. xxviii.—xxxv., has its date plainly marked by internal evidence. Its first message seems to have been about the third year of Hezekiah, when the siege of Samaria was ready to begin. The next chapters answer to the time of that siege; while ch. xxxiii. may be placed rather later, when Sen-

nacherib's invasion was just at hand, or had already begun. The whole will thus lie between the third and the fourteenth of Hezekiah. It begins with denouncing woes on Ephraim, Judah, and Jerusalem. Still there is a marked contrast with the first series in the time of Ahaz, from the greater fulness of hope and comfort which mingles with its warnings. The Woe on Ariel changes into a direct Woe on the mighty spoiler, with a promise of lasting peace and security to the people of God.

This series, again, falls easily into a sevenfold division: 1st, The Woe on Ephraim, ch. xxviii.; 2nd, The Woe on Ariel, ch. xxix.; 3rd, The First Woe on the Egyptian League, ch. xxx.; 4th, The Second Woe and its Sequel, ch. xxxi. xxxii.; 5th, The Woe on the Assyrian, ch. xxxiii.; 6th, The Judgment of the Nations, ch. xxxiv.; 7th, The deliverance of Zion, ch. xxxv.

### § 5. FIRST SERIES OF VISIONS, Chapters I—XII.

These twelve chapters, though composed of an earlier portion, ch. ii.—vi., in the reign of Uzziah, and of a later, ch. i. vii.—xii., in the reign of Ahaz, still form one connected whole, distinct in character from the Burdens and Woes that follow. Its key-note is given, ch. v. 25, in the earlier message: "Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled against his people, and he hath smitten them....For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." When the message is resumed early in the reign of Ahaz, after the great promise of the birth of Immanuel has been given, this warning is referred to, ch. ix. 8, and repeated four times, ix. 12, 17, 21, x. 4, till it issues in the full warning of the Assyrian desolation. Then follows the promise, x. 25: "The indignation shall cease, and mine anger, in their destruction." And now at length, after the full promise of the Rod from the stem of Jesse, the series closes with that song of triumph, xii. 1: "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." Thus the second and later part of this series completes a message of warning and hope, left unfinished under Uzziah. In the earlier part the promise, ii. 1—5, takes precedence of the warnings; and in the later part the warnings, more fully developed, of the sore judg-



ments near at hand, vii. 17—x. 34, issue in an enlarged prophecy of Zion's deliverance, ch. xi., xii.

This Prefatory vision, ch. i., is best explained as a description of the kingdom under the reign of Ahaz, introducing an early publication, by the prophet himself, of the first series alone. This may have been the fulfilment of the charge, viii. 16, 17, that Isaiah should commit his visions, in a written and collective form, to the faithful, during that interval of unbelief, which was to close in Hezekiah's reformation, and Sennacherib's overthrow. Its words, on this view, receive their fullest emphasis, as a picture of present rebellion and political trouble; while the chapter serves to unite more closely the two subdivisions of the series, revealed to the prophet at nearly twenty years' interval, at the close of the reign of Uzziah, and under the first years of Ahaz. At the same time the words of threatening, in the opening verses, correspond plainly to the promise which alludes to them and reverses them, near the close of the whole book, ch. lxii. 4. Thus all the successive visions of the prophet are linked together, like the loops of the tabernacle, by marks of internal unity and progress, which reveal themselves more and more clearly to thoughtful eyes, in proportion to the minuteness with which the comparison is made.

From all these remarks it appears how little weight is due to the assertion some critics have made, that 'the parts of the book are not arranged in chronological succession,' that 'they proceed from prophets of different times, and do not show the hand of one editor,' that 'no principle has guided the arrangement, and no definite, well-ordered plan can possibly be discovered.' Those whose first principle is unbelief in all genuine prophecy, or in anything higher than clever human guess-work, cannot be expected to discover for themselves, and perhaps hardly even to see, when pointed out by others, the real harmony and beautiful order in the messages of God. But, in reality, the Books of Euclid have scarcely clearer marks of unity and successive dependence than will be found, on patient search, in the prophecies revealed to this Divine messenger, when his lips had first been touched with fire from heaven.

## § I. CHAP. I. THE PREFATORY VISION.

1 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.

2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. 3 The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know; my people

v. 1. The first verse is plainly a common title of the whole book. It implies that its earliest prophecies were under Uzziah, and the latest under Hezekiah. It is probable (Intr. p. 15) that Isaiah made a first collection of his messages about the third year of Ahaz, when this chapter was prefixed, with its severe rebuke of the national blindness and guilt. The title would then be simply "The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz," or else include the names of three kings only. When the larger collection was made, forty years later, the title would naturally be enlarged to its present form. It now includes both the Earlier and the Later Prophecies.

This Title implies the Divine authority of the whole book. It answers to the promise Numb. xii. 6, "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known to him in a vision." It implies, further, the Unity of the whole work. These are no fragments, thrown fortuitously together. They form a Gospel of the Old Testament, midway in time between Moses and Christ, between the first Passover of the Exodus, and the finished and all-perfect Sacrifice of the Son of God.

This vision, like all Scripture, contains "doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness." First, it teaches the people their true state in the sight of God, vv. 2—9. Next, it re-proves their grievous sins, and their formal worship, vv. 10—15. It ministers correction, by a call to repentance and newness of life, vv. 16—20. Then, after a special exposure of the guilt of Jerusalem and its rulers, vv. 21—23, it instructs them in God's righteous purpose, to purge out transgression by judgment, and give full redemption to a faithful remnant, vv. 24—31.

vv. 2, 3. The message of the prophet begins with an echo to the sublime appeal in the song of Moses, the parting voice of the Law—"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth," Deut. xxxii. 1. The subject of each appeal is the same. Moses predicts the perverseness and rebellion of Israel. Isaiah, the foremost of the prophets, opens his message by proclaiming that the warning, given seven hundred years before by Moses, is now fulfilled. The same witnesses, summoned before to give solemnity to the warning, must now attest its fulfilment. All angels above, and all

doth not consider. 4 Ah! sinful nation! a people laden with iniquity! a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord; they have despised the Holy One of Israel; they are gone away backward.

5 Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. 6 From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; *but* wounds, and bruises, and open sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither

men below, and all the visible works of God, are to give ear with reverence, while Jehovah, the Lord of heaven and earth, pleads with His rebellious people. When the Creator speaks, all creatures are bound to give ear.

"The Lord hath spoken." Even before His words reach His people on earth, they are settled for ever and ratified in heaven.

The controversy proceeds in the audience of the whole universe. (The word *they*, v. 2 *d* is emphatic.) The most favoured and beloved have been the most perverse. The chosen people have become brutish, and debased themselves below the beasts of the field. Mere animal instinct is a safer guide than reason, perverted by pride and sensual vice. Contempt for God renders men more senseless than brutes themselves.

v. 4. The Son of God, at Nazareth, "marvelled because of their unbelief," Mark vi. 6. The Holy Spirit begins His review of Israel's guilt with like tones of wonder and shame. They were not sinful only, but deeply 'laden with guilt,' not in act alone, but in nature and heart, by general consent as 'a people,' and by inheritance from their fathers, 'a seed of evil-doers.' They were not only sinful, but sources of infection to others. Their sin was not only against men, but against God, and with every aggravation. They had forsaken Him by habitual disobedience, added contempt and insult to transgression, and deliberately renounced His service for vain idols. "Niatzu," *despised*, denotes one form of their sin, and not its result in God's anger.

vv. 5, 6. The Great Physician, in a case so desperate, considers what course He must pursue. Chastisements, though severe, seem to have failed, and what

remedy remains? The Divine medicines appear only to aggravate the disease. It is no spot on the surface, but a deep-seated infection, poisoning the springs of life. Their afflictions have been followed by deeper sin. "In the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord—this king Ahaz," 2 Chr. xxviii. 22. As it was with their king, so with the people. The furnace, in which wax and silver are melted or refined, only hardens clay.

[v. 5. Several translate (Jerome, Lowth, Gesenius, Rosenmüller, Knobel, Alexander, &c.) "On what part shall ye be smitten?" But this is disproved by the next clause, which Knobel calls "loosely strung on," when it is the key-note of the whole passage. Others (Drechsler, Henderson) make it a double question. "Why will ye be further smitten? why will ye increase revolt?" But the authorized version, preferred by Calvin, Vitringa, and others, is far more emphatic. When God's afflictions only harden, the case of the sinner seems almost hopeless. The mention of revolt, and the nature of the metaphors, indicate a reference to moral and social corruption, and not, as Calvin and Henderson, &c., to outward calamities only.]

v. 6. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." This inward corruption, intellectual and moral disease, sickness of head, and faintness of heart, revealed itself on the surface in social disorder and confusion. All classes, high and low, shared in the calamity. The body politic was full of sores and 'wounds' from open wrong-doing; of 'bruises,' in the discontent and revengeful passions of those who smarted under oppression; and of 'open sores,' in the open profligacy

mollified with ointment. 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 booth in a vineyard, as a lodge in a field of melons, as a besieged city. 9 Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, *and* become like unto Gomorrah.

10 Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah! 11 What

among princes and people. The word, *open*, or *putrifying*, occurs only in Jud. xv. 15, "a new jawbone," and denotes a fresh or still open sore, where no sign of healing has begun. Worst of all, there were none to apply healing medicines, and stay the foul disease. There were no loving and tender hearts, like the good Samaritan, to soothe the afflicted, and lighten their sorrows; and no witnesses for truth and righteousness, to stay the progress of corruption, and stanch the wounds by which society was bleeding to death.

v. 7. These evils within, the direct fruit of their rebellion, were now joined with sore inflictions from the hand of God. How changed from the times of Solomon, when Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and fig-tree, from Dan to Beersheba! 1 Kings iv. 25. A dark and cloudy day has settled down on the land of promise. Ephraim has smarted under anarchy and violence, and Assyrian invasion. Judah has been scourged by Syria and Ephraim, by Edomites and Philistines. 2 Chr. xxviii. Jerusalem is almost left alone in the midst of a ravaged and desolated land. It is a metropolis without a kingdom, a widowed relict of happier times. Compared with the reigns of David and Solomon, the words are already true—"How doth the city sit solitary, ... that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces!" Lam. i. 1.

v. 9. A faithful remnant still survived. The covenant of God could not fail, and a holy seed was kept alive in the land. But it was small and feeble, and the general corruption rivalled the cities of the plain.

Like Sodom and Gomorrah in sin and guilt, they would, except for these righteous ones in their midst, have been made like them also in sudden and entire destruction. [v. 8. *Succah* is a booth, or hut, for watchers to protect the grapes from thieves or foxes. The second word, *mishakh*, denotes a place or field for Egyptian melons, Num. xi. 5, a fruit highly prized. The last phrase has been rendered, a watch-tower (Hitzig), a captured city (Lowth), or "so is the besieged city" (Ges., Maur.), or the comparison is explained by making the daughter of Zion the people, as distinct from the city (Alexander). But the true sense seems very clear (Ewald). Zion was not actually besieged; but her isolation, solitude, and distress, through the public calamities, were just the same as if a siege had begun.]

vv. 10—14. The Spirit of God now reproves them sternly as a heathenized and apostate race. "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly." Jerusalem had sunk into a spiritual Sodom, Rev. xi. 8. He, who once called Israel His first-born son, now puts them on a level with the guiltiest of the heathen. The law of God, which ordained sacrifices and solemn fasts, only condemned their heartless and hollow services. Their presence in the temple profaned it. In treading its courts they trod them down, being really heathens in God's sight. Crimes were only made worse by their union with religious hypocrisy, and God's holy places were profaned by the presence of thieves and murderers. Such services and prayers, however multiplied, only increased God's holy displeasure and aversion. Far from turning

avail with me the multitude of your sacrifices, saith the LORD? I am sated with burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, and of lambs, and of he-goats. 12 When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands, to tread down 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 endure, iniquity and solemn meeting. 14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a burden unto me, I am wearied with bearing *them*. 15 And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, because ye multiply prayers, I will not hearken: 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, learn to do well: seek judgment, redress violence; judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

aside His anger, they increased it. Every fresh act of worship, from hearts steeped in sin, and hands that were defiled by blood, only filled up the cup of their guilt, and was really a fresh insult against the majesty of heaven.

[The inquiry, v. 11, is not what could be the intention of their offerings, but what would they avail with a holy God. The words, "I have no delight," have a fuller emphasis, as in the Hebrew, at the close. The meaning of the reproof is that, in treading God's courts, they profaned them, or trod them down, like the Gentiles in St John's temple vision. Again, it is not that the solemn meeting was sinful in itself, but that this union of iniquity with a solemn service was doubly hateful in the eyes of a holy God. Their multiplied prayers were not only the occasion, but even the cause, why God refused to hearken, because they were acts of mockery and profaneness.]

v. 15. "Because ye multiply." More exact and emphatic. Their prayers, being hollow mockeries, were even one main cause of God's holy anger.

vv. 16—20. The reproof of their sin (2 Tim. iii. 16) is followed by "correction," or God's earnest call to repentance and public reformation. Guilt must be washed away by pardon, and their souls cleansed by a thorough change of heart

and life, deep and entire, as under the holy eyes of God. No outward amendment is enough. It is the voice of the Son of God, whose "eyes are as a flame of fire;" and "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Rev. ii. 18, Heb. iv. 13.

Six short precepts unfold the nature of this repentance. "Abstain at once from all acts of oppression, and open injustice. Strive, with persevering effort, to attain habits of truth, justice, and kindness to your fellowmen. Be upright yourselves, and set your faces against the wrong-doing of others. Be upright as judges, zealous as advocates, in maintaining the cause of the helpless, whom the proud and selfish would trample in the dust."

v. 18. Whenever the stern rebuke of God has brought his guilt home to the conscience of the sinner, it is needful to guard him against the dark whispers of despair. The sullen excuse will easily rise to the lips, or be secretly cherished in the heart—"If our iniquities be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?" Ez. xxxiii. 10. The Spirit of God, by the prophet, now sets aside this last and most dangerous excuse for transgression. The way of life was still open. The mercy of God was still ready to welcome each returning prodigal. However deep their guilt, only obstinate per-

18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they were red as 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, for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

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 partners with thieves; every one loveth gifts, and followeth after bribes: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come before them. 24 Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, Ah! I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies: 25 And I will turn my hand upon thee, and will purely purge away thy dross, and take

severance in sin could make their condition hopeless. No past sins could close the door of mercy against them, but only their present refusal to return to God.

vv. 21—23. The prophet dwells a moment on the special guilt of Jerusalem and its rulers, before he utters God's sentence of judgment. The city, once faithful, had now, like a harlot, forsaken the covenant of her God. In the times of David and Solomon it was full of judgment, and justice was wisely executed. But now the heads of Jacob and princes of Israel "built up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity," Mic. iii. 9, 10. All that once was precious was debased, what was strong and pure had become corrupt, fraudulent, and feeble. Those who should be fountains of justice were fountains of iniquity, the patrons of fraud and crime. Princes may become "partners with thieves," not only by direct companionship, but by practising robbery themselves under other forms.

vv. 24—31. After doctrine, reproof, and correction, the righteous purpose of God is now proclaimed. He was about to purge away these transgressors and their sins by still heavier judgments. "That breadth" says Lord Bacon "is proper and usual in Divine prophecies, that their fulfilments take place continuously, and also at fixed times (*conti-*

*nenter et punctualiter*). For they reflect the nature of their Author, to whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. And although the fulness and topstone of their completion is commonly assigned to some certain age, or certain moment of time, yet they have meanwhile some steps and degrees of fulfilment, through different ages of the world." The present passage, in like manner, belongs to the whole course of Jewish history, until the restoration of the broken olive branches to the stem of God's covenant in days to come. Yet three gradual fulfilments are past, in the Assyrian desolations, the Captivity of Babylon and the Return, and in the Apostolic age. A fourth will complete and crown both the warning and the promise, when the branches are grafted for ever into their own olive tree. Rom. xi. 15, 23.

The three-fold title of God implies the solemn earnestness of the message. He who speaks is the Governor of the world, unchangeable in His counsels, whose word cannot fail, mighty to subdue and destroy the proudest rebels. Since His lighter strokes have led to no repentance, His coming judgments shall be more severe; and only genuine faith and holiness will endure the visitation. But the effect shall be blessed and glorious. The harlot city

away all thy tin. 26 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. 28 And the destruction of the apostates and the sinners shall be together; and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed. 29 For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen. 30 For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water. 31 And the strong shall be as tow, and their work *shall be* as a spark; and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench *them*.

shall be betrothed once more to the Heavenly Bridegroom with "loving-kindness and mercies," Hos. ii. 19. This home of murderers shall deserve the benediction, "The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness," Jer. xxxi. 13. When the dead branches have been taken away from God's olive tree, the living ones pruned by sore affliction, and retribution has lighted on the oppressors, then Zion will be 'redeemed by judgment,' and those who turn to Him with the heart will be comforted by His mighty and righteous acts of mercy to His suffering people.

vv. 28—30. These blessings, in store for contrite mourners in Zion, are joined with a solemn curse on the stubborn and unbelieving. Sinners high and low, rich and poor, the idolatrous, the covetous, and the profane shall all meet in one common ruin. Idolatry and luxurious ease are singled out for special condemnation. We are told that Ahaz "sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places and on the hills, and under every green tree,"

2 Kin. xvi. 4. The reproof, by a sudden change, is applied to these idolaters themselves, "They who have forsaken the Lord, and you who have thus forsaken him, shall be ashamed, &c." The chosen scenes of their forbidden worship should become a parable of the doom of the worshippers. They should be like trees which not only have lost their verdure, but whose dry stems are fuel to the fire. The haughty and luxurious idolaters, strong as the oak or terebinth, shall be like tow; and the idols, the work of which they boasted, like a spark. Their sin should be their curse, and light up the flame that consumes them. Vain are all the strength and beauty of man, when once the door is shut, and the great Master rises to His work of judgment.

v. 31. "Their work shall be as a spark." It is the idol itself, and not its maker, which is compared to a spark, kindling a fire to consume its own worshippers.

## § 2. THE PROPHET'S FIRST MESSAGE.

### CHAP. II.—IV.

THESE three chapters appear to be the earliest message of Isaiah to the people in the exercise of his prophetic mission, and thus belong to the year of Uzziah's death. The first verse is their common title. The message has five parts: (1) the Vision of Zion's Future Glory, ii. 1—5; (2) The Sin and Judgment of Judah, ii. 6—22; (3) Their Political Downfall, iii. 1—15; (4) The Sentence on Zion's daughters, iii. 16—iv. 1; and lastly, (5) The Promise of coming Deliverance, iv. 2—6.

The same opening words occur also in Micah iv. 1—4, with very slight variations. Hence three views have been held, (1) that Isaiah borrowed them from Micah (Michaelis, Gesenius, Hendewerk, Hengstenberg, Hoffman, Drechsler); (2) that Micah borrowed them from Isaiah (Vitringa, Calmet, Lowth, Beckhaus, Umbreit); or (3) that both derived it from some older prophet (Koppe, Rosenmüller, Maurer, De Wette, Knobel). Vogel, Hitzig, and Ewald add the conjecture that the prophet was Joel.

This last opinion seems wholly fanciful and groundless. The presence of the words in two prophets who lived at the same time is a strange reason for assigning them to a third and earlier one, without one grain of direct evidence. But there is a decisive reason for the second view, which ascribes the first publication to Isaiah. The warning in Micah iii. 9—12, which introduces this promise in his book, was given, as we are told, Jer. xxvi. 18, in the reign of Hezekiah. But these chapters of Isaiah, as they come first, are naturally referred to the end of Uzziah's reign, and by comparing chh. v. 25—30, ix. 8—17, must at least have been as early as the second year of Ahaz. Hence Isaiah, not Micah, must have been the first to receive this message, which is indeed the groundwork of all his later visions.

The one reason for assigning the first authorship to Micah, against the chronology, is the closeness of the connexion between Mic. iii. 9—12 and iv. 1—4. But this may be easily explained on the other view. His short book is ascribed to three reigns, and still the passage iii. 9—12 is fixed to the reign of Hezekiah. The book, then, is probably a selection from his oral messages in three reigns, given in a final recension or arrangement. This foremost of Isaiah's prophecies, who was a prophet still more honoured and widely known, might purposely be made the pivot and centre of the later prediction, on which is made to depend the change from stern reproof to promise and encouragement. The slight verbal differences are quite consistent with either view.



The prediction has often been supposed to refer to the first days of the Gospel. There can be no doubt that a signal earnest of the blessing was then given. The two main features, however, are the flowing of whole nations to Zion as the great centre of religious light, and the entire cessation of mutual warfare. But our Lord Himself has given this description of the times of the Gospel, that "nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom," and that "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled," Matt. xxiv. 7, Luke xxi. 24. Thus the past state of things is a direct contrast to the prophecy, not its fulfilment. St Paul defines both in the words, "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what will the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" Rom. xi. 15.

The words of the first subsection, ii. 1—5, may be viewed as the main text, which is expounded and varied in all the later visions. Its substance is repeated in the close of each series of the earlier prophecies, xii., xxvii., xxxv., and marks a pause and recommencement in the order of the visions. Again, it meets us, varied and enlarged, in the opening of the three series of the later prophecies, xl. 1—5, xlix. 14—26, lxi., and once more at the close of the whole book. Israel's long trials and final deliverance are the main historical subject of the whole message, answering to that which forms its internal character, as a witness of the "sufferings of Christ, and the glories that shall follow."

The three subsections that follow describe the approaching judgment through the Assyrian, but so as to include a later stage of decay, from Hezekiah to Zedekiah, when the captivity and desolation were complete. The first of them announces the punishment of their degrading idol-worship by sore and humbling judgments from the hand of God. The season for this visitation was fixed in the Divine decrees, and was near at hand. No part of the nation, high or low, would escape from the calamity, in which the power and greatness of God would be signally revealed. The next section describes the downward progress of political decay, as fulfilled, first in the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz, and then of Manasseh, Amon, and the sons of Josiah. There follows a separate warning on the proud, thoughtless, and luxurious daughters of Zion.

The last subsection is the first prediction of Messiah in the book, under the expressive title, the Branch of the Lord. There seems here to be also a typical reference to Joshua, the son of Jozedec, whom Zechariah, in the days of the Return, was taught to set before the people as the type of a more glorious King and Priest who was still to come.

CH. 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: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 And he will judge among the nations, and will rebuke many people:

§ I. CHAP. II. 1-6. THE VISION OF ZION'S GLORY.

v. 1. The title belongs to the three chapters that follow. The prophet speaks of himself in the first person, ch. vi. 1, and his name recurs in the history that follows, vii. 3; viii. 1-4. A similar title opens the second series of Burdens on the nations; while the Historical Episode, ch. xxxvi.—xxxix., supplies the place of a title to the rest of the Later Visions. Judah and Jerusalem are the direct object of this first message, and directly or indirectly of all the rest. However wide the prophetic landscape, its centre is always the chosen land and people of God.

v. 2. "The last days," literally, the after-time of the days, may denote any future time not close at hand, but more usually the times of Messiah, the great subject of sacred prophecy. In a more limited sense, it often denotes the latter times of the Gospel, or the kingdom of the mountain and of the Son of Man in Daniel, answering to the times of the Seventh Trumpet, and the latest visions in the Apocalypse. Such is the meaning here, for the reason just assigned. The mountain of the Lord's house is no abstract emblem for the Church (Vitringa, Alexander, &c.), but Jerusalem and its temple site. This is plain from the contrast, Mic. iii. 9, iv. 4, between the warning and the promise. Zion, long trodden down by the Gentiles for her sins, is to become once more a public centre of heavenly light and holy worship.

Some think the vision represents other

mountains as transported to the precincts of Zion, which seemed to rest upon and rise above them. But the word, *rash*, is often used for the chief or foremost in any sense, as in vii. 8, 9. The words will thus mean, more simply, that Zion will be firmly established as foremost in honour among the mountain eminences of earth, and be exalted in fame above all other hills.

v. 3. This return of God's favour to Zion, after long desolation, will be life from the dead to the nations of the earth, Rom. xi. 15. The great redemption, which began with the rejection of Messiah by Israel, and Israel by Messiah, will be completed in their recovery. Not a few scattered converts alone, but "all nations" shall flow to one common centre of holy truth. Their desire to learn the ways of God shall be satisfied. War and bloodshed shall be no more. The Prince of Peace will enforce his great law of love with such Divine authority, so stern will be his rebuke, by solemn judgments, of human selfishness and ambition, that a new era of peace will dawn upon the earth, and all study of the arts of war be laid aside. The words form a contrast to Joel iii. 9, 10, of which the fulfilment must have first come. Filled with this glorious hope, the prophet invites his countrymen to walk in its light, and to mould their hearts and lives by the vision of these good things to come.

v. 4, and ii. 18, iii. 5. Where Divine acts are named, or human choice of good or evil is prominent, the use of *shall* for *will* obscures the real thought.

and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. 5 O house of Jacob! come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

6 FOR thou hast forsaken thy people, the house of Jacob; because they are replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and exult in the children of strangers. 7 Their land also is full of silver and gold, and *there is* no end of their treasures: their land also is full of horses, and *there is* no end of their chariots. 8 Their land also is full of idols: they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made: 9 And the mean man boweth down, and the great man stoopeth low: therefore forgive them not!

10 Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, from the terror of the Lord, and from the glory of his majesty. 11 The

§ 2. CHAP. II. 6—22. THE SIN AND JUDGMENT OF THE HOUSE OF JACOB.

v. 6. *For*, more exact than *therefore*. The future troubles were one motive for dwelling in the light of God's promise.

vv. 6—9. From the people the prophet turns to God, with a sudden cry of sorrow. Their actual condition stands in mournful contrast with the brightness of the promise. There was the greater need to urge the faithful to dwell on the future hope, because of the present evils. Instead of walking in the light of the Lord, the people were going astray blindly in the ways of the heathen. The cloud now hanging over them was the exact reverse of the more distant promise. They were replenished, like a market stocked to overflowing, with diviners and vain superstitions. They had borrowed forbidden rites from their neighbours, from Chaldea on the east, and Philistia on the west, and forgotten their calling as the chosen people. Instead of all nations flowing to Zion, to learn the ways of God, the house of Jacob had forsaken His law for heathen marriages and Chaldean sorceries. They wasted their admiration on the children of strangers, in whom there was no trace of real holiness, aliens from the covenant of their God. Their riches had increased greatly under Uzziah's prosperous reign, and now their pride gave warning that judgment was near. Even

Uzziah, though a pious king, had yielded to the temptation. "His heart was lifted up to his destruction," when he entered the temple to burn incense, and was smitten with sudden leprosy. The like sin of pride now reigned and triumphed among the people; and, with their heathen alliances, hurried them into open idolatry. The spirit of the prophet is stirred within him, like St Paul's at Athens, and his mention of their sin turns abruptly into a prayer for righteous judgment—"therefore forgive them not."

v. 10. From their present state the scene changes to a future near at hand; from a careless, idolatrous nation, exulting in its wealth, to the same people, trembling and dismayed beneath the manifested anger and judgment of God. The words apply directly to the Syrian and Assyrian invasions; but more remotely to the Chaldean scourge, to the Roman "days of vengeance," Luke xxi. 22, to the sixth seal of the Apocalypse, and judgments on idolatry in the last days. The judgment will answer to the sin. The shameful prostration of those who stoop low to idols of silver and gold will be replaced by real and deep abasement under the hand of God. Proud and stubborn towards the Lord, they were abject before their senseless idols. Soon all would be reversed; God exalted, the haughtiness of these idolators abased, their pride and luxury punished, their idols swept away.

lofty looks of man shall be made low, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down; and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. 12 For *there shall be* a day from the LORD of hosts upon all that is proud and lofty, and upon all that is lifted up, and it shall be brought low; 13 And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan; 14 And upon all the lofty mountains, and upon all the stately hills; 15 And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall; 16 And upon all ships of Tarshish, and upon all merchandize of beauty. 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

A fixed time was already appointed, by the Lord of hosts himself, for the execution of this great work of judgment.

v. 12. "A day." The day of the Lord of hosts is an incorrect version. The real force of the phrase is, that a fixed time is appointed by God for this great work of humiliation and judgment.

[vv. 12—17. The general scope of these verses is plain, but opinions have been much divided as to their exact meaning. Many take them literally throughout, others figuratively, the cedars, oaks, and mountains denoting the great and noble of the land, or cities and kingdoms. Others hold that, by synecdoche, certain high and stately things are chosen specimens of a wide-reaching judgment. Some apply it to the Assyrian invasion, others to the Babylonian, and others, as Alexander and Drechsler, to the whole series of Divine judgment in later times. But the mention of an appointed day proves that a special season is meant, and not the whole course of providence for 2,500 years. Next, ch. iii. 1, and the whole context, prove that the direct, immediate reference is to those Assyrian troubles which began under Ahaz, and reached their height in Sennacherib's overthrow. Still the words, iii. 25, 26, prove a further reference to the later time of the Babylonian captivity.]

Again, the main idea is man's abasement. But the cutting down of literal oaks and cedars, the works of God, could have a very slight bearing on this main object. The view of Knobel, who refers

it to oak and cedar buildings or palaces, is not even literal, and is most prosaic. This First Series, ch. i.—xii., closes with a mention of the Assyrian overthrow under this very image, the cutting down of the cedars of Lebanon, x. 33, 34. Hence vv. 13, 14, where natural objects are named, must be figuratively taken. The cedars of Lebanon, and the oaks of Bashan, will denote the great, mighty, and noble, first of Judah and Israel; and next of the Assyrians, their proud oppressors, soon to be abased and cut down in their turn, when God's work was done. The mountains and hills will describe all that is politically firm, conspicuous, and noble, the high places of worldly power. Where artificial objects are named, vv. 15, 16, the figures are mixed, a part representing the whole. Whatever is strong, stately, and beautiful in the works of men, the high tower, the fenced wall, the ships of Tarshish, the pleasant merchandise, or the choicest products of human art, will share in the judgment. For this is not aimed against the works of God, which reveal His glory; but against the pride, the haughtiness, the luxury, and the vain confidences of men.]

v. 16. "Merchandize of beauty," R. V. "pleasant pictures." *Sekiyoth hachemdah* is explained variously, of statues (Michael Rosenm.), lofty images or obelisks (Ewald), palaces (Targ.), tapestry, or every lovely work of art (Lowth), or "works of curiosity" (Delitzsch). It seems to include all beautiful works of art, viewed in connection with ships, as being the imports of a luxurious commerce.

day. 18 And the idols he will utterly abolish. 19 And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, from the terror of the LORD, and from 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 have made *each* 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, from the terror of the Lord, and from 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?

CHAP. III. I. 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, 2 The mighty man and the man of war, the judge and the prophet, and the diviner and the ancient, 3 The captain of fifty

v. 18—22. The idolatries of the people, no less than their luxurious pride, shall meet with signal judgment. The rejection of the idols, the shame of their worshippers, shall be complete. The vain pomp of the world will be rebuked by the terrors of the Lord, and an awful glimpse of His glorious majesty. "They shall seek to escape, as unarmed peasants or women fly into the nearest cave or hole, when they hear the hoof of some plundering tribe from the desert. And as such fugitives carry in their hands their most precious goods, but are glad, in their extremity, to abandon them to the moles and bats of the caves, that they may use their hands to clamber into the safest recesses; so the idolatrous nation will be obliged to abandon its false gods" (Strachey, *Heb. Pol.* p. 40). One great lesson runs through the whole passage. How weak is the strength of man, how worthless his grandeur, in the presence of the Almighty! How do the shadows of the world fade away, when the unseen King of Glory once reveals His presence to the children of men! The prophet recalls the people, v. 22, from vain confidence in their own prosperity, their statesmen and warriors, by the prospect of a visitation so intensely solemn. What is man, the child of the dust, whose breath is in his nostrils, in the presence of

the great and infinite God! [The transfer of v. 22 to the next chapter robs the passage of half its force. For this verse plainly condenses the whole message of judgment into one great practical lesson, the fitting close of the whole. It is wanting in the LXX. but present in the Targum, the Syriac, Jerome, and Aquila. as well as in all Hebrew MSS. The application of it to Christ by some of the Fathers almost inverts the true sense. The rendering "in whose nostrils is a breath" (Henderson) loses the real emphasis, which lies in the secret reference to man's creation from the dust, Gen. ii. 7, and the feeble tenure on which his mortal life ever depends.]

### § 3. CHAP. III. 1—15. THE POLITICAL DOWNFALL OF JUDAH.

From the grand moral features of the judgment the prophet turns to describe those great evils in the state, which would prepare its way. The bulwarks of the kingdom would be withdrawn, and the whole fabric sink into ruin. The direct reference is to the disastrous reign of Ahaz, who came early to the throne, and died in his prime; and still later, to the first years of Manasseh, when Jerusalem was filled with blood, and to the reigns of Amon, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah, all alike young, foolish,

and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the skilful artificer, and the persuasive orator. 4 And I will give children *to be* their princes, and foolish ones shall rule over them. 5 And the people shall be oppressed, man by man, and neighbour by neighbour; the child will behave himself insolently against the ancient, and the base against the honourable. 6 For a man shall take hold of his brother, of the house of his father, *saying*, Thou hast a robe, thou shalt be our ruler, and this ruin shall be under thy hand. 7 He will lift up *his voice* in that day, saying, I will not be a healer; also in my house is neither bread nor clothing: thou shalt not make me a ruler of the people.

and wicked, under whom the state hurried downhill to its ruin. Ungodliness bred anarchy. Democratic licence then scorned the bonds of God's national covenant, and brought on the people a swift destruction.

In the year that Uzziah died, vi. 1, when Isaiah received his first messages, this judgment was near at hand. The first drops of the shower were under Jotham, 2 Ki. xv. 37, but his personal piety delayed it for a few years. But under Ahaz the full tide of trouble set in. The message resumes with a direct announcement of the coming decay and ruin. There is a slight pause after, and not before, the preceding verse. A vision of the power and glory of God has brought the weakness and littleness of man into full relief. This is now further shown, in detail, by a reference to the various classes which would share in the judgment. What was always true to the eye of faith would soon be proved true in the actual experience of the people.

v. 1. "The stay and the staff" denote here every main bulwark, and every secondary support of the kingdom. Not luxuries alone, but even the necessities of life would be removed. Along with these, all the pillars and ornaments of the state. Besides their mighty men and warriors, judges and prophets, the honourable men, of noble and commanding aspect, the counsellor, noted for prudence in affairs, the skilful artificer, like Bezaleel, Aholiab, and Hiram, and the "persuasive orator," able with gentle words to soothe the passions of an excited people, would be taken away. With young rulers, of child-

ish understanding, all respect for authority would die out from the land.

[Some render *nēbôn lachash* v. 3, 'expert enchanter' (Henderson, Alexander, &c.). But this departs from the scope of the passage, since the loss of false deceivers would be a gain. But the word refers, not to loud oratory, but soft, persuasive speech. The word *tha'alulim* v. 4, 'follies' or 'childishness,' is put contemptuously, for frivolous childish persons.]

v. 4. Ahaz came to the throne at twenty, Manasseh at twelve, and the reigns of Amon, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, Zedekiah, ended at the ages of 24, 23, 36, 18 and 32 years. The want of all wisdom in the rulers would cause a rank growth of lawlessness and oppression. The first commandment with promise being thus despised, a curse must follow. Young children disobedient to parents, arrogant and rude to their elders, are one of the plainest portents of national ruin near at hand.

v. 6. Amidst this rapid decay offices of trust would no longer be coveted, but prove an unwelcome burden. Men of character or substance would shrink, with selfish cowardice, from taking any part in public affairs. The honour of headship in the subfamilies of Judah, eagerly offered, will be as eagerly declined. ["Of the house of his father," that is, of the same subfamily, not an own brother, but one in a more general sense. "Thou hast a robe," a spare garment, costly, and suitable for the robe of office. Comp. Prov. xxxi. 22, 23. "He will lift up," not his hand, in an oath, but his voice, with a loud and eager refusal. First, he

8 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. 9 The show 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. 10 Say ye to the righteous, that *it shall be well with him* : for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. 11 Woe unto the wicked ! *it shall be ill with him* ; for the reward of his hands shall be given him. 12 My people ! children *are* their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people ! they which call thee blessed cause *thee* to err, and destroy the way of thy paths. 13 The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people. 14 The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and their princes : ye, even ye, have eaten up the vineyard ; the spoil of the poor man *is* in your houses. 15 What mean ye, that ye crush my people, and grind the faces of the poor ? saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

gives his prompt resolution, then adds his reasons, and closes with a protest, as against a serious wrong.

[The particle *v.* 6, has had six or seven renderings. But the conditional "Should one take hold, &c." (Henderson) is weaker than the received version, "when," which is that of Vitringa, Hitzig, Ewald, and Drechsler. "For," the usual meaning, seems better still. The progress downward, in three stages, is noted by the same word *vv.* 1—5 ; 6, 7, 8, 9, in its width, its extent, and its moral ground, patent even to the senses. The refusal is that of an offer to be one of the heads of thousands, or one of the lesser chiefs and princes of Judah.]

*vv.* 8—11. A fall so deep and shameful cannot be due to second causes alone. The sins of the people, like those of Sodom, are bringing down the fierce anger of God, and to the prophet's eye their ruin seems as if already come. Pride and lust are written on their very faces, and cannot be concealed. Nay, so shameless are they grown, they do not even try to conceal them. Effrontery doubles their guilt, and makes judgment inevitable. When vice grows bold and shameless, woe to the guilty land.

*v.* 10. But even in sorest judgment, God will remember mercy. As Lot was rescued even from Sodom, a blessing shall be given to the faithful, side by side with the heavy curse on these stubborn sinners. The Holy Spirit invites all wise and thoughtful observers to echo and proclaim this blessing on the righteous. The woe upon the wicked, a more solemn message, He reserves for his own lips alone.

*vv.* 12—15. In the dearth of wise rulers, the upstarts who replace them will be cruel oppressors, or else selfish flatterers of the people. But God will require from them a strict account for their deeds of violence. The leaders of the state, childish in counsel, feeble and effeminate in war, will only seek to enrich themselves by tributes levied on those beneath them. The priests and the prophets, by adding vain superstitions to the law and worship of God, will delude the people, till they wander on the dark mountains of unbelief. But their sin shall soon be punished. Jehovah will be the Mighty Advocate of the afflicted against their oppressors and deceivers. How stern is the rebuke, *v.* 15, "You trample down my people by contempt and oppression.

16 AND THE LORD said, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched out necks, and wanton eyes, walking and tripping delicately as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet; 17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their nakedness. 18 In that day the Lord will take away the finery of their tinkling ankle-bands, and the caps of lace, and the crescents; 19 The eardrops, and the bracelets, and the veils for the face; 20 The head dresses, and the ankle chains, and the girdles, and the scent-bottles, and the amulets; 21 The rings, and the nose jewels, 22 The state-dresses, and the mantles, and the shawls, and the reticules; 23 The mirrors, and the tunics, and the turbans, and the long-flowing veils. 24 And it shall come to pass, instead of choice perfumes there shall be a stench; and instead of a girdle, rags; and instead of richly plaited hair, baldness; and instead of a flowing robe, girding with sackcloth; *and* burning instead of beauty. 25 Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy strength in the war. 26 And her gates shall lament and mourn, and she will sit desolate on the ground.

You grind their faces, when you deprive them even of the necessities of life, to secure some pitiful increase of your own superfluities, and try to make dishonest gain from the very flesh and blood of your fellowmen."

§ 4. Chap. III. 16—IV. 1. THE SENTENCE ON THE DAUGHTERS OF ZION.

The women of Judah next receive a message of severe rebuke. Their luxury, pride, and wantonness, would have a large share in hastening the national ruin. Their costly apparel, their tripping, affected gait, and wanton glances, should soon be followed by most disgraceful exposure.

It is hard to decide certainly on the exact sense of some terms in this catalogue of their luxuries. But this only adds to the force of the lesson. The inventions and devices of fashion, whether in modern Paris or ancient Jerusalem, however trivial or transitory, are all noted in God's book of remembrance, and have moral results, for good or evil, that en-

sure for ever. In the history of Abraham, the thread and shoe-latchet stand close beside that glorious title, "the Most High God, the Possessor of heaven and earth." Nothing is trivial, by which God may be glorified, or by which His name is blasphemed, and souls endangered and ruined. A sad and humbling change would soon come over this scene of wanton pride and costly extravagance.

v. 25. The prophet now "turns abruptly from the daughters to the Daughter of Zion, gathering them together in their representative, the licentious and rebellious nation, the faithless Bride of the Holy One of Israel" (Strachey, *Hebr. Pol.*). All the previous warnings are combined in one picture of desolation. By the depth of the calamity, the strength of manhood would be wasted, and the deepest instincts of womanhood reversed. "Thy strength" denotes here the strongest warriors. The military prowess of the land would be wasted and destroyed.

Ch. iv. 1. This last stroke completes the picture of desolation. The fire will have consumed the youth of the land,



Chap. IV. 1 And seven women will seize hold of one man in that day, 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.

#### CHAP. IV. 2—6. THE PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE.

IN that day the Branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious; and the fruit of the earth *shall be* excellent and

and the maidens will no more be sought in marriage. The promises and threatenings of the Law, Deut. vii. xxviii. &c. would add a tenfold force to this part of the warning. The Hebrew order, when restored, brings out into clearer light the connexion of this verse with those before it, the pause being at its close. It is not parted off from them, but joined with them, by the words "in that day" and completes the picture of desolation. The verse, though a severe threatening, forms a transition to the promise that follows, in which One Man is revealed as the Stay and Hope of all His suffering people, in a higher union than of earthly marriage.

Chap. iv. 2—6. The opening message now unfolds itself in the first of many visions of hope and promise. A Person is announced, the Branch of the Lord, who will be the honour and glory of a restored remnant. Holiness, peace, security, and honour are then to follow. In the perspective of prophecy the type is often projected on the antitype, till some later prophecy, or the course of events, opens out the valley between them. Here the prophet Zechariah seems to give a key to the interpretation. After the Return, crowns were ordered to be placed on the head of Joshua the high priest, with this message,—“Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, Behold, the man whose name is the Branch (*tsemach*)...he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory,” Zech. vi. 12, 13. In this vision Joshua was “a man of sign,” iii. 8. He represented One greater than himself, of whom it had been written, “Behold, I will raise unto David a Righteous Branch; and a King shall reign and

prosper,...and this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness,” Jer. xxiii. 6.

vv. 2—4. “In that day” the time that follows the widowhood and desolation of Zion, the Branch of the Lord shall be ‘for beauty and for glory.’ Especial tokens of God’s favour, in the Return from Babylon, were given to Joshua, “the man whose name was the Branch,” when by God’s command he was clothed with beautiful apparel, and a crown of pure gold was placed on his head. This was an earnest of the nobler fulfilment, when Messiah, the Branch and Day-spring appeared, “a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel.”

Again, it was one part of the judgment that the whole stay of bread and of water would be removed. In the land, once flowing with milk and honey, the land of vines and fig-trees and pomegranates, even the necessities of life would fail. But this curse would be reversed. When Joshua had received the crowns of gold, the signs of beauty and glory, the message followed,—“The seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heaven shall give their dew, and I will cause the remnant (*she’erith*) of this people to possess all these things,” Zech. viii. 12. So here “the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely to the escaped in Israel,” the remnant in Zion. There was a still higher fulfilment when the true Branch of the Lord appeared. In a nobler sense the earth began to ‘yield its increase,’ when the church was “filled with the fruits of righteousness, by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.” Phil. i. 11.

comely for the escaped of Israel. 3 And it shall come to pass, that the remnant in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, *even* every one that is written unto life in Jerusalem: 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, a cloud and a smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence. 6 And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

v. 3. The name of 'holy ones,' and the writing to life at Jerusalem, had a typical fulfilment in the Return. The list of the names of the restored remnant is twice recorded in God's word, as the second founders of the nation, in whom the covenant was to blossom out once more. But the correspondence in the days of the Apostles is fuller and more complete. Saints or 'holy ones' is the constant title, and true character, of the first Jewish believers.

But these blessings might not come, until the prophet's warnings had first been fulfilled. Sore judgments, like the burning of fire, must purge away the blood-guiltiness and idolatry of the people, and also the pride and luxury of the daughters of Zion, which made them, in spite of all their costly apparel, vile and loathsome in the eyes of a holy God.

vv. 5, 6. These verses allude to the Exodus, when the fiery pillar not only

guided the people, but shielded them from the Egyptian armies, Ex. xiii. 21; xiv. 19. The same allusion meets us in the promise to the Exiles on their return to Zion, "For I, saith the Lord, will be a wall of fire round about her, and a glory in the midst of her." Zech. ii. 5.

The history of the Apostolic church, in the judgments on open persecutors, and in the glorious gifts of the Spirit, fulfilled the words of this promise still more abundantly. A refuge was provided in Pella, when the storm of wrath fell on the guilty nation. But the promise, it is likely, awaits a still more complete fulfilment, when the times of restitution, the kingdom of the mountain, shall begin. The Saviour, the Branch from the stem of Jesse, who has long been "a light of the Gentiles," will then become once more "the glory of his people Israel."

## § 3. CHAP. V. THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD.

In the prophet's first message the charge, "ye have eaten up the vineyard," is brought by the Holy Spirit against the rulers of Judah. He now unfolds this figure, and makes a further appeal thereby to the conscience of the whole people. The opening verse seems purposely left ambiguous, that the parable may be completed, and the answer of the people given, like David's to Nathan, before the real meaning comes fully to light. A comparison with the Gospels removes this ambiguity. The Well-beloved, and the Beloved, are two slightly differing names for the same Person. He is the Owner of the vineyard, v. 1, and it is also "the vineyard of the LORD of hosts," v. 7. He is also the same of whom we read in His own parable:—"Having yet one only Son, his Well-beloved, he sent him last unto them;" and to whom there came that voice in the holy mount, "This is my Beloved Son: hear ye him." These later words of the Gospels are like a Divine key to the prophet's earlier parable.

This same figure of the vineyard is resumed at the close of the second series, the Burdens on the Nations, ch. xxvii. 2—6, where the present threatening is reversed by a gracious promise. In the latest series we have two closely related metaphors, the winepress of judgment, lxiii. 1—6, and the blessing found in the vine-cluster, for which the message is given, "Destroy it not," lxv. 8—10.

The theories which interpose ch. ix. 5—x. 4, between vv. 25, 26 of this chapter (Ewald) or join it with vii. 1—9 and xvii. as one prophecy (Hendewerk) are equally opposed to the internal and to all the external evidence. Such arbitrary dislocations have their only source in an entire failure to discern the unity of each vision, and the true relation of the successive visions to each other, and to the actual course of the history.

CHAP. V. 1 I WILL now sing for my Well-beloved a song of my Beloved touching his vineyard. 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: 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, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

5 AND now, go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: 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, and behold, a cry!

v. 1. The parable is uttered by the prophet, *for* the Well-beloved, in his name, or in his behalf; but it is addressed to the men of Judah themselves. The very fruitful hill is literally "a horn, the son of oil." Its double allusion is to the long mountain range of Palestine, and to its great fertility.

v. 2. The LORD, the Owner of this vineyard, fenced it round, when he assigned the bounds of Israel's inheritance, Num. xxxiv., Deut. ii. iii., and by the terror of His mighty acts, under Moses and Joshua, restrained the heathen from assailing them. He gathered out its stones, when the Canaanites were expelled. He planted it with the choicest vine, when a generation, disciplined to faith and piety, entered and took possession, Ps. lxxx., Jer. ii. He "built a tower in it," when Jerusalem, under David, became the royal city and fortress. He "made a winepress therein," when the temple of Solomon became the fixed public centre of national worship; where the grapes might be crushed, and the owner

receive of the fruits in solemn rites of worship and thanksgiving.

The word "looked" implies mingled expectation and desire, Gen. xlix. 18, Job vi. 19, Ps. xxv. 5, xl. 1, Isai. viii. 17, Jer. xiii. 16. The "wild grapes" (*labruscas*, Jerome) are not nightshade or poison berries, which the metaphor excludes, but grapes of a sour and unwholesome kind. "Their grapes are grapes of gall, the clusters are bitter," Deut. xxxii. 32. The owner looked for grapes, as the Lord, at Nazareth, " marvelled at their unbelief."

v. 5. Since all culture seems wasted on this vineyard, the owner resolves to change his course, and abandon it to sterility. Its fences shall be removed, and the wild boar of the forest, and the beast of the field, be let in to waste and devour. The showers of blessing shall be withdrawn. The meaning of the parable, and the cause of these threatenings, are then explained together. The vineyard is the house of Israel and the men of Judah; and the reason of these

8 WOE unto them that join house to house, *that* lay field to field, till *there be* no place, that ye may be placed alone in the midst of the earth. 9 In mine ears, *said* the Lord of hosts, 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 a 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 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 her desire, 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 is brought down, and the mighty man is humbled; and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled: 16 But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment; and God, the Holy, shall be sanctified in righteousness. 17 Then shall the lambs feed as in their pasture, and the waste places of the fatlings shall strangers eat.

18 WOE unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity;

judgments is the crime and violence that fill their land.

vv. 8—23. Six Woes are now uttered against the guilty nation. Its covetousness shall be punished by poverty and desolation, its shameless riot by captivity and destruction. Those who make vain excuses for sin, scoff at God's messages, confound the great landmarks of right and wrong, boast of their wisdom, and abandon themselves to riot and oppression, shall fall in one common judgment. The goodly houses shall be desolate, without an inhabitant. The crop, instead of thirty-fold, shall be only a tithe of the seed. To the eye of the seer in vision the doom of the proud revellers seems already come. Hell, the great receptacle of the souls of the dead, hath enlarged her desire, and opened her mouth, like some ravenous monster; and their glory, and their multitude, and the profane re-

vellers themselves, in the midst of their wine and music, shall descend into it. Thus the opening message will be fulfilled, man will be abased, and God exalted.

v. 8. The change of person makes the warning more vivid and impressive.

v. 17. When the luxurious and covetous, who have lived in pleasure, and been wanton, nourishing their hearts in a day of slaughter, are exiled or destroyed, the meek and the lowly, or even strangers from afar, like lambs in a wide sheep walk, shall come to occupy their ample fields joining to fields, their spacious mansions and deserted palaces. "As in their pasture." Not, after their manner. Dobrām is the sheepdrive, or place of pasturage for lambs. The cultivated fields of Judah were to be waste and desolate.

v. 18. The figure in this verse is striking, but rather obscure. The second word seems more emphatic than the first

and crime, as it were with a cartrope: 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, and we shall know *it*. 20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! 21 Woe unto *them that are* wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! 22 Woe unto *them that are* mighty to drink wine, and men of strength, to mingle strong drink; 23 Which justify the wicked for reward; and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

24 THEREFORE, as fire devoureth the stubble, and 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, 25 Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses *were* as dung in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

and means here "crime" or open and public sin. The woe is aimed against those who reconcile themselves, by vain and tortuous excuses, to the practice of what is plainly evil, and carry their perverse reasonings further and further, till they are emboldened to commit without scruple enormous crimes. Such moral blindness is constantly joined with scornful contempt for warnings of judgment. They profanely invite God to let them see some specimen of these judgments at once fulfilled.

The title, the Holy One of Israel, is characteristic of Isaiah, both in his earlier and later visions. It meets us in the Preface to this First Series, i. 3, and near the close of the Sixth, in that vision of hope, ix. 14, "Thou shalt be called the City of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel." It thus forms one out of many signs of the unity of the whole work.

vv. 24—30. After these six solemn woes there follows a direct prediction of

judgment. The first act, the Syrian invasion of Judah, is described as if already past, the others as still to come. This onward passage into the midst of the predicted changes, forming a new narrative present in the future, marks Isaiah's visions from first to last. "And the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were as dung in the midst of the streets." The event predicted is that described 2 Chr. xxviii. 6: "For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, all valiant men, because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers."

v. 25. "For all this, &c." This sore stroke would only prepare the way for heavier judgments. Since there were no signs of true repentance, nothing would arrest the further strokes of God's vengeance. A solemn burden, five times repeated, here begins, ix. 12—x. 4, and lasts till it is exchanged for a blessing, xii. 1. Fierce invaders from the north would soon darken the whole land with

26 AND he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth; and behold! they shall come with speed, swiftly. 27 None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes broken: 28 Whose arrows *are* sharp, and all their bows bent: their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind. 29 Their roaring *is* like a lion, they shall roar like young lions: yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry it away safe, and none shall deliver *it*. 30 And they shall roar against him in that day like the roaring of the sea: and *one* shall look to the land, and behold darkness! even the light is anguish; it is darkened in the heavens thereof.

mourning and sorrow. The vision reaches into the farther distance, when the Lord's vineyard would be utterly wasted by the Chaldean armies; and even to a still later period, when the legions of Rome would bring in "the days of vengeance, that all things may be fulfilled," and completed the work of desolation.

v. 30. The construction and exact sense of the last clause are rather obscure. Many critics, and our received version, depart from the Masoretic pointing and accents, which group the middle words together. But several retain it, Cocceius, Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Maurer, Alexander, Drechsler. The last renders *tsar*, hailstone, and *ôr*, light, for lightning, so as to continue the figure of a thunderstorm. The Hebrew rhythm seems to

favour the Masoretic pointing, and perhaps the best rendering is as above. All is like the gloom of night, joined with a terrible thunderstorm, when the fitful flashes of lightning only render the gloom, desolation, and sorrow, more vivid, which have settled down upon the land.

"Against him." The plural has a collective reference to the whole Jewish people, and hence the singular, in the translation, is preferable to avoid ambiguity. The Hebrew order is also preferable.

The message reaches a grand and sublime climax of most indignant and solemn warning. Darkness, moral and political, like that of midnight, or a tropical thunderstorm, would settle down upon the guilty land.

## § 4. CHAP. VI. THE TEMPLE VISION.

This Vision begins with the earliest date in the Book of Isaiah, the year of Uzziah's death. It seems thus to mark Isaiah's first call to the prophetic office; which, even on this view, he must have held for sixty years, until near, and perhaps after, the close of Hezekiah's reign. The three reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, alone amount to sixty-one years.

When Jeremiah was first called to be a prophet, his lips were touched in vision by the Lord, as a sign of that mission. Ezekiel, at his first call, had a glorious vision of the Cherubim. In this call of a still greater prophet both of these features are combined. The whole account agrees with this view. The vision was suited to impress Isaiah with the dignity of his prophetic call, and to sustain him under the seeming ill success of his message. The known length of his ministry makes any earlier date for its opening rather less probable. The words, "Whom shall I send?" lose much of their force, if he had been sent already. No era could be more suitable for this chief of the prophets to enter on his public testimony than the last year of Uzziah. It closed a long and prosperous reign, in which was seen a last reflection of the early glories of the kingdom. After it the shadows began to lengthen. The reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah were only imperfect pauses, and times of suspense, in a downward course of spiritual apostasy and political decay.

Two reasons have been offered (Vitringa, Hengstenberg, Alexander, Drechsler) for supposing this to be a renewed commission. First, that this year was a crisis in the history. But this is a still stronger reason why it should have been chosen for sending the prophet to his great work. Next, that the message here assumes a new character. But the warnings in ch. v. 5, 6, and in vi. 11, 12, are in substance the very same, and almost in form. There is a close resemblance to the former message, and not a contrast. Again, the order is simply explained, if ch. ii.—v. are the public message given to Isaiah for the people at the time of this first commission. The message would be uttered, publicly and orally, in the year when Uzziah died, but before his death. But when the whole series ch. i.—xii. was published in a written form (comp. viii. 16) early in the reign of Ahaz, it would be natural to preface the whole with a direct and earnest appeal and warning to the guilty nation; next, to place on record the earliest public message, in the last year of Uzziah; then to append the account of the prophet's commission, with the more private warning to him of the ill reception of his public message; and, last of all, to add the later message, when the first act of judgment had begun in the reign of Ahaz. The words of God, which the people were condemned for refusing to lay to heart, could not consist of two verses, vi. 10, 11, alone. This view of the relation of the parts in ch. i.—xii. had been earlier and independently formed, but it agrees perfectly with the conclusions of Delitzsch in his latest work.



Some explain the date of the year before, and others of the year after, Uzziah's death. The Chaldee and a few others apply it strangely to the year of his civil death, when he was smitten with leprosy. But the plain reference is to the Jewish year, from Nisan to Nisan, in which he died. The regnal years of the kings of Judah and Israel are all really numbered in this way, and not as the Roman emperors, from the day of their accession. In the collateral line of Israel the death-year is usually counted to both reigns. In the line of Judah, on which the reckoning of time depends, it is given to one only. Ahaz plainly died towards the close of the Jewish year. The same was probably true of Uzziah, and the vision might be several months earlier, so that the prophet's first message would belong fully to that reign. The same year was the first in Pekah's reign of twenty years, and was thus a marked era in both kingdoms.

On the meaning of the Seraphim many volumes have been written. They answer plainly to the Cherubim in Ezekiel, and to the ζῶα, or Living Ones of St John's Visions. The differences in Ezekiel are easily explained from the different circumstances. Though the persons be real, the visual form is symbolical, and may thus be varied in its details, to express some new idea. The name here has a kindred sense, "burning ones," or creatures of fire, from their appearance. So in Ezekiel, "Their appearance was like burning coals of fire, 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," i. 13. They are no mere symbols, but living, intelligent creatures, who perform acts of unceasing worship. They are creatures, not emblems of the Godhead, as some have held, for they stand before the LORD, and offer praise to Him as the Thrice Holy. They are not redeemed men; for they were stationed at the east of Paradise, to keep the way of the tree of life, before the work of redemption had begun; and they appear in God's presence in these visions, when the souls of Abraham and the faithful were still in Sheol or the grave. Even in the Apocalypse, they offer worship to God the Creator, before the Lamb, the Redeemer, has been introduced into the scene. The chief reason for holding them to represent the church, or some chosen part of it, from Rev. v. 9, 10, is removed, when we adopt the best supported reading of the text (see Wordsw. *in loco*), "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation; and hast made them unto our God kings and priests, and they shall reign over the earth." This difficulty removed, all the marks concur in the primitive view, still expressed in the Te Deum, that they are the highest rank of heavenly spirits, nearest the throne of God and the foremost leaders of the worship of the whole universe. They are four in number in Ezekiel and the Apocalypse, and probably in this vision also. The phrase, "one from the Seraphim," could hardly be used if there were two only. The attitude of the Cherubim, depicted in the tabernacle, with their faces towards the mercyseat, seems referred to by St Peter, when he remarks, of the wonders of redemption, "which things the angels desire to look into (παρακύψαι)," 1 Pet. i. 12.

CHAP. VI. 1 IN the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the LORD sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. 2 Aloft in it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings: with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. 4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with

v. 1. "In the year, &c." This commission answers very nearly to the usual Varronian date for the founding of Rome. The times of the Gentiles, and the predicted judgments on Israel, run side by side. "The national glory of Israel died out with king Uzziah, and has never revived to this day." (Delitzsch.)

"I saw also." This version is the simplest, and retains its full emphasis by the present view. [Others (Gesén., Hend., Alex.) make the *Vau* a Hebrew pleonasm.] In the same year, assumed to be the well-known date of the prophet's public message, ch. ii.—v., he now recounts that he received this temple vision; and was not only called solemnly to his office, but had a warning of the heedless unconcern with which his words would be received by the people.

"The temple." Some refer this to the outward temple, seen in a trance or ecstasy, others to the heavenly antitype. Rather, the type is here made ideal, and loses itself in the antitype. It is still God's own dwelling in the midst of His rebellious people. The temple is seen with the altar of burnt-offering; but the veil is removed, and the prophet's eye reaches to the inner shrine. The lofty throne answers to the mercyseat in the Holy of holies. There He sat in kingly majesty, who "covereth himself with light as with a garment:" and the skirts of this robe of dazzling light "filled the temple," or reached throughout the holy place.

The Person seen, as St John declares, is the Son of God, the Eternal Word, by whom alone the Father is revealed, "These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory, and wrote of Him." Joh. xii. 41.

v. 2. "Aloft in it." The Hebrew

preposition must here be taken adverbially, in the sense "the upper part of it." The Seraphim, it clearly means, stood in the upper part of the temple, not above it. So *tachath* is used for *down* or *low*, instead of *beneath*, Gen. xlix. 25; Is. x. 4, see note. The Seraphim stood, not above the throne itself, or Him who sat thereon, which would ill agree with the scope of the passage, or with the parallel visions of Ezekiel and St John; but in the upper part of the temple that was filled with glory. They stood thus in the holy of holies, in the immediate presence of the King. "Each one had six wings" as in the Apocalypse. The covering of the face was a sign of the deepest reverence. In the East, covering of the feet has often a like significance. But here they seem to be put for all the lower part of the body. "They cover their faces, lest they should see, their feet, lest they should be seen." Or perhaps with this meaning; that while full of awe and reverence towards the King of heaven, before all others they are self-clothed with marvellous dignity and honour. Their own wings are their celestial garments. Near the throne, in the highest part of the temple, perhaps self-poised in the air, they stood ready to obey, with the speed of the lightning flash (Ez. i. 14), the commands of the LORD of hosts, the King of heaven.

v. 3. The Seraphim sing responsively to God, as thrice holy, supremely holy, and persevere without weariness in their adoration. But the words allude further to the Three Persons of the Godhead, Joh. xvii. 11; Heb. vii. 26; 1 Joh. ii. 20, and to the Sacred Name, including past, present, future time, as in their Apocalyptic song "Holy, holy, holy Lord God

smoke. 5 Then said I, Woe *is* me, for I am undone! because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. 6 Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, and a live coal was in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from off the altar. 7 And he laid *it* upon my mouth, and said, Lo! this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged. 8 Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying,

Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Rev. iv. 8.

"The whole earth." To sinful men, dwelling in the mist and darkness, this is a promise for days still to come, Num. xiv. 21. But it is a present truth to the glorious spirits who stand before God, and see all His works, and all His providence, in the light of heaven. Every step of spiritual advance brings us nearer to those Pisgah heights, from which the earth is seen to be full, even now, of the goodness of the Lord.

v. 4. "With smoke." Some refer this to smoke from the incense altar (Michael, Koppe, Ewald, Drechsler), as if parallel in sense with Rev. viii. 4. But the true parallel, retained by most, is with 1 Ki. viii. 10—12; 2 Chr. v. 13; Rev. xv. 8. There is no allusion to the prayers of saints, but simply an emblem of the Divine majesty. In the Dedication by Solomon, the song of praise was the signal for the cloud of glory to fill the house, and so also in the Apocalypse. As fire from heaven was the sign of His acceptance of earthly sacrifice, so here this cloud, "dark with excessive bright" is the sublime response to the worship of the Seraphim. What nobler answer could be given to their adoration than fresh tokens of the unsearchableness of His glory?

vv. 5—7. This bright vision overpowers the prophet with fear and shame. The pure worship of the Seraphim reveals his own sin, and the sin of his people, in their vain speech and unholy services. A glimpse of God's majesty, as with Job, Daniel, and St John, overwhelms him with awe. And here also, as with them, deep humiliation leads to signal honour and blessing. Pieces of wood were laid upon the altar of burnt-

offering, to keep up the fire, Lev. vi. 12. One of these pieces of burning wood, living sources of heat and flame, was taken with tongs, in vision, by one of the Seraphim, and made to touch his lips. It was thus part of the same fire, which consumed the sacrifices, whereby the prophet's lips were purged in the vision for the fulfilment of his high calling. The altar is plainly not the incense altar (Drechsler), which would now be concealed in the smoke of the glory. His own place, in vision, was without in the altar-court. The mention of the tongs is a further sign. The atonement was made by the sacrifices on the altar of burnt-offering. The act of the seraph denoted the pardon of sin, because the wood was from this altar, where the blood of the sin-offerings was poured out. But it also implied the conveyance of prophetic inspiration, since his lips were now consecrated to God's service with heavenly fire.

v. 8. The prophet now hears the voice of the Lord out of the thick darkness, seeking for some messenger to convey His words to a rebellious people.

The voice, Who will go for us? teaches the plurality of Persons in the Divine Essence. St John xii. 41, refers the vision to Christ, and St Paul (Acts xxviii. 25), the message that follows to the Holy Ghost. The prophet eagerly accepts the call. His heart, with his lips, has been touched with fire from the altar, and he longs to share with the seraphim in showing forth the high praises of God. The message is like that to Moses, Ex. iii. 10; to Jeremiah i. 7, to Ezekiel ii. 3. In all these cases it marks their first public consecration to be God's inspired messengers. Their messages came not from their own will, 2 Pct. i. 21,

Whom shall I send? and who will go for us? Then said I, Here *am* I: send me. 9 And he said, Go and tell this people, Hearing hear ye, and understand not; and seeing see ye, but perceive not. 10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and return, and be healed. 11 Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and

but the hand of the Lord was strong upon them, Is. viii. 11; Ez. iii. 14. God called them, and they obeyed His voice; and they were "borne along," 2 Pet. iv. 21, to their work, and sustained in it, by the Holy Spirit.

vv. 9, 10. "This people." Their sins had made them unworthy of the name, "my people," "the people of God." These words could not be the whole of Isaiah's first message. Rather they are a supplement, for his own guidance, to the vision revealed at the same time "concerning Judah and Jerusalem," ii. 1. Though his lips have been touched with fire from God's altar, he is not to expect the general repentance of the people. His burning words would kindle no worthy response in their hearts. They would hear, constantly and repeatedly, and not understand. They would see his warnings fulfilling themselves before their eyes, and be blind to that fulfilment. With stern irony, they are told to persevere in this deafness and blindness. In the same way the prophet is taught what would be the direct result of his own labours. His words would leave the people, in general, more hardened; yet knowing this, he was to teach them and to warn them still. The foreseen abuse of God's messages is not always a reason why they should be withheld. Even the Gospel itself is "unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish." And though God, who cannot be tempted of evil, himself tempts no man, yet the perverseness of the ungodly can never disappoint His counsel; and their foreseen guilt and folly will minister at length to the brighter display of His infinite holiness, and perfect love.

vv. 11, 12. The prophet's words are

no mere curious inquiry, but a sorrowful complaint. So Jeremiah xii. 4, "How long shall the land mourn for the wickedness of them that dwell therein?" And the beloved Daniel, "How long shall be the vision of the transgression of desolation?" Dan. viii. 13. And the souls under the altar, "How long, O Lord, faithful and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" It is the longing of the faithful, in every age, to look beyond the dark clouds of sin and sorrow to the close of the mystery of God, the times of restitution of all things, and to the full victory of redeeming power and love.

The answer declares how complete the judgment will be. Not the cities only, but their separate houses; not only the town, but the country, will be dispeopled. They shall be exiled, not to near districts, whence they might soon return, but far away; and there would be a long-lasting desolation. The warning plainly extends beyond the nearer Assyrian troubles to the captivity of Babylon. And as the reproof was applied anew by St Paul to the Jews at Rome, so the words have been fulfilled, even more strikingly, in the wars of Vespasian and Titus, and the dispersion and desolation which lasts even to the present time. So wide in their range are His messages, with whom a thousand years are as a single day.

v. 13. But this judgment, though most severe, will be tempered with mercy. The covenant to Abraham and to his seed cannot fail. The exact meaning of the verse is disputed, and rather obscure. Most modern critics, as Vittinga, Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Ewald, Alexander, Henderson, Drechsler, render nearly thus: "And should a tenth remain in it, it shall once more be con-

the houses without a man, and the land be utterly desolate :  
 12 And the LORD have removed men far away, and *there be* a  
 great forsaking in the midst of the land. 13 And still *there*  
*shall be* a tenth therein, that shall return: and there shall be  
 wasting; *but* as a teil tree and as an oak, whose life is in them  
 when they are cut down: the holy seed *shall be* the life  
 thereof.

sumed; yet as a teil tree and an oak, whose substance is in them when they are felled (*or*, cast their leaves), the holy seed is the substance thereof." The word "returns" is thus taken, by a frequent idiom, to denote that the main action is repeated. But there are weighty reasons for giving it its primary sense. It has been used just before in the threatening, "lest they return, and be healed." It forms the name of Isaiah's son, Shearjashub, "a remnant shall return," alluding to the promise couched in this first message. That name seems to have been borrowed from the words in this very text, which relieve its severe and solemn threatening. Also the allusion seems rather to the life which remains in the stock of a tree when felled and cut down, than to the annual fall of the leaves only. The rendering above seems to give the

real meaning. The consumption shall not be total; but like that of a tree which retains vital power in the stock, when its branches are lopt, or even its stem cut down. See Job xiv. 7, 9. The same figure recurs a little later in the promise of Messiah, xi. 1, as a lowly sucker or shoot arising from the stem of Jesse, after it has been brought low.

"The holy seed shall be the life thereof." There shall be a remnant according to the election of grace. The covenant to Abraham and to his seed after him cannot be broken. The Apostle repeats the truth in its latest form. "As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching their election, they are beloved for the fathers. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Rom. xi. 29.

### THE PROMISE TO THE REMNANT. CHAP. VI. 13.

Three critical questions arise on this verse. First, does *věshabah vėhayėthah lėba'ėr* denote a repeated destruction, or does *shabah* retain its proper meaning, as a promise that the tenth, '*asiriyah*, shall return, either to the land, or from sin to God? The former view is more usual (LXX., Symm., Rosenm., Gesen., Hend., Alex., Drechsler, Delitzsch). But the latter view (Chald., Jarch., Calv., A.V., De Dieu, &c.) is confirmed by the use of the same root, i. 27, *shabėiyah*, "her converts," in the first promise to Zion; by the name *shearjashub*, "a remnant shall return," given to the prophet's first-born; by the warning v. 10 "and shall return (*vashab*) and be healed;" by its renewal ix. 13 (12) "the people turneth not (*lo shab*) to him that smiteth them;" and by the promise x. 23 *shear jashub bo*, "a remnant of them shall return." Besides, the idiomatic use elsewhere is before a simple verb, and not, as here, before a complex phrase, "it shall be for a consuming." These reasons seem decisive in favour of the proper sense, so that *věshabah* is to be joined, as a relative clause, to the tenth or remnant named just before.

The return, however, is to God himself, i. 27, 28, x. 21. The idea of exile, and return to the land, has only a secondary place even elsewhere, and here it cannot apply, for this remnant are described as if still in the land.

Next, does *shalleketh* denote the shedding of the leaves only (Targ., Kimchi) or of their fruit (LXX.) or the felling of the trunk itself (Rosenm., Hend., Alex., Knobel, Drechsler, Delitzsch)? The last observes, "These trees were selected (the terebinth or teil-tree, and the oak)...on account of their readily springing up again from the root, like the beech or nut, even when completely felled. As the forms *yabbesheth*, dryness, *dalliketh*, fever, &c. are used to denote certain qualities, and for the most part faulty ones, so *shalleketh* does not refer to the act, but the condition of a tree, that has been hewn down; yet not of the trunk, but of the root still left in the earth." (Delitzsch Trans. i. 202.) The customary fall of the leaf seems quite short of the force of the word, which applies to a violent casting down. So 2 Ki. vii. 15, xxiii. 12; Neh. ix. 11; Ez. xxviii. 17; Ex. iv. 3, xxii. 31, xxxii. 19; Deut. ix. 17; Jon. ii. 3; Dan. viii. 11. On the other hand the growth of a sucker from the stump of Jesse's family, and of a Branch from his roots, is the figure used presently, xi. 1, to describe the birth of Messiah.

Thirdly, does *matzëbeth* denote the root, stock, or stump (Rosenm., De Wette, Gesen., Hend., Drechsler, Delitzsch), or the sap, life, or young shoot (Targ., Hitz., Knob., Alex.)? The word is used elsewhere for a pillar, from the root *natzab*, to stand fast, set upright, or establish. This, however, can hardly apply, literally, to a stump level with the ground. But it applies, by an easy metaphor, to that which gives permanence to the tree, when apparently destroyed, that is, to the seminal or vital power. Nor could the stump be said to be *in* the tree, being the only part left. But the vital power, the life, remains in it, and enables it to sprout anew. So, in the lowest state of the Jewish people, there would be "a remnant according to the election of grace," Rom. xi. 5, to whom the promise is sure, and through whom the olive-tree of Israel will survive its greatest calamity and revive in full beauty once more.

## FIRST SERIES, LATER DIVISION.

### SECOND YEAR OF AHAZ.

#### § 5. CHAP. VII.—IX. 7. THE PROMISE OF IMMANUEL.

The six chapters, ch. vii.—xii., which complete the First Series of Isaiah's vision, and which Delitzsch calls their Second Cycle, are parted from those before them by an interval of nineteen years. But they are closely linked with them by the common preface, ch. i., which applies to the calamities in the later reign, and also by the burden, ch. v. 25, which is repeated four times in the Assyrian Woe, ix. 12, 17, 21, x. 4, is arrested by the promise, x. 25, "Yet a little while, and mine anger shall cease in their destruction,"

and is finally reversed by the promise at the close, xii. 1, "Thine anger is turned away, and thou hast comforted me." This link firmly binds together the whole series, begun in the last year of Uzziah, and renewed and completed in the second year of Ahaz. We have no prophecy that seems to date from the reign of Jotham. Isaiah prophesied, however, through its course, by the message already given and then unfulfilled.

This latter part of the series admits easily of a threefold division, (1) The Promise of Immanuel, vii. 1—ix. 7, closing with a glorious promise; (2) The Assyrian scourge, ix. 8—x. 34, a burden of warning and sorrow, and (3) The Promise of the Son of David, ch. xi., xii., a message of unmingled hope and brightness. The first separates into distinct portions, but the promise of Immanuel runs throughout the whole.

Different views have been taken of the most natural division in these later chapters vii.—xii. of the First Series. Vitringa parts the whole series into five sections, ch. i., ch. ii.—iv., ch. v., ch. vi., ch. vii.—xii. The fifth, one half of the whole, he divides into five subsections. Drechsler, more simply, adds these as five sections to the other four, a little varied, making a ninefold division. Thus we have three partitions of the later part.

Vitringa.

1. vii.            2. viii. i—ix. 7.    3. ix. 8—x. 4.    4. x. 5—34.    5. xi. & xii.

Drechsler.

1. vii.            2. viii. i—viii. 4.    3. viii. 5—ix. 7.    4. ix. 8—x. 4    5. x. 5—34 & xi, xii.

Stier.

1. vii—viii. 8.    2. viii. 9—22.    3. ix. 1—7.    4. ix. 8—x. 4.    5. x. 5—34. 6. xi & xii.

The present division varies from that of Vitringa in making three sections, where he makes one with five subsections; his first and second, and his third and fourth subdivisions, being joined in one. Thus i.—xii. is viewed as having seven parts, well defined, and not very unequal in length, i., ii.—iv., v., vi., vii.—ix. 7, ix. 8—x. 34, xi. and xii. The Promise of Immanuel, ch. vii. is distinctly resumed in viii. 8, 9, and culminates in ix. 6, 7, so that this part has a dramatic unity. It is hardly less plain, though overlooked by many, that the warnings, ix. 8—x. 4, have their direct issue in the summons to the Assyrian, x. 5—34, to fulfil God's threatenings. No sensible pause can be admitted at x. 5 without obscuring the whole message. The opinion of those critics, from Lightfoot to Ewald and Henderson, who make x. 5—34 a later prophecy after the fall of Samaria, rests on a wholly false view of x. 11, and does violence to all the internal evidence, which links this part with the previous verses in the clearest way. The sins of Israel and Judah are first described ix. 8—x. 4, and then the avenger, the rod of God's anger, is summoned to execute the decreed judgment. This whole message of warning is preceded by a full prediction of Messiah, as Immanuel, and is followed by another, which reveals Him as the Branch from the root of Jesse, and announces more fully His glorious and triumphant reign.

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 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 resting upon 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

v. 1. This passage, vii. 1—9, with viii. 1—4, is the historical pedestal of the great prophecy of Immanuel, as ch. xxxvi.—xxxix., is in like manner for the later visions, from ch. xl. to the close. God's predictions of the future are always fast rooted in the soil of present history. No part of this book seems to belong directly to the reign of Jotham. But in that reign Isaiah's record of "the acts of Uzziah, first and last," 2 Chr. xxvi. 22, was most probably written; and his earlier messages, ch. ii.—vi., were a constant warning of judgments near at hand.

"Pekah, the son of Remaliah." This, the last prosperous reign in Israel, began in the last year of Uzziah, when Isaiah received his commission. It seems most probable that this campaign was not the same, nor earlier, but later than the one in 2 Chr. xxviii. 6 (Jerome, Theodoret, Jarchi, Vitringa, Rosenmüller, Drechsler). The inroads had begun under Jotham, 2 Kin. xv. 37. They would be at once renewed on the accession of Ahaz, who was young and unpopular. His apostasy began from the first, and the campaign in Chronicles followed, when Rezin took Elath, and Pekah defeated Judah with great slaughter. "This success carried their hopes further, so that they thought to dethrone Ahaz, displace the house of David, and set up one of their own creatures king of Judah. This is the expedition, 2 Kin. xvi. 5; Is. vii., and would fall in the next military season, the second year of Ahaz" (Drechsler). This answers probably to B.C. 741, and the nineteenth year of Isaiah's ministry.

"But could not prevail." Their first success was great, when fulfilling God's

threatened judgment against Judah. But when they sought to depose the line of David, they fought against God, and wholly failed.

v. 2. "Is resting upon" *A. V.* "confederate with" "Ephraim." Some refer the phrase to alliance, others to the place of encampment. But this latter sense is opposed to the context, which implies that these forces were in the land of Judah, not of Ephraim. The meaning is rather that there was a league, in which Syria had the chief control. The restoration of the captives after Oded's rebuke, 2 Chr. xxviii. 9—15, would awaken the hope that Ephraim had now returned to a brotherly policy. This hope proved vain. Syria, the constant foe of the house of David, had regained its former influence. The professed aim of the renewed confederacy was not bloody war, but a friendly revolution to remove an unpopular king. Their real aim was to make Judah a vassal of Syria and Ephraim. There was thus great cause for dismay. The people feared the renewal of former bloodshed, and the house of David were aware of deep discontent among the people. Faith alone could have made them bold, and this faith was wholly wanting.

v. 3. Hosea's mission began with the birth of two sons and a daughter, whose names announced the coming judgments of God. The two sons of Isaiah had the same character of "signs from the Lord," viii. 18. The name of the younger was given by express command, viii. 1—4, and announced the speedy advent of the Assyrian spoiler. Of Shear-jashub no such details are given,



field: 4 And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet: fear not, neither be fainthearted, for these two tails of 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, the son of Tabeal: 7 Thus saith the Lord God, It shall not stand, and it shall not come to pass. 8 For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the

but his name must have been either from a prophetic impulse or direct revelation, "a remnant shall return." It is derived from the promise, vi. 13. "And still there shall be a remnant therein, that shall return." This key-note of promise recurs, x. 21. If Shear-jashub was born in the first year of Jotham, he would now be seventeen years old, and have been a sign of judgment and deliverance throughout that reign.

"The upper pool." Its exact position is not quite certain. The most current view places it to the west, near the Jaffa gate. But some strong reasons may be urged for placing it on the north side, (Lightfoot, Hitzig) where is the traditional "Camp of the Assyrians." The interview was clearly in the same spot with Rabshakeh's insults and blasphemies, ch. xxxvi. 2, which were like a repetition of the message to Ahab, "I will requite thee in this plat, saith the Lord," 2 Ki. ix. 26.

v. 4. They were tempted, not only to terror and alarm, but to a heathen alliance with Assyria. The caution applies to these dangers, rather than the armies of Ephraim and Syria. The title given to Rezin and Pekah alludes to the terrible fire they had so lately kindled in Judah, and to the fact that their course was nearly run. The name "son of Remaliah" is repeated in contempt. He was an usurper, who had gained the throne by the murder of the previous king, 2 Ki. xv. 25.

v. 6. Some think that Tabeal is put for Remaliah by a kind of Hebrew or Cabbalistic anagram; others that it is a Hebrew substitute for Tab-rimmon, the name of Benhadad's father, in which case his son would be some Syrian noble.

The view of Calvin seems to agree better with the context, that he was the head of the disaffected party in Judah. By promoting a Jewish noble or popular favourite, the confederates would be most likely to secure their object of making Judah a vassal and dependent power. The presence of a stranger, a Syrian noble, would have been a constant motive for revolt, and sign of degradation.

vv. 8, 9. This prediction renews chronological prophecy, which has not occurred since the days of Joshua. It is followed by the 15 years of Hezekiah, the seventy years of Tyre's oblivion and Judah's captivity, the seventy weeks of Daniel and their three subdivisions, Is. xxxviii.; xxiii. 15. Jer xxv. 11, 12; xxix. 10. Dan. ix. 24—27. These 65 years reach beyond the fall of Samaria to the latest exile of Israel, and their replacement by heathen colonists under Esarhaddon, Ezr. iv. 2. The Scripture data, so far as they exist, agree. From the second of Ahaz B.C. 741, they would reach to B.C. 676; and the Seder Olam assigns Manasseh's captivity to his 22nd year, or B.C. 676—5. By Ptolemy's Canon the reign of Asaradinus at Babylon was B.C. 680—667, after an interregnum. But a recent recovery of Babylon, after a revolt, would naturally suggest the plan of transporting colonists from Samaria to Babylon, and from Babylon to Samaria. There are also 65 years from the death of Jeroboam II., in whom the promise to Jehu expired, to the fall of Samaria. The 70 years of Judah's captivity had likewise a double date B.C. 606—536, 588—518.

The rest of these two verses is obscure. Most critics explain them to mean that each king and kingdom was shut within its own bounds, and therefore might not

head of Damascus *is* Rezin; and within threescore and five years Ephraim shall be broken, and be no more a people. 9 And the head of Ephraim *is* Samaria, and the head of Samaria *is* Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe, surely ye will not be established.

10 MOREOVER the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying, 11 Ask thee a sign from the Lord thy God: make thy petition deep, or in the height above. 12 But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord. 13 And he said, Hear ye

enlarge itself by the conquest of Jerusalem. But there is no sign that either king, in case of success, would have transferred his seat of government to that city, which this interpretation seems to require. Several others have been proposed. In each verse a plain warning is prefaced by one more obscure, which the event would make clear. The whole may be thus paraphrased. "Ephraim relies on Syria, Judah is afraid of Ephraim; their confidence and their fear are equally vain. For the head of Syria is Damascus, soon to be spoiled; and the head of Damascus, Rezin, the tail of a firebrand soon to be quenched; and in spite of their worthless help, the doom of Ephraim is certain; within 65 years it shall cease to be. And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, feeble and luxurious, a chaplet soon to be trodden down; and the head of Samaria a mere usurper, a murderer soon to be murdered in his turn. It is not such a foe, but your own cowardice, which is the real danger. If ye will not believe, surely ye will not be established." Their unbelief was the true source of their confusion and sorrow.

vv. 10—15. The previous verses are the historical preface to this wonderful prophecy. Two or three remarks will guide us to its true meaning.

First, the birth of Immanuel was to be a sign directly to the house of David, and more indirectly to Judah and Israel. It was to be a pledge that the oath to David, of a kingdom never to be diverted from his offspring, could not fail. The promised child was to be owner of the land, viii. 8, and also heir of David's throne, ix. 6, 7. Hence the promise cannot refer to a son of Isaiah, or any child not conspicuously of David's line. Next,

this child was not yet born, and Hezekiah was now about ten years old. Also the birth of Manasseh, the next successor, was thirty years later. Thus the birth of no heir to the throne could be really a sign, in the chronological sense, so as to define a very short period when the actual invasion would have failed. Thirdly, another child, a son of the prophet, and no heir of the throne, plainly fulfils this purpose of limiting a time for the fall of the two invaders. Before this child can cry, "My father," and "My mother," the spoil of Damascus and Samaria would be carried away. The birth of Immanuel, then, could not be a useless duplicate, a second limit of time to the present invasion, but must be a sign in some other sense. His name clearly towers above both the Syrian and Assyrian calamities, announcing a Ruler in the line of David, of whose kingdom there would be no end, ix. 6, 7.

v. 10. The sign offered was to be a pledge of God's enduring favour to the house of David, now threatened at home and abroad, by the disaffected in Judah, and by the confederate kings. The title "thy God" reminds Ahaz of the sure covenant to David, on which he was bound to rest. The sign might be a present wonder, like the change of the rod of Moses, and the dew on Gideon's fleece; or a prediction, sustaining hope by details of a future blessing, like the message to Moses, Ex. iii. 12. or like the warning to Eli of the death of his sons in one day, 1 Sam. ii. 34.

v. 11. The answer of Ahaz alludes to Deut. vi. 16. He wrests the command of God into an excuse for rejecting God's own offer. He did not wish to be bound to God's service by any fresh tie, and

now, O house of David: *Is it* a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? 14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

15 CURDS and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse evil, and to choose the good. 16 For before the child shall know to refuse evil, and to choose the good, the land shall be forsaken, in the presence of whose two kings thou art dismayed. 17 The LORD will bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day when Ephraim broke away from Judah, *even* the

clung to his politic scheme of hiring the king of Assyria.

v. 13. "To weary men." The contrast is usually held to lie between the prophet himself, whose message had gained no credit, and the LORD, whose offered sign was refused. But the prophet, from the first, had spoken in God's name, and this reply is the voice of the Lord himself through his lips. The need for a sign arose from the danger to the house of David through the general discontent of the people. Their claim to Divine right, coupled with their luxury, selfishness, and oppression, had exhausted the patience of many in Judah, and made them ready to welcome this rival, the son of Tabeal. Thus the house of David, having lost the favour of the people by abusing the honour divinely given, were now provoking God, if it were possible, to revoke His own promise. By pride and oppression, in the confidence of their descent from David, they had wearied men. And now they wearied the LORD himself, by rejecting His message, and refusing the offered help and succour of heaven.

v. 14. A sign had been offered, in the depth below, or in the height above. If given at all, it should answer to the Divine proposal, and be some surprising wonder. Such is this sign, as expounded by the Holy Spirit in the Gospel, the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus, the Son of the Most High, from a virgin mother. This is truly a sign in the depth of unspeakable condescension, and in the height of God's unsearchable glory. The birth of a child in the usual course of nature would hardly be a sign at all, and

plainly neither in the depth nor in the height above. The article, "the Virgin," is significant. It can refer to no wife of the prophet, since this was to be a royal child; nor of Ahaz, of whom no younger son came to the throne; nor of Hezekiah, still a mere child. The allusion is to the first promise, that the Seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. This promise had been limited, first to the race of Abraham, and next, to the seed of David; and "the Virgin" must thus mean that damsel of the race of David, for whom the high honour was reserved, in God's secret counsel, to give birth in due season to the long promised King of Israel, the Saviour of the world.

v. 15. "Curds" rather than butter, milk curdled and thickened being a usual kind of food in the East. The reason for this mention of the food of the infant Immanuel is shewn, v. 22.

The connective has been rendered "before," "when" and "until". But the received version is the most simple, and agrees best with the real scope. It is in the use of food that every infant attains the full exercise of its human faculties. But this child, unlike other infants, from the first dawn of reason, will know to refuse evil and to choose the good. The phrase, like the fact, is unique, and never used in Scripture of any other child. Three wonders would meet in Him whose name is "Wonderful,"—a miraculous birth, a Divine nature, and sinless choice of the good alone.

v. 16. The altered rendering is preferred by most critics, and confirmed by the order of the Hebrew words. Ahaz and his people were now dismayed by

king of Assyria. 18 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD will hiss for the fly that is in the borders 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 clefts of the rocks, and upon all thorn-bushes, and in all pastures. 20 In the same day the Lord will shave with a razor, hired from beyond the river, with the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet; and it shall also consume the beard. 21 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep. 22 And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk *that* they shall

the presence of the two kings of Ephraim and Syria, with their warlike array. But very soon these boastful powers would be brought to ruin, and their land become a desolation. This would be the first step in a series of judgments.

v. 17—25. The difficulty often felt in v. 16 will be removed, when the true nature of its connection with these following verses is clearly seen. That there is a close connexion is plain from v. 22, where we have mention once more of "curds and honey," as the key-note of the passage.

The promise of Immanuel was to be a sign of God's unchanging favour to the house of David, and to Israel his people. The food of his infancy was a pledge of the sorrows that must first come, and the thorough wasting of the land by the Assyrian and Babylonian armies. The sign was not to assure Ahaz or the people of escape from calamity, for this was not God's purpose, and a prophecy of the exact opposite had been given. It was to assure them that, in spite of severe, extreme, and almost hopeless troubles, the covenant of God would be firm to the end, and at length achieve a signal triumph. The sign, then, included two elements, the wonderful and glorious character of the Child hereafter to be born, shewn by the name Immanuel, and the later titles, ix. 6, which unfold it; and the food of his infancy, implying a previous desolation that would come upon the whole land of promise.

Thus v. 17, by the absence of the copula, is to be joined more closely, not less closely, with the previous verse, without a pause, and forms part of the

same warning. "Before the infancy of Immanuel, not only Syria and Ephraim shall be forsaken, but the land of Judah shall be desolated also, and such wasting come to pass, that the land of vineyards and oliveyards shall be changed into mere jungle, or become wide pastures for cows and sheep." This mention of the food of the infant Immanuel does not prove that the desolation would still continue at his birth. It is meant to teach only that this great desolation would first have come. Any further delay of his birth, or previous return of culture and fertility, was no part of the actual message, and was left at present unrevealed. The land to be forsaken, v. 16, is Syria and Ephraim. But their ravaging by Tiglath-pileser would be only the first step in a series of coming troubles.

v. 17. Judah had suffered much since the revolt of the ten tribes under Jeroboam. But now still heavier calamities were coming on the house of David and the whole people. A clearer, nobler promise of Immanuel was to strengthen the faithful in the prospect of these sore afflictions.

v. 18. The fly from the river of Egypt, and the bee from Assyria, denote the numerous swarms of heathen soldiery from the rival empires, that would soon overrun the land of Israel. "The borders" seem meant, rather than "the uttermost parts." These insects are bred in immense numbers in the marshy banks or borders of the Nile and tropical rivers. A fit emblem of the population of Egypt, chiefly dwelling on the two sides of the long course of the Nile. The flies are described as resting in the desolate valleys

give, that he will eat curds: for curds and honey shall every one eat that is left in the midst of the land. 23 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines for a thousand pieces of silver, it shall *even* be briers and thorns. 24 With arrows and with bows shall *men* go thither, for all the land shall be briers and thorns. 25 And *on* all hills that are digged with the hoe, there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns; but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and places for sheep to tread.

and in all the thorn-bushes; and the bees in the clefts of the rocks, and in all pastures.

v. 20. "A razor, hired from beyond the river." Ahaz, in spite of God's warning, was bent on hiring the king of Assyria to crush his present rivals, Rezin and Pekah, 2 Kin. xvi. 8—10. Proud of this stroke of policy, he despised the warnings and the promises, sent to him by the prophet. It succeeded for the moment, as faithless expediency often seems to do, but it would be bitterness in the end. His sin would lead to his own punishment, and that of His people. God himself would hire this king of Assyria, by the hope of ample spoil, to waste Judah as well as Ephraim. Not only the hair of the head, the luxury and wealth of the king and his nobles, but even the hair of the feet, the scanty necessities of the poorest classes, would be scraped and shorn away. It would consume "even the beard," the symbol in the east of all that was sacred and venerable. The treasures of God's own temple, the honour and dignity of the priesthood, would also be swept away by this fierce spoiler.

v. 21. "The description is, of set purpose, thoroughly tautological and pleonastic, heavy and slow in movement, and is intended to give the impression of tedious monotony, of a wasted heath" (Delitzsch). It forms the dreary background to a most bright and glorious promise.

v. 22. "For curds and honey, &c." Here comes to light the connexion with the promise of Immanuel. The land was to pass through a change from tillage to pasture, when curds and honey should be the more usual food, and not until then should its Deliverer appear. The prophet, in vision, sees him growing up from infancy to manhood amidst the shadows and ruins of a desolated land.

vv. 23, 24. The most fertile districts, when culture ceases, are most liable in tropical countries to degenerate into dangerous jungle, the haunts of beasts of prey. Such was to be the doom of the vine and olive districts of Palestine. Whoever visited them at all would need bow and arrows, to protect him from the dangers to which he would there be exposed.

v. 25. Most modern critics here prefer the rendering "Thou shalt not go thither for fear of briers and thorns" (Henderson, Alexander, Drechsler, Delitzsch, &c.). This verse will then simply continue the previous description. But the received version seems better, when rightly explained. A careful husbandman would scarcely send out oxen and sheep to graze in a jungle, where he has to go with bow and arrows, to protect himself from the wild beasts. The true meaning seems to be that, while parts once the most fertile would become mere jungle, briers and thorns, other parts, once tilled with more labour, would become a scanty pasture, suited for the grazing of sheep and oxen. Thus there would still be pasture land, though all tillage of vines and olives and wheat would nearly cease.

The fulfilment of this warning had three stages. The first was in the Assyrian ravages till the overthrow of Sennacherib, when all the North was wasted. The second was the deportation of the remains of the ten tribes under Esarhaddon, referred to above, v. 8. The third and last is the Chaldean desolation under Nebuchadnezzar. This is afresh predicted in chh. xxvii. xxxix. and its assumed fulfilment is the starting-point of nearly all the later visions ch. xl.—lxvi. The darkness of the captivity was to be lit up with the hope of the coming Saviour.

Chap. VIII. 1. AND the Lord said unto me, Take thee a large tablet, and write in it with plain writing concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz. 2 And I was to take to me faithful witnesses, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. 3 And I went unto the prophetess, and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the Lord unto me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz. 4 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 carried away before the king of Assyria.

Ch. VIII. 1-4. THE BIRTH OF  
MAHER-SHALAL-HASH-BAZ.

These verses are plainly a sequel to the former message. The promise of Immanuel was a pledge of God's unchanging mercy to the house of David, though long and sore judgments were first coming on the land. This birth of Isaiah's son, and his name, were a pledge of the speedy fall of Pekah and Rezin by the Assyrian. Not only the name, but the family is different. This message would be useless, if Immanuel were promised as a mark of time, to prove, by his immediate birth, that in two or three years Syria would be overthrown. These verses, then, contain a promise for the moment, which the fuller and nobler promise did not supply. Their date is the second year of Ahaz. His third year was the last of Pekah, and towards its close the prediction was fulfilled. 2 Ki. xv. 30; xvi. 8-10.

The prophet is to take a large tablet, like the tables of the law; not a mere roll, since the message was for public exhibition; large, compared with the contents, that it might be read more easily, and "a man's pen" or style is named for the same reason. The writing was to be plain and legible, no mystery for the learned, but a witness to all the people (Hab. ii. 2). The preposition applies to the compound name, and shows the subject of the inscription. To take the name for the sole inscription (Alexander, Drechsler, &c.) as if it were a mere enigma, seems without reason. The tablet would announce that the prophetess would bear a son to be so named, in less than a year; and that before this child could utter its first articulate speech, the judgment on Ephraim and Syria

would have come. For nine months the witness was to be in words, and then for a year in act, by the birth of a son, not a daughter, and by his expressive name.

v. 2. The versions, "I took," referring to the prophet, "I will take," as if part of the message itself, or "and that I should take," are either harsh in sense or less exact. "I was to take" expresses Divine instructions that were given, and implies their fulfilment. Uriah was the high-priest under Ahaz. The word "faithful" refers to the public character and position of these chosen witnesses, not to their moral worth. The compliance of Uriah with Ahaz in his idolatry would only make his testimony to Isaiah's message more full and striking. These two witnesses, like notaries, were to attest Isaiah's handwriting, and the date of his message, which might be placed at the entrance of the temple. Their signatures would not only guard against all suspicion of forgery, but prove the confidence of the seer in the result, as a public seal to all his later prophecies.

v. 3. The general sense of the name is clear, though critics have differed on its exact construction. The marginal rendering, slightly varied, seems the best. The whole is a short sentence, and refers to the Assyrian foe. Its brevity and its form, two dissyllables followed by two monosyllables of like sense, gives a striking effect of swift onward motion. "Hasting to plunder, he speeds to the prey." The mighty invader would soon come, like a cataract, upon the guilty land.

v. 4. The interval meant is about one year from the birth, or twenty-one months from the message. The event strictly corresponds. In the next year, the third of Ahaz, Damascus was sacked and led captive, and Rezin slain. The message

5 AND the LORD spake still further unto me, saying, 6 Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah, that go softly, 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 overflow all his banks: 8 And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and pass over; he shall reach *even* to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel!

9 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. 10 Take counsel together, and

of Ahaz to Urijah, 2 Kings xvi. 10, was a practical seal to the truth of this prophecy, which the latter had been called to attest. The final capture of Samaria, it is true, was twenty years later. But the history implies that it escaped from Tiglath-pileser only by a costly ransom. The conspiracy against Pekah, and his murder, in the third year of Ahaz, are best explained by his loss of power, and the public discontent, because of the spoil which the Assyrian had just exacted and carried away. This was one part of the hire of this unconscious hireling of God.

vv. 5—10. The warning here passes from Ahaz and the house of David to the discontented and rebellious people. They had despised God's covenant with David, and the grace and holiness which flowed in streams of living water from the sanctuary of God. Their heathenish tastes and heathen alliances were now to be punished by heathen oppression. These men of Judah and Ephraim, faithless to God's covenant, who admired the prowess of Rezin and Pekah, and longed for the son of Tabeal to reign, should soon reap the bitter fruit of their folly. The Assyrian hosts, like the floods of the Euphrates, would sweep through the land, and Jerusalem alone would escape from the inundation.

v. 5. "Still further." Lit. "added and spake."

The figure changes suddenly, v. 8, from a river flood to the fierce hovering of a ravenous bird over its prey. But when

the judgment is at its height the voice of promise is heard once more—"thy land, O Immanuel." This child Immanuel is the Owner of the land, the heir of David's throne. Against this rock the flood of the destroyers will dash itself in vain. Bars and doors have been set to this stormy sea, and a voice from heaven has said to it: "Hitherto shalt thou come but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

v. 6. Some think Ephraim alone to be meant in this rebuke, others, only the disaffected in Judah. But in the view of the covenant both kingdoms were still one people. Both shared the sin, Ephraim more completely, Judah in large measure. The threatening, in like manner, would apply fully to the northern kingdom. In Judah it would reach to the neck, but would then be stayed.

vv. 9, 10. A challenge is now given to the heathen invaders to use their utmost efforts, and see whether they can reverse the promise, and wrest the land from Immanuel, its Owner and King. "For God is with us (*Immanu El*)."  
His name, Immanuel, begins and closes this defiance, and is the bow of hope in the darkness of the coming storm.

vv. 11—15. The prophet's bold defiance of the powers of the heathen world would seem strange and wild to these faithless princes and people, whose hearts were moved "as the trees of the wood are moved by the wind." He now tells them whence his confidence arose. The Spirit

it shall come to nought: speak the word, and it shall not stand, for GOD IS WITH US.

11 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, 12 Say ye not, A confederacy, whensoever this people may say, A confederacy; and fear not their fear, neither be afraid. 13 Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and *let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.* 14 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. 15 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: 17 And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from

of God laid His hand on him with power, lest the currents of worldly policy and coward fear should carry him away. So Ezekiel writes that "the hand of the Lord was strong upon him," iii. 14. The message was not to the prophet alone, but through him to all the faithful remnant in Judah.

v. 12. "Say ye not, &c." Some refer this caution to the alliance between Ephraim and Syria, the present source of alarm; others, to domestic conspiracies; others, to charges of treason and disaffection against the prophets of God. The word might be used either as an invitation to conspire, or as an utterance of alarm. The phrase comprehends all parties by whom, or times when, this cry might be raised, whether leagues without, or secret plotters at home. There is no need to exclude any of these applications, and all forms and devices of worldly fear may be condemned together. "Dread not, like this people, the league of Ephraim and Syria. Devise no counter league with the Assyrian king. Make no secret terms with these invaders. Form no conspiracy to set up this son of Tabeal. Bring no false charges of treason against the prophets of God. Be not terrified with rumours of new alliances abroad, or treacherous plots at home. Fear only God's anger, and rest simply on his promise. Set him high in your thoughts above every earthly power. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let Him be

your fear, and let Him be your dread."

v. 14. The promise answers to the command. Sanctify God in your hearts, and He will be your sanctuary, to which you may resort for refuge. But this refuge will avail for the faithful alone. The pillar of fire was light to Israel, but darkness to Egypt. He who is the Sanctuary of the faithful is a Rock of offence to the disobedient, who stumble at His word, 1 Pet. ii. 8.

vv. 14, 15. This warning is often quoted in the New Testament. "This child is set for the fall and rising again (*ἀνάστασις*, overthrow?) of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be spoken against," Luke ii. 34. "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken," Matt. xxi. 44. "For they stumbled at the stumblingstone, &c." Rom. ix. 32, 33, and by St Peter as above. In all these texts the title is directly applied to the Lord Jesus, while here it is plainly "the LORD of hosts himself." There is thus a fourfold witness to our Lord's true Divinity. And this is plainer still by comparing 1 Pet. ii. 8 and iii. 14, 15, quoted from this same passage.

The promise of Immanuel, first, and then still more its fulfilment, would have opposite effects on the people at large, and on a faithful remnant. The figures imply something placed low on the ground, against which the foot may stumble. They cannot apply to Jehovah in His celestial majesty, but only in some special form of condescension and grace. He



the house of Jacob, and I will look unto him. 18 Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me, *are* for signs and

must stoop to earth, before He can thus be a stumblingstone and rock of offence, a gin and a snare. This was done, first, by the promise of this unborn child, on which they were to rest amidst thickening perils; and at length by its fulfilment in Jesus, the despised Nazarene. Already, in the days of Ahaz, this promise of the coming Redeemer of Israel was the source of a deep and real moral separation.

viii. 16—18. Some refer these words wholly to Isaiah and his two sons, others exclusively to Messiah and His disciples; others to both, the prophet in type, and Messiah as the antitype. As to the speaker there is the same diversity, whether the prophet, the prophet and Messiah, or Messiah alone. Many take v. 16 to be the words of God himself, either to the prophet (Calv., Gesen., Hitzig, Ewald, Umbreit, Knobel) or to Messiah, and vv. 17, 18 a reply; while some (Luther, Drechsler) take v. 16 as the prophet's address to God.

The reasons for a double reference to Isaiah and his two sons, and to Messiah, seem quite decisive. The allusion to Shear-jashub and his brother is plain, while the application to Christ, Heb. ii. 13, is plain also, and confirmed by the sequel. The typical correspondence is full and clear. Isaiah not only spake by the Spirit of Christ, but had just given a signal prophecy of His birth. In his person this promise was now exposed to contempt and opposition, as Messiah, the fulfiller of it, would be when He came. The message and the messenger were now a moral test, parting the faithful from the bulk of the people, and exposing them to reproach until the predicted time of deliverance. These words of Isaiah, like those of Christ, were treasured in the hearts of true Israelites, a feeble remnant in the midst of general unbelief. The two sons of Isaiah, like Isaac, were "children of promise," born to fulfil a Divine message; and thus represent those who are "born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," Joh. i. 13, Rom. ix. 7, 8, Gal. iv. 23, 28. Their names were a double witness of grace to the penitent, and of judg-

ment on the ungodly. The brief space, also, from this promise of Immanuel to the overthrow of the Assyrian is a miniature of the Providence of God to Israel from the birth of our Lord to their predicted recovery in the last days.

v. 16. These are the words of Isaiah, occasioned by the unbelief of his message; but also of Christ, speaking by His Spirit through him, and predicting His own work, in giving the oracles of God in trust to His own disciples after the resurrection. Isaiah speaks to his helpers or companions, such as Baruch was to Jeremiah, and instructs them to give copies of his message to the faithful alone, the disciples of the prophet, who had heard it with docility and reverence. It probably refers to the whole series, ch. i. —xii., and implies that it was written and copied for the use of the faithful, from the date of its oral delivery in the second year of Ahaz. The meaning in the antitype corresponds. When the Jews rejected our Saviour, and His gospel, He taught the Apostles not only to preach it in the world, but, in sacred writings to consign it to the lasting custody of the Church of Christ.

v. 17. The message being thus intrusted to those who alone were prepared to receive it, the prophet expected that the rest of the people would be obdurate and profane. He would wait patiently on the Lord until the time, when "in their affliction they would seek Him early," and a remnant would return in true repentance to the God of their fathers. In the antitype the words, like lxii. 1, predict the ceaseless intercession of our Lord for the final recovery of Israel, all through the ages when Jerusalem would be trodden down of the Gentiles, and while the branches remain broken off from their olive tree.

v. 18. Isaiah was now "a sign and a wonder" from his strange confidence in the hour of deep alarm, and from his stern opposition to the fatal policy of Ahaz. His children were signs and wonders, from their names, denoting the sure approach of God's judgments; and the younger, from the public prediction of his

for wonders in Israel, from the LORD of hosts which dwelleth in mount Zion. 19 And whereas they will say unto you, Inquire of them that have familiar spirits, and of the wizards that chirp and mutter; should not a people inquire of their God? for the living *should they inquire* of the dead? 20 To the law, and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *there shall be* no morning unto them. 21 And they shall pass through it, hardly bestead, and hungry: and it shall come to pass, when they are hungry, that they will fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and will look upward. 22 And *one* shall look unto the earth; and behold, trouble and gloominess, dimness of anguish, and utter darkness of desolation. IX. 1. For the dimness shall not be such as in her anguish, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali; and afterward more grievously afflicted the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

birth, and after his first year, from his being a constant memorial of a warning already fulfilled.

“Which dwelleth in Mount Zion.” A prophetic allusion to the scene of coming deliverance. The head of Damascus was Rezin, soon to be slain; and of Samaria, Remaliah’s son, soon to be slain also; but the head of Judah was Mount Zion, the city of Immanuel, the dwelling of the Lord of hosts. The flood might reach to the neck, but the head was safe from its power. For there “the Lord of hosts would be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of His people,” xxviii. 5. The fulfilment in the antitype, Heb. ii. 13, is not less clear. The first Jewish believers, the spiritual children of Messiah, would in the days of the Apostles be a sign and wonder to the unbelieving people.

viii. 18—ix. 1. These verses refer directly to the coming Assyrian troubles. More remotely, they include the two crises of Chaldean and Roman desolation, and also a predicted time of trouble to Israel, still to come. The first verse of ch. ix. belongs to those before it, in the Hebrew division; but many Christian interpreters give it a different meaning, so as to include it in the following promise. Israel are here described as having recourse to sorcery, in despair of help from God.

But the result would be to aggravate their distress and misery.

v. 19. “And whereas, &c.” The words may be viewed either as the prophet’s own, or as the voice of God speaking by his lips. The parties addressed are the faithful in Jerusalem, who will be invited by others to consult charmers and wizards. A double reply to this wicked counsel is put into their lips. Should not a people, most of all, the chosen people, inquire of their God, and not of those who deal in forbidden sorcery? Should they hope to obtain from the dead guidance for the living, and look down to Sheol for counsel, instead of looking upward to the mercy seat of God? The spiritualism of those days, as well as of the last times, turned its back on the living God, and was in direct opposition to His revealed will.

v. 20. The refusal of the people to take counsel from the word of God, their perverse devotion to forbidden alliances, and to hateful heathen sorceries, were the true cause why their sorrow would be so lasting, and no morning of joy and deliverance break early on the gloom. Those who reject the true Light have to walk on still in darkness.

v. 21—ix. 1. These three verses have caused much discussion, and received many diverse expositions. The following

Chap. IX. 2. THE people that walked in darkness have seen a great light : they that dwell in a land of the shadow of death, upon them light hath shined. 3 Thou hast multiplied the glad-

paraphrase, I believe, gives their true meaning.

"And they shall pass through it," this pathway of trouble, where no light dawns, "hardly bestead and hungry," not only with bodily hunger, but with deep craving of heart for help that fails them, and relief that never comes, Lam. iv. 17. Their sufferings and distress will stir up feelings of rage and vexation, that find vent in open blasphemies. They will do what Naboth was falsely said to do, blaspheme alike their earthly and their heavenly king, and look upward with the vain longing of despair. "And one shall look to the earth, and behold, trouble and gloominess, dimness of anguish, and utter darkness of desolation." There will not only, throughout the land of promise, be a twilight of fear and perplexity, but hopeless sorrow, entire expulsion, and midnight gloom. "For the dimness shall not be" merely "such as in her anguish, when at the first he lightly afflicted," &c. The "former time" is when Ben-hadad, in the reign of Baasha, "smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maachah, and all Cinneroth, and all the land of Naphthali," 1 Ki. xv. 20. The latter time, or afterward, is that heavier scourge, when Hazael "smote all the coasts of Israel; from Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, from Aroer, Gilead and Bashan," 2 Ki. x. 33. These two earlier stages of trouble and captivity exactly answer to the description. But the trouble now in prospect would be still more severe, so as to account for the predicted despair of the people, and the deep gloom and darkness that would cover the land. See App. IV.

ix. 2-7. Here the message changes, with a striking abruptness, from the midnight of sorrow to a daybreak of hope and joy; from the Assyrian and Chaldean desolations to the times of Immanuel, the great Hope of Israel, and the heir of David's throne. The same region, the borders of the sea of Galilee, where the sorrow of captivity had begun, was to witness the first dawn of the joyful change.

v. 2. This promise is quoted Matt. iv. 14-16, and is given as the reason why

our Lord chose Capernaum by the sea of Galilee, for the main seat of His earthly ministry. Hence many separate this verse from those before it, as if a direct prediction of the scene of Messiah's labours. But the words in St Matthew do not at all require this construction. "The land of Zebulun," &c., is not there in grammatical apposition with the words that follow. The local reference results simply from the succession of the two verses, and will be the same whether v. 1 be threatening or promise. Again, the change from warning to promise is simplest and most emphatic at ix. 2, where it is placed in the Hebrew Bible. It is harsh and strained to place it in the last clause of v. 22 (Hitzig, Alex., Drechsler), or to make the particle one of contrast, (A.V., Gesen., Rosenm., Ewald, Henderson), or to refer back to viii. 13, 14 (Vitringa), or to make a complete pause in the middle of ix. 1, where the Hebrew has only a secondary pause. The correlative, *even* so, which the emphasis would then require, is wanting. Both verbs have the same tense, while the rendering of *Mede*, &c. requires a strong contrast of past and future. The opening of a new subject with a double comparison has no parallel in the book, and is quite unlike the terseness of Isaiah; while the sudden promise in v. 2, after the threatening has reached its height, is emphatic and striking in the highest degree. The usual sense of *cabad* is retained, while the contrast suggests at once the meaning, in *hêqal*, of a lighter affliction. The history too corresponds, and shews two successive stages of wasting and exile, under Ben-hadad and Hazael, which answer precisely to the description.

The force of the quotation, on this view, is plain. That same district of the Holy Land, marked by the first step of national downfall, was also chosen for the first dawn of light, when it was made the scene of our Lord's personal ministry. He, who was despised and rejected of men, would choose his Apostles, and dawn upon the benighted people, in despised Galilee.

ness, thou hast increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest: and as *men* are glad when they divide the spoil. 4 For the yoke of his burden, and the staff upon his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, hast thou broken as in the day of Midian. 5 For every greave of the fierce warrior, and every warcloak rolled in blood, shall be utterly burned, *it* shall be fuel of the fire. 6 For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government is on his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. 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.

v. 2. "Light hath shined." The absence of the article adds to the force of the promise, which has thus its most comprehensive form.

v. 3. This is one of very few cases where a conjectural change of reading *gilah* for *goi lo* or *lah* (see App. IV.), seems justified by the variations, and the internal evidence. The parallelism thus becomes complete, and the sense, obscure in the received version, emphatic and clear. So Luke i. 14, "And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at His birth." The birth of our Lord would be "glad tidings of great joy to all the people," Luke ii. 10.

vv. 4, 5. Of v. 5 many renderings have been proposed. The word *seon* occurs here only. Some render it as a measure, some the stir and noise of battle; but most moderns, from the Syriac, Chaldean and Ethiopic, as a greave or military boot (J. Kimchi, Rosenm., Gesen., Maurer, Hengst., Henderson, Ewald, Selwyn, Drechsler). The sense of *armour* in general is preferred by others (De Wette, Hitzig, Umbreit, Knobel, Alexander). Again, *raas* is referred by most to the din of battle, by some to the sound of greaves. It seems best to take it as modifying the previous word. The greave and war-cloak complete the picture of the warrior; the tumult or war-cries, and the bloodstained vesture, are the signs of battle to the eye and ear.

The last clause alludes to the custom of burning hostile or useless weapons on

the field of victory. The words themselves predict the overthrow of Sennacherib. But there seems to be a further remote allusion to the more remote event in Ez. xxxix. and to the scattering, in the last days, of the people that delight in war.

vv. 6, 7. The vision ends with the same key-note with which it begun,—Immanuel, God with us, the Son of the virgin mother, who knows from his childhood to refuse evil and choose the good, the heir of David's throne, the Mighty God, to whom the faithful remnant will return, ix. 6—x. 21, the Prince of Peace, to reign for evermore. He is the bright morning-star of hope and comfort in every storm of adversity and hour of sorrow. He is Wonderful in the mystery of his person, the Incarnate Son of God. He is Counsellor, when He ascended on high, and received with sevenfold wisdom the book of the Divine decrees, to govern our sinful world. He is the Mighty God, the champion and avenger of his people, who will in righteousness judge and make war, and subdue his enemies. He is the Father of Eternity, who will reign for ever; and the Prince of Peace, who will make wars to cease to the end of the world, and reign in righteousness and peace for evermore. In Him will be fulfilled the later promise, "And the Lord God will 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," Luke i. 32, 33.

## § 6. CHAP. IX. 8—X. 34.—THE ASSYRIAN SCOURGE.

The whole of this section is closely connected in itself, and with those which precede and follow. After the completed promise of the coming Immanuel, the destined heir of David's throne, it resumes the warning of ch. v. 24—30, describes the first stage of it as already fulfilled in the Syrian invasion of Rezin and Pekah, denounces the unrepenting stubbornness both of Ephraim and Judah, and goes on to predict more fully the coming Assyrian desolation. The prophecy includes the fall of Samaria, an attempt to surprise Jerusalem, and terrify it into surrender, and the sudden overthrow of the invading army by the hand of God. The call to the Assyrian x. 5, to execute the Divine anger, is the immediate result of the woes on Israel's iniquity, which form the opening portion. The sins of God's people would bring upon them the heathen spoiler, and ensure his success, till God's discipline was accomplished. Then the pride awakened by his success, and his ignorance of its true cause, would ensure a terrible retribution, like the sudden hewing down of a mighty forest.

THE LORD sent a word unto Jacob, and it hath lighted down upon Israel: 9 And all the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say, in pride and stoutness of heart, 10 The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones; the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars: 11 Therefore the LORD will set up against him Rezin's adversaries, and will join his enemies together; 12 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.

Chap. ix. 8. The earliest warning of the prophet to "the house of Jacob," ii. 6, had now begun to be fulfilled. The slaughter in Judah, Is. v. 25, 2 Chr. xxviii. 6—8, had been like a sudden thunderbolt from heaven. The renewed voice of warning begins with an allusion to this great calamity. But the first stroke, which filled Judah with dismay, had only inflamed the pride of Ephraim. Vain of their late success, they hoped to recover more than their former greatness. They would repair every loss of four disastrous reigns, changing bricks into hewn stone, and sycamores into cedars. But their pride would only hasten their punishment.

The Lord would set up against Ephraim the Assyrians, Rezin's dreaded adversaries, and his own accustomed foes, the Syrians and Philistines, from opposite sides, to waste and destroy. And still there are no signs of repentance, and the judgment must be the more severe.

v. 11. "Rezin's adversaries." The original order being restored makes the sense clearer. "Against him" means against Ephraim, not Rezin. The Assyrians, the foes of Rezin, would aggravate the plague from the Syrians and Philistines. The burden, v. 12, links this with the earlier message, v. 25.

13 FOR this people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the LORD of hosts. 14 Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, palm-branch and rush, in one day. 15 The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail. 16 Also the guides of this people cause *them* to wander; and *they that are* led by them *are* destroyed. 17 Therefore the Lord will have no joy in their young men, neither will have mercy on their fatherless and widows: for every one is a hypocrite and evildoer, and every mouth speaketh folly. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

18 FOR wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briers and the thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest; and they shall mount up *like* the eddies of smoke. 19 Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as fuel of the fire: no man shall spare his brother. 20 And he shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and shall eat on the left hand, and not be satisfied: they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm: 21 Manasseh, Ephraim, and Ephraim, Manasseh; *and* they together *will be* against Judah. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

CHAP. X. WOE unto them that decree decrees of falsehood,

vv. 13—17. Intestine confusion and broils would aggravate the course of these foreign inroads. Head and tail, palm-branch and rush, would be taken away together. The charge, brought earlier against Judah, is now applied to Ephraim in its turn, iii. 12, ix. 16. The people would be flattered by those who ought to be their guides; and blind subservience to popular caprice would overturn God's covenant, and bring them unto ruin. Democratic license is the sign of a decaying state, and its boast of progress and light prepare the way for political ruin. The infection had spread through all classes, and all alike must be visited with judgment.

v. 14. "Palm-branch and rush." A fit emblem of the highest and lowest classes. "The tail," as the emblem of "the prophet that speaketh lies," may be compared with Rev. ix. 10, 19. As none are more honourable than God's

faithful messengers, none are baser in His sight than those who sacrifice God's truth to secure the favour of an ungodly and idolatrous people.

vv. 18—21. The picture of guilt grows darker still. It is like destroying fire in the jungle of a forest. The confusion and misery thus caused are like the volumes of smoke that mount up in whirling eddies from such a conflagration. The skies over them are dark with the frown of God. Unbridled selfishness wastes their strength, and hurries them to ruin. The interests of all are so closely entwined that this is a partial suicide. "No man shall spare his brother." The discord and hatred will extend to the separate tribes as well as the rival kingdoms. And the burden lasts, and judgment grows deeper still.

Ch. x. 1—4. A direct Woe is now pronounced against their various acts of social oppression. Wherever faith and true

and register oppression they have written! 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 they rob the fatherless! 3 And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the storm *that* shall come from afar? to whom will ye flee for help, and where will ye leave your glory? 4 Without me it shall bow down captive, and they shall fall down slain. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

5 Ho, Assyrian! the rod of mine anger! and this *is* the staff

piety decay, there social virtue declines also. Manasseh, Ephraim, and Judah, the whole house of Jacob, are included in the solemn warning.

v. 1. The second clause has been variously rendered. But one word seems to refer to loose draughts, or private copies, of unrighteous laws or judgments, and the other to their publication in due legal form. Flagrant wrong, when it is cloaked by the forms of law, becomes still more hateful, and brings down speedy vengeance from God. The last clause reverts to a direct assertion of the fact itself, and thus adds to the force of the description.

v. 2. Their sin is their folly. What stronghold can they possibly find, where their wealth and honour will be safe from the cruel spoiler? Their God has abandoned them, and their only true defence is gone. Forsaken by Him, their glory will soon fall under the yoke of bondage; and these oppressors of the poor by fraud and legal chicanery will perish with the sword, and lie amidst heaps of the slain.

Two words here have caused much variety of judgment. The first, *bilti*, has been rendered, making the verse depend on the other, "so that ye should not, &c." (LXX., Vulg., Luther, Castalio, Dathe, Knobel). Or, again, as an alternative, "except they bow as captives, they shall fall, &c." (Syr., De Dieu, Gesen., Rosenm., Hend., Alex.). Or "without me," that is, when God-abandoned (A. V., Kimchi, Noldius, Vitranga, Lowth, Gesen., Mich., Ewald, Maurer). Since this verse forms the climax of the warning, the most emphatic lawful rendering is the best. To make this verse

only modify the last weakens the force of both. And it is feebler still to make it a mere alternative, that they will be slain unless they are made captive. But the brief allusion to the true source of their calamities, that they were God-abandoned, is impressive in the highest degree.

Again, *tachath* has been rendered "in the place of" (Kimchi, Rosenmr., Ewald), (2) "under" (A. V., Junius, Piscator, Maurer, Knobel, Alexr., Drechsler), (3) "among" (Aben Ezra, Abarb., Vitranga, Rosenmr., Henderson), or (4) adverbially, "down" or "low" (De Dieu, Gen. xlix. 25). This last, though a rare usage, has one clear precedent, and the analogy of most other languages in its favour, removes all obscurity, and gives an emphatic meaning. The word "captive" being singular, seems to exclude the other constructions. To fall down under captives is harsh, but to fall "under a captive" is a phrase quite unnatural.

vv. 5—11. The controversy of God with his rebellious people now reaches its height. They had been warned already, in Uzziah's reign, that He would "lift up an ensign to the nations from afar, and hiss unto them from the ends of the earth," and that they would "come with speed, swiftly." The hour is now come. The Assyrian armies are called to fulfil their task, and execute the decreed judgment. The moral blindness of the instrument employed gives double power to the warning.

v. 5. Many render the opening words "Woe to the Assyrian," (LXX., Jerome, Luther, Vitr., Cocceius, Gesen., Rosenmr., Umbreit, Knobel, Maurer, Jenour, Hend., Alexr., Drechsler). Alexander thinks the analogy of v. 1 and the later threatenings

in their hand, *even* mine indignation. 6 I will send him against an impious nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge; to take a spoil, and to take a prey, and to tread them down like mire of the streets. 7 Howbeit he *indeed* meaneth not so, neither will his heart so intend: for *it is* in his heart to destroy and to cut off nations not a few. 8 For he saith, *Are* not my princes, all of them, kings? 9 *Is* not Calno as Carchemish? *is* not Hamath as Arpad? *is* not Samaria as Damascus? 10 As my hand hath found the idol kingdoms, whose gods surpass *those of* Jerusalem and Samaria, 11 Shall I not, as I have done to Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?

decisive in its favour. It seems plain, however, that it is not a woe, but a Divine summons to the Assyrian (Calv., Munster, Pagnin., Montanus, Lowth, De Wette, Hitzig, Ewald). This appears, first by the reference to ch. v. 25, "he shall hiss to them from the ends of the earth." Next, from the title, "the rod of mine anger," the moral ground of this summons to do God's work. Thirdly, because his blindness is first mentioned v. 7, after his commission. Lastly, because the Woe comes much later, indirectly in xvii. 12, and directly in xxxiii. 1, after the latest woes on Ephraim and Judah. The use of the same word, in warning and invitation, follows a kind of law of alternation and progress from judgment to mercy. First, seven Woes on guilty Israel, v. 8, 11, 18, 20, 21, 22, x. 1. Next, this Call to the Assyrian, the rod of God's anger, to do His work, x. 5. When this work is half done, a Woe on his army, xvii. 12, and a second Call to the rival kingdom, to own the hand of God. Next, five Woes on Israel and Zion, xxviii. 1; xxix. 1, 15; xxx. 1; xxxi. 1, followed by a Woe to the oppressor, when his work is done, xxxiii. 1; two more Woes, after an interval, on faithless Israelites, xlv. 9, 10, and a final Call of Gospel invitation, lv. 1.

The double metaphor vv. 5, 6 has led Hitzig and Ewald to alter the text, and others to distort or enfeeble it. But it is beautiful and expressive. The Assyrian is a mere tool, wholly under the control of God. His weapons also and forces are powerless to injure, except by the strength

they receive through God's indignation against Israel.

v. 5. The Woes on Ephraim and Judah are here followed by a Call to the Assyrians to fulfil the judgment. But all their power to waste and destroy arises solely from the appointment of God. They are a tool in His hand, unconsciously doing His work; and His indignation is like a staff in their hand, securing that the work shall be effectually done.

"To take a spoil," &c. The warning in the name of the prophet's child, Maher-shalal-hash-baz, is now to be fulfilled.

v. 7. Such a commission from God, however, is far from the thoughts of the Assyrian king. He will ascribe the whole series of his conquests to his own prowess and wisdom alone. Carchemish and Calno on the Euphrates and Tigris, Arpad and Hamath on the Orontes, Damascus and Samaria on the route southward towards Jerusalem, would fall in succession, and some had already fallen. His pride would grow with every victory. Each past conquest would be viewed as a pledge of further triumphs. His ambition, blind to God's secret purpose, would thus set up an inductive philosophy of its own.

v. 11. Many infer from this verse that the prophecy dates after the fall of Samaria, (Rosenm., Gesen., Knobel, Ewald). But this is quite groundless, and destroys the force of the passage. In v. 6 even the sending is still future, while its object, ix. 9, 17, 22, is plainly Ephraim as well as Judah. The passage does not fix one point of time, but predicts



12 WHEREFORE it shall come to pass, when *once* the Lord shall have performed his whole work on mount Zion and on Jerusalem, *that* 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*, 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, like a mighty hero, *their* princes: 14 And my hand hath found, as a nest, the riches of the nations; and as one gathereth eggs *a bird* hath left, *so* have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or that opened the mouth, or chirped.

15 SHALL the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? *or* shall the saw magnify itself against him that moveth it? As if the rod should brandish them that lift it up! as if the staff should lift up *him who is* not wood! 16 Therefore will the Lord, the LORD of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he will kindle a burning like the burning

and explains the growth of the Assyrian's proud confidence. The prophetic present shifts onward from the siege of Calno to that of Hamath, and again to that of Samaria, till it culminates in his boasts of speedy triumph before the walls of Jerusalem. Thus v. 10 answers to a point of time before, and v. 11 after, the fall of Samaria. The whole is a prophetic picture, a sequel to the briefer warning, ch. v. 25—30.

vv. 12—19. The doom of the Assyrian is now foretold. No sooner shall his appointed work be done, than his boastings shall end in utter shame. Wicked actions are the natural "fruit" of pride of heart. He may boast for a time of his triumphs, while all is unresisting submission. But as his pride increases, so the rebukes of God grow more contemptuous and severe. The "whole work" means here the predicted judgment upon the sins of Israel; and "the fruit," the wicked actions of the Assyrian, and perhaps especially his direct blasphemies against Jehovah. The word, *abbir*, v. 13, sometimes denotes a bull, and may be used with reference to the winged bull in the Assyrian mythology, but is rather to be taken here in its kindred sense of a mighty hero. The Assyrian thus claims for himself to be the ideal of

a mighty and valiant conqueror. The "seated ones," v. 13, seems to denote here the sitters upon thrones, the rulers and princes of the vanquished nations. The cruelties of eastern conquest might well strike extreme terror into the people who were subdued.

v. 15. The figure here denotes, not mere opposition, but a ridiculous reversal of the true relation between the heathen king, the mere tool, and Jehovah who employs him. It is just as if the rod or staff of wood should pretend to lift up or to brandish the man who holds it, and who is not a mere piece of wood, like itself, but far higher and nobler. "There is no wisdom, nor counsel, nor understanding against the Lord."

vv. 16—19. The Assyrian overthrow is now foretold under the figure of a vast forest conflagration. It would come direct from God himself, and be terrible and complete. Not only the rank and file of his soldiers, but the mighty and the noble would perish. Though he would boast of entering into God's Lebanon, and his Carmel or fruitful field, xxxvii. 24, it is his own Lebanon and Carmel that will be destroyed. It will be like the sudden panic of soldiers, when a standard is taken, and its bearer falls down

of a fire. 17 And the Light of Israel shall be a fire, and his Holy One a flame; and shall burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day: 18 And it shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body; and they shall be as when a standard bearer fainteth. 19 And the remnant of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may reckon them. 20 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. 21 A remnant shall return, the remnant of Jacob, unto the Mighty God. 22 For though thy people Israel were as the sand of the sea, a remnant *only* of them shall return: a consumption *is* decreed, it shall overflow with righteousness. 23 For the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth make a consummation, and that determined, in the midst of all the land.

24 THEREFORE thus saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts: Fear not, O my people, that dwellest in Zion, because of the Assyrian: he will smite thee *indeed* with a rod, and lift up his staff

and is slain. The remnant will be so few, that they may be counted by a child. How striking was the fulfilment, when the angel of the Lord, in one night, slew one hundred fourscore and five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians!

v. 20. From the scanty relics of the Assyrian host the message turns now to the sacred remnant in Israel. The name of the prophet's son, Shear-jashub, "a remnant shall return," after being a sign and wonder in Israel more than forty years, will at length be fulfilled. After the great Assyrian overthrow, this remnant will cleave to the Lord with true repentance and living faith. Judgments, in which multitudes will be consumed, are decreed and sure; but not less certainly this remnant will be spared, and will return, in faith and humility, to the God of Israel. And, however numerous the people may be, it will be a remnant only; while sore vengeance will light on all the apostates throughout the land of promise.

The direct reference is plainly to the time of Hezekiah, when those who were spared were weaned, by bitter sufferings, from the senseless trust of Ahaz and his counsellors in the Assyrian power, and

learned to rely with simpler faith on the covenant of their God. But this was the earnest of a later fulfilment in the return from Babylon, iv. 3, in the times of the Gospel, Rom. ix. 27, 28, and in the final restoration of Israel. See Dan. ix. 27, where the phrase recurs.

vv. 24—27. An exhortation now is given to the faithful in Jerusalem, where the scourge would be stayed, and suddenly followed by a joyful deliverance. The command, "Fear not," to give it more emphasis, begins the message. A double ground of confidence is then given. Israel are the people of the Lord, and Zion is the place He has chosen. The Assyrian, like Egypt and its task-masters, may oppress them for a moment, but for a moment only. The indignation of God against His people, that staff in the Assyrian's hand, giving force to his strokes, would soon cease. Then the rod would be broken, and thrown away. Samaria, like Damascus, may fall, the fenced cities of Judah be taken, and a heavy yoke and tribute, like the yoke of Egypt, may be imposed. The blows may be grievous, but the city of God is safe. The oppressor's time is short, and the wrath he is to

against thee, after the manner of Egypt. 25 For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger, in their destruction. 26 And the LORD of hosts will stir up a scourge for him, like the slaughter of Midian at the rock Oreb; and his rod *shall be* on the sea, and he will lift it up after the manner of Egypt. 27 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.

28 HE is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron: at Michmash he hath laid up his baggage. 29 They are gone beyond

execute will soon turn on himself, and cause his own destruction. His fall will be like that of Midian, when overthrown by Gideon and the sons of Ephraim; or like that of Egypt, when the rod of Moses was lifted up over the sea, and it returned to its strength when the morning appeared. Ex. xiv. 27.

v. 27. The burden and yoke of the Assyrian, however firm and strong, should soon be destroyed in answer to the prayers of the faithful remnant. On them would rest the Spirit of grace and supplication, the holy anointing of God. And this would be an earnest of lasting deliverance through the promised Messiah, on whom the anointing Spirit would rest in fullest measure, xi. 1—3.

This verse has been obscured, and strained constructions or various readings have been proposed, from seeking a relation in the emblems which belongs to the things figured alone. The seeming paradox forces our thoughts deeper, when the hidden meaning comes to light. Ointment has no power whatever to destroy yokes either of wood or iron; but the anointing of the Spirit has power to remove the yoke of sin, and to set free from the bondage of all worldly violence and oppression.

vv. 28—34. On these verses Knobel remarks, "The description is prophecy, not an oracle after the events, since no Assyrian king made the march described." In the view of critics of this school, if true, it is history after the event, but if false, then only a prophecy. Comp. Is. xxix. 10, 11. No distinct record remains, it is true, of this march; but nothing in the history

excludes it, and there is everything to make it probable. When Sennacherib "came up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them," his first effort would naturally be to take Jerusalem by surprise. For this end the proper course would be to assemble part of his army near Bethel, the southern limit of previous conquests, and of Ephraim, and then to make a forced march southward against Jerusalem. The difficulties of this route for a large force, while it is clearly the shortest, would be a strong reason for choosing it with such an object in view. When the surprise failed, the enemy would prosecute the campaign by the siege of the other fenced cities, which were weaker, straitening Jerusalem by blockade, or striving to terrify it into surrender; and only when these threats proved to be vain, an attempt would be made, last of all, to take it by storm in a regular siege.

v. 28. Aiath is Ai, near Bethel, the natural starting-point in a forced march to surprise Jerusalem. Migron, near Michmash, is the place where Saul tarried under a pomegranate before Jonathan's victory. The narrow pass between Michmash and Gibeah, and between the sharp rocks, Bozez and Sineh, 1 Sam. xiv. 4, made it needful to leave the baggage behind. Ramah lies west of the route, Gibeah in its track: one is alarmed, the other takes to flight. Gebim, used here only, seems merely a name for the heights northward of Jerusalem. Nob is "a low peaked hill to the right of the north road, opposite Shâfât, from which Mount Zion is seen." Porter, *Handb.* II. § 24.

v. 29. Several (Knobel, Barnes, Drech-

the passage, they have lodged at Geba ; Ramah is afraid, Gibeah of Saul is fled. 30 Cry with shrill voice, O daughter of Gallim : hearken, Laishah ; answer her, O Anathoth. 31 Madmenah is removed ; the dwellers on the heights flee in haste. 32 As yet the same day he will stand in Nob ; he will shake his hand *against* the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

33 BEHOLD, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, will lop the bough with terror, and the high ones of stature *are* hewn down, and the lofty shall be brought low. 34 And he will cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one.

### § 7. THE PROMISE OF THE SON OF DAVID.

CHAP. XI. AND there shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 2 And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him ; the Spirit of wisdom

sler) take *lanu* for the pronoun, "Geba is a lodging for us." But this abrupt change of person is harsh and strange ; and the sense "they have lodged a lodging" answers to the other clause, "they have passed the passage." Also from Josh. xviii., 1 Ki. xv. 22, Geba and Gibeah were distinct places, though near together.

v. 30. This verse admits of several renderings. Some render Laishah, "toward Laish," or northward, in the direction of Dan-Laish. Some make *aniyah*, as in A. V., an epithet of Anathoth. Others (Hitzig, Henderson) take it as a proper name, the same as in Beth-any ; others as a verb. The version "hearken towards Laish, O poor Anathoth," is not impossible. But 1 Sam. xxv. 44 makes it likely that some site near Gallim was named from Laish, a chief man of the place in Saul's days. The version above seems thus to be the best both for rhythm and sense. Laishah listens to the cry of fear from Gallim, and Anathoth takes it up with a responsive shriek of terror.

vv. 33, 34. The picture of the forced march is complete. But now the scene suddenly changes. The middle steps of the campaign are omitted, and the prophet describes the catastrophe. The proud king vaunted that he had put down princes like a mighty hero ; and by one

far mightier than himself he must be suddenly brought low, by the destroying angel of God, and the fierce anger of the Holy One of Israel.

### § 7. PROMISE OF THE SON OF DAVID, CH. XI., XII.

The prophecy of Immanuel, vii.—ix. 7, has two subjects interlaced together, the coming trouble of Ephraim and Judah from the Assyrian, and the promise of the Child, who is the Mighty God, and whose reign will endure for ever. The two portions that follow unfold separately the warning and the promise. The vision here passes on from the fall of the Assyrian to the promised reign of Immanuel. The short reprieve under Hezekiah is a hill-top in the prophetic landscape, whence the eye is carried over dark valleys of sorrow to the times of Messiah.

v. 1. The stem, *gezah'*, is the stump left in the ground when a tree has been felled. The mention of Jesse, and not David, implies the same fact. The birth of Messiah is thus referred to a time when the royalty of David's house would have passed away, as Jesse was only a private person ; just as before it was referred to a time when the land would have suffered an utter desolation. In Messiah David's line would flourish after seeming extinc-

and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the LORD: 3 And shall make him of quick scent in the fear of the LORD: and he will not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: 4 But with righteousness will 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 will he slay the wicked. 5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. 6 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.

tion. Messiah is the Branch of Jehovah, Is. iv. 2, the Branch of righteousness that would grow up to David, Jer. xxiii. 5, the highest Branch of the young cedar, to be planted on the height of Israel, Ez. xvii. 22, 23, the Man whose name is the Branch, a Priest on his throne, Zech. vi. 12. In His person truth would flourish out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven, Ps. lxxxv. 11. In moral contrast to the sudden fall of the mighty Assyrian forest, this lowly Branch was to grow up from the root of Jesse, when the noble tree of David's house had been cut down to the ground. When pride has been abased, the Meek and Lowly One must be exalted.

v. 2. This sevenfold name of the Spirit answers to the seven branches of the candlestick in the tabernacle, and to the "seven lamps of fire before the throne" in St John's vision, Rev. iv. 5. He is "the Spirit of Jehovah," a Divine Person, proceeding from the Father and the Son. He is the Spirit of wisdom, or insight into all Divine truth; and of understanding, to choose in practice the things which are excellent. He is the Spirit of counsel, to whom the whole scheme of Providence lies open; and of might, by whom are executed the decrees of the Father. He is the Spirit of knowledge, enabling us to understand what the will of the Lord is; and of the fear of the Lord, disposing the hearts of men to obey that will with reverence. And in all these divine characters He was to rest on Messiah without measure.

v. 3. "Of quick scent." Our bodily

senses have their counterparts in the higher faculties of the soul. Here smell, in its higher meaning, is contrasted with the outward faculties of sight and hearing. Messiah is to share that Divine attribute, announced at the choice of David,—“Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart,” 1 Sa. xvi. 7.

v. 4. St Paul and St John, in their prophecies, seem to allude to this verse, 2 Thess. ii. and Rev. xix. 15, 21. The three prophets all announce a time of judgment in the last days, to follow after times of patient long-suffering. The word “wicked,” having no article, means naturally each and all of those who are eminently wicked. The reference to one single person, or one corporate body, like the Man of Sin in Thessalonians, is neither required nor excluded. But the words seem best explained in the distributive sense.

v. 5. The figure does not mean, simply, that Messiah will be righteous and faithful; but that by the fulness of these moral perfections He will be strengthened for the great work He fulfils. In this the disciple is called upon to copy his Divine Master, to be girt with truth, and have on “the breastplate of righteousness,” Eph. vi. 14.

vv. 6—9. It has been a great controversy, whether these words predict (Irenaeus, Tertullian, al.) a literal change, a control or reversal of animal instincts, as in Paradise; or are simply (Jerome, &c.) an allegory of moral changes wrought by the Gospel. The objection of Jerome

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.  
 8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp; and the weaned child shall put his hand on the basilisk's den.  
 9 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 others to the earlier view, that the rod, branch, girdle, must then be literal, is plainly worthless. It confounds two things wholly distinct, the metaphors common in all poetic writing, and continuous allegory.

Taken simply as an allegory, it is hard to give the words a consistent meaning. The change of wolves and lions into lambs is the natural emblem for conversion, not the dwelling of both side by side. If the wolf, lion, leopard, lamb, kid, serpent, little child, alike denote regenerate and holy men, all distinctness in the allegory is lost. If the figures, as mere figures, are beautiful and expressive, why should their actual fulfilment be less beautiful, whenever "the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God"? Rom. viii. 21. Taken in the letter, the words will answer to a mysterious notice in the opening of God's Law, Gen. i. 30, and to one of the noblest promises of the Gospel. The creatures will be subject to man, when man is subject to God.

There are two objections to this view, one theological, one scientific. Why should so large a space be given to a change in the animal creation in this brief prophecy? Doth God care for oxen? It may be replied that the description is given, not for its own sake, but as a pledge how complete will be the redemption Messiah will bring to pass. If peace will so reign in this outmost and more unlikely sphere, how much more in the higher sphere of redeemed humanity!

The scientific objection has its strength in the plain fact, that carnivorous animals are adapted, by their whole structure, to prey upon the flesh of others. This fact, however, is implied, and not contradicted, in the vision. Its whole emphasis consists in the reversal or suspense

of the strong instincts of these beasts of prey by a mightier power. If it were natural for the lion to eat straw like the ox, the promise would lose all meaning. He, whom the fishes obeyed when on earth, can subdue the fiercest instincts of the wolf and lion, and turn them into parables of His own moral victories.

v. 9. "The holy mountain of God" usually denotes Zion alone. But the phrase here is peculiar, and occurs only elsewhere in Is. lxx. 25, "All my holy mountain," or literally "the whole mountain," or "every mountain of my holiness." The local features, so marked in this chapter, disprove a reference to the church throughout the world (Hend., Alex.); and a double allegory, which makes this mountain the same with the wolf, lion, bear, and leopard, is most harsh and violent. On the other hand, it would be strange to predict that none will hurt or destroy in Jerusalem, because piety is spread through the world.

The "whole mountain," then, seems to be here the mountain-range of Palestine, the "very fruitful hill" in the former parable, ch. v. 1, the mountain of God's inheritance, Ex. xv. 17, Is. lvii. 13. All its heights and mountains, Zion, Moriah, Gerizim, Olivet, Tabor, Hermon, Carmel and Lebanon, were hallowed by special memorials of Divine love. The keeping of the whole picture needs a reference to such mountains as had once contained the haunts of these beasts of prey.

"For the earth, &c." The context would here point to the narrower sense of "the land," that is, the land of promise, Palestine. Comp. ii. 7, 8, v. 30, vi. 11, 12, vii. 24, viii. 8, ix. 2, x. 23. The correspondence of the two clauses would then be perfect. But the mention of the earth, v. 4, and the repetition of the same promise, Hab. ii. 13, in the wider sense, confirms the received ver-

10 AND in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign to the nations: to him shall the Gentiles seek, and his resting-place shall be glorious.

11 AND it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD will 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. 12 And he will set up an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. 13 The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the vexers of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall

sion. There will then be a climax in the promise. There will be peace, first of all, throughout all the "fruitful hill" of God's own vineyard; and even more widely still, "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord," that knowledge which is life eternal, and the cure of all ill doing. And this knowledge shall be wide and deep, as the waters fill the bed of the mighty ocean.

v. 10. The Vision returns, from a picture of the completed redemption, to mark two main steps in its progress. The first is the reconciling of the world, when Israel were cast away; and the second that recovery of them again, which will be "life from the dead," Rom. xi. 15.

The day here is the future times of Messiah. He is called the Root of Jesse, as one growing up from the roots of David's family, when cut down and deprived of its royal grandeur. The peoples or nations (*amimim*) are not the tribes of Israel (Hend., al.) but the Gentiles, as ii. 4, viii. 9, x. 13, 14. The ensign is the standard of a captain or military leader. St Paul, Rom. xv. 12, quotes the words as predicting the call of the Gentiles. They shall "seek unto Christ," consult Him as their oracle, and resort to Him as their heavenly Guide. The resting-place is often referred to the church, where Christ dwells by his Spirit. But, 1 Tim. iii. 16 supplies a simpler and more emphatic meaning. Immanuel, God manifest in the flesh, would first be "preached unto the Gentiles," set up before their eyes as the standard whereto they should

resort; then "believed on in the world," or widely accepted as their Oracle and Teacher; and lastly, "received up into glory." His resting-place would thus indeed be glorious, "the right hand of the Majesty on high," Heb. i. 3, viii. 1.

v. 11. A return of Israel from previous captivity and dispersion is here one predicted feature of Messiah's reign. Does this refer to the Return from Babylon, or to a recovery still future? The order, and the close connexion with the victories of Messiah, point to the second or wider view. Yet even then the former must be included, as a signal earnest of a fuller recovery, more complete and glorious.

This Return is compared with the Exodus, as a still brighter display of God's favour to Israel. "The remnant of his people which shall be left." Here the name of Shear-jashub, the prophet's first-born, and his watchword when his mission began, carries forward its double voice of warning and of hope into the last days. Pathros is the Thebais, or Upper Egypt. The islands of the sea refer to all Europe, represented by its maritime tracts that lay westward from Palestine. Elam and Shinar are Persia and Babylon; and the "isles of the sea," or Greece and Rome, come last in this catalogue of the lands of Israel's dispersion, just as in Daniel's series of the Four Empires.

v. 13. Three different renderings of this verse have been proposed to make the parallelism complete. The first clause may be rendered "the envy against E-

not vex Ephraim. 14 And they shall alight on the border of the Philistines toward the west ; they shall spoil the sons of the east together ; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab, and the children of Ammon shall obey them. 15 And the LORD will utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea ; and with his mighty wind will he shake his hand over the river, and will smite it into seven streams, and make *men* go over dryshod. 16 And there shall be a 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.

phraim," as Is. xxvi. 11, (Luther). Next, the second may be explained "the adversaries (of Ephraim) *in* Judah" (Kimchi, Schult., Rosenm., Gesen., Hengst., Ewald and Henderson). Thirdly, the word may be taken as an abstract noun "the enmity of Judah," (Lowth). Or, fourthly, the rendering of the received version may be retained, though the parallelism seems left imperfect (Umbreit, Alex., Drechsler, Delitzsch). This simplest version is the best, and even the parallel is complete in reality, though not in appearance. The envy of Ephraim revealed itself in two stages ; first, as an internal feud in the nation of Israel ; and next, as bitter and open hostility against the Zion of God. Under David and Solomon we see the first, but under Pekah and Hoshea this second and worse stage. The first half of the verse predicts the end of foreign hostility and hatred ; the second, that of internal strife and discord. That bitter envy of Ephraim shall depart, which made it rank foremost among the open adversaries of Zion, vii. 1-8, and the vexers of Judah "shall be cut off," all those heathen powers, Syria, Philistia, and Asshur, which had found their willing ally in envious and apostate Ephraim. But the internal strife shall also cease. Here Ephraim and Judah were guilty alike, and both needed a moral conversion. Ephraim, restored to the covenant of God, "shall not envy Judah," as it had done in the times of Gideon, David, and Solomon ; and Judah, humbled by afflictions, "shall not vex Ephraim." The prominence here doubly given to the cure of Ephraim's jealousy refers us back to ch. vii. 1-18, and shows the striking moral

unity of these later messages in the time of Ahaz.

v. 14. The figure here is thought by many to be the pouncing of a hawk or eagle upon the shoulders of an antelope, and thus to denote military conquest. Some explain it that the Jews were to be conveyed swiftly by ships of the Philistines back to their own land (LXX., Jerome, Abarbanel). Others refer it to the conquests of Jonathan the Maccabee. But this agrees neither with the singular form of the word "shoulder," nor with the order of the prophecy. The word is used Josh. xv. 8, 10, 11 for the border of Judah towards Philistia ; and many justly prefer this meaning (Rosenm., Hitzig, Hend., Ewald, Drechsler, Delitzsch). The verb occurs lx. 8, in reference to the same or a similar event, and does not there allude to birds of prey. Such seems, then, to be the true sense. The returning Jews shall alight, as doves that flock to their windows, on the Philistines' border, to the west ; and shall lay their hand, in restored supremacy, on all the eastern regions of the land of promise.

vv. 15, 16. Signal acts of Divine power, as in the Exodus, are to attend this restoration. So Micah predicts, "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous things," Mic. vii. 15-17. The tongue of the Egyptian sea is that arm of the Gulf of Suez, which was parted in the Exodus, and to which attention is now turned by a recent triumph of human labour and skill ; but hereafter, that man may be humbled in the dust, and the Lord alone may be exalted. The river is the Eu-



CHAP. XII. 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 hast comforted me. 2 Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH *is* my strength, and *my* song: he also is become my salvation. 3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. 4 And in that day ye shall say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. 5 Sing unto the LORD, for he hath done excellent things: this *is* known in all the earth. 6 Cry out, and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion, for great *is* the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee!

phrases. The "mighty wind" is a peculiar word which may denote "hot, burning breath." The mighty stream will be so wasted, as to leave in its bed only seven fordable rivulets. Comp. Rev. xvi. 12, whether the same or only a kindred event. The message closes with a double allusion to the threatening in viii. 5—10 under the figure of an Euphratean overflow, and to the promise in Shear-jashub's name. "And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, like as it was to Israel, in the day he came up from the land of Egypt."

CHAP. XII. THE SONG OF RESTORED ISRAEL.

The Prophecy closes fitly with a song

of praise, the utterance of restored Israel. And this links itself with the fivefold burden of the previous vision ch. v. 25, ix. 12, 17, 21; x. 4 in a most impressive contrast. The hand of God, once stretched out in judgment, is now extended in mercy. His anger, once sore and heavy, is now turned away. The ceremony of drawing water from the pool of Siloam on the last great day of the Feast of Tabernacles would now receive a glorious antitype. Blessed themselves, the house of Israel shall be a blessing to others. All the nations of the earth are loudly invited to share in Zion's gladness, and in the joy of their long-delayed and full redemption.

## II. THE BURDENS ON THE NATIONS.

### CHAP. XIII.—XXVII.

#### § I. THE BURDEN OF BABYLON. CH. XIII.—XIV. 27.

THE First Series of Isaiah's Prophecies, chh. i.—xii. is followed by a Second, composed of Burdens on the Gentile nations, chh. xiii.—xxiii., and summed up in a common sequel of judgment and blessing, chh. xxiv.—xxvii. The two subjects of the first series are the impending Assyrian Woe, and the coming and reign of Immanuel, the Branch of the Lord. The former is unfolded anew in these Burdens themselves, and their sequel points again to the times of Messiah.

The date of this Second Series lies between the third year of Ahaz and the third of Hezekiah, or between the fulfilment of the warning, ch. viii. 1—4, and the opening of the siege of Samaria, predicted ch. xxviii. 2. During these sixteen years there seem to have been no direct inroads of Assyria on Ephraim or Judah, but it was extending and confirming its dominion over the surrounding heathen powers. The form of the prophecy corresponds. Burdens on the Gentile nations are successively revealed; and the message returns to Israel and to Judah, when the northern kingdom was ready to suffer once more under the Assyrian scourge. The arrangement has thus a clear basis in the history; so that the visions were probably revealed, almost or altogether, in the same order in which they now stand.

The Burden on Babylon takes precedence of the rest, since this was the Gentile power ordained to complete the predicted judgment of God on the chosen people. Next are the Burdens of Philistia, Moab, and Damascus, the neighbours of Israel on the west, the east, and the north, with a brief Sequel of their own. Next is the Burden on Egypt and Ethiopia, the southern rival of Assyria. Then follow, as before, three secondary Burdens on the border lands of the southern side. The message then returns to Palestine, in the Burden of the Valley of Vision; and the series ends with Tyre, the great maritime power of the ancient world. So also in ch. ii. the woe ends with "all ships of Tarshish, and all merchandize of beauty"; and in ch. xi. the lands of dispersion close with "the islands of the sea."

The name, burden, denotes a prophetic warning. This is proved by the constant use of the same word for a literal burden, and from the contents of the visions which have this title. Also by the severe rebuke addressed to those who borrowed this word, to convey the charge of a burdensome, severe, and repulsive character against all the messages of God, Jer. xxxiii. 33—40. Its use in Lam. ii. 14, Zech. xii. 1, quoted in proof of a wider sense, forms no exception. The "burdens of falsehood" will fitly express messages of judgment against the foes of Israel, when the people ought to have been warned of judgment coming on themselves; and the prediction in Zech. xii. is that Jerusalem would be "a burdensome stone to all the nations."

The name of Isaiah has occurred before in the Preface, ch. i. 1, in the Opening Vision, ch. ii. 1, and in the introduction to the Prophecy of Immanuel, vii. 3; and occurs again, ch. xx. 2, 3, and in the Historical Episode. It thus appears three times in the First, and three times in the Second Series, but not once in the Third; which is linked, however, more closely with the Second than the Second with the First, the Burdens passing, almost without pause, into the Woes that follow. There is a plain correspondence between ch. xiii. 19 and xxxii. 19, between xiii. 19—22 and ch. xxxiv., between xiv. 1—3 and ch. xxxv. Hence the present title, xiii. 1, links the name of the prophet with the Burdens, the Woes, and the concluding Promise. On the other hand, the peroration of the first Burden, xiv. 24—27, refers back to the double prediction of the Assyrian's fall, ix. 4, 5, xx. 16—19, and also to the key-note of the still earlier message, ch. v. 25, xiv. 26, 27. The mention of the Medes, ch. xiii. 17, is completed by that of Cyrus in the Later Prophecies, xlv. 28, xlv. 1. The title, then, of this first Burden forms an essential link in the structure of the whole book. In the four historical chapters, which constitute the Fourth Series, Isaiah's personal dignity and honour, as God's messenger, reaches its height. These are the historical basis and pedestal of all the Later Visions. And now the person of the prophet almost disappears from view; and, like the Baptist of whom he speaks, he becomes a mouth and a voice alone. The Word of God, the coming Messiah, speaks through him in those later visions, to proclaim comfort to His people, and bids all the islands keep silence and listen to the voice of their Lord and King, chh. xl. 1, xli. 1, xlix. 1.

Babylon reached its height of grandeur under Nabopolassar, and his son Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 623—561, more than a hundred years after the death of Ahaz. One generation later; B.C. 538, it was captured by Cyrus the Persian and Darius the Mede. In the fourth or fifth year of Darius Hystaspes, in consequence of a rebellion, he ordered its gates of brass to be taken away, and its walls lowered. Still later, Xerxes, B.C. 477, plundered and destroyed the temple of Belus, and carried away its golden tables and statues. Alexander tried to restore its greatness, but in vain. It was conquered by Seleucus Nicator, B.C. 312, and on his building his new capital, Seleucia on the Tigris, fell more rapidly into decay. In the time of Strabo and Diodorus it was almost a desert, and Pausanias, in the first part of the second century after Christ, says that nothing remained but the walls. These were partly repaired in the fourth century, to make a hunting-ground for wild beasts to the Persian king. Since then, for more than a thousand years, it has been a scene of solitude, horror, and desolation. Of Birs Nimroud, Rich writes in his Memoir on Babylon, "It burst at once on our sight, in the midst of rolling masses of thick black clouds, obscured by a haze, of which the indistinctness added to the sublimity; whilst a few strong catches of light, thrown upon the desert in the background, served to give some idea of the immense extent and dreary solitude of the wastes in which this venerable ruin stands," p. 74.

The genuineness of the title, and the Isaian authorship of this first Burden, have been denied by several modern critics (Justi, Gesen., Rosenm.,

Hitzig, Knobel, Ewald, Davidson, &c.) on such grounds as these: (1) "The standpoint of the writer is in the time of the captivity, when the Chaldean Empire was flourishing." On the contrary, it begins with the mustering of Median armies, and reaches on to a completed desolation, which has lasted to the present day. Or if the actual date be meant, that is fixed by the close, xiv. 25, before the fall of Sennacherib. (2) "Isaiah could not transfer his position into the distinct future, disregarding the horizon of his own day." This merely affirms that the Holy Spirit may predict events twenty or thirty, but not two hundred years beforehand. Besides, the political horizon of the time is kept in view, for a solemn oath of the Assyrian's fall closes the prophecy. (3) "The tone and spirit are bitter, revengeful, taunting, sarcastic. It is intelligible from one who had suffered under the Chaldeans, not from Isaiah." This is like one of the predicted "hard speeches" against the Lord of Hosts, whose message it is. The Burden is not "bitter," but most solemn and sublime. It breathes, not the feeble malice of Jewish exiles, but the holy anger of the Most High, against the oppressors of His people, and blasphemers of His great name. It is sarcastic, because it is the voice of Him who "scorneth the scorners, but giveth grace to the lowly." The vengeance is the same as in Rev. xviii., given through the Apostle of love. (4) "There are imitations of Ezekiel and Joel, and traces of acquaintance with Zephaniah." Between Jer. l, li., and Isai. xiii. there is considerable likeness. There is here a strong proof of the genuineness, and no argument against it. It is easy to conceive that these later prophets might borrow phrases or images from one earlier and greater; but incredible that a Vision so earnest and sublime, full of seraphic fire, should be a cento from three or four sources, turned into a forgery by prefixing a false name. (5) "The style and diction are unlike Isaiah's." On the contrary, there is no passage more characteristic of his style in the whole book. (6) "The prophecy was not fulfilled, as announced. The desolation did not take place by the Medes, as the prophecy asserts." The statement, and not the prediction, is untrue. To the Medes is assigned a fierce slaughter of the men of Babylon, when the city is captured; but how soon, or how slowly, or by what steps the total desolation would follow, of this the text says not a single word. The mention of shepherds and their flocks, and of tents of the Arabians, points to a time beyond the age of the Medo-Persian Empire. The reasons thus alleged from internal evidence, to disprove the genuineness, are all worthless. All the external evidence, and decisive reasons from the structure of the book, combine still further to prove that the vision is Isaiah's, and stands here in its proper place.

CHAP. XIII. THE BURDEN OF BABYLON, WHICH ISAIAH THE SON OF AMOZ DID SEE. 2 Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain: exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles. 3 I, even I, have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, my proudly rejoicing ones! 4 The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of the nations gathered together! the LORD of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. 5 They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, *even* the LORD, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land. 6 Howl ye! for the day of the LORD *is* at hand: it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. 7 Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt: 8 And they shall be afraid; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them: they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth; they shall be amazed one at an-

v. 1. The promise to Zion, ii. 1—5, and this Burden of Babylon, are the two portions of the book where the prophet's name is expressly given. They contain the two poles, in judgment and mercy, of his whole message. And the same law of arrangement is seen in each case. The promise to Zion in the last days is placed before the long series of troubles and woes coming on her for her sin; and the Burden of Babylon, the scourge of God, introduces the burdens of the other states and kingdoms, soon to be scourged by the Assyrio-Chaldean power.

v. 2. The Vision begins with a message of the Lord of hosts to the confederate princes. They are to set up a standard on a lofty mountain, bare and woodless, that it may be seen from afar, and to gather their armies, that they may fulfil His decreed judgment, and enter the gates of the palaces of Babylon. The commission is not from man, but from God himself. The armies of the Medes and Persians are His "sanctified ones," set apart by the Lord himself for this great work. They are His "proudly rejoicing ones," warriors that exult in the conscious pride of their own strength and prowess. The call is obeyed, the warriors throng to their standards. The ear catches the sound of their voices, the tramping of

their feet, the hum and murmur and growing tumult of their immense array.

v. 3. "My proudly rejoicing ones." The Hebrew suffix modifies the whole phrase. The idea is not religious reverence, but the military exultation of conquerors, used as God's instruments of vengeance.

vv. 6—9. The scene changes suddenly to the land and people of Babylon. They are called to tremble at the approach of the hostile armies, when the judgment is near. But presently they are seen as if already crushed under the stroke of this terrible judgment. "Behold! the day of the Lord is come."

vv. 11—18. The ruin is compared to a total and sudden eclipse of all the lights of heaven. The stars are darkened above, the earth trembles below, and all nature mourns together "in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger."

v. 8. "Their faces shall be as flames." Some expound this of the fierceness of the conquerors, but it clearly refers to the men of Babylon. Others take *lehabim* for the proper name of Lehabim, son of Mizraim, Gen. x. 13, and explain it "black with horror;" while others, again, take it for the redness of shame and confusion. But it seems rather to refer to

other: their faces *shall be as flames*. 9 Behold! the day of the LORD is come, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he will destroy the sinners thereof out of it. 10 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. 11 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 low the haughtiness of the terrible. 12 I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. 13 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. 14 And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a flock that no man gathereth: they shall turn every one to his own people, and flee every one

the flickering of flames, as a figure of sudden, fitful, and violent emotions, written on the countenance. So the variable play of the moonbeams has been applied (Rokeby, i. 9—14). But for such sudden and rapid changes of countenance through violent emotions, no emblem could be more expressive than flames of fire.

v. 9. "Is come." The change of tense marks the progress of the vision. The judgment, described first as near, is next seen as already come.

v. 10. The figure is not of the total extinction of the stars (Alex.), but that of a sky suddenly darkened by a terrible storm (Vitr., Mich.) when murky gloom overspreads the whole firmament. v. 13 describes the reverberation of the thunder, joined with earthquake. The same figure runs through all the earlier prophecies of Isaiah, ch. v. 30; viii. 22; ix. 19; xiii. 10; xxxiv. 4, from their first to their latest message. It is a most striking emblem of those political convulsions, reaching to the highest classes, which attend the downfall of a mighty Empire.

v. 10. "Their constellations." Their Orions, this bright constellation being made a generic term. The name, *kesil*, seems to mean "foolhardy, arrogant;" and answers to the Persian view of Orion, as Nimrod, and the Arabic name of the constellation, the Giant. The Targum here renders "their giants." Even the brightest and most conspicu-

ous stars were to be darkened in this judgment.

v. 11. "The world." Used, like a proper name, for the full extent of the earth, and in allusion to the world-wide dominion elsewhere ascribed to Babylon. So the Roman empire and the world are often confounded together, as nearly equivalent terms. The threatening in ch. ii. 9—19, which applies first to guilty Israel, is here extended and applied to Israel's fierce oppressors.

v. 12. "Precious" because scarce, when "few men are left," xxiv. 6. The truth implied is that which forms the basis of political economy. Price depends not so much on intrinsic worth, as on the scarceness of the article, and the difficulty of procuring it. Ophir has been referred to the east coast of Africa, "Sofala, thought Ophir;" to Ind, or the west coast of India, near the mouth of the Indus (Delitzsch); or to Ceylon (Bochart). But it seems more likely that it was on the east coast of Arabia, in the Persian Gulf (Foster, Henderson), where is a town Ofor, and where Ptolemy places a gold coast. These early gold districts have been worked out long ago; and when richest, the yield of Peru, California and Australia throws their wealth into the shade.

v. 14. The terror of the men of Babylon is compared to the fright of the roe or timid gazelle; and the dispersion of its mixed population, its visitors and mer-

into his own land. 15 Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is overtaken shall fall by the sword. 16 Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes, their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished.

17 BEHOLD! I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and, *as for* gold, they will not delight therein. 18 *Their* bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they will have no pity on the fruit of the womb: their eye will not spare children. 19 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the excellent beauty of the Chaldeans, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. 20 It shall never be in-

chants, to a flock scattered by an alarm, which no shepherd cares to gather again.

v. 15. Those who are found in the city, and those overtaken in flight (Hend., Gesen., Ewald, Delitzsch), shall alike be destroyed. Xenophon says that Cyrus sent out his cavalry into the roads when the city was taken, and ordered them to put to death all that were found outside the houses.

v. 17. The name, Medes, is that of Madai, the son of Japheth, Gen. x. 2. Their country lay along the south and west of the Caspian, including the present provinces of Shervan, Azerbaijan, Ghilin, Mazanderin and Irak Ajemi, celebrated for the number and bravery of their warriors. It was the first horn of the Ram in Dan. viii., and Persia, the higher horn which came up last. "The prophecy takes a fresh turn, and the veil is completely broken through. We now learn the name of the conquerors" (Delitzsch). The kings of Media, or the rulers in their villages, were to drink the cup of God's anger through the Chaldeans, Jer. xxv. 25, and revenge would render them doubly fierce and cruel.

*Shall* in one clause, and *will* in the other, best expresses the double fact of the Divine decree, and its fulfilment through the free agency of man.

These words shew the gradual steps of prophetic revelation. In this earliest message against Babylon, the Medes only are named. In a second, ch. xxi. 2, both Persians and Medes, in the order they would thenceforth assume. "Go up, O Elam! besiege, O Media!" In a third prediction Cyrus, the Persian leader, is mentioned by name, xlv. 1. There is here

a further sign that all three visions are placed in their original order, are given by the same prophet, and form one harmonious whole.

"And as for gold, they shall not delight therein." Their chief aim in the conquest will not be mere booty, but a cruel revenge on masters, by whom they had been oppressed before. Sin recoils on the sinner.

v. 19. What the temple was to Judah, "the beauty of ornament," and "the excellency of their strength," Ez. vii. 20, xxiv. 21, Babylon, with its stately walls, palaces, and hanging gardens, was to the Chaldeans. It was their boast and pride. The temple was to be burnt, but restored, but this excellent beauty of the Chaldeans was to suffer a final overthrow.

"As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah." The repeated mention of this fact, i. 9, 10, iii. 9, xiii. 19, Jer. xxiii. 14, xlix. 18, l. 40, Lam. iv. 6, Ez. xvi. 48, 56, Amos iv. 11, Zeph. ii. 9, shews how familiar the people were with the narrative in Genesis. The present Burden is thus linked with the first chapters of the book, i. 9, iii. 9. The comparison lies in the completeness of the desolation. In one case the fulfilment was sudden, in the other gradual, but this only deepens the lesson of Divine foreknowledge. The work of fire and brimstone from heaven was here wrought by sword, pestilence, inundation, and complex revolutions, through six hundred years. But the fulfilment was at length complete; and the wild Arab, for long ages, has shrunk with superstitious terror from the ruins of ancient Babylon.

habited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall shepherds make their fold there. 21 But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures: and ostriches shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. 22 And jackals 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.

CHAP. XIV. FOR the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and will make them rest in their own land: and strangers shall join themselves with them, and they will cleave to the house of Jacob. 2 And the people shall take them, and bring them to their own place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the LORD for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captive, whose captives they were, and they shall rule over their oppressors.

vv. 21, 22. Most of the terms are debated, and rather obscure. They reflect the gloom that was to brood over the doomed city. *Tsiim*, according to Bochart, is "wild cats," but seems rather to be a general term. *Ochim*, which some render "doleful cries," perhaps denotes horned owls, or more generally "doleful creatures." *Benoth-yaaneh*, as most now agree, is a name of ostriches, rather than of owls. "Wild beasts of the islands" are jackals, so named from their cry. *Almènoth* for *armènoth*, "palaces," probably has one letter changed, to include the further idea of widowhood and entire desolation.

The word *scirim*, "satyrs," has caused the chief doubt as to its exact meaning. By derivation it means "hairy creatures." Twice it is applied to Esau, forty times to goats used in sacrifice, twice it is rendered "devils," and twice "satyrs," where the LXX. translate it "demons." But a different word is used elsewhere for wild goats, and flocks of any kind are excluded by the context. From xxxiv. 14, "the satyr shall cry to his fellow," it seems to denote some creature of shrill and discordant cry. The word "satyr," when rightly explained, seems the best version, and helps to indicate the vague, gloomy, mysterious character of the judgment. Creatures of the ape, baboon, or monkey kind, resembling the human form, but with

wild cry or howl, grotesque and hideous, were to haunt the forsaken site of the once glorious city, and to sport hideously among its ruins.

vv. 19—22. The result of this predicted capture would be long lasting and utter desolation. No shepherd will make his flock to lie down there, no wandering Arab of the desert pitch his tent, where once stood the fair and stately city, the mistress of the world, the beauty and pride of the Chaldeans. Wild beasts and doleful creatures will haunt its forsaken palaces, and people the dreary and awful solitude. The name, Arabian, first occurs in this place, and seems to point to a fulfilment in the later times.

#### Ch. XIV. THE SONG OF THE RESTORED.

vv. 1—4. The effects of this great overthrow are next described. Israel will return from their exile, and break forth into a triumphal song. The source of the great change is the free mercy and love of God. The promise refers to the Return from Babylon, and to the Gentile servants who accompanied the returning exiles. But it was fulfilled, still further, in the rule of the Maccabean princes, and in the moral victories over Gentile superstition in the times of the Gospel. The words look forward even to days still



3 AND it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage, wherein thou wast made to serve; 4 That thou shalt take up this song against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the exactress of gold ceased! 5 The LORD hath broken the staff of the wicked, the rod of the tyrants; 6 That smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, that trampled the nations in anger; persecuting, and no man hindered. 7 The whole earth is at rest, it

future, when the nations shall learn war no more, and Zion's glory shall be fully come, ch. ii. 1—5.

vv. 4—23. The transitions in this sublime Song or Parable are not plainly marked, and this adds to the power and vividness of the whole. The restored exiles, the cedars of Lebanon, the kings in Hades, the dwellers on earth, the prophet himself, and the Lord who sends him, all lend their voices to the chorus, and make the warning more terribly sublime. Some refer v. 11 to the departed kings, others to the exiles who begin the Ode. Some make it close at v. 20, others at v. 21, others at v. 23. But in v. 11 the exiles join the greeting of the kings, and in v. 12 the prophet shares in the antistrophe of these exiles; and then carries it forward vv. 15, 16, as a vision of the future, not of the past, in his own person. The Ode closes v. 20, and is followed by a warning, directly from the prophet, of the utter extinction of the royal race. The LORD himself, last of all, confirms the message of His servant, and adds to it a still more solemn oath of the destruction of the Assyrian.

v. 4. Who is the king to whom the Song refers? His conquests, pride, and boasting, suit with Sennacherib or Nebuchadnezzar; but his sudden fall, at the time when the city is taken and the exiles return, answers to Belshazzar alone. Hence a variety of interpretations. But the true reference is to the dynasty, viewed as one collective person, just as in Dan. i. 44, vii. 1—17, 24, viii. 20—23. Babylon and Assyria are also viewed, in this prophecy, as one and the same power. For Babylon, even then, was the second city of the Assyrian empire, and Esarhaddon reigned alternately there and at Nineveh, and

peopled Samaria from its revolted inhabitants. Nabopolassar was probably linked, either collaterally or by marriage, with the Assyrian line of kings. Even the successors of Cyrus are styled, in Ezr. vi. 22, kings of Assyria. The kingdom fell, when the handwriting appeared to Belshazzar, "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it." "That same night was Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, slain," Dan. v. 30. His corpse was left unburied in the storming of the city, and after him no shoot or offspring of the old Chaldean line ever came to the throne.

"The exactress of gold." Some, by a slight change of text (*marhâbah*, Mich., Döderlein, Knobel, Drechsler), render "haughty, violent treatment." Others find the like meaning (*place of torture*, Delitzsch) in the actual text; while most derive from the root "gold," and render either "the golden city" or "the gold-exacting city." The last is probably the true sense (LXX., Vitruvius, Lowth, Rosenmüller, Winer, Henderson). The heavy imposts of gold, laid by Assyria and Babylon on Ephraim and Judah, are a very prominent feature of the history. They were shorn by this razor, vii. 20, till not only their wealth and glory, but even the necessaries of life were removed. The taxation of cruel conquerors wasted hardly less than the sword. Perhaps both ideas are combined, that the city was enriched and adorned by exacted tributes of gold.

v. 6. This verse continues and unfolds the words of the former one, to shew how oppressive was this sceptre and rod of Babylon. The last clause relates, not to God's vengeance, but to the severity of Chaldean oppression. None had power to rescue its victims in the days of its pride.

is quiet, they break forth into singing; 8 Yea, the cypresses rejoice, *and* the cedars of Lebanon, *saying*, Since thou art laid low, no woodman cometh up against us.

9 HELL from beneath is disquieted for thee, to meet *thee* at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, all the leaders of the earth; it raiseth up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. 10 All these shall answer and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou made like unto us? 11 Thy pomp is brought down to hell, *and* the loud mirth of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee!

12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O bright one, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, that didst

v. 7. The phrase, to break forth into singing, recurs xlv. 23, lii. 9, lv. 12, and is one mark of common authorship in the Earlier and Later Visions.

v. 8. The tree (*hērūsh*), named with the cedar, is probably the cypress, xxxvii. 24, xli. 19, lv. 13, lx. 13 (Gesén., Ewd., Knob., Alex., Hendn., Drechsler, Delitzsch). The words may be explained with reference to the actual use of the trees of Lebanon by the Assyrian or Chaldean conquerors; or as a general figure, to express the wide range of the oppression (Calv., Alex., Drechsler); or as a metaphor and allegory (Aben-Ezra, Grot., Delitzsch) for princes and rulers of the heathen world. So the terms are used x. 17, 18, 34, xxx. 24; Ez. xxx. 1, 8. (Targ., Cocc., Vit., Jerome, Rosenm., Hend. &c.). Both ideas may well be combined. All outward nature rejoices, so that the lofty cedars, on heights of Lebanon almost inaccessible, share with the lowly and fertile valleys in relief from the wasting hand of the mighty spoiler. But close behind this poetical figure, based on the physical desolations of war, lies the further application to those princes and rulers, whom the prophet so often describes as the lofty forest-trees of Lebanon.

"Cometh up." The tense denotes a continued act, both past and future.

v. 9. "Hell from beneath." *Sheol*, sometimes rendered *hell*, sometimes *the grave*, denotes the under world of the dead, viewed as a hidden, lower region,

below the earth's surface, answering to the hemisphere of the skies above. The *Rephaim*, "giants" (LXX., Targ., Syr., Vulg., Alex.), are rather simply "the dead" or "the shades," from a root expressing weakness (Ges., Ewd., Rosenm., Hend., Drechsler, Delitzsch). The figure is that of all the departed and their leaders rising in astonishment, to see the proud king of Babylon brought down so low.

v. 12. The word *hēilāl*, rendered *Lucifer* in A. V., from the root *halal*, to shine, here describes the king of Babylon as a shining morning star, to be cast down suddenly from the height of worldly splendour. The frequent application of the words to Satan, and his fall from heaven, is certainly not the direct and proper meaning of the passage. But the analogy is so close between the character of the proud king of Babylon and the lost archangel, the king over all the children of pride, between this political judgment and the revealed warning of our Lord himself, Lu. x. 18, as fully to vindicate this frequent use of the words from the charge of being a gross perversion of the text. The resemblance is very full and complete, both in sin and punishment, between the human and angelic leaders in pride and rebellion, and is fully confirmed by the later prophecies of the New Testament, Rev. xii. 9—12, xx. 3, 10.

The rendering, "Howl, son of the morning" (Aquila, Syr., Jerome, Mich.,

overshadow the nations! 13 And thou saidst in thy heart, I will mount up to heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; and I will sit on the mount of the congregation, on the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High. 15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit! 16 They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, *and* consider thee, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms? 17 That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof? his prisoners he set not free for their homes. 18 All the kings of the nations, *yea*, all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own burial house. 19 But thou art cast out unburied, like an abominable branch, *like* the raiment

(Ges.), is plainly at variance with the whole drift and scope of the passage. This proud king is compared, first, to the bright morning star, and then to a lofty tree, like the one in Nebuchadnezzar's vision, shadowing all the nations. "The morning star derives its name from its brilliancy in other languages also, and is here called 'son of the dawn,' as in Greek mythology 'son of Eos,' because it rises before the sun, and swims in the morning light as if that were the source of its birth." Delitzsch.

v. 13. "The mount of the congregation" early writers apply to the Jewish temple, or mount Zion; but most moderns explain it by the Zend mythology, and refer it to a mountain, Elborz, the supposed seat of the gods towards the arctic pole of the sky. "While the Greeks had their *Olympus*, and the Hindoos their *Meru*, the ancient Persians had their Elborz or Elborj, a name still given to the highest mountain in the Caucasian range, 16,000 feet above the level of the sea. According to the Bundesheh, this mountain rose, when the world was created, during the first two hundred years, to the starry heavens; during the next two, to the sphere of the moon; during the third, to that of the sun; and during the fourth, to that of primeval light. Here is the throne of Ormuzd, the congregation of the living, where there is neither enemy, darkness, nor death." (Hend.)

Either view is open to grave objection. Jerusalem and its temple would be

strangely interposed between the words, "I will ascend above the stars of God," and "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds." They were really occupied, and the temple burnt, by the Chaldeans. On the other hand, the whole Song is referred to Jewish exiles; and the force of the rebuke lies in the claim of this king to rival the Most High in His own dwelling-place. But the temple of Zion, and the mount where it stood, were earthly types of heavenly realities. The Olympus of the Greeks, the Mount Meru of the Hindus, the Elborz of the Zend mythology, were distortions of the same truth. Apotheosis after death was the constant form of pride and ambition in the despots of the East, and even in those of Macedon and Rome. The claim, then, of this proud king was to be exalted, after death, above the inferior deities, the idol gods of the vanquished cities and provinces, and to sit by the side of the Most High in His holy and heavenly dwelling.

The sides of the north will thus have no special reference to Zend mythology. But the starry region around the north pole, high above the earth, always visible and luminous, is a natural type of the heaven of glory, the special abode of the Most High. The rebuke refers, not to the phrases under which this king might veil his ambitious hopes, but to the real nature of his claim, which was to have a glorious seat, after death, side by side with the throne of the Almighty. And the contrast is his descent to "the sides of the

of the slain, *which are* thrust through with the sword, *and* go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under foot. 20 Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, *and* slain thy people: the seed of evil-doers shall be named nevermore.

21 PREPARE slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers; lest they rise up, and possess the earth, and fill the face of the world with cities. 22 I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and will cut off from Babylon name and remnant, and issue and offspring, saith the LORD: 23 And I will make it a possession for the porcupine, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts.

pit," the deep recesses of this lower world of *Sheol*, the region of the dead.

v. 17. The marginal version of the last clause, "he did not let his prisoners loose homewards," seems to give the true construction, and is made rather more terse by the slight change above. The refusal to exchange prisoners of war has been one of the most cruel forms of over-bearing ambition. The masculine affix to "cities" has been referred to "the world," a feminine noun, or to "the king," a harsh construction, since the hostile cities destroyed could scarcely be called his own. It refers rather to "the wilderness," that is, the world as wasted by his cruel ambition, and thus adds to the emphasis of the description.

v. 18. "In accordance to the Oriental custom of erecting splendid mausoleums for kings and other great men, in the sides of which were cells for the reception of the dead bodies...all the other kings of the earth are represented as occupying in silent state the chambers allotted to them; whereas to this king of Babylon the rites of sepulture are denied. No royal mausoleum receives his corpse, nor even a common grave, but it is left to putrefy on the ground" (Hend.). "Unburied," lit. "away from thy grave," that is, the sepulchre that had been appointed beforehand to receive him after death.

v. 20. "Shall be named nevermore." The version "shall never be renowned" falls short of the true meaning. Not only shall they fail of conspicuous renown, but

shall be sentenced to shame and lasting oblivion; while "the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance."

v. 21. "The dramatic form of the prediction is repeatedly shifted, so that the words of the triumphant Jews, of the dead, of the prophet, and of God himself, succeed each other insensibly, without any attempt to make the points of transition prominent" (Alex.). Here the prophet lays aside the dramatic figures of the Song, and speaks in his own person, denouncing the utter extinction of the guilty dynasty. "After the storming of Babylon by the Medes, the kingdom and royal house, established by Nabopolassar, vanished entirely from history. The last shoot of the royal family was slain as a child of conspirators. The second Nebuchadnezzar deceived the people, says Darius in the inscription of Behistan, declaring, I am Nabukudracara, the son of Nabunita" (Drech.). There is no need to correct "cities" into "ruins," "tyrants," "wicked men," or "conflicts," as others propose (Hitz., Ewald, Knob., Meier, Maurer). Newly founded cities were, in the East, the signs of strength in a rising or reviving kingdom, as Alexandria, Antioch, Seleucia, &c., and were often named after their royal founders. But there was to be no such cure for the ruined race of old Nineveh and Babylon.

v. 22. The abrupt form of the original, and the change of person, seem best rendered by omitting any connective. The Lord suddenly seals the warning of

24 THE LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so hath 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 will I tread him down; and his yoke shall depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. 26 This *is* the purpose that is purposed upon all the earth, and this *is* the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. 27 For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul *it*? and his hand *it is* that is stretched out, and who shall turn it away?

the prophet by a direct address in His own person. The *kippod*, since Bochart, is usually admitted to be the porcupine or hedgehog. All the artificial defences being neglected, and falling into ruin, the once fertile Babylon becomes a marshy waste. So complete will be the desolation, that it would seem as if it had been swept, as with a besom, by destruction itself.

vv. 24—27. These verses are parted from the rest of the prophecy by those who deny its genuineness, and are referred, as a sequel of ch. xii., to the previous vision. But that chapter is a natural and perfect close to the first series of prophecies; and these verses, so transferred, would be wholly intrusive and out of place. Here they are in their fit place, the topstone of the burden, and its direct practical application. They link this message with the Parable of the Vineyard, v. 25, xiv. 26, with the Prophecy of Immanuel, viii. 8, 9, ix. 4, xiv. 25, with the warnings to Ephraim, or the Assyrian Woe, ix. 12, 17, 21, x. 4, and with the double prediction of the Assyrian overthrow, x. 27, 33.

There is also here a climax, which marks strongly the unity of the whole. For in v. 21 we have a prophetic warning, in vv. 22, 23 its confirmation by the LORD

of hosts himself; and here, in vv. 24, 28, not only the voice of the LORD of hosts, but His solemn oath predictive of coming judgment. All creatures are challenged to show whether they can reverse His firm decree, or turn back His almighty hand. The warnings and burdens of the more distant future are used to deepen and confirm the certainty of that great visitation, which was nearer at hand, and forms the main central thought in these earlier prophecies. The sore judgment on the Assyrian would also be a gracious reprieve to the kingdom of Judah before its fall, a typical redemption, a pledge of the full and final deliverance in days to come.

v. 24. The change of tense is striking, and implies the absolute certainty of the still future vengeance. It seems taught here, as in the later prophecies and the history, that sudden destruction would fall on the mighty Assyrian host, while encamped on the hills around Jerusalem, ch. xxix. 3—8, xxxi. 4, 5.

v. 27. "His hand *it is*." The exact force of the original is restored by this slight change. The emphasis is that the hand stretched out is that of no mere creature, however powerful, but of the Almighty Creator.

## § 2 (1). Chap. XIV. 28—32. THE BURDEN OF PHILISTIA.

This short prophecy is very usually referred to the victories of Uzziah over the Philistines, the reverses under Ahaz, and the recovery of Judah under Hezekiah (Jerome, Kimchi, Abarb., Calvin, Vitruvius, Rosenm., Gesenius, Henderson, Drechsler, Delitzsch). The Chaldee, Drechsler, and Delitzsch, even apply the fiery flying serpent to Messiah. But there are weighty objections to this view in every part. The death of Uzziah was thirty years, and his victories perhaps sixty years, before the date of this burden. The Philistines had causes of joy much more recent than Uzziah's death. A serpent, basilisk, and flying serpent, are figures ill suited to express the line of David, Hezekiah, and most of all, the Messiah. The basilisk and fiery serpent, also, seem distinct; while on this view most refer them both to Hezekiah, but the Chaldee and Drechsler to the Messiah. In the two next burdens, with which this forms a trilogy, the chief reference is clearly to troubles from Assyria; and the close refers to a time when Zion would be a sure refuge, as in Sennacherib's campaign. The date is the first of fifteen years, which were eminently marked by Assyrian inroads and conquest.

Now if Tiglath-pileser, when hired by Ahaz for that purpose, after taking the spoil of Samaria and Damascus, viii. 4, imposed a heavy ransom on Philistia, or inflicted on it some heavy blow, the prophecy will receive a consistent and easy explanation. His death, from the Assyrian remains, lay within three years before the date of this burden, and might have been just before it, so that tidings of it had only lately come to Palestine. The last year of Ahaz would be B. C. 727, and the Assyrian limits for Shalmaneser's accession are B. C. 730—725. The Philistines might think their troubles at an end, when they heard of the death of their late oppressor. The rod that smote them, and also "the serpent," will be Tiglath-pileser. The basilisk will be Shalmaneser or Sargon, see App. III., by whom Samaria was besieged, and the kingdom of Ephraim ruined. The "fiery serpent" will refer to his son Sennacherib. The smoke from the north will signify the invasion and conquest of Philistia by these powerful kings.

The date belongs to this burden, not the last, and is mentioned from its close connexion with the meaning of the prediction. The Burden on Babylon, as it takes precedence of all the rest, was probably rather earlier, in the last years of Ahaz. The present date may be common to several of those which follow, since ch. xxviii. seems to precede the third of Hezekiah. He began his reformation in the first month of his first year. His accession, then, and the death of Ahaz, were towards the close of the last year of Ahaz, the year of this prophecy. It could thus probably have no historical reference to the death of Ahaz himself, but only to that of Tiglath-pileser, the dreaded Assyrian king.

CHAP. XIV. IN THE YEAR THAT KING AHAZ DIED WAS THIS BURDEN. 29 Rejoice not, all Philistia, because the rod that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a basilisk; and its fruit *shall be* a fiery flying serpent. 30 And the poorest 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 Howl, O gate! cry, O city! thou, Philistia, all of thee, *art* dissolved: for there shall come a smoke from the north, and there *shall be* no straggler in his armies. 32 What shall *one* then answer the messengers of the nation? That the LORD hath founded Zion, and in her the poor of his people shall find refuge.

v. 29. "All Philistia." This word, in Scripture, always means the land of the Philistines, not Palestine in the wider sense, or the whole land of Canaan. This whole region is here described as rejoicing in the recent death of the Assyrian king, and in the weakness of Judah, which left them in possession of the recovered cities.

"The rod that smote thee is broken." Not Ahaz, who was still alive, and whom the Philistines had smitten, but Tiglath-pileser. The Assyrian has already been styled "the rod of God's anger," x. 5. This might now seem broken. In the East very much depends on the personal character of the despot who reigns. But the hope of the Philistines would prove groundless. The kings who reigned next would prove more formidable still. Shalmaneser is the basilisk, under whom Samaria fell; Sennacherib the son of Sargon, whose campaign shews that Philistia was wholly subdued, is the "fiery flying serpent."

v. 30. "The poorest of the poor." The "first-born" is here a Hebrew idiom for the foremost of the class; and, in this case, those whose poverty is extreme. The promise refers to the freedom of Judah from Philistian inroads under the peaceful reign of Hezekiah, 2 Ki. xviii. 8, who recovered the cities Ahaz had lost.

"Thy remnant." Those who escaped from the Assyrian would suffer further

reverses, after his fall, from the recovered power of Judah.

v. 31. The gate and the city are distributive terms for all the towns of Philistia. Instead of triumph they would have bitter mourning through the Assyrian invaders. The smoke is either clouds of dust raised by the army on its march, or that of flames they have kindled. It is from the north, not the east; or in the direction of the Assyrian invasion, not of assaults from Judea. Their army would be unbroken and complete, vv. 27, 28, and none would loiter in their march, being eager for spoil and conquest.

v. 32. "The messengers of the nation" are the Assyrian ambassadors, with their insulting demands, made to Hezekiah and his people, of instant submission to the irresistible power of the great Assyrian king. In the hour of common dismay to Philistia and Judah, what reply shall be made, when this mighty foe mocks at the weakness of the people of God? The same which the history has soon to record, "That the Lord hath founded Zion, and in her the poor of his people shall find refuge." So we read, ch. xxxvii. 32—35, "For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake." This short burden predicts thus the progress of the Assyrian from the death of Ahaz till Rabshakeh's message of defiance, when the flood of heathen invasion dashed itself vainly against the Zion of God.

## § 2 (2). Chap. XV. XVI. THE BURDEN OF MOAB.

The Moabites, the descendants of Lot, expelled the Emim, and occupied the land east of the Dead Sea, and of the lower Jordan, from Zoar at the south to Jazer and the brook Jabbok. In the days of Moses the Amorites expelled them from all the district north of Arnon. The Israelites, in turn, conquered Sihon; and the land north of Arnon, to Jabbok, was given partly to Gad, and mainly to Reuben. In the days of Ehud the Moabites subdued southern Palestine. They were themselves subdued and made tributaries in the time of David. After the schism they transferred their submission to Jeroboam, and brought a yearly tribute till the death of Ahab. When Hazael had ravaged the eastern tribes, 2 Ki. x. 32, 33, the Moabites seem to have reoccupied the territory of Reuben, and held it in the days of Isaiah. We have no indication that they were invaded by Tiglath-pileser. But the history and prophecy, compared, show that Shalmaneser, before his long and tedious siege of Samaria, spoiled all the open country both east and west of Jordan, when Moab suffered an almost entire devastation. To this time the prophecy must refer.

This burden has been ascribed by some moderns to Jonah or Jeremiah, or to some unknown writer. Their chief reason is drawn from the two verses at the close, which they assume to have a different date from the rest of the burden. But its genuineness is proved by all the external evidence, and not less by the internal structure of these visions. The Burden of Babylon, the main adversary of Judah, is followed by three against the border states on three sides of Palestine; and all these have a common character, agreeing with the date prefixed to the first of them. Sore judgment from Assyrian spoilers was at hand, but Zion was to prove a safe and sure refuge.

The inscription lately discovered, of Mesha, a king of Moab, probably the same who is mentioned in 2 Ki. iii. 4, gives some promise of further light on the early history of the tribe. But it is too short, and too imperfectly preserved, to supply much information alone. The transfer of ch. xvi. 6—12 from the prophet himself to the Jewish people, as expressing their rejection of Moab's entreaties for succour, though accepted by several modern critics, has no warrant in the words of the text, and wholly distorts its natural meaning.

These three Burdens, of Philistia, Moab, and Damascus, form a kind of trilogy; and answer to a second trilogy in ch. xxi., which contains three burdens on the Desert of the sea, on Dumah, and Arabia, lying south of Judah. The prophecy, ch. xviii., is a common sequel of the former three Burdens, though connected most closely with the Burden on Damascus, the ally of Ephraim.



CHAP. XV. THE BURDEN OF MOAB! Because in a night Ar-Moab is wasted, is destroyed: because in a night Kir-Moab is wasted, is destroyed. 2 He is gone up to Bajith and Dibon, to the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl upon Nebo and on Medeba: on all their heads *shall be* baldness, *and* every beard cut off. 3 In their streets they shall gird themselves with sackcloth: on the tops of their houses, and in the broad places they all shall howl, and come down with weeping. 4 And Heshbon shall cry, and Elealeh; their voice shall be heard unto Jahaz: therefore the warriors of Moab shall shriek; his soul is sore vexed within him. 5 My heart crieth out for Moab: his fugitives, even unto Zoar, are as a young heifer: for by the ascent

v. 1. The Title implies a sorrowful message. The cause of sorrow is abruptly explained, the desolation of the metropolis of Moab, and of its chief fortress. Ar-Moab or Rabbath-Moab is the Areopolis of the Greeks; and Kir-Moab, called presently Kirhareth and Kirhareth, is the Karaka of 2 Macc. xii. 17, and the Charak-moba of Ptolemy, still called Kerek or Karak. It is a strong fortress seven or eight miles south of Ar, at the head of a deep valley. The words imply a sudden and unexpected invasion.

The construction has been variously explained. But the *ki* retains its causal force. The word *burden* implies a message of judgment, and the reason for the warning is given at once, which deepens the impressive tone of the prophecy. Again, the word *shuddad* may be joined with *leil*, "a night of desolation." But, xxiii. 1 is a reason for viewing it as a participle, not a verbal noun. The redoubling in the phrase, and the repetition of the phrase itself, give fuller emphasis to the warning.

v. 2. The Moabites, in their distress and confusion, would resort to their high places for the worship of Chemosh, near Bajith or Beth-baalmeon, towards the south east; at Dibon on mount Nebo, noted in the history of Moses, and on the rocky hill of Medeba, Nu. xxxii. 34, 38. This last was the scene of the capture and death of John Maccabæus, avenged soon after by Jonathan and Simon, 1 Mac. ix. 36, Jos. Ant. XIII. 1, 4.

v. 3. They will go up to their high

places to consult their idols, but in vain; for no help will be found in them. They will go up to their housetops for worship, or to look out for the foe; but they will find no comfort, and will come down to hasten their flight, weeping in hopeless sorrow.

v. 4. Heshbon, the capital of Sihon, and of the Reubenites, had been recovered by Moab. Jahaz lay on the border toward the eastern desert, where Sihon came out to fight with Israel, and was overthrown, Deut. ii. 32, 34. The cry of grief would be so loud as to reach this outmost border. Even the warriors of Moab would become like women, and shriek out with panic terror. The nation are spoken of as one man, filled with terror and dismay.

v. 5. The prophet shares in the sorrow he describes, so vividly is he possessed by the awful picture the Spirit sets before his eyes. In their alarm at the fierce invader, the Moabites are seen hurrying towards Zoar, their extreme southern border. They mount up to Luhith across a mountain-ridge, and then go down to Horonaim on the further side, Jer. xlvi. 5. Their loud wailings, as they hurry southward, will be like the lowing of a young heifer that has lost her way and her companions, and so renews at every step her loud plaintive cry.

Some, for *fugitives*, render *berichim*, *bars* or *posts*, its more usual sense. But the other suits the derivation, and is required by the whole drift of the passage. The words "young heifer," *eglah shelishiyah*,

of Luhith with weeping will they go up; for in the way of Horonaim will they lift up a wail of destruction. 6 For the waters of Nimrim shall be desolation: for the herb is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing. 7 Therefore the remnant they have kept, and their store, will they carry away to the brook of the willows. 8 For the cry is gone round to the borders of Moab: his wailing is unto Eglaim, and his wailing unto the well of the nobles. 9 For the waters of Dimon are full of blood: for I will bring more *troubles* upon Dimon, upon the escaped of Moab a lion, and upon the remnant of the land.

CHAP. XVI. SEND ye the lamb to the ruler of the land, from Sela toward the wilderness, unto the mount of the daughter of Zion. 2 For it shall be, *that* as a wandering bird, *and* as a

are taken by several as a proper name (Gesén., Hend., Rosenm., Knob., Drech., Meier). Others apply them as an epithet of Zoar (Hitzig, Delitzsch). But the received version, slightly varied as above, to make the emphasis plain, seems to give the true sense. It is the lowing cry of a young solitary heifer, to which the prophet, in passing, compares the lamentation of the fugitives.

vv. 6, 7. The cause of their hurried flight is now explained. The fertile and well-watered district in the north has been ravaged by the foe, and they have no resource but to hurry out of his reach to the edge of the southern desert. Past tenses are mixed with the future to express the certainty of the judgment. The waters of Nimrim are put for the district they fertilize. "The brook of the willows" some render "the brook of the ravens," or "valley of the Arabians," and others have even referred it to Babylon. But it is the Wady-el-Ahsey, which parts Kerek from Djebal, or the brook Zered of Israel's desert journey. "The remnant they have kept," rather than "the abundance they have gotten," denotes here all their portable goods that were not consumed before.

v. 8. This flight is further explained by the wide extent of their calamity. Eglaim lay to the south of the Dead Sea, not far from Zoar, and Beer-elim or "the well of the nobles," named Nu. xxi. 16—18, lay to the north east, in the edge of the wilderness. These were then the limits of Moab, like Dan and Beersheba to Israel. The mention of Beer-elim, "the well of

the nobles," refers back plainly to the narrative in the Book of Numbers. It was here that the trials of Israel's desert journey began to find their close.

v. 9. Dimon is another form of Dibon, and both forms were in use in the days of Jerome. It seems chosen to point the warning that its waters should be full of *dím*, blood. The "more troubles" and the lion, may perhaps allude to the later troubles from the Chaldeans, whom Jeremiah describes by this figure, Jer. iv. 7. Thus the vision travels on for a moment to the more complete desolation, chh. xxiv., xxv.

CHAP. XVI. THE WOE CONTINUED.

vv. 1—5. This passage has been very diversely explained. Many moderns take it for a consultation of the Moabites to renew their tribute to Judah, followed in v. 6 by the reasons of the men of Judah for rejecting their prayer. But this wholly distorts it, and destroys its real force. It is a voice of the Spirit of God to Moab, through the prophet, exhorting them, in their distress, to take shelter within God's covenant, by renewing their allegiance to the house of David, and lending shelter to the Israelites who might suffer from this Assyrian foe. They would then share with Judah in the deliverance near at hand.

v. 1. "The lamb" is here a collective term for the lambs of sacrifice, of which Moab supplied an ample tribute under David and Solomon. The ruler is Hezekiah, whose accession was close at hand. Sela is Petra, the *rock*, the capital of

forsaken nest, so shall be the daughters of Moab, *and* the fords of Arnon. 3 Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday: hide the outcasts, betray not him that wandereth. 4 Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler: for the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land. 5 And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hastening righteousness.

6 WE have heard of the pride of Moab; *he is* very proud: of his pride, and his haughtiness, and his wrath: of no worth *are* his vain boastings. 7 Therefore shall Moab howl for Moab, all of them shall howl: for the clusters of Kir-hareseth shall ye mourn; surely *they are* stricken. 8 For the fields of Heshbon

Edom. The wilderness is that of which Strabo writes, that beyond the enclosure of Petra "most is desert, especially toward Judea." The messengers of Moab, like Israel of old, must pass through a desert, before they can procure a share in Israel's blessing.

v. 2. This is usually taken for a single comparison between the Moabite women, crowding to the fords of Arnon in flight, and a bird driven out from its nest. But the vision has already pictured their flight to Zoar, while Arnon was the northern limit of Moab's proper territory. The literal rendering gives a double parallel, in full harmony with the context. The daughters of Moab, chased beyond the southern border, are like the wandering bird, deprived of its nest. The fords of Arnon, once thronged by the dwellers in Aroer, "the city in the midst of the river," Josh. xiii. 16, will be like the forsaken nest itself. The once busy resort of commerce and pleasure, the centre of Moabite travel and commerce, will become a silent and dreary solitude.

v. 3. The prophet next advises the remnant of Moab to reverse their former pride and cruelty to Israel in times of affliction, and to lend them friendly shelter, such as a former king of Moab had shewn to David in the time of his distress. The judgment hanging over them would also involve both Israel and

Judah. From the fourth year to the sixteenth after the previous date, xiv. 28, was a time of great distress and sorrow. The remnant of Moab, when their own trouble abated by the siege of Samaria, would have special opportunities for shewing kindness to outcasts of Israel and Judah, now to be afflicted as they themselves had lately been. By this means repentant Moab might share in the covenant blessings of repentant Judah. The Assyrian flood should soon cease, the throne be established in mercy, and Hezekiah sit on it in peace, "judging, and seeking judgment, and hastening righteousness." In all this there would be a very speedy earnest of higher blessings, "the sure mercies of David," when the promised Immanuel should appear, take the kingdom, sit on David's throne, and reign in righteousness for ever.

vv. 6—12. These words are no excuse of the Jews for a heartless rejection of the prayer of Moab's outcasts (Gesen., Ewd., Hitzig, Knobel), nor even an explanation why the prophet's earnest counsel would be given in vain. He reverts from counsels that may yet avail them, when their pride has been humbled by sore affliction, to their actual condition, so wholly unlike what he desires, and to the secret moral cause of their approaching calamity. "The prophecy enters here on a new stage, commencing with Moab's sin, and

languish. The vine of Sibmah! the lords of the nations have broken down its choicest shoots, that came unto Jazer, and strayed into the wilderness: her tendrils were stretched out, they passed beyond the sea. 9 Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will make thee drunk with my tears, O Heshbon and Elealeh; for on thy summer fruits and thy harvest a warshout hath fallen. 10 And gladness is taken away, and joy, out of the fruitful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no song nor shouting: the treader shall tread out no wine in the presses; *their vintage* shouting I have made to cease. 11 Therefore my bowels shall sound like a harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kir-haresh. 12 And it shall come to pass that Moab will present himself, and will weary himself in the high places, and he will come to his sanctuary to pray, but he shall not prevail.

depicting their fate in still more elegiac strains" (Delitzsch). The warning is half literal, half figurative, and refers not only to the vines, but to the men themselves (Jer. xlviii. 32), viewed as the rich grape-clusters of the great Vine of Moab.

v. 6. "Of no worth are his vain boastings." *Kên* is here an adjective, not an adverb, *sure, firm, of value*. The proud speeches and pretensions of Moab are of no value, empty, and without solid foundation.

vv. 8—10. The people of Moab are here described by a beautiful and expressive figure, taken from the vine, for the culture of which they were famous, and which had ministered to their habits of sensual indulgence. This "Vine of Sibmah," a chief seat of the vine culture, spreads its choice tendrils on all sides towards the borders of the land, to Jazer northward, into the wilderness on the east and south, and across the Dead Sea westward. But the Assyrian princes and captains, "the lords of the nations," would break down and destroy its flourishing branches. Their vintage mirth would be exchanged for the warshout of victorious enemies, and loud wailings of distress. The prophet ends by recording his deep grief for these sorrows of Moab, and describes their vain resort to senseless idols for help in their time of calamity.

vv. 13, 14. These two verses are very

generally supposed to be a later addition to the rest. Several refer the burden to Jonah (Hitzig, Knobel, Maurer, Baur, Thenius) or to some prophet before Isaiah (De Wette, Ewald, Havernick, Drechsler, &c.). Others refer the prophecy itself to Isaiah, but these verses to Jeremiah or one of his time (Hendn.); or suppose that Isaiah added these verses to the rest after some interval (Delitzsch).

The contents of the whole burden, however, and this sentence at the close, point equally to the same date in the year of the death of Ahaz. The difficulty has arisen simply from the word *mâaz*, or "aforetime," and is removed by one simple reflection. The words of God are settled in heaven, before they are published by his prophets on earth. This message, except the date, was not of yesterday. It was a fixed purpose and decree of God to bring these judgments upon Moab, even from of old. But the limitation of the time, as a message to be fulfilled within three years, became true, first of all, in the year in which it was revealed. When this contrast is once borne in mind, the message is plain; and a very slight change in the received version, as proposed above, brings out the real emphasis.

Only three years elapsed from the accession of Hezekiah to the beginning of the siege of Samaria, which itself also

13 THIS is the word which the LORD hath pronounced against Moab from aforetime. 14 And now the LORD hath further spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of a hireling, and the glory of Moab in all his great multitude shall be brought low, and the remnant shall be few and small, and of no strength.

lasted for three years. The Assyrian would naturally complete his spoiling of the open country of Israel, Syria, and Moab, the country east and west of Jordan, before entering on this long and laborious siege, which was to put the keystone on his northern conquests, and complete the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel. There is no need, then, against all external and internal evidence, to assign either the main part of this burden, or its

close, to some other prophet, or even to separate these from the rest by an interval in their publication. The doom of Moab, the prophet here tells us, had been decreed long ago, before the message was revealed to him; but the fulfilment of this doom within three years was a present addition to the burden, which was true, for the first time, when the vision was thus revealed.

## § 2 (3). CHAP. XVII. THE BURDEN OF DAMASCUS.

THE Burdens of Philistia, Moab, and Damascus, have a common sequel in xvii. 12—14, xviii., but which is most closely connected with the third. All three alike may be probably referred to the last year of Ahaz. Syria and Ephraim had been so linked together in close alliance, that the sentence on Damascus implies the coming fall of Samaria. This, again, leads to a fresh prediction of the Assyrian overthrow. The voice of Woe on the Assyrian introduces an invitation to the rival empire, Egypt and Ethiopia, to befriend and honour Israel, with a call to distant lands to adore the wonderful work of God.

This Burden is referred by many to the first years of Ahaz, as a prediction of the capture of Damascus by Tiglath-pileser, 2 Ki. xvi. 9, (Calv., Vitruv., Lowth, Döderlein, Rosenm., Gesen., Hendewerk, Hitzig, Umbreit, Knobel, Ewald, Meier, Maurer, Henderson). On this view the prophecy is out of its true place, and would really be earlier than ch. vii. But the reason for this view, Drechsler has shewn, is of no real strength. The words of 2 Ki. xvi. 9 do not imply a complete destruction. The spoil of Damascus, as of Samaria, was then taken away, ch. viii. 4, but neither city was destroyed. Captives were led away from Damascus to Kir, as they were from Babylon to Samaria by Esarhaddon, or with Jeconiah from Jerusalem, while Zedekiah remained there as a tributary king. Some successor to Rezin would most probably be set up by Tiglath, like Hoshea in Samaria, or Zedekiah in Jerusalem. His later rebellion against the power which had promoted him would bring upon Damascus, as theirs did on Samaria and Jerusalem, a more complete destruction.

CHAP. XVII. THE BURDEN OF DAMASCUS. Behold, Damascus is taken away from *being* a city, and shall be a ruinous heap. 2 The cities of Aroer *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 it shall 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

v. 1. The riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria were carried away by Tiglath at the close of the third, or beginning of the fourth, year of Ahaz. He died perhaps a year before Ahaz, and all Philistia rejoiced, because the rod that had so lately smitten them was broken, xiv. 29. Hoshea soon after made a conspiracy with So, king of Egypt, which led to Samaria's fall. The Syrians probably seized the same occasion for an attempt to throw off the hated Assyrian yoke. Such a revolt, after conquest and submission, meets with more severity from conquerors than the first resistance. Shalmaneser, then, seems at the outset of his reign to have inflicted on Damascus a heavier and final blow. In the time of Ezekiel and Daniel the city had revived, and was again subdued by the Chaldeans. But it had received no threatening, like Babylon, of final desolation. It revived under the Persians, Greeks, and Romans, and not least under the Saracens, and became one of the chief cities of the East. In sacred history it is linked with the early victory of Abraham over the confederate kings, and with the latest triumphs of the gospel, in the sudden and miraculous call of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. The first capture of Damascus by Tiglath-pileser, predicted viii. 4, was about B. C. 740, at the close of the third or beginning of the fourth of Ahaz. But the more complete ruin here described seems to have occurred B. C. 726—724, in the three first years of Hezekiah, xiv. 29; xvi. 14; 2 Ki. xvii. 3, 5; xviii. 9.

v. 2. There were two Aroers, Josh. xiii. 9, 25, one on the river Arnon, the

border of Moab, the other more northerly, near Jazer. The latter is here meant. The "cities of Aroer" are the district of Gilead and Bashan, the portion of Gad and Manasseh. These had been part of the Syrian kingdom for many years. Even under Ahab Ramoth-gilead, at the southern limit, was in the hands of Syria. Under Jehu Hazael smote all the country east of Jordan, as far as the Arnon. Moab reclaimed the land of Reuben, which had been theirs before its conquest by Sihon, Num. xxi. 26, and the rest was attached to Syria. Jeroboam II. recovered it for a short time; but it reverted to Syria on his death, forty years before the reign of Ahaz. It was ravaged by Tiglath-pileser before Pekah's death, 2 Ki. xv. 29, 1 Chr. v. 26. Shalmaneser seems to have completed the ruin of Damascus, and further ravaged the cities of Aroer, Gilead and Bashan; and then to have made a sudden inroad on Moab before the long siege and ruin of Samaria.

v. 3. The word "glory" is not ironical (Jerome), nor does it mean what was left of former glory. The words admit a simple explanation. The glory of Ephraim was already gone at the death of Ahaz; but Samaria and other strongholds remained, and the kingdom of Syria had not wholly ceased. But now the fortress of Ephraim, and the kingdom of the remnant of Syria, would pass away and disappear like this departed glory of Israel.

vv. 4—6. "Jacob" refers here chiefly to the northern kingdom, which was called the kingdom of Israel. Their

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 he respect what his fingers have made, either the grove-idols, or the sun-images. 9 In that day shall his strong cities be as the forsaken *ruins* of the woods and of the hills, which they forsook before the face of the children of Israel; and there shall be desolation.

10 BECAUSE thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the Rock of thy strength: therefore

state would be like a man wasted away with pining sickness, like the few scanty ears left by the corn-reaper in a rich harvest-field, like gleaning grapes of the vine, or the shaking of the olive-tree. All these are striking figures for a very scanty remnant. "In November comes the final summons, which calls forth all Hasbeiya. Everywhere the people are in the trees shaking them with all their might. But in spite of their shaking and beating, there is always a gleaning left, and these are gleaned up by the poor, who have no trees of their own." (Thomson, *Land and Book*.) Very few Israelites, but still a few, were left in the northern kingdom. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 21.

v. 7. "The Ashtoreths or sun-images." The former word, often rendered grove, means the idols of Ashtoreth or Astarte, the Syrian Venus, worshipped with impure rites, and often in groves, whence the other version of the name. It seems to mean "goddess of luck or fortune." The other word, *chammânîm*, refers to images of the Sun, the Syrian Baal. These two forms of idolatry had a special fascination for the people of Israel. One was the sentimental, but impure worship of a "Queen of Heaven;" and the other the worship of power without holiness or moral perfections, like the abstract Deity of worldly science. The result of Israel's afflictions, and of the overthrow of the

Assyrian, would be a revival of genuine worship offered to the true God alone.

v. 9. "The forsaken *ruins* of the woods and the hills." This verse, from early times, has been felt obscure, and has received many versions or conjectural changes. But the version above, in substance that preferred by Drechsler and Delitzsch, is simple and expressive. The allusion is to strongholds of the Canaanites, in the thick forest, or on some hill-top of Palestine, which they had forsaken or been driven from in the days of Joshua, and of which ruins still remained, the fading memorials of a race long since passed away. The fortresses of Ephraim, in their turn, were to become such neglected ruins as these.

vv. 10, 11. The prophet now turns his voice of warning directly against Israel, whose league with Syria had led them so far astray. He names the true source of their troubles, and denounces the sure failure of all their schemes to recover political greatness, while forsaking the covenant of their God. The pleasant plants and strange slips are those worldly alliances and expedients, whereby they hoped to regain their lost honour and greatness. They might water their old plans with ever new expedients, but all would be vain, and the harvest be only a heap in the day of trial.

Many translate "the harvest flees

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 he shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind! 14 At eventide, behold, trouble! before the morning he *is* no more! This *is* the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us.

away." But the usual rendering of *nēd* as a noun, not a participle, is the best here also, and more emphatic. The allusion is not to a wheat harvest lessened to a single heap, but rather, as v. 10 shews, to the fruit-harvest. Instead of the pleasant crop, so diligently tended, being safely housed, the trees themselves should wither and be cut down, and then be piled into a heap, to be burned up with fire.

vv. 12—14. These verses, and the next chapter, are a common close of the three previous burdens. The Assyrian, the scourge alike of Philistia, Moab, Damascus, and of the cities of Aroer and Ephraim, will be suddenly overthrown. The messages of hope in xiv. 32, xvi. 4, xvii. 7, 8, are here combined together; and distant lands are called upon, along with rescued Judah, to see and adore the mighty hand of God.

The connexion with the previous verses, though denied by many, is clear and plain. The Assyrian campaigns, already announced, viii. 5, 8, as an overwhelming flood, will be to Damascus and Ephraim their day of grief and desperate sorrow. The Burden, having thus introduced the destroyers of the pleasant plants of Ephraim, now predicts their tumult and rage, and then their sudden overthrow. The first clause of v. 13, which a few MSS. and several critics omit, adds much to the energy of the description.

v. 13. "But he shall rebuke them."

The name of God seems purposely withheld, as in Ps. cxiv. 1—6, to give greater force to the warning. The work would be conspicuous, but the Worker shrouds himself in a veil of mysterious darkness.

"Like a rolling thing." The wild artichoke, which Dr Thomson has graphically described (*Land and Book*, p. 564). "Once north of Hamath my eyes were half blinded with the stubble and chaff which filled the air, but it was this 'rolling thing' which rivetted my attention. Hundreds of them, bounding like gazelles over the desert, would suddenly wheel short round, and dash off with equal speed on a new course. An Arab proverb addresses it thus—Ho! *akkub*, where do you put up to-night? to which it answers as it flies—Where the wind puts up." So the remnant of the mighty Assyrian host, smitten with panic terror, would flee away, and be like this "rolling thing" before the whirlwind.

v. 14. The abrupt form of the sentence adds to the force of the description. At eventide there was trouble in the mighty camp of Assyria, when the commission of the destroying angel began. Before the morning "he is no more," the work is done. "When they arose in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty! just and true are thy ways, thou King of nations!"



## § 2 (4). CHAP. XVIII. SEQUEL OF THE THREE BURDENS.

THIS chapter, from the various interpretations which the whole prediction and its separate phrases have received, is a kind of sacred enigma. Besides many secondary variations, and proposed applications to Rome, England, or America, expositors have been chiefly divided on two main questions; whether the land of v. 1 is Egypt or Ethiopia, and whether the same people, or Israel, are described in the second and seventh verses. The first word many take as a Woe, others as a Call or Invitation. The descriptive phrase in v. 1, *tsiltsal kenaphim*, has received seven or eight versions and expositions, "shadowing with wings," "of rustling wings," "of winged locusts," "of tinkling armour," "of the sistrum or winged cymbal," and "of the god Kneph." With the first of these versions the mention of shadows has been applied to the opposite direction of shadows between the tropics, to the eastern and western ranges of hills in Egypt, to the sails of ships, or to military protection. The epithets in vv. 2, 7, some explain in an active, others in a passive sense. Thus also *qavqav, line, line*, has been referred to the superstitious usages of Egypt, to conquests, to partitions of conquered lands, to the Egyptian plant *kiki*, and to an Arabic root, meaning *powerful*. The people, vv. 2, 7, are Israel according to the Chaldee Targum and Syriac version, Saadias, Kimchi, Jarchi, and most Jewish writers, Jerome, Calvin, Horsley, Faber. But most moderns, from Bochart and Vitringa to Gesenius, Ewald, Knobel, Henderson, Drechsler, Delitzsch, think that the same people are meant as in the former verse. This is Egypt according to Jerome, Cyril, Liranus, Bochart, Grotius, Vitringa, Huet, Clericus and Lowth; Meroe or Seba according to Knobel; but Ethiopia according to Calvin, Piscator, Sanctius, Mich., Rosenm., Gesen., Ewald, Henderson, Drechsler, Delitzsch. Other differences occur in the construction of almost every verse.

The version and paraphrase here given are the result of a careful and repeated comparison of these various criticisms and expositions. They involve these main conclusions: (1) The power addressed is neither Egypt nor Ethiopia separately, but the conjoint Egypto-Ethiopian empire. (2) The first word is not a Woe, or denunciation of calamity, but a Divine Call to honour God and assist His people, because of His power to be displayed in the sudden overthrow of the Assyrian army. (3) The people to whom the messengers are to go, the scattered and peeled, are not the Egyptians or Ethiopians, but the Israelites, whether dwelling in Palestine or exiled in Egypt. (4) The main drift of the whole is to form a contrast and joyful sequel to the three previous burdens, by predicting the honour to Zion and its temple, under Hezekiah, through the signal display of God's power for the protection of His chosen people.

CHAP. XVIII. Ho! land that shadowest with wings, from beyond the rivers of Ethiopia: 2 That sendest ambassadors by the sea, and in vessels of bulrushes upon the face of the waters; Go, ye swift messengers, to the people scattered and shorn, a people terrible now and henceforth, a nation meted out

Ch. XVIII. § 2 (4). CALL TO EGYPT AND ETHIOPIA. The same Hebrew word which begins ch. xviii. occurs in ch. v. 8, 22, x. 1, xvii. 12, and also x. 5, lv. 1. In the former places it is a voice of Woe; in the last it is plainly a call or summons of God. This has been shewn to be its force also x. 5, and the present is a third instance of the same use. The Call of the Assyrian x. 5, to execute God's judgments, is changed xvii. 12, into a direct Woe on his armies, when that judgment is finished; and is here followed by a Call to the lands of the south, to listen to God's voice, and be willing messengers of His mercy to Israel. We have thus, in these earlier visions, an earnest of the fuller gospel invitation, lv. 1, in the later prophecies.

v. 1. "That shadowest with wings." The versions, "of winged locusts," "of the sistrum or winged cymbal," or "of rustling wings," refer to things either too trivial, too vague, or too little distinctive, to be the probable sense. The words cannot refer to literal shadows, since in those countries "a shade is not easily found," (Kitto, *Egypt*). The masculine shews that "land" is here used for the people, and the character should be distinctive and emphatic. The phrase "shadow of wings" is of frequent use in Scripture, and the doubling of the form, in Hebrew, often serves to add further emphasis. Soon afterwards, the men of Judah are solemnly warned of their sin, for "trusting in the shadow of Egypt," xxx. 2, 3. The wings, a dual word, are a natural figure for Egypt and Ethiopia, united at this very time, under So and Tirhakah, into a double power, protecting or overshadowing with its greatness the lands on either side.

"From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia." The word "beyond" is the main reason why many writers restrict the chapter to Ethiopia; while the vessels of bulrushes,

v. 2, are one of equal weight for assigning it to Egypt. But the phrase "from beyond" removes the difficulty. The words may thus refer to the farther, not the nearer limit. So Zeph. iii. 10. "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants shall bring my offering." The land, shadowing with double wing from beyond the rivers of Cush, will thus be neither Egypt nor Ethiopia alone, but the whole region of the Nile, from beyond its remote river-sources to the northern sea. This was ruled by Sabacho, So or Sevechus, and Tirhakah, in the days of Isaiah. This Ethiopian dynasty in Egypt was a rare exception to its long series of native Pharaohs. It lasted (Herod., Manetho) about fifty years, and began seven or eight years only before the date of these burdens. The use of an unusual and peculiar phrase has thus its explanation in the history.

v. 2. In the first clause the Red Sea and the Mediterranean are meant, in the second the Nile and its branches, where alone the light barks of papyrus could be safely used. The fact is attested by Plutarch and Theophrastus, Pliny and Lucan. Classic authors mention messages by sea from Egypt to Byblus, and the monuments record others to Mesopotamia. The description answers in all points to the compound Empire of Egypt and Ethiopia, the actual new-formed rival of the Assyrian power.

"Go, ye swift messengers." The word may be rendered either "go" or "come," and in Isaiah the latter sense is much more frequent. The received version, however, gives the correct view, of a message from Egypt towards Palestine, as shewn by the last verse. The voice is first addressed to the far land, that is, to its people, and calls them to attention and obedience. They are defined by their practice of sending messages by sea, and also from district to

and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled. 3 All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers in the earth, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains, behold! and when he bloweth the trumpet, hearken! 4 For thus said the LORD unto me, I will rest calmly, and look down, in my dwelling place, like a clear heat after rain, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. 5 For before the harvest, when the bud is finished, and the flower is become a ripening grape, he will both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and will take away *and* cut down

district, by light barks on the Nile. The messengers themselves are then addressed, and sent on a swift voyage to a people more fully described. Since the land of the messengers has been already defined, both in position, and by its political eminence, the further description must belong to the objects of the message, as viewed by the foreign messengers themselves. On this view of the connexion, which is the simplest, every term is appropriate to Israel at the time of Sennacherib's overthrow.

"To the people scattered and shorn." The multiplied epithets supply the place of the definite article, and limit the message to one well-known nation. The first occurs only once beside: "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." The word means to beat out, and spread over a wide surface. In the time of Hezekiah Israel had been partly led captive by Syria, Edom, Tyre, Egypt, and above all, by Assyria.

The next epithet is expounded by the prophet himself, vii. 20. "In that day will the Lord shave with a razor, hired beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet, it shall consume also the beard." At the time of fulfilment of this later message, the earlier one would be already fulfilled. The other applications, to the Ethiopians, as of tall stature, or "drawn out" for military service; or to the Egyptians, as dwelling in a long strip of narrow valley, or from the habit of close shaving in their priests, are all strained and unnatural, in words addressed to the messengers themselves.

"Terrible now and henceforth." Literally, "from this and onward." The Chaldee renders "olim ac deinceps" or

"long ago and thenceforward," and so A. V., Jarchi, Vitringa, Rosenm., Henderson. But Saadias "dehinc" "henceforth," and so Drechsler, and many others. In the lips of the messengers this seems the more natural. These words fitly describe the impression of awe on Egypt and other nations, when the sudden destruction of the Assyrian army was made known. Israel would indeed seem "a people terrible now and henceforth," after these wonderful signs of God's mighty presence in the midst of them. Comp. Is. xix. 16, 17, Ps. lxxvi. 5—9.

"Meted out, and trodden down." Lit. "Of line, line, and treading down." The last word occurs once only beside, ch. xxii. 5, and in a passive sense, which confirms the received version. The other phrase also occurs ch. xxvii. 10, 13. This makes it very unnatural, with some modern critics, to resort to an Arabic root, and treat *qavqav* as a single word. David "smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground: with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive." 2 Sam. viii. 2. Hence the words fitly express a series of captivities, defined by local limits. In this sense the fulfilment in Israel's history is most conspicuous 1 Ki. xv. 20, 2 Ki. x. 32, xv. 29, 2 Chr. xxviii. 18, 2 Ki. xvii. 5—41. The Assyrian has been already commissioned, x. 6, "to tread them down like mire of the streets."

"Whose land the rivers have spoiled." The version, "Whose land the rivers divide," is exact neither in tense nor meaning, and is less appropriate to Egypt and Ethiopia than to several other countries. Egypt is not spoiled, but

the branches. 6 They shall be left together to the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth; and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them. 7 In that time shall a present be brought to the LORD of hosts, the people scattered and shorn, and from the people terrible now and henceforth, the nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion.

enriched by the Nile, nor Ethiopia spoiled by the transport of alluvial soil by its waters. A mere mark of geography would here be out of place. Isaiah himself expounds the phrase in its reference to Israel, viii. 5—8, and compares the course of the Assyrians to a mighty overflowing flood, sweeping through the land. The prophet Amos has the same figure, viii. 8. Palestine, in the middle of Hezekiah's reign, had been thus spoiled by many successive floods of Philistine, Edomite, Syrian, and Assyrian armies.

The people, then, of the land which reaches to the northern sea from beyond the rivers of Cush, accustomed to send messages in papyrus barks along the Nile, are here invited to send swift messengers. The message is to a people, scattered and made bare by sore calamities, yet terrible through mighty acts of God in their behalf, a people visited by successive conquests, ravaged throughout their land by floods of hostile invasion. Every term is striking and emphatic, as applied in Egypt to Israel, when there arrived the first tidings of the Assyrian overthrow. The message is either by sea to Palestine, or along the Nile to exiles in Egypt.

v. 3. The words, from their order, are a command, not a prediction. The voice to Egypt and Ethiopia is extended now to all other nations. The ensign and trumpet are neither those of the Ethiopians, mustering their forces, nor yet of the Assyrians, encamped near Jerusalem. For the overthrow is looked upon as already past xvii. 12—14, and is itself God's own ensign, lifted up on the mountains of Judah, and His loud trumpet call to nations of the earth. Here, as

xvii. 10, for greater emphasis, the name of God is implied, not expressed.

v. 4. This verse describes God's calm forbearance towards His enemies, the sure progress of His counsels, and the blessing to His people during the affliction and at its close. His favour will be to them like "clear shining after rain," or the refreshment of a dewy cloud in the heat of harvest. So the Chaldee paraphrase. "I will make my people Israel to rest, and it will please me, in my holy dwelling-place, to bless them: I will quickly bring them blessings and consolations, like a clear heat, and as a cloud of dew in the burning heat of harvest."

vv. 5, 6. The allusion here is to the grape-harvest, or vintage. When the bud is finished, or is passing into fruit, and the flower is become a grape; ripening, but not yet fully ripe, the vines shall be suddenly cut down, and their branches be left like weeds on the sides of the mountains. The mighty Assyrian host would be cut down, when its schemes of conquest were almost fulfilled, and God's mercies to His people be wholly undisturbed by all the rage and malice of their enemies. After this judgment, homage would be rendered to the Lord by Israel, the down-trodden people, in His temple at Jerusalem. They would bring a present, and be a present themselves. Compare 2 Chr. xxxii. 23, Zeph. iii. 10, and Is. lxvi. 19, 20. This promise is a glimpse of hope in the midst of the burdens, and its counterpart and antitype is the latest utterance of those lips which had been touched with celestial fire.

## § 3. CHAP. XIX. THE BURDEN OF EGYPT.

THIS Burden of Egypt contains, first, a warning of political downfall and decay; and next, a promise of conversion to God's service in later times. Its date was before the expedition of Sargon, ch. xx. 1, which thus forms its foreground. The priests in Herodotus traced the old monarchy down to Sethos in the time of Sennacherib, and reported that a time of great division and anarchy followed. Such exactly is the picture in the second verse. Again, the last verse has never yet been strictly fulfilled. But the earlier vision, ch. ii. 1—5, leads us to look for such an issue in the final glory of Israel and of Zion. Thus the Burden has a wide range, from the time when it was published to an age still to come.

The main subject of the prophecy is the great change soon to pass over Egypt, when the ancient glory of the Pharaohs would completely die away, and be followed, first by a time of anarchy, next by the severe oppression of the Persian dynasty; and finally, by the renewed prosperity under the Ptolemies, and the dawns of a purer faith, to be completed by the perfect triumphs of the gospel in later days.

CHAP. XIX. THE BURDEN OF EGYPT. Behold, the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud, and will come into Egypt; and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it. 2 And I will set Egypt against Egypt; and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour, city against city, kingdom against kingdom. 3 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, and to them

v. 1. God is said to come with power, when He reveals His presence by signal and especial acts of grace and righteous judgment. "The idea is that of a king, who, knowing that in some remote part of his dominions there are enormous crimes, travels thither in a very swift chariot, that he may punish the guilty." (Rosenm. II. 4.) So in Ps. civ. 3, God is said to "make the clouds his chariot." The moving of the idols at His presence may be simply a figure, to predict the weakening or fall of the Egyptian idolatries. Perhaps, in a deeper sense, it refers to those spirits of evil, by which the immense fabric of the idol-worship of Egypt, through long ages, had been reared and upheld. Comp. Jas. ii. 19; Matt. viii. 29.

v. 2. The Ethiopian dynasty, the 25th of Manetho, ending with Tirhakah, Taracus, or Taharuka Saen Ra, was followed by anarchy and confusion before Psammetichus. Egypt was then parted into twelve *nomes* or kingdoms, at variance with each other; and from this period dates the complete decline of the old Pharaonic power. It was by the help of Greek mercenaries that Psammetichus subdued his rivals, and reunited the kingdom. The verse is thus an exact picture of the next main event of Egypt's history after the date of the vision.

v. 4. A plural noun is here joined with a singular adjective, "a cruel lords." "Since the prophet is everywhere emphatic," Vitranga remarks, "this construction teaches that several lords are to be

that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards. 4 And I will shut up Egypt into the hand of cruel lords, and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

5 AND the waters shall fail from the flood, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. 6 And the streams shall stink, the rivers of defence shall be emptied and dried up, the reed and the rush shall wither. 7 The green things by the river, by the mouth of the river, and every thing sown by the river, shall be dried up, driven away, and be no more. 8 And the fishermen shall mourn, and all that cast hook into the river shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish. 9 And they that dress choice flax, and that weave fine linen,

understood, who would form one body of rulers, and be one in that sense, but not one person. In v. 20, these are called oppressors."

A king, in predictions of wide range, often denotes a series or dynasty of rulers; as the king of Babylon, Is. xiv., of Persia and of Javan, Dan. viii., and the four kings in Dan. vii. 17. Every feature in this verse answers to the Persian dynasty, which began with Cambyses, a stern and cruel king, and ended with Ochus, one of equal or greater cruelty. It was abhorred, from first to last, by the natives of Egypt; who strove, in four or five rebellions, to escape from the yoke, but were shut up in hopeless subjection by the hand of God.

vv. 5-10. The decay of Egypt is described under the figure of a failing inundation of the Nile. In ch. xvi. 8, 9 the Vine of Sibmah represents Moab itself, a country famous for its vineyards. Here, in like manner, the Nile, with its pastures, fisheries, and manufactures, is made to represent the whole national life and prosperity of Egypt. The things named were main elements of the national wealth and power. But oppression and anarchy would lessen the benefit of prosperous seasons, and double the loss in years of scanty inundation. Thus an excessive and extreme wasting of the Nile becomes a striking emblem for the whole course of national decay. This explains the repeated mention, nine times in succession, of the flood, the waters, and the river.

v. 5. "The flood." The term *sea*,

*yâm*, is often applied to the Nile in the Delta during the inundation, when its appearance is that of an inland sea. Such is plainly the meaning here. The inundation would fail, and with it the national prosperity, of which it was at once the source and natural emblem.

v. 6. "The rivers of defence." The word is the singular, of which Mizraim, Egypt, is the plural; and hence many moderns render it "the canals of Egypt." But the word occurs elsewhere forty times, and once in Isaiah, always in the meaning of a defence or fortress. The other version is feeble, since no other rivers than those of Egypt could possibly be meant in this context. It was also one main effect of the Pelusiac or Eastern channels of the Nile, to protect the land from Asiatic invaders. The meaning is thus clear. All branches of the river, whether for culture or defence, were alike to fail.

v. 7. "The green things by the river." Most moderns apply the first word to meadows, and the second to produce generally, or to sown lands, in contrast with pasture. But it is harsh to speak of the meadows and sown lands themselves as driven away. The best version seems to be that of Kimchi, who applies one word to grass or pasture, and the other to garden produce. In extreme drought these would first be withered, and then be driven away like dust.

v. 10. This verse sums up the whole description of Egypt's political decay. The pillars or foundations, a word used once only beside, Ps. xi. 3, may denote

shall be confounded. 10 And her pillars shall be broken down, and all her workers for hire shall be grieved at heart.

11 SURELY the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how ascribe ye the speech to 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, the princes of Memphis are deceived: they have even seduced Egypt, that were the cornerstone of her tribes. 14 The LORD hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof, and

the princes or nobles; but perhaps rather those pursuits of industry, which were the mainstay and strength of the nation. These would be broken down, and all the traders and workmen, whose means of livelihood were gone, would grieve in soul at the affliction and ruin of the land.

vv. 11—15. This utter decay, so unlike the fame of Egypt and its counsellors for political wisdom, leads to a further picture of their infatuation and folly. The last clause of v. 11 is referred by most moderns to the counsellors themselves, as boasting of their noble ancestry. But this would rather require the plural, "we are wise, &c." and the reply is addressed to Pharaoh, not his counsellors. Hence the passive usage in iv. 3, xix. 18, lxi. 6, seems here to give birth to a secondary meaning of the word, as above. "How ascribe ye this saying to Pharaoh?" This is nearly Kimchi's version, "How say ye, in the person, or in the behalf, of Pharaoh?" How can Pharaoh make the boast any longer, and that boast become a proverb, that he inherits both wisdom and honour from a long line of wise and mighty kings? Where are the wise counsellors, who should form one main part of this noble heritage? The mournful change from world-famous wisdom to folly would be God's own judgment on an idolatrous land. When nations reject the words of God, their wisdom soon dies out, and turns to utter foolishness. The warning v. 15, answers to ix. 14—16, where the same words are used of Ephraim, and thus marks the unity of the whole series of visions. The palm

branch denotes the noble and the honourable, and the rush persons of mean and low estate.

vv. 16, 17. These verses complete the warning; and their preface, "in that day," links it with the promises that follow. There would be secret awe on the conscience of the Egyptians in these times of calamity; and many would come to feel that the anger of Jehovah, the God of Israel, the same who had executed judgment on the idols of Egypt long before, was the true source of their heavy troubles. Conviction of sin is the first step toward true conversion.

From Cambyses to Ochus, more than a hundred and eighty years, the abasement of Egypt went on side by side with Israel's return and recovery. The growth of Greek literature, and the number of Jews who resorted to Egypt, would spread the knowledge of these and similar prophecies, especially since the name of Cyrus is so conspicuous in Isaiah's later visions. A race highly superstitious, in seasons of deep distress, would be prone to ascribe their calamities to Divine displeasure, and thus to be "afraid of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts." Predictions of calamity, even from sources not usually credited, have often a strange fascination over the minds of men.

v. 18. This verse has caused an unusual amount of controversy and discussion. The present text, Ir-ha-heres, "city overthrow" by the very slight change of  $\Pi$  for  $\eta$ , becomes Ir-ha-cheres, "city of the sun," or Heliopolis, the Greek name of On, one of the most famous cities of Egypt, and the first named in

they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunkard staggereth in his vomit. 15 Neither shall there be any work for Egypt, which head or tail, palm-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: 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 *there be* five cities in the land of Egypt,

the sacred history. Sixteen MSS. and several editions have this reading, which is followed by the LXX., the Complutensian, Symmachus, the Vulgate, the Arabic, and Saadias. The Chaldee combines both. Coverdale, Vitringa, Lowth, Jenour, Henderson, adopt this marginal version, derived from the various readings, and render "city of the sun." But many others, with Caspari and Drechsler, prefer the received text, and suppose a double allusion to the name of Heliopolis and to the political and spiritual catastrophe here foretold.

The true reading seems to be *Heres* from the general consent of Hebrew MSS., and also from the difficulty which makes it a less likely corruption or change than the other reading. Yet the allusion is to On or Heliopolis, the city named so early in the history of Joseph, and well known to signify the City of Light, or of the Sun. The phrase "shall be called" is seldom used for the usual name, but for some significant title, as in Is. i. 26; iv. 3; lxii. 4. Again, the root *heres* is chiefly applied to the casting down of walls, altars, or fenced cities. Now the two parts of the prophecy, between which this verse is the transition, announce the weakening and decay of the old idolatrous empire, and a later conversion of Egypt to the service of God. On or Heliopolis had the name Ha-ra, the abode of the sun, its chief temple was dedicated to Athom, the setting sun, and it was one main centre of Egyptian idolatry. The prediction of Jeremiah refers either to the city or its temple. "He (Nebuchadnezzar) shall break also the

pillars of Bethshemesh (i.e. house of the sun) which is in the land of Egypt, and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire," xliii. 13. The word, *one*, in Hebrew often means "the first," and may here signify the most conspicuous of these five cities. The Chaldee Targum here alludes directly to the words of Jeremiah, and expounds — "One of them shall be called, City of the house of the Sun, which is to be destroyed."

The title, then, may be explained, City of the Overthrow, i.e. of sun-worship destroyed. The name Ir-ha-heres, will have a double meaning, and alludes to Ha-ra, the Egyptian name of On, and to its Hebrew equivalent, Ir-ha-cheres, city of the sun, or Heliopolis. As On, light, in Ezekiel becomes *Aven*, vanity; so here the slight change, *heres*, for *cheres*, inverting the sense, serves to announce the coming overthrow of the old sun-worship in the presence of a purer and nobler faith. The same word occurs in the charge to Gideon to throw down the altar of Baal, the sun-god of Syria.

The fulfilment is striking. "Onias, son of Onias the high-priest, asked permission from Ptolemy and Cleopatra to build a temple in Egypt like that in Jerusalem, and to appoint for it priests and Levites of his own nation. This he devised, relying chiefly on the prophet Isaiah, who six hundred years before predicted that a temple must be builded in Egypt by a Jew to the supreme God. He therefore wrote to Ptolemy and Cleopatra the following epistle: 'Having come with the Jews to Leontopolis of the Heliopolite



*that* speak the language of Canaan and *that* swear to the LORD of hosts: one shall be called, City of the Overthrow. 19 In that day shall there be an altar to the LORD of hosts in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD. 20 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 will send them a saviour, even 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,

district, and other abodes of my nation, and finding that many had sacred rites, not as was due, and were thus hostile to each other, which has befallen the Egyptians also through the variety of their religions, and disagreeing in their services, I found a most convenient place in the fore-mentioned stronghold, abounding with wood and the sacred animals. I ask leave, then, *clearing away an idol temple not owned, that has fallen down*, to build a temple to the supreme God, that the Jews dwelling in Egypt, harmoniously coming thither, may minister to thy benefit. For Isaiah the prophet has predicted this;—There shall be an altar in Egypt to the Lord God, and he prophesied many other such things concerning the place.' The king and queen replied: We have read thy request, asking leave to clear away the fallen temple in Leontopolis of the Heliopolite nome. We are surprised that a temple should be pleasing to God, settled in an impure place, and one full of the sacred animals. But since you say that Isaiah the prophet so long ago foretold it, we grant thee leave, if according to the law, that we may not seem to have offended against God." (Joseph. *Ant.* XIII. 6.)

The place of this temple for the worship of God in Egypt, in the district of On, or Ha-ra, in Hebrew Ir-ha-cheres, on the site of a ruined idol temple, might well be called Ir-ha-heres, City of the Overthrow. It was a signal pledge and earnest of the overthrow of the old idolatries of Egypt by a purer and higher worship.

The prediction that five cities should "speak the language of Canaan," was

fulfilled by the large influx of Jews under the Ptolemies. Philo must exaggerate, but he reckons that there were nearly a million of Jews in Egypt. The meaning is neither five out of six (Calv.), nor out of 20,000, the extravagant estimate of Herodotus; but five of note, out of a much larger, but still moderate number. They are probably Heliopolis, Leontopolis, Daphne, Migdol, and Memphis (Clericus, Newton, Hitzig). The truth implied is by no means a total conversion of Egypt, but a firm footing gained by the people and faith of Israel, even in this land of the old Pharaohs.

v. 19. The altar in the midst of Egypt was remarkably fulfilled in the temple of Onias. The Book of Isaiah stands here midway between the Law and the Gospel. The change foretold, though hateful to the Pharisaism of the Jews of Palestine, was a step from the strict confinement of sacrifice to Jerusalem only, towards the wider change our Lord announced to the woman of Samaria, when local restrictions on God's worship would be fully done away.

The pillar at the border of Egypt is clearly distinct from the altar in the midst of the land. We read in Josephus (*Ant.* XIV. 6. 2) that in the century before Christ the Jews at Pelusium were so numerous and powerful, as to be appointed "guardians of the entrances of Egypt." The erection, then, of some memorial pillar, on their part, is as natural and likely as the Reubenite altar at the brink of Jordan.

v. 20. This verse refers plainly, not to any and every trouble (Alex.), but to some special season of Egyptian calamity,

and shall perform *it*. 22 And the LORD will smite Egypt; he will smite and heal it: and they shall return to the LORD; and he will be entreated of them, and will heal them. 23 In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria; and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. 24 In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the land; 25 Whom the LORD of hosts will bless, saying, Blessed *be* Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.

followed by a special deliverance. The oppressors are the Persian rulers of Egypt, especially Ochus and his satraps. The "saviour, even a great one" is Alexander the Great, the horn of the he-goat in Daniel, whom the Egyptians hailed as their deliverer from a hated yoke with excessive joy. The first Ptolemy, who succeeded him, bore this name, Soter, or Saviour. Under him Egypt entered on a new era of prosperity. The mild and wise reign of the Ptolemies led to a large increase of Jewish immigrants, and a growing respect for their worship, and thus paved the way for the accession of many proselytes to a purer faith. "No small number of Jews came into Egypt, attracted by the excellence of the sites, and the liberality of Ptolemy" (Jos. *Ant.* XII. 1. 1).

v. 21. "The third Ptolemy, when

he had occupied all Syria by force, did not sacrifice thank-offerings to the gods in Egypt, but came to Jerusalem, and made votive offerings" (Jos. *Ap.* II. 5). Thus all Egypt, under the Ptolemies, may be said to have paid vows to the true God in the person of its kings.

vv. 23—25. These verses complete the prophetic outline. Earnests of this promise were seen largely even before the Christian Era, and also in the times of the Apostles. The dwellers in Mesopotamia and Egypt, on the day of Pentecost, the Ethiopian eunuch, the converts, like Apollos, from Alexandria, Acts vi. 9, xviii. 24, were its partial fulfilment. But its fullness seems reserved for the day when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation," Is. ii. 4, and when the recovery of Israel shall be life from the dead to the Gentile world. Rom. xi. 15.

### § 3 (2). CHAP. XX. THE SEQUEL OF THE BURDEN.

This chapter is a Sequel of the previous Burden. Between the death of Ahaz, xiv. 28, and the fourteenth of Hezekiah, the Jews, alarmed by the growing power of Assyria, and faithless towards God, were eager in their desire to gain help from Ethiopia and Egypt. This sin is sternly reproved in a later message, ch. xxxi. 1—6. After the fall of Samaria, and when the burden on Philistia<sup>a</sup> was fulfilling in the siege of Ashdod, a new message was therefore given, to warn them against their vain trust in "the shadow of Egypt." In ch. xxviii. 1, the fall of Samaria is still future, and the message, xxii. 15, 16, seems also to belong to the reign of Ahaz. Hence the date here given must be one which specially belongs to this chapter, and does not apply to the Burdens that follow, all of which appear to belong either to the last year of Ahaz, or the two first of Hezekiah.

IN the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, and fought against Ashdod, and took it; 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, a three years' sign and wonder against Egypt and against Ethiopia; 4 So shall the king of

Ch. XX. SIGN AGAINST EGYPT AND ETHIOPIA.

v. 1. Sargon is never once named in classic writers, and only here in the Scriptures themselves. Hence most writers, before the late Assyrian discoveries, took him for Shalmaneser or Sennacherib; though Rosenmüller, Gesenius, and others, on internal grounds, held him to be some intermediate king. The latter view is held by most Syrologists to be confirmed by the monuments, but, I think, on insufficient grounds, and that the chronology in this prophecy confirms the usual view of earlier writers, that Shalmaneser and Sargon are two names of the same king. His annals on the monuments seem to assign him fifteen campaigns; while the interval, in Kings, Chronicles, and Isaiah alike, from the fall of Samaria to Sennacherib's campaign, is only eight years. See Appendix III. on the Assyrian reigns.

v. 2. "The Lord spake by Isaiah." He spoke *to* the prophet, but by the actions of the prophet He spoke to the people. The view that the whole occurred in vision only (Maimon., Kimchi, Staudler, Hendewerk) does open violence to the words of the text—"and he did so." The very object of the message was to make a deep impression on the senses of a careless people.

"Naked and barefoot." This means, without shoes or sandals on his feet, and also without his usual coat or tunic of sackcloth. The word, barefoot, is alone a proof that absolute nakedness is not meant, since otherwise this addition would be quite unnatural. It completes a description of undress, not of absolute nudity. The term, naked, is often so used in Scripture and classic authors.

vv. 3, 4. Many think that the symbolical action lasted three years, during

which, either constantly or at intervals, Isaiah walked stripped and barefoot. But the Hebrew accents, the connexion of the verses, and even moral congruity, point to the varied rendering above. The symbolic act must have been already finished, when the exposition in v. 3 was given; and this could scarcely have been delayed till three years after the first date. The act, also, if continuous for three years, would be out of proportion with the object; and if at intervals only, then its meaning, as a prediction of time, would be quite obscured and destroyed. The three years naturally denote a period, throughout which the humiliation of Egypt would last. The chief doubt is whether this period were simply predicted in words, or also represented in the symbolic act. The former is the view of Hitzig and Alexander, but the latter is that of Vitringa, and every way more probable. In Num. xiv. 33, Ez. iv. 1—6, a day is made the type or historic symbol of a year. The prophet's walking stripped and barefoot before all the people for three successive days, would fix their attention, and be a definite act, capable of a definite meaning. This the same act, spread over a space of three years, at indefinite intervals, could not be. It was to be "a three years' sign and wonder," a direct sign of the approaching shame of Egypt and Ethiopia in three campaigns.

vv. 5, 6. A strong party in Judah eagerly sought the help of Egypt, as their only defence against the Assyrian. The aim of the previous burden, and of this message, is to wean the people from this deceitful hope, and to lead them to rest simply on the covenant of the God of Israel. How should those be their deliverers, who could not even deliver themselves?

Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old; naked and barefoot, even with *their* body uncovered, to the shame of Egypt. 5 And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory. 6 And the inhabitant of this isle shall say in that day, Behold, such *is* our expectation, to whom we have fled for help, to be delivered from the king of Assyria; and how shall we escape ourselves?

“This isle.” The word, in Hebrew use, is not limited to islands only, but includes all the borders of the sea. It is here applied to Palestine; and the Philistines and Tyrus, and other dwellers by the sea, who were looking to Egypt for help, are joined with the Jews in one

common warning. When worldly helps are most needed, their failure is most conspicuous. No sooner had Egypt ceased to wield the rod of an oppressor, than it became a treacherous friend, the staff of a broken reed, to the church and people of God.

#### § 4. CHAP. XXI. THE BURDENS OF THE SOUTH.

THIS chapter contains three Burdens, on the Desert of the Sea, Dumah, and Arabia. The watchman of the first burden reappears in the second, and Dumah and Seir belong to Arabia. But while the close relation of the three seems thus to be proved, a serious difficulty lies in the way. The siege and fall of Babylon are so clearly described in vv. 3, 4, that sceptical critics deny Isaiah to be the author of the first burden, and ascribe it to the days of Cyrus. Hence also most critics take the Desert of the Sea for a name of Babylonia, whether so called from the marshes and floods of the Euphrates, or figuratively, as a wilderness of nations.

This usual view is open to weighty objections. A burden of Babylon has begun this series, and it is not likely that it would be the subject of a second, under an obscure and mystic name. The Desert of the Sea, in Scripture, denotes “the district bordering on the Red Sea, near the gulf of Elah,” and cannot without violence be applied to the fruitful land of Babylon. The mention that follows, of Dumah, Seir, and Arabia, confirms this meaning of the term. It results, also, from the order of the whole series. The Burden of Babylon is followed by those of Philistia, Moab, and Syria, on the west, east, and north of Palestine, or on its Chaldean side. The Burden of Egypt, the rival empire, is followed naturally by those on the southern side. The treacherous dealer is named again, xxxiii. 1, and plainly refers to the Assyrian. The previous burdens of Moab and Damascus include a prediction of judgment on the oppressing power. For these reasons the Desert of the Sea must be taken here, with Grotius, in its proper sense, so that the direct subject of all the three burdens is the region south of Judea.

THE BURDEN OF THE DESERT OF THE SEA. As whirlwinds in the south sweep through, so it cometh from the wilderness, from a terrible land. 2 A grievous vision is made known to me: the treacherous one dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam! besiege, O Media! all the sighing have I made to cease. 3 Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman in travail; I am bowed down with hearing *it*; I am dismayed at seeing *it*. 4 My heart is bewildered, fearfulness hath affrighted

v. 1. The Sea, in connection with the desert, means the Red Sea, especially its northern part. Ex. xiii. 18; Deut. i. 1. Elath, at the head of the gulf, became the southern limit of Edom, 1 Ki. ix. 26. It was occupied by Solomon and his successors as a naval station, was conquered by the Syrians under Rezin, 2 Ki. xvi. 6, and retained by a Syrian colony even after the fall of Damascus. The burdens, returning from Egypt, and following the route of Israel, light first on this region. The inscriptions of Sargon state that "he penetrated deep into the Arabian peninsula." But these Assyrian inroads would supply few materials for detailed prediction; and the burden hurries on to a more weighty event, the sore judgment that was to light upon the violent and treacherous invaders in days to come.

These inroads of the Assyrian forces are described by a metaphor, suitable to the scene, the southern whirlwinds of the Arabian desert, Zech. ix. 14. Like these whirlwinds the fierce marauders would sweep over the cultured districts of that "terrible land," the peninsula of Sinai, and the wilderness of Paran, the scene of God's wonders in days of old.

v. 2. The abruptness is here increased by a grammatical discord. The style reflects the wildness of the terrible desert whence the vision comes. Contempt for treaties was a marked feature of the Assyrian power, ch. xxxiii. 8. Sargon's invasion of Egypt is the starting-point of the last burden. An agreement was probably then made by him with the dwellers in the wilderness, and violated. These inroads on the southern desert seem to have been the farthest limit of the Assyrian triumphs, while the prophet has

already linked Assyria and Babylon as one compound empire, xiii—xiv. 27. The Spirit, then, hurries us forward, as with the speed of the southern whirlwinds, from the scene of crime to that of retribution; from the dwellers in the desert, treacherously surprised by the Assyrians, to the surprise of Babylon in its might of drunken revelry. As even the Desert of the Sea has smarted under the treachery and ambition of the northern spoiler, so would Babylonia be turned into a "desert of the sea," a waste of sand-heaps and marshes, by the righteous judgment of God. All the sighing of the exiles and captives would cease in the fall of the great oppressor. Elam here comes before Media; a transition from xiii. 17, where the Medes only are named, to the later visions ch. xlv., where Cyrus, the Persian, is twice mentioned by name as fulfilling the Divine judgment.

vv. 3, 4. There is no need to suppose here any change of speaker. The prophet, in vision, by the sympathy of a holy love, feels and suffers along with the objects of his warning. He is transported in spirit into the royal palace, while the great feast is going on, sees the hand-writing on the wall, and shares in the dismay of Belshazzar himself, and of his careless revellers.

v. 5. The Hebrew tense is different in the two clauses, but the imperative in English alone gives the true emphasis of both. The table of the royal banquet is prepared. "Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and drank wine before the thousand." The guests are ready to sit down, when the watch, after the custom, is set at the gates of the city. The feast begins, they eat, they drink, in unsuspecting revelry.

me; the night of my pleasure hath he turned for me into shuddering. 5 Prepare ye the table, set the watch; eat, drink: arise, *then*, ye princes, anoint the shield. 6 For thus hath the LORD said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him tell whatever he shall see. 7 And should he see riders, a pair of horsemen, riders on asses, riders on camels, let him hearken diligently with great heed. 8 And he cried *as* a lion, My lord, I stand upon my watchtower continually in the daytime, and I am set in my watch all the night; 9 And, behold! here come riders, a couple of horsemen. And he spake again, and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods hath he broken *and flung* to the ground. 10 O my threshing, and the corn of my floor; that which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.

II THE BURDEN OF DUMAH. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman! what of the night? Watchman! what of the night?

"They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, of brass and iron, of wood and stone." And now the call of God goes forth to the Persian leaders, "Arise, ye princes, anoint the shield." In the same night the handwriting appears on the wall. The kingdom is numbered and finished, and the night of pleasure turned into shuddering and utter dismay.

vv. 6, 7. The prophet is charged next, in vision, to set a watchman on a tower, who is to look out in the eastern horizon for Persian horsemen, or riders on asses and camels, to learn the result of the siege; and when these appear, he is taught to listen eagerly for their tidings. Xenophon describes the Persian cavalry as advancing in double rank or file (*Cyrop.* vii. 5, 8). The Caramanians, one part of his forces, used asses for war (Strab. xv. 2.) That *rekeb* means here mounted men, not chariots, seems proved by the double mention of camels and asses. Horsemen, *parashim*, is here the same word from which the name, Persian, was afterwards derived. The conditional rendering of vv. 6, 7 (Ewald) makes the connexion clear, which our version leaves obscure. The charge or instructions are first given, and then the watchman's report follows.

vv. 8, 9. The watchman is described as reporting his care to fulfil his wearisome

task, when suddenly he catches a glimpse of horsemen in the horizon, for whom he had looked out so long. A pause is implied, till they reach his watchtower, and give in their tidings; that Babylon is fallen, and the conquerors have dashed her idols ignominiously to the ground. Since the Persians thought it unlawful to make images (Herod. i. 131) they would without scruple break the idols in pieces, that fell in their way. The vision ends with a direct address to the people of Israel, long threshed by the blows of the heathen oppressor, and they are assured solemnly that all these are "the true sayings of God."

vv. 11, 12. The short burden of Dumah has been variously explained. Michaelis, Doderlein, Hitzig and Maurer refer it to the Ishmaelite tribe of Dumah, the Dumætha of Ptolemy. But a majority of critics (LXX., Jarchi, Vitringa, Lowth, Koppe, Dathe, Rosenm., Knobel, Drechsler, Alexr.) apply the title to Edom or Idumæa, with a secondary idea of solitude or silence, the meaning of the word. The two views may be combined. A voice from Seir, nearly south of Jerusalem, could not refer to Ptolemy's Dumætha, distant 300 miles nearly due east. But the Ishmaelites and Edomites were much intermingled, and Petra itself is constantly assigned to the Nabathæans,

12 The watchman said, Morning cometh, and also night. If ye will inquire, inquire *ye*, return, *and* come.

13 THE BURDEN IN ARABIA. In the thickets in Arabia shall ye lodge, ye caravans of Dedanites. 14 Bring water to meet the thirsty, O inhabitants of the land of Tema, meet the fugitive with bread. 15 For they have fled from swords, from the brandished 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 a hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail: 17 And the residue of the number of the archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for JEHOVAH, the God of Israel, hath spoken it.

or sons of Nebaioth, as their capital. If the Desert of the Sea includes the southernmost part of Edom, Dumah may refer to the northern portion, and to the adjoining tribes, Ishmaelite as well as Edomite. This agrees with the natural order, since the visions are here returning from Egypt to Palestine again.

The voice from Seir is to the watchman, seen in the last vision as placed on his watchtower. It is night, and he is asked how far the night has gone, and when the day will break. The figure implies that the land of Seir is visited by a great calamity, so as to stir up intense desire for happier times. In their heavy affliction they would gladly learn, even from the prophets of Israel, God's watchmen to the nations, how soon their trouble will pass away. The answer is mysterious. It seems to tell them that the present trouble is near its close, but that a fresh calamity would follow. Some think that the morning refers to Israel, the night to Edom. But the first night is implied to be common to both. The whole admits rather of this paraphrase. "A morning is near, of relief from your present troubles through the Assyrian. But while you remain far from God, a second night, the Chaldean desolation, is sure to follow. Would you learn the future from God's prophets, let your inquiry be earnest and sincere; return from crooked ways of idolatry and pride, and join yourselves to the covenant of the God of Abraham."

vv. 13—15. The slight change in the form of the title answers to the fact that

Arabia was a lodging-place rather than a home for its wandering tribes. The caravans of Dedanites are the companies of trading Arabs, descended from Dedan, son of Midian, whose route lay from Damascus to the south of Arabia. Thus we read of Tyre, Ez. xxvii. 15, "The men of Dedan were thy merchants...they brought thee for a present horns of ivory and ebony." This implies trade with Africa through the east of the Red Sea. So Jeremiah xlix. 8. "Flee ye, turn back, dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan, for I will bring the calamity of Edom upon him." This confirms the reference here to Seir and the land of Edom. The scourge of war was to reach even the traders who coasted Idumæa, like the Ishmaelites who brought Joseph into Egypt. They would have to forsake their usual route, and "dwell deep" in thickets far inland, to avoid the enemy.

The companies of Tema are named Job vi. 19. Their land lay east from Moab in the great desert (Foster's *Arabia*, i. 289—304). The fugitives from the caravans, from Kedar, and perhaps from Moab and Edom, would have to seek refuge in these inland regions of the desert. The men of Tema are called upon to supply them with bread and water, when exhausted by their sudden and hasty flight.

vv. 16, 17. The warning here extends from the trading Arabs to the warlike Kedarites, the modern Beni Harb, who dwelt on the upper part of the east of the Red Sea. A single year is made the limit of the fulfilment. This is a weighty

objection to the view which refers the previous burdens to the Chaldeans, while it confirms the reference to Sargon's campaigns, of which the Nineveh sculptures, so long buried, contain the record. The Kedarites dwelt near the sea in the great desert, so that the three burdens seem to unite in one common warning to the dwellers in the wilderness between Egypt and Palestine. Their speedy fulfilment would be one pledge more of

Isaiah's mission, so as to strengthen and sustain the faith of the men of Judah during that great crisis of trouble, which was so near at hand. The triumphs of the Assyrian spoilers would be like the sweeping of the whirlwinds of the south over those parts of the Arabian desert, which had usually escaped the evils of invasion and conquest, when affliction came on the more settled and populous regions of Palestine, Egypt, and Syria.

## § 5. CHAP. XXII. THE BURDEN OF THE VALLEY OF VISION.

THIS Vision is one of peculiar difficulty, and bears a title of which the meaning is obscure. The Valley of Vision, according to most writers, ancient and modern, here denotes Jerusalem. But the explanations offered are very diverse. The name has been referred to the actual degradation of the city (Kimchi), to the meaning of the name Moriah (Michaelis), to the school of the prophets in the Tyropæon (Vitringa), to the neighbourhood of the valley of Hinnom (Wachner), to the intersection of the city by ravines (Rosenm., Hend.), or to its being overlooked by higher hills (Drechsler); or further, to the fact of its being hidden and shut off by God's covenant from the rest of the world (Delitzsch).

The chapter has three parts. The first agrees with the account of the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, vv. 1—7; the second with Hezekiah's measures of defence against Sennacherib, vv. 8—14; while the third contains a promise to Eliakim, already fulfilled at the time of Sennacherib's campaign. On this view, however, the order of time is completely reversed, while there is no sign or trace of a transition from a later to an earlier period. Three expositions have latterly been proposed. First, that Isaiah begins by predicting the final capture of the city, and then suddenly reverts to the much earlier Assyrian siege, as a kind of earnest (Vitringa, Jackson, Vogel, Calvin, Drechsler). Secondly, that the first verses refer to the Assyrian siege, and describe, not the capture of the city, but only its confusion and dismay (Piscator, Dathe, Henderson). Thirdly, that the prophet "merely uttered what he expected to happen, so that the prediction has partly failed" (Knobel, Davidson). A fourth view has been held, that the whole may refer to a siege in the reign of Manasseh (Alex.). Calvin applies the title to all Judea; while Grotius refers it, unlike most others, to the city of Samaria. This last view, though opposed to the usual tradition of interpreters, is confirmed by the following reasons.

The previous Burdens are a series geographically complete. They all converge around one central region, the weakened remnant of Ephraim and



Judah. To these the message now returns from the lands of the south. In the view of God's prophets, Israel, though divided, are still one people. The rivalry and hatred of the two kingdoms could not undo their original calling, and the Assyrian was their common scourge, because of their common sin. At the date of this Burden, as fixed by the whole context, two main acts of judgment were still future, the siege and fall of Samaria, and the siege and extreme peril of Jerusalem. Even in xxviii. 1, Samaria's overthrow has not yet come. Now Samaria was only fifty miles from Jerusalem, and its fall took place only eight years before Sennacherib's campaign. The connexion of the two events, in place, time, and moral features, is of the very closest kind. They have also been included before, in ch. viii. 5—14, under one common figure of a desolating Euphratean flood. It is thus most natural that they should be here grouped together in one vision.

Again, the word *gêi*, valley, occurs in Isaiah only in three other places, xxviii. 1, 4, xl. 4. The last is quite general, but in the two others the reference is clearly to Samaria. Jerusalem is never elsewhere called a valley. Its whole site is on a very high level, and the hill and mountain of Zion are terms of constant use. But Samaria "is situated in the midst of a broad deep valley, which expands into a breadth of five or six miles. Beyond this valley, which completely isolates the hill of Samaria, the mountains rise again on every side," (Kitto, *Bib. Dict.*). The features of vv. 1—5, which answer to the capture of Jerusalem, are simply those of a luxurious city, taken by famine, not by storm; and this was equally true in the fall of Samaria. Either city fell after a siege of three years, 2 Ki. xxviii. 10, xxv. 1—3. But there is one decisive contrast. The siege and capture of Jerusalem was 125 years later than the events next described, while that of Samaria was eight years, at most, before them. If the title be referred to prophetic visions in general, these were nearly as frequent in Samaria as Jerusalem, and the name *valley* is far more appropriate. But the simplest meaning of the title is, that it refers to some valley brought under the prophet's eye in this vision itself. Now this agrees much better with the beautiful vale of Samaria, which he might never have visited, than with the hills of Jerusalem, which were his constant home.

The Vision on this view, like the Burden of Philistia, will belong to the last months of the reign of Ahaz, before Hezekiah's reformation had begun. It will predict, in regular order, the approaching overthrow of Ephraim and Samaria; its direct consequence, in the political exposure and peril of Judah, and the sensual blindness and worldly policy of the people; and also the abasement of the worldly and prosperous Shebna, and the promotion of the faithful Eliakim, which would become a sure pledge to Jerusalem of rescue and deliverance in the coming hour of need.

CHAP. XXII. THE BURDEN OF THE VALLEY OF VISION. What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops? 2 That thou art filled with outcries, the tumultuous city, the joyous city: thy slain are not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle. 3 All thy rulers are fled together, they are bound by the archers: all that are found of thee are bound together, that have fled afar. 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, the LORD of hosts, in the valley of vision, breaking down the walls, and crying to the mountains. 6 And Elam bare the quiver with chariots of men *and* horsemen, and Kir uncovered the shield. 7 And it is come to pass, *that* thy choicest valleys are full of chariots, and the horsemen set themselves in array toward the gate.

v. 1. The scene of these opening verses, from the reasons just given, is the valley of Samaria at the close of its three years' siege by the Assyrians. The bustling and noisy city of the drunkards of Ephraim, whose palaces had been full of tumultuous revels (xxviii. 1, and Amos iii. 9), is now filled with outcries of the famished, with fear and confusion. Its people have gone up to the housetops, to gaze on the host of enemies, or to escape from the fierce soldiers, bursting into the town. Its slain are wasted by the three years' siege and famine. The rulers, like Zedekiah and his princes afterwards, flee away by night, when the famine is intolerable, but are chased by the light archers, and become an easy prey. The common people, who have fled far off, are captured by "pursuers swifter than the eagles of heaven." Lam. iv. 19.

v. 4. The attempt to comfort the prophet would be less easy to explain, if the vision referred to the still remote downfall of Jerusalem. But on the present view it is full of deep meaning. The selfish and the short-sighted in Judah would care little for the fall of the rival kingdom, or might even be senseless enough to exult in its ruin. Not so the prophet of God. He knew that Israel were still one people,

and the ruin of Ephraim the herald of sorest trial to Judah. The siege and fall of Samaria were an image of the doom of Zion, though in days more remote; and he refuses all comfort, when the vision reveals to him, with mournful vividness, the "spoiling of the daughter of his people."

v. 5. There is here no trace of a change in the objects of the vision, which the common view compels many interpreters to assume. The prophet only amplifies the grounds of his sorrow. A grievous vision is before him. The fruitful and lovely vale of Samaria is seen filled with woe and clamour, and loud wailings of the fugitives and the captives are echoed back from the hills.

v. 6. The Elamite soldiers were chiefly archers (Strabo xv. 3). Kir is Kuros, a river that rises in the Caucasus, and runs into the Caspian, and from which Georgia, or Gircستان, derives its name. The natives of the Caucasus still wear shields (Hend. p. 195). The prophet first describes the army, and then pursues the course of its campaigns.

v. 7. The Assyrian army, released from the long and weary siege, is now seen pouring southward through the choicest valleys of Palestine. The horse-

8 HE hath also removed 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 have gathered together the waters of the lower pool: 10 And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and ye have broken down the houses to fortify the wall. 11 And ye have made a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool: but ye looked not unto the Doer of this, and have not seen him that appointed it long ago. 12 And the

men appear at the gate of each fenced city, in succession, and summon it to yield to the mighty conqueror. The prophet's words are here addressed to "the daughter of his people," whose calamity he deploras.

v. 8. The vision now passes on, from the completed ruin of Ephraim, to the fear and danger of Judah. The words may refer to God himself, or to the Assyrian, the rod who executes His judgment. The "covering of Judah" has been explained in many different ways. It may be a figure, frequent in Arabic, derived from the veil of a virgin, and the outrages of war. But it seems to have a striking historical force. Ephraim, in a military view, was the covering or sheltering veil of Judah against northern invaders. By the fall of Samaria this shelter was removed, and thus Judah was left bare and naked for the next inroad of the Assyrians. When their army marched on through Aiath, Michmash, and Gibeah, x. 28, 29, this covering was wholly taken away. The men of Judah would then "look to the armour of the house of the forest," or the arsenal and stores of the city of David, as their last human resource against the mighty oppressor.

vv. 9—12. The Prophet notes, in vision, the eager efforts of the people to secure the city against the terrible invaders. In itself, their diligence was to be praised; but they were blind to the hand of God, who had ordained, long ago, this sore judgment upon them for their national sins. The same phrases recur in the severe rebuke of Sennacherib, xxxvii. 26. This whole judgment had been planned, and was controlled, by the firm decree of the God of Israel. The

steps taken by Hezekiah answer closely to this prediction. But that pious king used his utmost efforts to avert the warning, and to persuade his people to rest on the covenant of their God. His faith, and that of a believing remnant, received a signal blessing; while the secret or open unbelief of the rest brought sore and heavy judgments upon the land.

vv. 12—14. The sensual blindness of the men of Judah, in these years of Assyrian triumph, is further proved. The words "in that day" may refer to the whole interval from the fall of Samaria to the overthrow of Sennacherib. The ruin of Ephraim called loudly upon Judah for repentance and godly sorrow. The effect was very different. Most of them indulged in selfish exultation, or resolved to enjoy the brief respite by giving the reins to their sensual appetites. This refusal to learn the lesson God would teach them by Ephraim's fall was their own death-warrant. Their own political ruin, though delayed by two pious kings, was then sealed and ratified; and when the time of respite was over, the judgment on Samaria became an exact picture of the fall of Jerusalem. See Jer. iii. 7—11; vii. 12—16.

vv. 15—25. This message to Shebna forms one part of the Burden, which is thus relieved and tempered at its close by a gracious promise. The double name, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, with which it begins, has been used twice in the previous verse, and thus connects this third part with the rest of the vision. The promotion of Eliakim had taken place before the message of Rabshakeh, xxxvi. 2, 3, which is a further proof of the unity of the whole chapter.

On the view taken above, the succes-

Lord, the LORD of hosts, did call in that day 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 die. 14 And the LORD of hosts revealed it in mine ears, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

15 THUS saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, Go, get thee unto this treasurer, unto Shebna, which is over the house.

sion of the parts in time, and the moral unity, are complete. In the beautiful valley of Samaria the scene is first laid, and exhibits the ruin of that once festive and luxurious city, when its three years' siege came to an end. Next is revealed the peril of Judah, left naked and exposed to the Assyrian; and a stern warning is uttered against their unbelief and luxury, which threatens them with a catastrophe not less complete. But here light breaks in upon the darkness: Shebna, the royal steward, whose care in building himself a costly tomb presents him to us as a type of the national pride and unbelief, the prophet here announces, will be deposed, and a man of faith and piety will be exalted in his stead. The result of this change will be safety and deliverance. Eliakim will become "a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah." The suggestion of some critics, that the prophet merely uttered his own erroneous calculations, is not less superficial than profane. The actual fall of Samaria, the speedy and extreme peril of Judah, the moral conflict in the bosom of the state, the coming triumph of faith over worldliness, of piety over pride, and the resulting safety of Jerusalem, form the main outlines of the vision, and are in exact accordance with the course of events in the actual history.

v. 15. The phrase "this treasurer" implies here a strong rebuke. "This man, so unworthy of high rank and honour among the chosen people." Some take him for a heathen and foreigner, but on very slender grounds. Others (Vitr.) think him a different person from Shebna the scribe, xxxvi. 3, 11, xxxvii. 2, who takes part in the messages to Isaiah. But the name never occurs elsewhere; and

the connexion with Eliakim is so marked in either case, as to make it clear that he is one and the same person. Some think he was first deposed to a lower office, and then exiled at a later period. A direct message, however, of this kind is not simple prediction, but warning, and is open, on repentance, to a partial or total change, Jer. xviii. 1—10; Jon. iii. 4—10. The only mention of Shebna in the history is fourteen years later, when he was the royal scribe, and was sent in sackcloth by Hezekiah, along with Eliakim, to ask the prayers of Isaiah himself. Their united message had then a signal and gracious answer. It is very natural to conclude that the sentence here pronounced against him had been already fulfilled, and that one clause was repealed through his repentance; rather than that all was unfulfilled, and impending over him, when he took part in that message of earnest faith and piety.

The following, then, seems a probable solution of the difficulty. This warning was given in the reign of Ahaz, probably in the year of his death, xiv. 28. That death, at the age of 37, came suddenly, and led to great political changes, along with Hezekiah's reformation. Eliakim was at once promoted, and Shebna deposed. He was then sent, either by choice in an embassy, or as a hostage, to Assyria, and was there detained a prisoner, when "Hezekiah rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not." In the time of his disgrace and trouble we may suppose that he humbled himself, like Manasseh; and then that the last clause of this warning was repealed, which threatened him with death in the foreign land of his captivity. He might then, on his return, be placed in a lower

16 What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here? that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here? hewing him out a sepulchre on high! graving for himself a habitation in the rock!  
 17 Behold! the LORD will mightily cast thee down, and will firmly seize upon thee. 18 He will violently whirl and toss thee, *like* a ball, into a wide country: there shalt thou die, and there *shall* the chariots of thy glory *be* the shame of thy lord's house. 19 And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down.

20 AND it shall come to pass, in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah: 21 And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand; and he shall be a father

office, and accounted by the pious Hezekiah a fit messenger to be joined with Eliakim, in seeking, through the prophet, a gracious answer from God in the time of trouble. So Sosthenes is joined with St Paul in the heading of his letter to Corinth.

v. 16. The absence of the usual preface, and the abrupt change from direct address to indignant soliloquy, add to the force of this rebuke. The Egyptians, says Diodorus, "call the homes of the living lodgings, since we dwell in them but a little while, but the tombs of the dead everlasting habitations, since they are to spend an unlimited time in Hades," 1. 51. This care of Shebna about a costly tomb implied carnal security, and an ambitious desire to rival the royal sepulchres; perhaps also a heathenish creed, as if the grave were an eternal home.

vv. 17—19. The threatening is one of sudden downfall, and of removal to a foreign land. Its fulfilment is not directly recorded, and various conjectures have thus been made. The view just proposed seems to agree best with the course of the history. The last clause is often taken as a direct address, "O shame of thy lord's house!" But the construction is simpler, and the contrast more full, with the received version. The presence of these chariots in Assyria, on the view suggested before, would be an open sign of Judah's vassalage and tributary condition.

vv. 20, 21. The title "my servant" implies the faith and piety of Eliakim, in contrast to Shebna's pride and unbelief.

His promotion was to be a pledge of God's blessing, and of His favour returning to Jerusalem. This verse is like the turning point, where the dark clouds of these successive Burdens begin to be lighted up with the bow of promise, and hopes of a great deliverance.

v. 22. The promise to Eliakim is adopted by our Lord himself in His message to the Philadelphian church—"These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth." It is strange, then, how Calvin can say confidently that Eliakim is no type of Christ. Shebna and Eliakim plainly represent two parties in Zion, one marked by pride and worldliness, the other by faith and true godliness. A typical character shines out in the whole message, and is plainly confirmed by the risen Saviour himself in His use of the words. The fall of Shebna is a picture of the judgment on those Jewish rulers and builders, who rejected the true Cornerstone, and received a sentence of degradation and lasting exile. This, again, adds to the presumption that Shebna was no foreigner, as some have fancied, but a heathenized Jew; while his reappearance in a friendly relation to Hezekiah and Isaiah, but in a lower office, may point onward to the time when, after long and sore affliction, Judah, so long outcast, shall be restored to the favour of God.

v. 25. This last verse repeats the

to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. 22 And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder : and he shall open, and none shall shut ; and he shall shut, and none shall open. 23 And I will fasten him *as* a nail in a sure place ; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. 24 And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from vessels of cups even to all vessels of flagons. 25 In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall ; and the burden that *was* upon it shall be cut off ; for the LORD hath spoken *it*.

warning to Shebna, no longer as a threatening to himself, but as direct prediction, sealed by the words, "for the Lord hath spoken it." Here there is no mention of his death in the foreign land, but of his degradation from his high office alone. The death of Ahaz at 37 might be quite sudden, and Shebna may have thought himself secure for many years, when the message was given. But Hezekiah, who began a religious reform with

so much zeal in the first month of his first year, would not fail to attend at once to Isaiah's solemn message. The deposition of Shebna and the promotion of Eliakim were thus probably among the first acts of the new reign, a public pledge of the religious reformation ; and the first dawn of hope and promise returning to Zion in the midst of the Assyrian troubles. So too when Christ reigns, Antichrist must fall.

THIS Burden, from its clear prediction of a distant future, has had its genuineness denied by some modern critics (Eichhorn, Rosenmüller, Movers, Hitzig, Davidson). But all the internal evidence of connexion and style, as well as all the external, proves it to be Isaiah's. The Burdens are a series, of which this of Tyre, the one great maritime power of those days, is the last. So also in ii. 16, the objects of judgment last named are "all ships of Tarshish, and all desirable merchandise," while in xi. 11, "the isles of the sea" close the list of places from which Israel are to return.

This Burden has also many internal links with those before it. Its opening and closing sentences begin the burden of Moab. The howling of Moab is mentioned six times, and the same word is found three times in this message to Tyre. The form of the phrase, "so that there is no house, no entering in," is the same as in the Burden of Damascus, "so that it is no city." The repetition, "the sea, the strength of the sea," is like xix. 7, "by the river, by the mouth of the river." The title "joyous city" is common with the last Burden, and the phrase in v. 11 is the keynote of three earlier visions, v. 25, ix. 12, x. 4, xiv. 24, 27. The last words of v. 13 answer to the sentence on Damascus, "it shall be a heap, a ruin." The promise at the close resembles those in the Burdens of Damascus, Egypt, and the Valley of Vision. The language is "terse, highly figurative, and sublime," quite in the style of Isaiah, and unlike any later writer. (Hend.). The charge that it is "weak, tiresome, lame, loosely strung together," involves an equal want of taste and of reverence.

**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 unto them. 2 Be dumb, ye inhabitants of the isle, which the merchants of Zidon, that cross the sea, have replenished. 3 And her revenue in great waters is as the sowing of the Nile, as the harvest of the river; and she

v. 1. The message begins with a call to the Tyrian merchants and sailors, far away from their home, to mourn over the ruin of their city. Tarshish is Tartessus in Spain, one chief emporium of Tyrian commerce. Ships of Tarshish thus became a title for all vessels used for long voyages. Chittim is Cyprus, and the sea-coasts of the east of Europe. The mariners, returning homeward, mourn at the tidings of Tyre's calamity.

vv. 2, 3. The word "isle," as in xx. 6,

denotes a maritime district; there Palestine, here Phœnicia. The people would be dumb with fear and sorrow. "Merchants of Zidon" is a generic term for those of Phœnicia; since either Tyre or Zidon fitly represents the whole nation. The rich revenues from their commerce are compared to the plentiful harvests of the Nile. What its river was to Egypt, the same to Tyre was the great sea itself, a source of most abundant riches.

hath been the mart of nations. 4 Be thou ashamed, O Zidon ; for the sea hath spoken, 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 concerning Tyre.

6 PASS 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 far away 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.

v. 4. "The strength of the sea" is usually referred to Tyre or Zidon, as if the cities were lamenting the loss of their former children. But the true emphasis is different. The sea itself, on which they relied, disclaims, as beyond its power, the task of supplying them with children, to repair the loss of men, and the desolation they had suffered. It could enrich and beautify Tyre in her prosperity, but could not breed or rear up children, young men, or virgins, for her desolated homes. The sea, her fortress and strength, and her refuge in danger, mourns over a calamity quite beyond its power to repair.

v. 5. Of this verse there are three expositions: that the Sidonians would grieve no less than if they had heard of the fall of Egypt; that the Egyptians, on hearing, would mourn themselves; or that the pain and grief would be like that once caused by the plagues on Egypt. This last view (Chaldee, Jarchi, Luther, Hendn., A.V.) is much the most emphatic. There is nothing farfetched (Rosenm.) in such an allusion, by the Hebrew prophet, to the most striking event in the history of his own people. The same comparison has been already once made in predicting the Assyrian overthrow, x. 27. It is no less suitable to express the general dismay which the fall of Tyre would cause through the Gentile world.

vv. 6, 7. The Tyrians, in this hour of trouble, would flee to their distant colonies for refuge. A parallel has been found (Michael.) in the resolution of the Dutch merchants, in 1672, to remove to Batavia,

if their country were subdued by the French armies. The actual flight of the Portuguese Court and Regent to Brazil in 1806, to escape from Napoleon, is a still more complete parallel.

The people of Tyre boasted of their high antiquity. Their priests told Herodotus that their temple of Hercules had lasted 2300 years. These proud boastings would give double force to the prophet's warning. Where all had been pride and vain security, there would soon be trembling flight, silence, and desolation. The Tyrians would escape to remote settlements. "Her own feet" is an expressive figure for the Tyrian navy, by which this merchant city was accustomed to travel swiftly to distant lands.

vv. 8, 9. Tyre might well be called "the crowning city," or giver of crowns, because of the many kings she set up in the various Phœnician colonies. And there may be a further reason for the epithet. By her commerce and wealth she might be said to supply garlands of grace and beauty to all the other nations. The fall of a city so ancient and noble must have some very weighty cause. "The Lord of hosts purposed it," in order to accomplish a great end in His moral government of the world. That purpose, here announced, is an echo of the opening message—"The loftiness of men shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day." ii. 11, 17. That day was to light in judgment on all the ships of Tarshish, and



10 PASS through thy land like the river, O daughter of Tarshish! *there is* no defence any more. 11 He hath stretched out his hand over the sea; he hath shaken the kingdoms: the LORD hath given commandment against the merchant *city*, to destroy the strong holds thereof. 12 And he said, Thou shalt no more rejoice, O oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon: arise, pass over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest. 13 Behold the land of the Chaldeans; a people that were no people, *which* the Assyrian founded for dwellers in the wilderness: they have reared their war-towers, they have wasted her palaces, they have made her a ruin! 14 Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for your strong hold is laid waste.

on all merchandize of beauty. In this Burden on Tyre and the ships of Tarshish we see the last sentence of the prophet's earliest warning fulfilled.

vv. 10—12. These verses have been explained by many as announcing the release of Tarshish and other colonies from the irksome control of the mother city. But this view, that "the daughter of Tarshish" means natives of Spain, in contrast to the Tyrians, has no solid ground. The ships of Tarshish, vv. 1, 14, are plainly those of Tyre and Zidon, trading with that colony. The same people, called the daughter of Tyre from their capital, and daughter of Zidon from their chief early site, may also be called the daughter of Tarshish, because they were dependent on these long sea-voyages for their greatness and renown. The ships of Tarshish, the isle, the merchants of Zidon, the daughter of Tarshish, the daughter of Zidon, are names of the same Tyrian or Phœnician power, though each presents it in a different aspect. This name pictures them as driven out from their home, and forced to seek for shelter in their distant colonies.

"Like the river," that is, the Nile, in its steady onward progress. The figure is taken from the river Nile, not in its annual overflow, but in its steady onward course, without winding, from Ethiopia to the sea. The word *mezach*, "defence," elsewhere a girdle, seems here to mean "restraint," or barrier to this current of the figurative river. There would be no bulwark to stay the flight of the Tyrians and arrest the enemy. All the strongholds of

the merchant-country would be destroyed. One steady current of forced migration, like the flow of the Nile, would carry them away to distant shores. Yet even there, in those remote colonies, they would be followed by new troubles.

vv. 13, 14. The instrument of this judgment is next foretold. The received version is rather ambiguous and obscure. The rendering above seems to give the true sense, and may be thus paraphrased: "Fix your eyes on lower Mesopotamia, the land of the Chaldeans. This people had no place among the powers of the earth, till the Assyrian transplanted thither some of the dwellers in the wilderness, who had before led a wandering life in the mountains or deserts. This people, once not a people, and still obscure, are the destined leaders in this work of judgment, and by them luxurious, haughty Tyre will be overthrown. They will set up their war-towers against her, demolish her stately palaces, and make her a ruin." The successful siege of Nebuchadnezzar, and not the fruitless attempt of Shalmaneser or of Sargon, is thus the main object of the prophecy. The emphasis lies in the contrast between the past and present obscurity of the Chaldeans, when the message was given, and their destined power and greatness when the vision should be fulfilled.

v. 14. Strong hold, not strength in the abstract.

v. 15. "One king." The explanations here are various. Vitringa takes the seventy years strictly; Gesenius and the later Germans make it a round number;

15 AND it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as a harlot. 16 Take a harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten: make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered. 17 And it shall come to pass, after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she will turn to her hire, and commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth. 18 And her merchandize and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandize shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat abundantly, and for durable clothing.

Michaelis and Paulus read  $\text{שִׁבְעִים}$ , *another*, for  $\text{שִׁבְעָה}$ , *one*; Grotius reads *seven* for *seventy*, and assumes that Shalmaneser reigned seven years; Jarchi understands David by the "one king," who died at that age; Kimchi suggests an allusion to the treaty between David and Hiram; Hitzig thinks the phrase borrowed from Jeremiah's expectation, that Zedekiah would be restored at the end of seventy years; Movers supposes the comparison to be of two cases of oblivion, and the king to be Jehoahaz, with his three months' reign; Henderson explains that Tyre would be forgotten as completely as a king when he is dead; Knobel, that the oblivion would be as fixed as the decrees of an oriental monarch during his own reign; Eichhorn and Ewald suppose the phrase to mean, in contrast with the days of a hireling, days computed freely. The true sense of this debated passage seems clear on a comparison with later prophe-

cies. The "one king" is the first of the four kings of Dan. vii. 17, or the Chaldean sovereignty. Comp. Dan. ii. 38, 39, 44; vii. 23, 24; viii. 20, 21; Is. xiv. 4; Jer. xxv. 11, 12. The seventy years of this "king" reach from the first of Nebuchadnezzar to the first of Cyrus. The political oblivion of Tyre was to be of the same length. The time of Chaldean power was to be that also of Tyre's political oblivion. Its land was first conquered, and later the old city was overthrown, after a long siege, Ezek. xxix. 17—20; but in the first of Cyrus it reappears as ministering help once more to Israel.

v. 16. These words are not the quotation of a popular song, but the prophet's own address to Tyre, using his own figure, to predict the restoration of her commerce after a season of judgment, but with no return of her former greatness. The last verses point forward to a time when heathen rites would be replaced by a purer and holier faith.

## § 7. SEQUEL OF THE BURDENS.

## CHAP. XXIV.—XXVII.

THESE four chapters combine the previous Burdens in a general picture of coming judgment. But they also point forward to the days of Messiah, including the final deliverance of Israel, and the resurrection of the just.

The proposed applications are most various. The older Jews refer the first part of ch. xxiv. to the Assyrian invasions, the last to the wars of Gog and Magog in the days of Messiah; while Moses Hacohen applies the whole to the first subject, Kimchi and Abarbanel to the second. Cyril makes it, in the primary sense, a summary of the foregoing messages; in a secondary sense he applies it to the end of the world. Eusebius, Jerome, Œcolampadius, take this latter view only. Luther applies it to the Roman desolation of Judea; Calvin to the Assyrian, and denies any reference to the final judgment. Grotius refers it to Assyrian troubles, Clericus to the Babylonian, Vitringa to Antiochus and the times of the Maccabees. Eichhorn and Umbreit think it written after the fall of Babylon, Bertholdt and Knobel after that of Jerusalem. Gesenius refers it to a Jewish exile before the fall of Babylon, Hitzig to an Ephraimite before that of Nineveh, Ewald to a Jew of the restoration, in Palestine, during the campaign of Cambyses in Egypt. Henderson applies it mainly to the Chaldean troubles, and denies any reference to times yet future. On the other hand, Alexander, as usual, makes it generic and quite indefinite.

The true construction seems to be that three crises, or special seasons of trial and deliverance, are here grouped in perspective, like hill-tops in a landscape, so that the eye passes rapidly from the nearer to the more remote. These are the Assyrian troubles to the overthrow of Sennacherib; the Chaldean desolation, followed by the Return, and by the times of the Gospel in the further distance; and the Roman desolation, to be renewed in the last days, and then to issue in the final redemption of Israel.

These chapters hold thus a middle place between the previous Burdens and those later visions, ch. xl.—lxvi., where the prophet seems almost wholly transported into the distant future. Though they are connected very closely with the Burdens and their local prophecies, the point of sight moves swiftly forward, and in three of them is just the same as in the later visions. Hence the critics who hold these last to be spurious, and the work of an unknown writer in the days of Cyrus, find here an enigma they cannot solve, and offer most discordant explanations. The stream of prophecy, emerging here from the narrow channel of the local messages, unfolds the widest aspects of judgment and of mercy, to Israel and to the world, reaching from the times of the prophet through long ages then to come.

## CHAP. XXIV. THE DESOLATIONS OF THE LAND.

BEHOLD! the LORD maketh the land empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. 2 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. 3 The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled, for the LORD hath spoken this word.

4 THE earth mourneth, *and* fadeth away; the world languisheth, *and* fadeth away; the lofty people of the earth do languish. 5 The land also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance,

v. 1. The previous Burdens are here condensed into one message of coming judgment, especially in its bearing on the land and people of Israel. The LORD, the Unchangeable and Almighty, "maketh the land empty, and maketh it waste." The first reference is to the Assyrian woe, when Palestine and the border lands were wasted and made captive, and the flood reached to the neck even in Judah, and covered the whole breadth of the land of Immanuel, viii. 7. There is a further reference to the Chaldean captivity, when the warning, iii. 25, 26, would be fulfilled—"Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in war. And her gates shall lament and mourn, and she will sit desolate on the ground." The judgment will include high and low, rich and poor together. The Lord had "spoken this word" even in Isaiah's first commission (vi. 11), thirty-two years earlier; but now the first stage of its fulfilment upon Ephraim, and in part on Judah also, was drawing very near.

"The land," that is, of Israel. So too vv. 5, 6, 17.

vv. 4—6. The sentence of doom is seen taking effect, like the curse on the barren fig-tree. The vision is inexpressibly grand, solemn, and mournful. Sin against God's everlasting laws is bearing its natural and certain fruits of sorrow and death. The whole frame of nature is polluted by the transgression of men. The rainbow had been given as the sign

of a covenant for ever between God and "every living creature of all flesh upon the earth." This covenant was now broken by the gross idolatry of the Gentiles, and even of Israel, the chosen people. Instead of seed-time and harvest, and joyful increase, there would thus be a curse of barrenness, wasting, and desolation.

vv. 7—9. All festive mirth is changed into silence and sorrow. Men have been lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. And now pleasure, their idol, will be abolished. Wine and song will cease together, and those who still cling to their worldly delights will find them turn to bitterness and sorrow. Past and future tenses are intermingled, to denote the inevitableness of the coming judgment.

vv. 10—12. The cities, the natural centres of wealth and pleasure, would be specially visited by the judgment of God. [The view of the LXX., Rosenm., Drechsler, who make the word *city* distributive, seems more correct than that of Knobel, Alexander, Stier, and many others, who confine it to Jerusalem, or of Delitzsch, who makes it the "city of the world."] Each city of the land, being a scene of moral confusion, will be emptied, and then demolished, and its houses left without inhabitant. The description is the same as vi. 11. A shadow broods over worldly hearts, like the shadow of the grave. In v. 11 the earlier warning of ch. v. 29 is fulfilled—"And if one look unto the land, behold! darkness, even the light is sor-

broken the everlasting covenant. 6 Therefore hath the curse devoured the land, and they that dwell therein are desolate; therefore the inhabitants of the land are burned, and few men are left. 7 The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh. 8 The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of the revellers endeth, the mirth of the harp ceaseth. 9 They shall not drink wine with song; strong drink is become bitter to them that drink it. 10 The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in. 11 *There is* a crying for wine in the streets: all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. 12 In the city is left desolation, and the gate is battered down into ruin.

13 FOR thus shall it be in the midst of the land, *and* among the nations, even as the shaking of an olive-tree, as gleaning

row, it is darkened in the heavens thereof." The like sentence is pronounced afterwards on the great "city of confusion," the Babel of the New Testament—"And the fruits thy soul lusteth after are departed from thee, and all things dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all." Rev. xviii. 14. Joy and mirth from tabret and harp have vanished, and what remains? "In the city is left desolation, and the gate is battered down into ruin." But this disappointment of vain desires, this darkening of all worldly joy, prepares the way, by contrast, for the heavenly banquet, xxv. 6, and the unfading joy of the people of God, xxv. 8, 9.

vv. 13—15. To portray this calamity, the imagery of the former Burdens is combined with singular force and beauty. The worldlings of Judah have been denounced—"And the harp, and the viol, and the tabret, and pipe, and wine are in their feasts, but they regard not the work of the Lord, nor consider the operation of his hands," v. 12. But now "they shall not drink wine with song, the mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of the revellers (v. 14) endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth." It was said of Tyre, "It is laid waste, that there is no house, no entering in;" and here the picture is the same, "every house is shut up, that no man may enter in." Of Moab it was said that "joy is taken away, and gladness, from the fruitful field." Here the picture is

enriched and varied. "There is a crying for wine in the streets, all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone." It was threatened long before that "the cities would be wasted without inhabitant, and the land with desolation." The fulfilment is now shewn. Desolation abides in the city, and the gate is battered down with wasting ruin. Thus the threads of four previous warnings are entwined together. And now a figure is resumed from the Burden of Damascus to express the care of God for a faithful remnant in the time of calamity. The description already given, xvii. 6, is to be verified by a desolation almost, but not wholly complete. The name of Shearjashub will be realized, and a remnant will return, through affliction, to the God of Israel.

v. 13. The connexion is not one of time, as in the received version, but of direct consequence. The certainty of the judgment is again affirmed, but a limitation is assigned. Thus it shall come to pass that only a small remnant will be left, but still that remnant shall be preserved in the hour of trial. These, in the midst of the desolation of the land and of the surrounding heathen, stand out now in full relief, and are seen triumphing in God in the midst of all the sorrow. The figure, xvii. 6, is enriched with new features of hope and joy.

v. 15. The word *urim* has been variously explained; as valleys (Vitringa), the regions of fire, Etna and Vesuvius

grapes, when the vintage is done. 14 They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea. 15 Therefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires, *and* in the isles of the sea the name of JEHOVAH, the God of Israel.

16 FROM the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, a glory to the righteous. But I said, Misery! misery! woe *is* me! the treacherous ones have dealt treacherously, yea, the treacherous ones have dealt very treacherously. 17 Fear, and the pit, and the snare, *are* upon thee, O inhabitant of the land. 18 And it shall be, *that* whoso 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 the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do

(Hendn.), the east or region of sunrise (Schelling, Rosenm., Drechsler, Delitzsch), the north (Döderlein), and even Ur of the Chaldees, the northern lights (Barnes), or the rivers of Egypt (Hensler). But Isaiah's own use of the word seems the safest guide, xxxi. 9, xliv. 16, xlvii. 14, l. 11. It means, in these places, neither the east, nor the north, the region of volcanos, nor the lights of heaven, but *fire*, or *fire-light* alone. The two phrases will thus answer to the two-fold description, "in the midst of the land, among the nations." The faithful remnant, both in the land itself, in the fires of affliction, and as exiles, even in the farthest isles of the sea, will glorify Jehovah, the God of Israel. The bush may burn with fire, but it shall not be consumed. The order of the original shews the true emphasis. In deepest trial the sure ground of hope to the faithful is the name of the Lord their God.

v. 16. The wing, or uttermost part of the earth, seems to refer, not to the bounds of Judea, but to the furthest limit of Jewish dispersion among the heathen. Faith and hope shall triumph over the sorrows of their distant exile, when driven out from the home of their fathers. "The righteous" some suppose here to be a Divine title, others apply it to Cyrus, and take the words to denote the substance of the songs of praise. But the word *tsebi* denotes ornament or beauty. The other term, then, should be taken in its general

and wider sense, for the upright or faithful man. The songs of praise uttered by these in the fires of trial, or in their farthest exile, will be their beautiful ornament, the signs of a faith which glories in tribulation, pierces through clouds, and triumphs over sorrow.

The prophet returns from this bright vision, as of a few stars in a stormy sky, to lament once more the calamities near at hand. Heathen spoilers, treacherous and false, are bringing ruin and desolation on Israel and Judah. The words may apply equally to the apostasies and rebellions of Israel, the true cause of the coming judgments.

vv. 17—20. The figure is borrowed from the chase, when deer or antelopes are terrified, till in their flight they run into pitfalls; or, escaping these, are caught in nets or snares. The next figure is that of an earthquake, and of the motion of a couch or hammock, slung between trees, to secure the sleeper from beasts of prey. But the chief allusion is to the flood of Noah, when "the windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the great deep broken up." Gen. vii. 11. Because God's everlasting covenant had been profaned and broken, judgments, like that of the flood, were coming upon the earth. We seem here to be carried beyond the Assyrian, and even the Babylonian troubles, onward to the times of great tribulation, which herald the last triumphs of the kingdom of God.

shake. 19 The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is utterly dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. 20 The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a hammock; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall, and shall rise no more.

21 AND it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD will 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 And the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed: for the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancient ones, gloriously.

vv. 21, 22. Here the transition to the last times seems complete. The host of the high ones that are on high, in contrast to "the kings of the earth upon the earth," naturally denotes those powers of darkness, or spiritual wickednesses, more plainly revealed in the New Testament as the constant adversaries of the kingdom of Christ. The leaders of rebellion, both the visible and the invisible, are to be gathered in the pit, shut up in prison, and visited after many days, or brought forth, after a time of reprieve, for their final sentence. The prophecy, obscure in itself, seems to find its clear key in the latest prophecies of the New Testament. We see there a twofold time of judgment, separated by a long season of delay.

v. 23. "Before his ancient ones, gloriously." There were some earnest of this promise in the days of Hezekiah, and again in the return from Babylon. But its proper fulfilment, as of the opening vision, ii. 1—4, must be sought in days to come, when nations shall cease to learn war any more; in the times of restitution, spoken of by all the prophets since the world began. The "ancient ones" are probably the same with the ancients or elders of St John; whether these are redeemed saints, as many believe, or "thrones and dominions," the leaders among those morning stars, older than mankind, who celebrated man's first birthday with high songs of praise.

In the anthem that follows Isaiah takes his stand in that future, bright with hope, which has been announced in his earlier

messages. Nineveh has fallen; Babylon, its heir in the work of oppression, has been sacked and ravaged by its destined avengers, fulfilling the sentence of God. He gazes in spirit on the work of retribution, and celebrates the greatness of the deliverance. The strain of praise and hope is continued in the two chapters that follow.

#### Ch. XXV. THE SONG OF PRAISE.

vv. 1, 2. The counsels of God for the fall of Nineveh and Babylon had been announced in the early visions, ch. xiii. xiv. The prophet, in spirit, sees them now fulfilled. There is a double climax, a city, a fenced city, a stately palace; a heap, a ruin, a ruin never to be repaired. The word *strangers* constantly denotes aliens from God's covenant, and adversaries of His people. The word in Ex. xxii. 21; Deut. x. 18, &c., is quite distinct. The ruins of Koyunjik, Nimroud, Hillah, in our own days, have furnished a practical commentary on these words of the song. "Were the traveller to cross the Euphrates, to seek for such ruins as he left behind him in Asia Minor, his search would be vain. The stern, shapeless mound rises like a hill from the scorched plain, fragments of pottery and a stupendous mass of brick-work are occasionally laid bare by the winter rains. He is at a loss to give any form to the rude heap on which he is gazing. Those of whom they are the remains have left no visible traces of their civilization or their arts. The more he conjectures, the more vague the results appear. The scene around is worthy of the ruin. Deso-

## CHAP. XXV. THE PROPHET'S SONG OF PRAISE.

O LORD, thou *art* my God ; 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 a heap, *of* a defenced city a ruin, a palace of strangers to be no city, it shall never be built. 3 Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee. 4 For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress ; a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones *was* as a storm *against* a wall. 5 Thou wilt bring down the noise of the strangers as heat in a dry place, *even* as the heat by the shadow of a cloud :

lation meets desolation, a feeling of awe succeeds to wonder, for there is nothing to relieve the mound, or tell of what has gone by. These huge mounds of Assyria make a deeper impression than the temples of Balbec or theatres of Ionia." "The lofty cone and broad mountain of Nimroud broke like a distant mountain on the morning sky. No signs of habitation were seen on the plain. The eye wandered over a parched and barren waste, over which swept the whirlwind, dragging with it a cloud of sand. About a mile from us was the small village of Nimroud, a heap of ruins." "The great mound (Kalah Sherghet) could be distinguished through the gloom, rising like a distant mountain against the dark sky. From all sides arose the melancholy wail of the jackals, who had issued from their dwellings in the ruins, as soon as the last gleam of twilight faded in the western horizon. The owl sent forth its mournful note. It was desolation such as those alone who have witnessed such scenes can know ; greater than the desolation of the sandy waste of Africa, for it was the wreck of man, as well as nature." (Layard, *Nin.* pp. 5, 16, 274.)

v. 3. These judgments will make a deep impression on the conquerors themselves, and on the whole heathen world. A strong people, the Persian destroyers of Babylon, will glorify the God of Israel. The decrees of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes bear witness to the fulfilment. The city of the terrible nations, Susa, Ecbatana, Persepolis, or else the whole Gentile commonwealth under Persian

rule, shall fear Him because of the great deliverance wrought for His people.

v. 4. "The storm of a wall" is neither "so powerful as to beat down a wall," nor "weak as a storm against a wall," but a storm which seems more violent because it beats against a wall, and then rages the more. By such a storm weak resistance would be overthrown, but not the stronghold of the people of God. The description will apply to the days of Hezekiah, to the Return from Babylon, and again to the time of the Maccabees, when signal help was given in a time of severe persecution.

v. 5. A fierce tempest fitly denotes a season of sudden calamity. Scorching, sultry heat is an equally appropriate emblem of enduring oppression. Such burning heat is often assuaged by what seems the feeblest thing, the shadow of a cloud. By means no less gentle and silent will the Lord save His people from the fierce oppression of their heathen conquerors. The words denote that secret and powerful work of the Holy Spirit, by which Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes, Alexander, Ptolemy, were successively led to show especial favour to the people of God.

"The song of the terrible shall be brought low." Those who had once required songs from the captives of Zion in their heaviness, shall now have the noise of their revelling silenced, and their own songs turned into heaviness and mourning. One signal fulfilment was in the night of Belshazzar's feast, when riotous mirth was turned into terror and dismay.



the song of the terrible shall be brought low. 6 And the LORD of hosts will make for all nations, in this mountain, 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. 7 And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering that covereth all the people, and the veil that is spread over all the nations. 8 He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces: and the reproach of his people will 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; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this *is* the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. 10 For in this mountain will the hand of the LORD rest; and Moab shall be trodden down under him, as straw is trodden down for the dunghill. 11 And he will

v. 6. The song of praise now passes on to the days of Messiah. The blessings of the Gospel are described under the figure of an ample feast, as Is. lv. 1—6; Matt. xxii. 1—4; Lu. xiv. 15—20. The Author of this feast is first named, the Lord of hosts. Next, its subjects, or the invited guests, who are "all nations." Thirdly, the place of the entertainment, "in this mountain;" or Jerusalem, where the Son of God began and closed His public ministry, and suffered without the gate. Lastly, the nature of the banquet, the meat of fatlings, and choicest wine, free from dregs, but with the strength and richness of long fermentation. This feast is expounded in the Gospel, and is the full provision of mercy in the atoning sacrifice and resurrection of the Son of God.

v. 7. The Gospel is divine food for the hunger of the soul. But it also removes guilt and condemnation. When Haman was sentenced, "as the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face," Est. vii. 8. But in this day of mercy, the covering veil of death will be destroyed. So St Paul, 2 Cor. v. 19, without a figure.

v. 8. The Spirit, having borne witness of the sufferings of Christ, now speaks of the glory that shall follow. The word *netzach* may be rendered "in victory" or "for ever," and may include both ideas. The Apostle quotes the words as a pro-

mise of the resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 54. Death, the great devourer, will be swallowed up. Death, the mighty conqueror, will be swallowed up in victory. The next words are twice quoted in the Apocalypse, and applied to the gathering of the Church, after great tribulation, in the everlasting kingdom of God. The shame of the Jew, the reproach of the faithful Christian, will then have ceased for ever.

v. 9. Here we pass from the song of the prophet to a briefer utterance of the people of God. The words may refer to the joy of the wise men and the shepherds, and of the aged Simeon and Anna, at the first Advent. But they answer more fully to the glad welcome of the faithful, when their Lord "shall appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation."

vv. 10—12. Most modern critics apply v. 11 to Moab himself, as a swimmer striving vainly to support himself by the use of his hands. But since the Lord himself is plainly the subject of the next clause, the transition would be abrupt and strange. The difficulty felt in the earlier view, that of the received version and older writers, arises only from not seizing the exact force of the comparison. Again, the city has been referred to Heshbon, Ar-Moab, Kir-Moab, Nineveh or Babylon. But since the words are a sequel to vv. 6—9, and a contrast to the strong city of God, xxvi. 1, whose walls are salvation, this city of Moab, the children

spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as the swimmer spreadeth forth *his hands* to swim: and he will bring down their pride, together with the plots of their hands. 12 And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls will he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, *even* to the dust.

#### CHAP. XXVI. THE SONG IN JUDAH.

IN that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation he will appoint *for* walls and bulwarks. 2 Open ye the gates, and a righteous nation, that keepeth the truth, shall enter in. 3 Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind is stayed *on thee*, because he trusteth in thee. 4 Trust ye in the LORD for ever and ever; for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength. 5 For he bringeth down them that dwell on high: the lofty city, he

of pride, Is. xvi. 6, seems to be moral, not geographical, in its true meaning. We may therefore paraphrase as follows.

"For in this mountain, Jerusalem, the hand of the Lord will rest, like a father's on the head of his child, with protection and love. But the sons of riot and pride shall be trampled under His feet, as straw is trodden down for the dunghill. They will not only be subdued, but condemned to lasting shame, lxiii. 6. He will spread forth his hands amidst them, and overcome their resistance, as easily as the swimmer parts the yielding waves with his hands. All the plots they have laboriously framed against the people of God shall be swept away, and brought to nothing. The city of pride, the mystic Moab and Babylon in one, shall be brought low, and its walls overthrown, to usher in the triumph of that better city of peace and righteousness, whose walls are salvation, and her gates praise, xxvi. 1; lx. 18."

#### Ch. XXVI. THE SONG IN JUDAH.

This chapter is devotional meditation rather than prophecy, a review of the works and ways of God. Some verses will apply to the Return from Babylon. But the whole receives its full emphasis, when viewed as a sequel of xxv. 6—12, or as the prayers and praises of Israel on their final restoration.

vv. 1—4. When the reproach of Israel shall cease, and the City of Pride be over-

thrown, a song will be sung in the land of Judah by repentant Israel, the olive-branches grafted once more into their own olive-tree. The name of God is withheld, as in Ps. cxiv., and this adds to the emphasis. Jerusalem will need no outward defence. The LORD himself will be "a wall of fire round about her, and the glory in the midst of her," Zech. ii. 5. When Babylon, the City of Pride, is a heap and a ruin, the strength of the City of Righteousness, i. 26, will be gloriously revealed.

"And a righteous nation...shall enter in." The words are less a command than a promise. The gates are to be set open, because a righteous and holy people are waiting for admission. No fear of violence can assail those who dwell within its walls: they are safe under the shadow of the Almighty.

v. 4. The double name JAH JEHOVAH is most emphatic, to denote God's unchangeableness in His love to His people. "Everlasting Strength" is literally "a rock of ages." But the preposition, and the absence of the article, show that it is here an attribute, not a name of God. In Him a sure and eternal support, firm as a rock, lasting as eternity, will be found by His people.

vv. 5, 6. The description here will apply to Nineveh, or to old Babylon; but still more fully to the mystic Babylon, the seven-hilled city of the New Testament.

layeth it low; he layeth it low, *even* to the ground; he bringeth it to the dust. 6 The foot shall tread it down, the feet of the poor, *and* the steps of the needy.

7 THE way of the just *is* a perfect way: thou wilt make plain and straight the path of the just. 8 Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee: the desire of *our* souls is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. 9 With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee in the morning: for when thy judgments *are* in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. 10 Let favour be shewed to the wicked, *yet* will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD. 11 LORD, thy hand is lifted up, *yet* they do not see: *but* they

A like promise closes the Old Testament, Mal. iv. 2, 3, and meets us again at the close of the New, Rev. xvii., xviii.

vv. 7—9. The Song now records the experience of the faithful, their sense of God's equity, even in their heaviest trials, and the moral effects of His righteous judgments.

In v. 7, the plural "straight things" is put for the abstract, or the superlative. The reference is not to the moral excellency of the just, but to the wisdom of the path appointed for him by the Lord. The pathway He assigns them is altogether good and wise. The word, *yashar*, is not an address to God, or a Divine title (A. V., Rosenm., Alex., Hend., &c.), but an intensive addition to the verb (Drechsler, Delitzsch). In the perplexities of the just, God makes their pathway thoroughly straight and plain for them. Their hearts respond to the promise, and look, in darkest hours, for His help and guidance. "Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, we have waited for thee!" They wait, with longing desire, even for the display of His justice, because they know that blessed fruits of righteousness must soon follow.

v. 9. Night and morning are named, as day and night in Ps. i. 2, to express the constancy and earnestness of their desire. The words "with my soul" and "with my spirit within me" denote its depth and reality. Experience teaches the faithful how needful are God's most solemn acts of judgment.

vv. 10, 11. The course of the ungodly is a total contrast. Too often they are hardened, not melted, by God's forbearance and His messages of grace. Like the unbelievers of Israel in the land of promise, though surrounded by tokens of God's power and holiness, they continue blind to the works and ways of the Most High. The judgments of God are "far above out of their sight." The faithful repeat the truth, and join it with an act of holy adoration. The moral blindness of those who refuse to see the uplifted hand of God shall be subdued by decisive proofs of His power in the punishment of their sin. The slight change in the first clause of v. 11 is more literal, and also more emphatic. The phrase  $\text{עַל־אֲנָפֵינוּ}$  many refer to the jealousy of God on behalf of His people. But the received version is not less grammatical, and suits the whole context better. Comp. xi. 13; Ez. xxxv. 11, and Eccles. iv. 4, "the envy of a man from his neighbour." The jealousy of God for His people would naturally require a personal suffix. The "fire of thine enemies" is often taken for the Divine anger of which they are the objects. But the construction is easier, and the sense more emphatic, that their own guilty passions shall bring on their destruction.

This law of God's moral government applies equally to the Return from Babylon, the times of the Maccabees, the Jewish rejection of the Gospel, and all later seasons of Divine judgment.

shall see, and be ashamed for *their* envy at *thy* people: yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.

12 JEHOVAH! thou wilt ordain peace for us, for even all our works hast thou wrought for us. 13 O LORD our God! *other* lords beside thee have ruled over us, *but* by thee only will we make mention of thy name. 14 *They are* dead, they shall not live; shadows, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish. 15 Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation, thou art glorified: thou hast removed *it* far away to all the ends of the earth. 16 LORD, in trouble they have 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

vv. 12—15. From the doom of adversaries the Song now returns to the people of God. It speaks of their present hopes, their former sins, their vows of future service, and the blessings they have received. "Our works" mean here the works needful for their deliverance. The sentence refers, first, to the Return from Babylon, and then to similar mercies to the Church in later times. In their fullest sense the words link themselves with the Gospel promises just before. What sinful man could not do has been wrought on his behalf by the Son of God.

v. 13. The title *Adonim*, lords, had been applied to their idols and false gods, and they had sworn by Ashtaroth and Baalim. But henceforth the name *Adonai*, Lord, should be kept sacred and pure for Jehovah, the true God alone. No other should have the allegiance either of lip or heart.

v. 14. The false gods of the heathen and of the apostate Jews were chiefly dead men, deified ancestors and kings. But now their worship should die out and expire, like the shadowy divinities themselves, and the memory of them pass away from the earth. How true especially of the gods of Nineveh, Babylon, and Egypt! The word "therefore," wrongly rendered by some "because," is most emphatic. The God of truth will deal with these idol gods after their true character. They are dead men, ghosts, and shadows; and like shadows their worship shall flit away and disappear.

v. 15. The last clause many moderns render: "thou hast enlarged all the boundaries of the land." But the usual phrase for removing a bound or landmark is quite different, Deut. xix. 14, xxvii. 17; Prov. xxii. 28, xxiii. 10; Hos. v. 10, and the "ends of the earth" has naturally a wider sense than the limits of Palestine. Nor is it true that the bounds of the land of promise, fixed by God himself, would be changed by an overflow of the people into the border lands. The word occurs twice beside, vi. 12, xxix. 13, and refers to the exile of Israel, or their moral estrangement from God. On the other hand the pluperfect is used in the A.V. without cause. Two great facts of Providence, fulfilled through long ages on the largest scale, are here combined together. The numbers of the Jewish people have been sustained amidst heaviest trials; and still they have been dispersed in exile to the furthest regions of the earth. Comp. Amos ix. 9.

vv. 16, 17. The Song passes now from the past to the future. Israel's national rejection of idols, their increase in number, and their wide dispersion, are followed by sore troubles, that prepare the way, in the last times, for their full and final recovery to the covenant and favour of God. Their own efforts will wholly fail. God himself will then mightily interfere; and Zion, according to the later promise, lxvi. 7—9, will travail not in vain, and will bring forth children.

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 shall live; my corpses shall arise. Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is like a dew upon herbs, and the earth shall let go *her* dead. 20 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. 21 For behold, the LORD cometh out of his place, to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their

v. 18. "Neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen." Some render "are not born" or "were not brought forth." But this use of the Hebrew word has no example, and the meaning that results is unsuited to the context. The use of the word is the same as liv. 15, only the event here is opposite. Instead of signal victory, their attempts to save themselves led only to disappointment and shame.

v. 19. Most explain this verse as the prophet's own address to God. But strong reasons prove that it begins the answer of God to the confession of His people. The two next verses clearly have this character. This, being included, will form a seventh triplet, answering to six others, of song, prayer, confession, and promise. A promise of resurrection implies naturally that the speaker is the Lord. The contrast with v. 14 is thus more striking. Israel disown their idols with the words, "They are dead, they shall not live; shadows, they shall not rise." The Lord answers by the promise, "Thy dead shall live, my corpses shall arise." The transition in the rest of the verse is thus easier and more natural. There is only a change of number, not a voice to sleepers, separating a double address to God.

The prayer of penitent Israel is here answered by a gracious promise from the Lord himself, confirmed by His right of ownership in the buried corpses of His people. The word *nebdah* has no plural, and is here a collective. The Speaker is the Word, the Son of God, whose rising again assures the resurrection of His people. This address to the sleepers is an earnest, in prophecy, of that voice of the Son of God (Joh. v. 25)

which will summon the dead from their graves. The gracious promises to Israel shall have a quickening power, like natural dew on parched fields, Hos. xiv. 5; Deut. xxxii. 2. The earth will let go her dead, like a prey that can be detained no longer, when they are reclaimed by a mightier power. The words, in themselves and their context, answer very closely to Rev. xx. 1—6, the vision of the first resurrection.

vv. 20, 21. A solemn close of a glorious meditation and prophecy. The chambers may denote either some retreat of safety, like Pella, upon earth, or removal by translation to the Saviour's presence. The Lord comes out of His place, when His silent forbearance is succeeded by open judgments on the workers of evil. The words answer very nearly to Rev. xi. 18, and seem to announce the very same season of judgment on angry and rebellious nations, when Jerusalem ceases to be trodden down, and light dawns on Israel once more in the last days.

#### Ch. XXVII. THE VINEYARD RESTORED.

This chapter completes the Sequel of the Burdens, before those Woes and Promises to Israel, which form the third main division of the Book, and reach from the 3rd to the 14th year of Hezekiah. The prophet closes by a review of God's dealings with His people through long ages to their final deliverance.

v. 1. Some think that two, others that three evil powers are here meant; Egypt and Babylon, or Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria, or many other varieties. But Leviathan seems never the name of a class, so that the first two clauses have the same

iniquity : the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

### CHAP. XXVII. THE VINEYARD RESTORED.

IN that day the LORD, with his firm, and great, and strong sword, will punish leviathan the flying serpent, even leviathan the crooked serpent, and will slay the monster that *is* in the sea. 2 In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of choice wine ! 3 I the LORD do keep it, I will water it every moment : lest *any* hurt it, I will keep it night and day. 4 Fury *is* not in me : who will set against me briars *and* thorns in battle ? I would

subject. And his home is always described as the sea, or the deep, so as to confirm the reference to him in the last clause. The power thus described seems to be no earthly empire or king, but the leader of the host of "the high ones that are on high," xxiv. 21 ; the old serpent, who beguiled Eve by his subtlety, Gen. iii. 1 ; 2 Cor. xi. 3 ; Rev. xii. 9, 15 ; the "king over all the children of pride," Job xli. 34. Here, and also in the Apocalypse, the overthrow of this great Adversary attends the full triumph of the kingdom of God. It is joined there also with visitation for the blood of martyrs, and the waking up to life of sleepers in the dust.

vv. 2, 6. These verses are a contrast to vv. 1—7, which denounce the sin of God's vineyard, and predict its long and sore desolation. The harmonies are striking and beautiful. The burden ran before, ch. v. 25 : "For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." The former series closed with its reversal : "Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou hast comforted me," xii. 1. In ch. v. 6 the woe lights on the vineyard : "I will lay it waste, it shall not be pruned or digged. I will also command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it." Here, at the close of the second series, we find the contrasted promise : "I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment : lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." In ch. v. 30 was the warning : "If one look to the land, behold darkness, the light is anguish, it is darkened in the heavens thereof." The third series ends with the promise : "They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away," xxxv. 10.

The day is that of the ingrafting of the olive branches of Israel, Rom. xi. 24, 26. The "choice wine," *chemer*, rich, red wine, is a contrast to the "wild grapes" in the earlier warning, ch. v. 2, 4. The reading of several MSS. and editions is *chemed*, "a vineyard of delight;" which would mark a contrast with God's former displeasure. But the common reading seems more expressive. The rendering "in that day afflict her as a vineyard" (Alex.), is unnatural, and destroys the parallel with ch. v. 1. So also is the view of Lowth, Dathe, and others, who turn the passage into a responsive dialogue. The idea of "answering" will be simply retained by supposing the song to be the response of angels to the confession and penitence of Israel, Lu. xv. 7, 10 ; Zech. xii. 10. The words that follow are not the song, but the reasons for that heavenly gladness, of which the song is to be the utterance. They are a picture of safety, prosperity, and holy peace, a contrast to the curse, vv. 5, 6, under which this vineyard had lain for ages. But now it will be a vineyard of choice wine, the Lord's delight, watered each moment with dews of heaven.

v. 4. The first clause is often explained, that God has no fury against His people, but against their adversaries alone. This, however, would be a feeble bathos, after those strong declarations of His favour. It would be no less strange that fury should be disclaimed and affirmed in the same verse, and the contrast of its objects be only implied, not expressed. Others make the latter clause also apply to chastisement on the vineyard, as overrun with thorns. But this is still more remote from the general scope.

The true sense lies deeper. There can be no fury where there is the consciousness

march against 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 Jacob shall take root in days to come: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

7 HATH he smitten him, as he smote them that smote him? or is he slain like the slaughter of those that are slain for him? 8 In measure *only*, when thou sendest it, thou wilt strive with her: he hath taken it away with his strong blast in the day of the east wind. 9 Therefore by this the iniquity of Jacob shall be purged; and this *shall be* all the fruit, to take away his sin; when he maketh all *their* altar-stones as chalkstones beaten asunder: the grove-idols and sun-images shall rise up no more. 10 For the defenced city *shall be* desolate, the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: there shall the calf feed, and

of Almighty power, and of a love which invites continually to repentance. Fury elsewhere is ascribed to God, to express the intensity of His holy averseness from all evil. Here He disclaims it, to teach how far He is above the fierce excitement of human passions. Contempt and pity alone would be felt, if briars and thorns had feeling, and were seen to set themselves in array against a fiery furnace. Those who fight against their Maker may be so guilty as to deserve holy anger, but their folly is so great as to call still more for pity and compassionate warning.

v. 6. The parable here issues in open prophecy. The result of the afflictions on Israel, and of the judgments on their oppressors, will be a signal blessing to the whole earth. The receiving of them "into God's favour" again, will be "life from the dead," Rom. xi. 15. The first word in Hebrew, "the coming," is an ellipsis for "the coming days." The world is not to be limited to Palestine (Hend.), but includes the whole earth. In Christ, the true Israel, and next through the nation Israel, blessed in Him as their Messiah, all other nations are finally to be blessed.

v. 7. A contrast is here drawn between the trials of Israel and the severe judgments on their adversaries. Their afflictions have been meted out in thoughtful wisdom and love, as medicine to cure their sins. Their suffering has been great, who fell on the stumbling-stone and were

broken; but those on whom it falls it will grind to powder, Matt. xxi. 44.

v. 8. These words are obscure, and have received many versions. "In measure, when thou sentest it, thou hast striven with her; when he blew with his violent wind in the day of the east wind" (Vitringa). "Very moderately, when she was put away, didst thou contend with her; he took her away with his rough blast, &c." (Henderson). "In measure, by sending her away, thou dost contend with her; he removes her by his hard wind, &c." (Alexander). "*Seah* for *seah* by her divorce thou quarrest with her; he hath carried her away with his mighty wind, &c." (Drechsler). "Thou didst punish it with measure, when thou didst thrust it away, sifting with violent breath in the day of the east wind" (Delitzsch). All these agree in referring the last words to the exile of Israel. But Vitringa, after Kimchi, explains the first clause of God's plague on the vineyard, the others of a wife's divorce. The taking away, however, either of a wife or a vineyard by a strong wind is a harsh figure; and still more that an eastward exile should be assigned to a violent east wind, of which the effect would properly be just the reverse. A clearer and more consistent meaning will be found by combining two figures, of the vineyard, and of the locust-plague of Egypt. It may be thus paraphrased:

"In measure only," each part of the judgment meted out slowly and with

there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof. 11 When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women shall 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 show them no favour.

12 AND it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD will beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.

13 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 they shall worship the LORD in the holy mountain, in Jerusalem.

care, "when thou sendest it," the locust-plague on the vineyard, "thou wilt strive with her." The judgment shall be wisely restrained and tempered. "He hath taken it away with his strong blast in the day of the east wind." When the east wind from Babylon has brought the locust destroyers, as soon as the measured judgment is complete, his strong blast, the mighty west wind of his power (Ex. x. 19), will sweep them away. The metaphor on this view is consistent and beautifully complete. The change of person answers to a change of subject, from the vineyard to the agents in its desolation.

v. 9. Israel, by these judgments, will be weaned from their idolatries. Their altar-stones will be beaten down in the time of their exile, and never replaced.

vv. 10, 11. Most recent critics apply these verses to Babylon. But there are decisive reasons for the earlier view, which refers them to the desolations of Palestine. The figures resemble vii. 24, 25, vi. 11, 12, xvii. 9, and are a contrast to the warning, xiii. 20—22. The description is borrowed from Deut. xxxii. 28, where it belongs to Israel. The breaking off of withered branches is a symbol for judgment on the vineyard or vine of God, Ps. lxxx.; John xv. The connexion favours the same view. Isaiah here reviews the whole course of God's dealings with His people. His chastisements, like the locusts of Egypt, all pass away when their work is done. All had one aim, that the idolatrous images might be broken, and rise no more. The trial must last till the

end is gained; and from the blindness of Israel this would need a lasting desolation. Less would not suffice, but the issue would be a glorious recovery. Ver. 10 describes the solitariness of the towns of Palestine: cattle browse amidst their deserted sites. In v. 11 there is a transition to figure. Israel would be like one of the trees in the ruins, whose withered boughs are fit only for firewood, gathered, and burned, Joh. xv. 4; Rom. xi. 17.

vv. 12, 13. The beating out is like the severing of corn from chaff or husks. The brook of Egypt is the southern limit, named Num. xxxiv. 5; 1 Ki. viii. 65. The remnant would be gathered "one by one," and also "one to another," as grains mixed with chaff are separated and brought together. The stream is El Arish, the river is Euphrates. The land, in its whole extent, will be freed from aliens.

v. 13. God's providence in this great work will be loud and clear, like a trumpet's voice. Assyria and Egypt are named as the two chief powers of the world in Isaiah's days. There is an allusion to Deut. xxvi. 5, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father." The children, like the patriarch, shall at length have a full share in the blessing of God. The words have a first fulfilment in the return under Cyrus and Zerubbabel. But their full reference is to the time when the Old Serpent is sentenced, and when Israel, after slaying the Well-beloved, the Owner of the vineyard, shall look on Him whom their fathers pierced, and become a vineyard of delight, a moral Paradise, in the last days.



## III. THE WOES ON ISRAEL AND THE NATIONS.

## CHAP. XXVIII.—XXXV.

AFTER the Burdens on the Gentile nations, and their sequel, the prophecy returns more directly to the chosen people. Four successive Woes are denounced on Samaria, Jerusalem, and on all those in Israel who resorted to Egypt for help, instead of resting in faith on the promise of God. These are followed by another prediction of the times of Messiah, a direct Woe on the Assyrian, a more general warning of judgment on the heathen, and a closing prophecy of Messiah's coming, and the full redemption of Israel.

The first Woe, ch. xxviii., announces the fall of Samaria as near at hand. It is therefore earlier than the sixth year of Hezekiah, and probably even than his third year, when the siege began. This whole series to ch. xxxiii. may be referred to the same period, the first year of Hezekiah's reign, while ch. xxxiii. implies that the campaign of Sennacherib was either close at hand or already begun. In the reign of Hezekiah the visions of the prophet, as was natural, assume a more hopeful tone, even amidst their severest warnings. A daybreak is seen to be near at hand.

## § I. CHAP. XXVIII. THE WOE ON SAMARIA.

Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, here called the proud crown or garland of the drunkards of Ephraim, was built by Omri, after the civil war, in which his rival was overthrown, and became a place of great wealth and luxury under the following kings. It was besieged by Benhadad, 2 Ki. vi., vii., and reduced to great extremity, but signally delivered. After a three years' siege it was taken by Shalmaneser or Sargon, and reduced to a heap of ruins, Mic. i. 6. This event followed very soon after the present prophecy, which was probably just at the opening of Hezekiah's reign. It afterwards revived, and was restored by Herod the Great, who gave it the name Sebaste in honour of Augustus Cæsar, and this name, slightly varied, is retained by a small village, which still occupies its site.

The warning passes on, as before, from Ephraim to Judah, and denounces the sensual blindness and pride of the rulers, when the judgment of God, after lighting on Israel, was just ready to visit the southern kingdom. The scourge of the Assyrian armies would soon pass over to Judah, and all their false hopes of deliverance from Egypt would perish. But the promise of Messiah would secure the preservation of a faithful remnant; and the holy discipline of God, however severe, would issue in a harvest of righteousness and praise. The last verses unfold this truth in a striking parable, drawn from the various processes of natural husbandry.

WOE to the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim! and to the fading flower of his glorious beauty, which is on the head of the rich valley of them that are stricken down with wine. 2 Behold, a mighty and strong one of the LORD, like a tempest of hail, and a destroying storm, like a flood of mighty overflowing waters, shall cast it down to the earth with his hand. 3 The crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim shall be trodden under foot. 4 And his glorious beauty, which is on the head of the rich valley, shall be a fading flower; even like the

v. 1. The crown of pride, or proud crown, of the drunkards of Ephraim is Samaria, the metropolis of the kingdom. It stood on a hill in the midst of a rich and fruitful valley. "It would be difficult," says Dr Robinson, "to find in all Palestine a situation of equal strength, fertility, and beauty combined." The figure alludes doubly to the elevated site of Samaria, and to the chaplet or garland of flowers, often worn by revellers in their joyous banquets. The word *gêi*, valley, occurs in Isaiah only here and in xxii. 1, a presumption for the reference of the former prediction also to Samaria. It is compared not only to a crown, but to a fading flower, a chaplet or wreath already withering, because its fall was so near. The sensuality and drunkenness of the city are denounced by other prophets. Some take drunkards literally, others for those drunk with worldly pride. Both ideas may well be included in the warning. Revelling and drunkenness imply spiritual blindness and stupor, and increase it, and make men senseless to the approach of the Divine judgments.

v. 2. The mighty and strong one of the Lord, or appointed by Him for the work of judgment, is the king of Assyria, Shalmaneser or Sargon, who completed the overthrow. He is described, as in ch. x., as the tool or instrument to execute the warnings of God. He would soon pluck this proud and beautiful garland from the head of the drunkards of Ephraim, and cast it down to the earth with his hand, as a fierce tempest or flood sweeps everything away before it. The

union of two metaphors, each separately striking, adds double force to the prophet's warning.

vv. 3, 4. The figures in the first verse are here carried further. The proud crown or garland of the drunkards, when the spoiler has torn it from their brows, and cast it on the ground, will be trodden under his feet. Samaria, the glorious beauty or ornament of Ephraim, would be indeed like a fading flower, a wreath withering away; and also like the early fig, which drops when the tree is shaken, and which he who sees it no sooner sets his eyes upon than he devours it with greedy haste. "Which he that seeth it, seeth, &c." The repetition of the same word in the same form increases the force of the description, and hurries us onward from the sight of the fruit to its speedy consumption. The meaning is not that "a three years' siege was reckoned short in ancient times" (Henderson), which is clearly untrue; but that, on the scale of a nation's lifetime, Ephraim was now quite ripe for the hand of the spoiler, and would very soon be brought to utter ruin.

vv. 5, 6. In this mournful hour of Samaria's fall and treading down, the LORD himself would be the ornament and honour of Judah, the residue of the chosen people. Wisdom would be given to their judges, and prowess to those who turn back the war to the gate of the enemy. Their deliverance from Sennacherib would form a signal contrast to Samaria's overthrow, and honour be given to Judah and her king in the sight of all the nations. The last clause has a secret emphasis,

hasty fruit before the summer, which he that seeth it, seeth, and while it is yet in his hand he will eat it up.

5 IN that day will the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people, 6 And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate. 7 But even these have erred through wine, and through strong drink are gone astray: priest and prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up by wine, they are gone astray through strong drink; they err in vision, they have stumbled *in* judgment. 8 For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness; no place *is clean*. 9 Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand the tidings? *Them that are weaned from the milk, and removed from the breasts.* 10 For it must

often overlooked. For Judah had then no mighty warriors, no armies in the field. The prowess intended was the believing prayers of Hezekiah and Isaiah, and the faithful in Zion, and answers to the message to their forefather at Penuel. Like princes they had power with God and with men, and mightily prevailed.

vv. 7, 8. Judah and Zion, although they receive this gracious promise, were deeply guilty of the very same sins which doomed Samaria to speedy ruin. With the bulk of the people and princes the reformation of Hezekiah, when he came to the throne, was a surface-change alone. Apostasy, idolatry, and sensuality had spread widely under Ahaz; and only by the stern rebukes of Isaiah and Micah a remnant were brought to sincere repentance, for whose sake a century's reprieve of judgment was given. Literal excesses are here included; but along with the more subtle intoxication of spiritual pride, by which so many were "drunk, but not with wine." Thus both priest and prophet were blinded, and looked to Egypt for help, instead of resting in faith on the messages of their God.

vv. 9—13. "It can hardly be told," says Rosenmuller, "how much these verses have exercised both ancient and modern interpreters." The view he prefers ascribes vv. 9, 10 to the scorners of Judah, not to the prophet. So Jerome, Lowth, Gesenius, Ewald, Maurer, Hitzig, Umbreit, Knobel, Henderson, Alexan-

der. But this Vitranga has justly called farfetched and unnatural. It is highly artificial, and destroys the unity and force of the passage. Vitranga, Drechsler, and others refer vv. 10, 13 to the ritualism of the Pharisees in later times. But this too agrees ill with the actual context. The received version needs only two or three very slight changes, and a clear paraphrase; and is then far superior to attempted modern improvements.

v. 7. "Swallowed up by wine." A forcible contrast. While they swallowed down the wine literally, it swallowed them up. The figure is not of a maëlstrom (Barnes), but rather of a marsh or quicksand. Sensual indulgence is a quagmire, where there is no standing, but its victims sink lower and lower, till reason, conscience, and modesty, are lost and buried. The word "even" is emphatic. Comp. Hos. iv. 15. "No place is clean." The connectives, in the received version, weaken the force of the brief addition.

v. 9. "The tidings." The reference here is not to doctrine in the abstract, but to the prophet's message or tidings from God of the speedy Assyrian triumphs, and of the great deliverance to ensue, through no help from Egypt, but from the mighty hand of God. The word recurs, v. 19, for the actual tidings, when the enemy had overrun the land.

When all tables are full of sensual excess, and priest and prophet are senseless through wine and strong drink, to

be word on word, word on word, line on line, line on line, here a little, there a little. 11 For with stammering lips, and with a strange speech, will he speak to this people; 12 To whom he said, This is the rest, give ye rest to the weary, and this *is* the refreshing; and they would not hear. 13 And the message of the LORD shall be unto them, word by word, word by word, line by line, line by line, here a little, there a little; that they may go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared and taken.

14 WHEREFORE hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which *is* in Jerusalem: 15 Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with the grave have we made agreement: the overflowing scourge, when it passeth through, shall not come upon us; for we have made lies our refuge, and in falsehood have we

whom shall the LORD turn, and direct His prophet to go, that they may understand and receive His message? He must turn to the children just weaned from their mother's breast. To these infants the prophet must adapt his teaching, since the men are too proud or too senseless to be disciples of God. God's school must be an infant-school, when those who are fullgrown have abandoned themselves to worldliness and folly. The transfer of these and the next words to the scoffers is harsh and abrupt, while they are most expressive as the prophet's own complaint. The description is literal, not figurative of spiritual sucklings, 1 Pet. ii. 2, or of those too proud to be suckled with heavenly doctrine (Mich.); but of children lately weaned, in the earliest stage at which infant teaching can begin.

vv. 10—12. The teaching of such disciples must be suited to their infant years, in monosyllables, in short words, and brief lessons often repeated; word by word, and line by line, or stroke by stroke; also word upon word, line upon line, like food to a sick patient. Teaching, thus wisely suited to these infant learners, would seem like the words of a stammerer, or a strange dialect, to the proud and worldly-wise. They had forfeited all claim to be considered in the style of the message, and the very form required by these infants and weanlings would be a stumbling-block to the wise in their own conceit. So our Lord's own parables,

while they have made His doctrine plainer to children, veiled it from the proud and careless, Matt. xiii. 11—13.

v. 11. The strange speech many refer to the Assyrians or Chaldeans (Rosenm., Hend.). But this agrees neither with the context nor St Paul's use of the words (1 Cor. xiv. 21). The meaning is still the same. The style of God's instruction to infant learners would seem like the needless repetition of stammerers, or a foreign and barbarous dialect, to the proud in heart. Thus the analogy with St Paul's application of the words is full and clear.

v. 13. That form of God's messages, whereby they were suited to infants, because the men were not willing disciples, is now described as a direct judgment on the profane. Their table would thus be turned into a stumbling-block and a snare. Even through the very style of His messages God would destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. The *Vau* is conversive, because of the close connexion with the future, "will he speak," before the relative sentence.

vv. 14, 15. The warning is now directly given to the scornful rulers of Judah, who fancied themselves safe from the flood of the Assyrian armies, even when Ephraim fell, and indulged in festive merriment, when the voice of God called them to mourning and sorrow. The words, "lies" and "falsehood," are God's description

hid ourselves. 16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD ; Behold ! I lay in Zion a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone for a firm foundation : he that believeth shall not be in haste. 17 And I will make judgment a line, and righteousness a plummet ; and hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters shall overflow the hiding place. 18 And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with the grave shall not stand : the overflowing scourge, assuredly it shall pass through, and ye shall be a thing for it to trample down. 19 As soon as it passeth through, it shall seize upon you ; for morning by morning shall it pass through, by day and by night : and it shall be nothing but sorrow to understand the tidings. 20 For

of what they themselves would call by other names, prudent expediency, and wise state policy.

v. 16. The words of God are here placed in full contrast to the flattering hopes of these scornful rulers, His gracious design to their dreams of worldly peace. The stone is Immanuel, the promised Son of the Virgin, and Rod from the stem of Jesse, ch. vii., ix., xi. Laid first in the counsel of God from eternity, He was laid anew, as the promised Heir of David's throne, and Possessor of the land, in Isaiah's earlier visions. This stone is a tried stone, tested and proved. The chief reference is to that sinless life and death, in which Immanuel would be proved and tested by God's perfect law, and found able to bear up the weight of a sinking world. He is "a precious corner-stone" uniting the whole church, and of unspeakable worth in the eyes of His people, "a sure foundation," on whom they build their hope of complete salvation. In steadfast hope, without impatience, believing Israelites would await the birth of this promised Saviour. Meanwhile all the false hopes of the scoffing rulers should be swept away, when the armies of Assyria, the fierce and overflowing scourge, should pass through the land. Because of their pride, therefore sore judgment was at hand. But the mercy and love of God ensured a firm support for the faith of His servants, before the scourge would be suffered to pass through. Vain hopes of worldly peace would be replaced by a work of searching moral contrast and separation.

v. 17. Judgment and righteousness are the line and plummet, or plumb-line, whereby the needful separation would be made, and no hypocrite would be able to endure in the solemn visitation.

v. 18. Hell, or the grave, is not the place or state of final punishment, but the receptacle of the dead. The warning is that their lives should not escape from the sword of the Assyrian by all their alliances with Egypt, and schemes of worldly policy. The figure is resumed from v. 14. They fancied that they had made a league with this mighty, ravening monster, so that it would devour no more. The particle *כי*, in its peculiar position, seems here emphatic: "certainly it shall pass through." "And ye shall be to it for a treading down." The form of the phrase is contemptuous.

v. 19. The two figures, of a scourge, and a flood or sweeping torrent, are perhaps here completed by a third, a wild beast seizing on its prey. The last clause admits of two or three meanings; that the mere report would be vexation, that sorrow alone would lead them to understand, or that the tidings would bring unmixed vexation and sorrow. The last seems the true sense. The word, message, or tidings, is the same as in v. 9. There it referred to the whole message of God by the prophet, and here to the confirmation of his warnings by the actual report of the Assyrian desolations of the land.

v. 20. The allusion here is to their perverse confidence in an Egyptian alliance. Their worldly, unbelieving devices

the bed is too short for *a man* to stretch himself on it; and the covering too narrow for *one* to wrap himself in it. 21 For the LORD will rise up as *in* mount Perazim, he will be wroth as *in* the valley of Gibeon; that he may do his work, his strange work, and perform his task, his strange task. 22 Now therefore scoff ye not, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard of a consumption, firmly decreed, from the Lord GOD of hosts upon the whole land.

23 GIVE ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech. 24 Will the plowman ever be plowing in order to sow? *will he for ever* lay open and level his ground? 25 Will he not, when he hath made plain the face of it, also cast abroad the dill,

for averting the troubles which threatened them would be wholly in vain, and end in disappointment and sorrow. The connexion with the former verse, which some have mistaken, is clear and simple. The disappointment and vexation of the scorers would be complete, because their devices would be proved utterly worthless to avert the sore calamity.

v. 21. Ewald refers the first clause to Joshua's victory over the Canaanites; Hendewerk, to the breach of Uzzah, 2 Sam. vi. and the last to the history of Achan, Josh. vii. But the usual view justly applies both to the victories of David over the Philistines, 2 Sam. v. 17—25. The fact that these were judgments on heathen enemies of Israel only adds to the force of the warning to these rulers of Sodom, and people of Gomorrah, ch. i. 10. Their covenant privileges, for a time, were forfeited by their sin.

“His strange task.” The word usually denotes a laborious service. Judgment is God's strange work, because His especial delight is in mercy. It is even His “strange task,” because He doth not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men.

v. 22. The verb is intensive, “give not yourselves up to scoffing.” The bands may be afflictions in general, especially those of captives in war. The prophet, as God's messenger, had learned from Him the tidings of a consuming, wasting judgment, fixed and firmly decreed, which was soon coming on the land. The phrase is resumed from x. 23, where again, by the name of Shearjashub, “a remnant shall return,” it is linked with Isaiah's first commission, vi. 13. It occurs

once more in the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks, and thus unites a whole series of prophetic warnings. The Apostle, Rom. ix. 28, quotes and applies it to the times of the Gospel.

vv. 23—29. Here the solemn warning has a striking close. A parable is drawn from the various processes of husbandry, to teach us the deep and hidden wisdom of God in His moral government of the church and of the world. However strange some of those processes to the inexperienced, they all concur in securing one main result, the harvest. So too all the ways of God in His holy providence conspire to one great end, a blessed harvest of purified and ransomed souls.

v. 23. Our Lord's parable begins like the prophet's—“Hearken! behold, there went out a sower to sow.” This preface fixes our attention on what follows, as a parable, that we may look below the surface, and not rest in the literal sense. This figure of extreme simplicity conceals a most weighty truth, which forms the Divine key to all the previous messages. The same analogy had been presented before in another form, in the parable of the vineyard, chh. v., xxvii.

vv. 24, 25. “Ever be plowing.” The phrase “all the day” is here used, not in contrast to the night, but in reference to the year-day of the natural season, “ever” or without limit, when sowing time has come. The future also has the continuous sense, “ever go on plowing.” Will he always continue in that stage of plowing, of which the sole use is to prepare for the seed-time that follows? So too of the harrowing, that lays open and levels the

and scatter the cummin, and set the wheat in rows, and the barley in its due place, and the spelt in his border? 26 And he chasteneth it in the due order his God doth teach him. 27 For the dill is not threshed with the sledge, neither is the cartwheel rolled upon the cummin; but the dill is beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. 28 Bread *corn* is bruised: yet with threshing he will not for ever be threshing it, nor drive over *it* the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it *with* his horses. 29 This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, *who is* wonderful in counsel, *and* excellent in wisdom.

ground. The severest dealings of God with Israel were meant, in like manner, to prepare the entrance of His heavenly messages into the hearts of His people. The truths, from which the moral harvest will spring, are various as the kinds of grain sown by husbandmen in the fields. Each work has its fitting season, and each kind of seed its own place. In the moral tillage, all is ordered with equal or still deeper wisdom. The skill of the farmer is God's own gift, and a reflection from the higher wisdom of the True Husbandman in heaven.

"Will he not?" The order of words in the original adds to the emphasis, and reflects the incompleteness of the plowing and harrowing, till the seed is sown. "The dill," A. V. "the fitches," H. "getzach," Vulg. *gith*, LXX. *melanthium*, the black poppy, its seeds being used both for food and medicine, Plin. XIX. 8; XX. 17. "The cummin," *cuminum cyminum*, with larger aromatic seeds. "And set the wheat in rows." He does not scatter it, like the other two, but sets or dibbles it with care in the furrows. "In its due place," a portion of ground set apart for the crop of barley. "And the spelt," Gr. *ζέα*, H. *cussemeth*, mentioned, *Od.* IV. 604, between wheat and barley. "In his border," the border of the husbandman, that is, of his field.

v. 26. This verse has caused much variety of judgment as to its exact meaning. Most suppose the subject of the first verb, as well as the second, to be God himself, who teaches and instructs the husbandman in his work. But the order of the words, and the simple connective, point rather to the construction above, of Vitringa, Kocher, Hahn, and many others, the relative being omitted in the Hebrew as in our English idiom. The

word *yasar*, to chastise, or train by discipline, is here very fitly applied to the whole process of agriculture; and *mishpat*, judgment, refers to the wise, orderly method, in which the whole work needs to be carried on. The verse refers alike to what has gone before, and to that which follows; and thus connects the whole by the common lesson of man's dependence on a wisdom that comes from God.

vv. 27—29. Four methods were used in the east for threshing grain, the rod or staff, for the lightest grains, the feet of horses or oxen, the threshing instrument, or *tribula*, with teeth, and the wain, or cart with wheels on which a driver sat, drawn by oxen or horses.

The harvest, like the seed-time, is a parable. In severing grain from the husks or chaff, the farmer deals differently with the small and the great, the weak and the strong. The smaller kinds, or those easiest to separate, are beaten by a staff or rod with the hand; but the sledge or cart wheel, or the feet of oxen and horses, are used in treading out wheat or barley. And even here there is a wise limit. The corn of which bread is made bears a stronger threshing than dill or cummin; but even in this case the husbandman will not go on threshing, when once his object is attained; for his aim is to separate the chaff, and not to destroy the grain. This skill of his, in harvest as well as in seed-time, is a reflection from the higher skill of the great Husbandman above. It is a gift from JEHOVAH, the Lord of the hosts of heaven, who is wonderful in the depth of His counsels, and vast and unsearchable in the wisdom with which He tills the soil of man's stubborn and barren heart, and carries on, both by judgment and mercy, the government of His own people and of a sinful world.

## § 2. CHAP. XXIX. THE WOE ON JERUSALEM.

THE Woe on Samaria, the proud crown of Ephraim, like the Burden of the Valley of Vision, serves chiefly to introduce a message to the people and rulers of Judah, the direct objects of Isaiah's ministry. But now the message turns directly to Jerusalem. It announces the overflowing scourge of the Assyrian campaigns, and the sudden overthrow of the fierce invaders. A stern reproof of the rulers of Judah for their sensual blindness, when the judgment was so near, is followed by the promise of a great moral revolution. The idea that the first part has no express reference to Sennacherib's campaign, but is only "a figurative expression of the truth that the Church shall suffer, but not perish," (Alex.) exchanges a clear and definite sense, confirmed by the whole series and order of the visions, for one which is wholly vague, misty, and undefined. The Woe on Ariel is addressed to Jerusalem under its double character, as at once a sacred and a royal city, the lion and the altar-place of God.

WOE to Ariel, to Ariel, the city *where* David encamped! add year to year, let the festivals go round. 2 Yet will I distress Ariel, and there shall be sore grief and sorrow, and it shall be

v. 1. The name Ariel has two different meanings. In 2 Sa. xxiii. 20 it means "lion of God," or a mighty warlike champion. Benaiah slew two Ariels, or "lion-like men" of Moab. In Ez. xliii. 15 it means the "fire or fireplace of God," and is applied to the altar of burnt-offering. The first sense is here preferred by Vitranga, Dathe, Döderlein, Eichhorn, Gesenius, Maurer, Scholz, Hendewerk, Ewald, Hahn, Drechsler; the second by the Targum, Sanctius, Grotius, Michaelis, Lowth, Rosenm., Hensler, Hitzig, Knobel, Henderson, and Delitzsch. Each has a text in its favour, and an apparent ground in the context, which refers alike to the wars of David and to the approach of a fiery judgment. The repetition, then, seems not only to be for emphasis, but also to include the double meaning. "Woe to the lion of God, warlike and invincible! to the altar-place of God, where the fire of sacrifice burns continually!"

"Where David encamped." In the LXX. "which David warred against." The main idea is that it was the residence of the great warrior king, the encampment from which he went forth to repeated victories. But there seems also, from v. 3, to be an intended allusion to his siege and capture of the stronghold from

the Jebusites. He first encamped against it, then within it; and it became the lion-like city, the Ariel of God. So the Lord would first encamp against it for its iniquity; and then within it, to defeat and destroy its enemies.

The next words are a severe irony: "Continue year by year to dream of unbroken peace and safety, and that by your diligence in your formal services you have secured the blessing of God."

The word *chaggim* may denote either victims or festivals. But the verb means constantly to compass or go round, and the verbal noun is thrice used for the revolution of time or seasons, Ex. xxxiv. 22; 1 Sam. i. 20; 2 Chr. xxiv. 23. The irony and the warning is thus more full and complete. "Keep for a while your strict routine of all the yearly feasts. They shall be merely like God's milestones in the path to speedy judgment."

v. 2. There is a close resemblance of sound in the two words *thaaniyah* and *aniyah*, "sore grief and sorrow" which deepens the emphasis of the warning. "And it shall be to me as Ariel," that is, "the hearth of God," or the scene of a fiery and sifting judgment on His sinful people. The connective has here an adversative sense, as in the received version.



unto me as Ariel. 3 And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mound, and will raise forts against thee. 4 And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust; and thy voice shall be as of a wizard, out of the ground, and thy speech shall mutter out of the dust.

5 AND the multitude of thine adversaries shall be like fine dust, and the multitude of the terrible as chaff that fleeth away: it shall even be at an instant, suddenly. 6 From the LORD of hosts shall they be visited with thunder and earthquake, and with a mighty noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire. 7 And the multitude of all the nations that fight against

The rendering of Delitzsch, "then," with the idea that one revolution only of the feasts would occur before the siege foretold, contradicts the sequence of the visions, and weakens the force of the text, which rather implies that the circle of festivals would go on for several years to come. The true interval was probably nine or ten years. The application, also, of the last clause to the judgment on the enemies, not on Ariel itself (Hend., Delitzsch), disturbs the order of the message. Four verses contain the warning and woe to Ariel, and four others the prediction of judgment on her enemies. The present clause predicts the fiery trial of the city, and xxxi. 9 the fiery judgment on the Assyrian foe.

v. 3. This verse has been thought to disprove the reference to Sennacherib; or else, by negative critics, to prove a failure of the prophecy, on the ground that there was then no actual siege, ch. xxxvii. 33. But the conclusion seems hasty and groundless. The king "sent Tartan and Rab-saris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to Hezekiah with a great army against Jerusalem." They could not be sent to remain idle, and for mere display. The first aim was by their appearance alone to frighten Hezekiah into submission. This failing, they would of course cut off the city from its supplies, and form a strict blockade, until the king came with the rest of his forces to press the siege, and get the honour of the triumph. Comp. 2 Sam. xii. 27, 28. Though Rabshakeh the spokesman returned to Lachish, and brought back a second message, Tartan,

the warrior general, ch. xx. 1, and Rab-saris remained. They encamped against the city "in the highway of the fuller's field" where the interview of Isaiah and Ahaz took place thirty years before. They would of course, by all military usage of those days, raise forts at a little distance, and erect a mound to intercept the supplies. The king himself was not to come into the city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor to come against it with the shield (or *testudo*), nor to raise a rampart against its walls, xxxvii. 33. But these all belong to the later stages of a siege, when it is endeavoured to take a city by storm. There is no reason, then, to doubt that the warning was strictly fulfilled. All is ascribed to God, because the Assyrian was only like a tool in His hand.

v. 4. "The dejection and fear would be such that they would give utterance to it in feeble and scarcely articulate sounds, like those of the necromancer or ventriloquist, when personating the spirit he professed to evoke" (Hend.). It is a vivid picture of the deepest humiliation.

v. 5. The prophecy of Ariel's trouble is here followed by one of judgment on her adversaries. The absence of contrast in the phrase makes the real contrast more impressive. Easily and without an effort, deliverance will follow close on the deepest sorrow. It is natural and inevitable, in the sight of God, that the seeming triumph of God's enemies, and the height of their pride, should lead at once to their overthrow.

v. 6. "Shall they be visited." The subject is not Ariel, but the multitude of

Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision. 8 It shall even be as when a hungry *man* dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he awaketh; and his soul is empty: and 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 BE astonished, and wonder! take your pleasure, and riot! They are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. 10 For the LORD hath poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep: and he hath closed your eyes, the prophets, and your heads, even the seers, hath he covered.

the aliens or adversaries. The words are commonly held to be figurative. Yet since no details are given elsewhere, the view of Vitranga seems more probable. "We learn," he says, "from this very passage, that a tempest was raised by the angel of the Lord, and that he thundered on the Assyrian camp with lightning, and storm, and hailstones, like the arrows of heaven." No form of judgment would seem more adapted to mark it as the immediate work of the God of heaven.

vv. 7, 8. The reference to the night when the Assyrian host were slain by the destroying angel, xxxvii. 36, is clear, like history itself. The plans of ambitious conquest would be utterly scattered to the winds, in the moment when they seemed certain to be fulfilled.

vv. 9—11. The message turns here, from prediction of the coming woe, to severe reproof of the stupor and blindness of the people. The words in v. 13 are quoted by our Lord, and applied to the Pharisees of His day. But this is quite consistent with their truth in the time of Hezekiah, when the open idolatry of the reign of Ahaz had been succeeded once more, in the main body of the people, by a superstitious worship of God.

v. 9. "Start back and wonder! take your pleasure and riot!" These words have received many versions, since each pair corresponds, and still the same parts, in two of the words, rarely occur. The two in each pair being from a kindred root, and alike in sound, seem to have a kindred meaning. The first in each pair is reflexive, and seems to relate more

to momentary feelings, the second to a course of action that follows. "Stay yourselves" or start back, like one who suddenly pauses in deep surprise at an object in his path, "and wonder." The words refer to their stupid surprise, first at the prophet's message, and then at the judgment that fulfilled it. The second clause is an ironical command, like Eccl. xi. 9, and predicts their foolish merriment and revelry when the desolator was near at hand. So ch. xxii. 13, 14. The marginal version of the second clause is more expressive, and keeps closer to the natural force of the words than the other modern varieties, "take your pleasure and be blinded," Hend. "Be merry and blind," Alex. "Act as blind, and be blinded," Rosenm. "Blind yourselves and grow blind," Delitzsch. Staring, vacant wonder, alternating with mirth and riot, is a more vivid picture, and a more expressive irony. Comp. Ps. cxix. 16, 47, 70, xciv. 19; Is. xi. 8, lxvi. 12.

v. 10. The first figure is that of a stupefying liquor poured out from a vessel, and steeping thoroughly that on which it falls. The rest of the verse admits of two or three slight variations as to the exact sense. But there seems to be a double figure, from eyes that are closed, and a head wrapped round with a thick covering, so that the man cannot see his way. The prophets, the eyes of the people, were blinded. The seers, the heads of the people, were covered, and unable to guide them.

11 And the vision altogether is become unto you as the words of a writing that is sealed, which *men* give to one that can read, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed. 12 And the writing is given to one that cannot read, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot read. 13 And the LORD said, Forasmuch as this people draw near to me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is a vain thing, taught by the precept of men; 14 Therefore, behold! I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, a marvel and a wonder: even the wisdom of their wise *men* shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent *men* shall be hid.

v. 11. The words refer to a written paper or letter, not to a book in the modern sense. The contrast does not refer to learning and want of learning in general, but the power to read only. The common feature in both cases is the careless unconcern or aversion with which the writing is received. He who can read will not take the trouble to break the seal, and he who cannot read will not take the least pains to secure the help of another. It is implied that the request is for his own sake, not for the instruction of him by whom the writing is given. Thus, with various and opposite excuses, the learned and ignorant were agreed in despising the messages of God. Some were not scholars enough to understand the prophecies; and the scholars said they were mysteries, not meant to be understood.

v. 13. The LXX. translate "In vain do they worship me, teaching doctrines the commandments of men." Their version is adopted by St Matthew and St Mark in their report of our Lord's discourse against the Pharisees. The Hebrew gives the same sense by the change of one letter, *Vaufor Yod* (וֹפֹר יוֹד for וֹפֹר יוֹד). And this renders the sentence so much more emphatic, that it may claim to be received as the true reading, having the sanction of our Lord, or at least of His two evangelists. "And there is their fear toward me taught, &c." is weak, compared with the other reading, where the expressive word, *thoku*, holds the emphatic place. Their religious service is

*thoku*, a thing of nought, vain and worthless; being taught by the precept of men, and no real obedience to the will of God. When human traditions are placed on a level with God's own messages, and in practice even set above them, obedience is removed from its true foundation. A form of barren orthodoxy may be retained, but it becomes worthless in the sight of God. The Pharisaism of every later age has its type and pattern in those whom the prophet here condemns.

vv. 15, 16. The prophecy belongs to the time when the Ephraimites were forming their alliance, and sending their embassy to Egypt; or else to a season rather later, when the princes of Judah may have tried the same experiment. These too, like Ephraim, clung fondly to the hope of Egyptian succour. The piety of Hezekiah seems only to have made them negotiate, in spite of Isaiah's warnings, in a more secret way. Their perverse schemes would be baffled by Him whose words they despised, just as a lump of clay is moulded by the potter into some wholly unexpected form. The perverseness refers chiefly to their stubborn clinging to heathen alliances, even when God was using the heathen to scourge them for their breaches of His covenant. The figure resembles those used before concerning the Assyrian. Man is weak as potter's clay, when he strives against the purpose of God. The rendering of several moderns is, "O your perverseness! shall the potter be es-

15 WOE unto them that go deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us? 16 Your perverseness, surely it shall be esteemed like potter's clay! for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or the thing formed say of him that formed it, He hath no understanding? 17 Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a planted field, and the planted field shall be counted as a forest? 18 And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see, out of obscurity, and out of darkness. 19 The meek also shall increase *their* joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. 20 For the terrible one is brought to nought, and

teemed as the clay?" But this introduces a tautology. It is also abrupt and wanting in dignity, and sets aside the contrast, in the Hebrew, between direct statement, and questions that follow in the usual form.

v. 17. This verse is obscure, and has received very diverse expositions. Some apply it to the rejection of the Jews and call of the Gentiles, while others make it only a general promise of increased fertility. The first doubt is whether *carmel* is a proper name, or a common one, to be rendered fruitful field, tree-garden, or orchard. Some refer Lebanon to the Assyrians, Carmel, or the fruitful field, to the Jews; others Lebanon to the princes of Judah, and Carmel to the people. Others apply Lebanon to Judah itself, as to be reclaimed from desolation, and Carmel to the Assyrians, as soon to be made desolate. Most view the words as strictly parallel with ch. xxxii. 15. But Lebanon, elsewhere in Isaiah (ii. 13; x. 34; xiv. 8; xxxiii. 9; xxxv. 2; xxxvii. 24; xl. 16; lx. 13), always denotes what is noble, lofty and magnificent, and never a mere waste or desolation. Thus the day of the Lord was to be "on all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up," and the glory of Lebanon is a leading subject of promise. In x. 18, 34 the sudden cutting down of its cedars is a figure for the overthrow of the mighty Assyrian princes. Again, Carmel, when used as a common noun, does not refer to fields of wheat, barley, &c., but to a shrubbery or orchard, or a

tract of fig-trees, vines, and olives. Its contrast with the wilderness is one of fruitfulness with barrenness, but with Lebanon it is one of glory or sublimity with beauty, xxxv. 2, or else of smaller and greater height, as of shrubs compared with forest-trees or cedars.

The figure here is not the cutting down of Lebanon, nor the change of vineyards into a wilderness, but an exchange of character, by which Lebanon is turned into a Carmel, and the Carmel into a forest of cedar-trees. This fitly describes a political revolution in the Jewish state, by which the high and noble would be abased, and the meek and lowly exalted. The words may therefore be thus paraphrased: "Is it not yet a very little while, and the proud and haughty princes of Judah shall be abased, when all their hopes from Egypt have failed, and their schemes of worldly policy end in confusion and sorrow? But then the faithful, the despised remnant, who rest on God's promise, shall be promoted to signal honour." Comp. 2 Chr. xxxii. 23. Yet the abasement would be in mercy, not for utter ruin, which is expressed by another figure, Jer. xxii. 6, "Thou art Gilead unto me, the head of Lebanon; yet surely I will make thee a wilderness, cities not inhabited."

vv. 18, 19. The signal fulfilment of God's messages, first in the siege of Jerusalem, and then in the sudden overthrow of its enemies, would open many eyes, and unstop many ears, which had been blind and deaf to the words of God.

the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: 21 That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and by falsehood defraud the righteous.

22 THEREFORE thus saith the LORD to the house of Jacob, even he who redeemed Abraham, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, and his face shall not now wax pale. 23 For when his children see it, *even* the work of my hands in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and shall sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall reverence the God of Israel. 24 They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn wisdom.

The humble, who had rested on His promise in the hour of trouble, would exult and rejoice, and "the poor among men" would own with gladness that Jehovah is the Refuge and Protector of his servants, the Holy One of Israel.

vv. 20, 21. The general meaning of these verses is plain, though some clauses are variously explained. The terrible one, the Assyrian spoiler, is brought to nought, and has passed away like a dream. The scorner in Judah is come to an end, has either perished in the judgment, and been brought to repentance, or else is mute with shame. Their scoffs at God's prophets will be turned to wonder and silence. The proud and worldly, who have brought the state to the brink of ruin, will be deposed, and the hands of Hezekiah be strengthened to execute righteous judgment. The last clause refers to the perversion of justice, so as to defraud the righteous, either by false testimony, or by direct wrong in those who occupy the judgment-seat.

vv. 22—24. Many constructions of v. 23 have been proposed, and also some conjectural changes of the text. But the above seems to be the true meaning. "Therefore," not "nevertheless." This abasement of the proud is no hindrance to the promise that follows, but one condition of its fulfilment. The message is to the house of Jacob, and also concerning them. The title of God "He that redeemed Abraham" carries back their thoughts to the original promise and covenant. Jacob means here the patriarch

himself, viewed as gazing on these acts of God's providence, ashamed when his children rebel, and rejoicing in their repentance. "The work of my hands" is here the wonderful act of God in rescuing Zion, and scattering her enemies. "In the midst of him," that is, of the land which bears his name, the land of Israel. They who erred in spirit, and the murmurers, are those who had despised the messages before their fulfilment.

In this time of mercy the Patriarch will no longer be ashamed for his degenerate children, but be cheered by the sight of a faithful remnant. A striking revival of true piety will gladden his heart. Believing Israelites will render a full tribute of praise to the God of their fathers; and many, who before had murmured at the words of the prophet, would now discern the truth of all his messages, and listen with reverence to the words of heavenly wisdom.

The whole chapter has thus a direct and plain reference to the crisis impending over Jerusalem about the time of the siege of Samaria, to its siege by the host of Tartan and Rabsaris, and to their sudden overthrow by the hand of God. But the stupor and blindness here described rested mainly on the Jewish rulers and people, except a faithful remnant, till the coming of our Lord, and was the cause of His rejection and their own long desolation. The abasement of the proud, and the exaltation of the lowly, is the standing and eternal law of God's moral government.

## § 3. CHAP. XXX. THE WOE ON THE EGYPTIAN LEAGUE.

THIS chapter, like the last, plainly belongs to the earlier years of Hezekiah's reign. Ephraim, we are told, 2 Kings xvii. 4, formed a league or conspiracy with the king of Egypt. The worldly party in Judah clung to the same alliance as their chief hope; and either shared in the same mission, or else copied it a few years later, without Hezekiah's consent, after the fall of Samaria. Their unbelief is here sternly reprov'd, their embassy itself derided and condemned, and its utter failure foretold; but there follows at once a promise of succour and deliverance, when they have repented of their sin, while the message closes with a solemn and impressive warning of the great Assyrian overthrow. The whole has a plain and direct reference to that impending crisis of judgment; whatever counterparts, in still mightier foes and a more lasting deliverance, may await the church, the world, and the people of Israel, in days to come.

WOE to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that frame a counsel, but not by me, and that mould an image, but not by my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin; 2 That walk to go down to Egypt, and have not inquired at my mouth, to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt. 3 So the strength of Pharaoh shall be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt *your* confusion. 4 For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors

v. 1. The figure in the first verse has received four different explanations, to cover with a covering, to weave a net, to pour out a libation, or to pour out and mould a molten image. The last of these seems the most expressive. It is confirmed by the use of the same noun, v. 22 (*massèkah*), and of the same verb (*nasak*) in ch. xlii. 10, "who hath *molten* a graven image?"

The standing national sin of Ephraim had been the calves at Dan and Bethel. And now this scheme of an Egyptian alliance was another idol, one of the heart, which they formed and moulded with equal care, poured into it, as a mould, costly sacrifices and efforts, and thereby "added sin to sin." To inquire at the mouth of God, v. 2, is to consult Him in the appointed way, either by Urim and Thummin, or by the voice of His pro-

phets. Their senseless "trust in the shadow of Egypt" was a hateful contrast to the vow of the Psalmist,—“I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever, I will trust under the shadow of thy wings.”

v. 3. The connective is rendered variously; "therefore" A. V. "but" (Rosenm., Hend.), "and" (Alex., Drechsler, Delitzsch). The first makes the causal relation too prominent, which has its proper Hebrew word, xxix. 14, 22; xxx. 7, 12, 13, 18. The main thought is that disappointment would be the natural and speedy result of their sin, and the causal relation is only implied. The word "so" is thus the best rendering.

v. 4. "His princes and ambassadors" some take to be those of Pharaoh himself, sent to meet the Israelite messenger. Others refer the word "his" to Judah, implied, though not expressed (Rosenm.

arrived at Hanes. 5 They were all ashamed of a people that will not profit them, nor be a help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.

6 THE BURDEN OF THE BEASTS OF THE SOUTH. Into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence come the young and the old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, on the shoulders of young asses they will carry their riches, and upon the bunches of camels their treasures, to a people *that shall not profit them.*  
7 *As for* the Egyptians, they shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried concerning this, they are PRIDE SITTING STILL.

Delitzsch). Others to Hoshea, the last king of Israel (Vitr.). Some, again, take the phrase for a statement of the weakness of Egypt (Hitzig), others of its strength and greatness (Ewald). The difficulty from the pronoun may be thus explained, that the princes and ambassadors are those of Judah, but are called Pharaoh's by an expressive irony. "His princes," those who are degrading themselves into vassals of Egypt, "were at Zoan," and "his ambassadors," those who so eagerly court his aid, "arrived at Hanes." Some take this for Daphne or Tahpahnès, near Pelusium (Targ., Grot., Champoll., Poole); others for a place more distant than Zoan or Tanis, Heracleopolis in middle Egypt, the Ehnes, or H'nes of Edrisi the Arabian geographer; perhaps too the city Anysis of Herodotus (Vitr., Gesen., Hendewerk, Hend., Delitzsch). The latter is more probable. The embassy may have found the Tanite rule displaced by the Ethiopian, and thus have had to proceed further. Anysis, in Herodotus, is the city of that Pharaoh who was driven into exile by Sabaco the Ethiopian.

The embassy, with toil and danger, would reach Zoan, near the entrance of Egypt. It would arrive still further, at the southern capital of the Ethiopian king of Egypt. But its expectations of any effectual succour would wholly fail.

v. 6. "The Burden of the beasts of the south." Many take this for the distinct heading of a short prophecy, like those in ch. xiii—xxiii. (LXX., Kimchi, Hend., Drechsler, Delitzsch); others refer it simply to the load of the asses and camels, which carried the presents of the

ambassadors (Vitr., Rosenm., Alex.). Delitzsch, after Clenius, takes "the beasts of the south" for the river-horse, used as an emblem of Egypt from its huge, unwieldy strength. But this is every way unnatural, makes the plural form unmeaning, and separates the words wholly from the context which explains them. The burden, also, is clearly not on Egypt itself, but on Judah, for their vain reliance on heathen succour. The "land of trouble and anguish" some also apply to Egypt (Vitr., Rosenm., Clericus, &c.). But its more natural reference is to the desert through which the envoys must pass.

Each view of the Burden has a partial truth. It refers clearly to the asses and camels, travelling through the south country, loaded heavily with presents for the Egyptians. But it stands here in the form of the title of a vision, to bring out, with severe irony, the folly of this Jewish embassy. They had loaded their beasts of burden, their asses and camels, with rich gifts, to secure an Egyptian alliance; but the only result would be a burden from God himself, a sentence of disappointment and sorrow on their vain expedition. The description of the desert alludes to Deut. viii. 15. They were reversing the steps of their great national deliverance. They were trusting in the shadow of that oppressor, from whose cruel yoke God had rescued their fathers. On this vain errand they were journeying south through that terrible wilderness, where their forefathers had been sustained by water from the rock, and manna from heaven. There was danger in the journey itself, and would be nothing at its close but shame and sorrow.

8 NOW go, write it before them on a tablet, and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come, for ever and for evermore; 9 That this *is* a rebellious people, lying children, children *that* will not hear the law of the LORD; 10 Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, See not for us right things, speak to us smooth things, give us visions of deceit. 11 Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

12 WHEREFORE thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon, 13 Therefore this iniquity shall be to you

v. 7. "Rahab," Ps. lxxxix. 10, "strength," A. V., "pride," R. V., is a name given to Egypt from their national haughtiness, and contempt for strangers. But now the weakness and forced inaction of these boasters would make a strange compound of pride and childish feebleness. The staff would prove a broken reed.

v. 8. What was the prophet to write, and how was it to be written? Some think the "book" to be the same with the "tablet," the word, inscribe, answering rather to a graving tool, than a pen (Gesenius, Hitzig, Scholz, Alex., Drechsler, Delitzsch). Others infer a tablet writing, as Hab. ii. 2, for present use, and in a book or on parchment for posterity (Vitr., Rosenm., Maurer, Ewald, Hend.). The latter view is confirmed by the fulfilment. No such tablet has been preserved, but in the written prophecy the words are verified to this day. The word, "grave" or "inscribe," may be used to express strongly the enduring nature of this written record, however perishable in its outward form. But this view may be carried still further, and the tablet be named at all, only to signify the fixed and lasting nature of the record. "Write down this warning message, and let the inscription be enduring, as if written on tables of stone, and inscribed by the graver's hand." The conjectural reading *la-éd*, "for a witness for ever," scarcely adds to the thought, and the climax is less impressive.

v. 9. Most moderns render "For this &c." and suppose a reason to be given for writing down, either vv. 6, 7, or the whole previous message. But the other version (LXX., A. V., Vitr., &c.)

seems on the whole preferable. What needed so lasting a record was rather the engrained perverseness of the people, out of which all their acts of sin arose, than the details of this Egyptian embassy. Its failure was rather a lesson for the moment; but the perverseness of the Jewish people in despising God's word, and rejecting His prophets, was a weighty and solemn lesson for every age. They continually urged the prophets to give answers that would encourage them in their worldly schemes, instead of reporting truly the messages of God.

v. 12. The title they so much disliked, the Holy One of Israel, is chosen to introduce the new message of solemn warning. They despised His word, which denounced the worthlessness of their proposed alliance, and the punishment of their sin would be swift and sure. The league of the Ephraimites with Egypt was the direct occasion of Samaria's ruin. The later campaigns of Sargon seem, from the monuments, to have completed Egypt's humiliation. No sherd was to be left of this broken vessel, their much coveted alliance.

vv. 15—17. These titles of God have here a special force. Their resorting to Egypt for help was a direct affront to the unchangeable Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel. It was a denial of every lesson taught by the plagues of Egypt, the Passover and Exodus, when that name was more fully revealed. Distrust of God had caused a feverish restlessness. Their punishment would resemble their sin. By rejecting the prophet's warning they virtually claimed to be wiser than God, and they would now be filled with their



as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose crash cometh suddenly, at an instant. 14 And he will break it as the breaking of a potter's vessel; he will shatter it, and will not spare: so that in its shattering there shall not be found a sherd, to take up fire from the hearth, or to skim up water from the pool. 15 For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not. 16 And ye said, No! for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall your pursuers be swift. 17 A thousand *shall flee* from the rebuke of one, from the rebuke of five shall ye flee; till ye be left like a beacon on the top of a mountain, and like an ensign on a hill.

own devices. Schemes of worldly policy, in which God's word is despised, recoil swiftly on their own authors, and hasten national decay and ruin.

v. 17. Some have thought that the word "ten thousand" has dropped out of the second clause (Lowth, Gesen.). But this mistakes the real force of the passage, and destroys the connexion with the close of the verse.

The law contained two promises, Lev. xxvi. 8; Deut. xxxii. 30. "Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred shall put ten thousand to flight." "How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight." These promises would not only be forfeited but reversed. The first clause in each is inverted, only the "hundred" is not expressed. But the thought remains implied that the thousand would dwindle away, till only solitary stragglers remain, "like an ensign on a hill." The word, beacon, is to be taken in its primary sense for a signal, like a flagstaff, on a pole or turret, that could be seen afar. The message points to the time of Rabshakeh's insulting defiance.

There is here a sudden transition from stern and repeated threatenings against the worldly party in Judah to the promise of gracious help in the time of distress, and of a sudden and mighty deliverance. The prayers of Isaiah, Hezekiah, and a faithful remnant, should not be in vain, but a signal answer of mercy be given them in their hour of need.

vv. 18—26. These verses, from the whole context, refer to the Assyrian de-

liverance. The connexion is direct and forcible, though some have thought it obscure. However severe God's discipline, its design was gracious. His dealings are full of wisdom, like our Lord's absence during the sickness of Lazarus, to make the blessing afterward more glorious and Divine. There is, on His part, no slackness or indifference, but the calm waiting of an ever-patient love. Even in the hour of judgment, God will be exalted, not to crush His people with the terrors of His majesty, but only "that He may have mercy" upon them. He knows how to temper their afflictions, that they may yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Since He waits in patient love, to shew them favour at the last, they also are bound to wait, in faith and patience, until the blessing shall come.

v. 19. "In Zion, in Jerusalem." Other versions have been proposed, from overlooking the real emphasis. The aim of the Assyrian was to remove the people wholly from the land of promise, xxxvi. 16, 17. The carrying away of Ephraim followed the fall of Samaria, and was doubtless followed by that of many captives from the villages and fenced cities of Judah. But as to Zion, the hopes of the enemy would wholly fail, when they seemed certain to be fulfilled. The flood mentioned in viii. 8 might reach to the neck, but then a voice would be heard—"Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

The next promise is distinct from Is.

18 AND therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you : for the LORD is a God of judgment ; blessed *are* all they that wait for him. 19 For the people shall dwell in Zion, in Jerusalem ; thou shalt weep bitterly no more : he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry ; as soon as he heareth it, he will answer thee. 20 And the LORD will give you bread *in your* adversity, and water *in your* affliction ; and thy teachers shall be removed into a corner no more, but thine eyes shall observe thy teachers. 21 And thine ears shall hear a voice from 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. 22 Ye shall defile also the coverings of thine idols of silver, and

xxv. 8, Rev. xxi. 4, and alludes to that season of bitter weeping and anguish through which they were soon to pass. This would suddenly cease, and be replaced by the joy of prayers most wonderfully and speedily answered. The past tense, "he answered thee" (Heb.), is here used to denote the swiftness of the answer their prayers would receive.

vv. 20—22. The opening words of vv. 20, 23 are the same, and introduce two triplets of promise, the first to Zion, the second to the country at large. Though distressed and afflicted, they would be saved from utter famine. Bread would be given them, and their water would be sure. The prophets of God, scorned and slighted in their days of carnal security and pride, would rise into public honour, xxxvi. 1—7. The eyes of the people would be eagerly fixed on them, to receive some message of hope and comfort, xxxvii. 8, 38. They should thus be guided in a right path to a joyful issue.

"Bread *in your* adversity, &c." These words form a part of the promise, not its limitation. The affliction has been fully denounced before. Here they are assured that, although besieged, they will not be given over to famine. The path of duty will be made plain by God's prophets, and speedy deliverance be given.

v. 21. The voice is "from behind," not as if they had turned their back on guides before them (Hend., Alex.), for the allusion is to deceitful bypaths, that seem to lead forward, and not to a course

directly backward. The meaning is that they would be doubly guided, by the ear and the eye, by a guide before and a voice from behind, that they might be kept without fail in the narrow way.

v. 22. The cases or coverings of heathen idols were often more costly than the idols themselves. But these, even though made of gold and silver, should be cast away with shame and loathing, when the power of the God of Israel had been signally revealed once more. This intense, though transient loathing of idolatry, was the earnest of a more lasting change after the Return from Babylon, and in all the later times of Jewish history. A pledge would thus be given, under Hezekiah, of this marked change in the character of the Jewish people in the latter times.

vv. 23—25. The promise passes here from the city to the country. The remnant of Zion, escaped from the spoiler, will re-occupy the ravaged and deserted fields. The former rain would accompany the seedtime, and in due season they would reap an abundant harvest. The cattle would feed in spacious pasture grounds, and the produce of tillage would be so plenteous, that the cattle employed in it need no longer be confined to coarse provender, but should partake freely of the grain procured through their own labours. The phrase "seasoned provender," refers to an eastern practice of adding salt or acid herbs to the food of cattle, to make it more pleasant to them. There is an Arabian proverb (Hend.), "Sweet

the cases of thine images of gold; thou shalt cast them away as a loathsome thing; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence!

23 THEN shall he give rain for thy seed, wherewith thou shalt sow the ground; and bread, the increase of the earth, and it shall be rich and plenteous: thy cattle shall feed that day in a large pasture. 24 The oxen likewise, and the young asses that ear the ground, shall eat seasoned provender, winnowed with the sieve and with the fan. 25 And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every lofty hill, rivers *and* streams of water, in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers shall fall. 26 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 when the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of his wound.

provender is the food of camels, salted provender their dessert."

vv. 25, 26. These verses have caused some perplexity as to their true meaning. Some who think the rest literal take them as purely figurative. Others infer from them that vv. 20—24 are also figures only. Vitringa applies them to the time of the Maccabees, Henderson and many others to the Return from Babylon. Dr Alexander looks on it as a vague prediction of prosperity after war and carnage, with no proper reference to one period above another. But the whole context proves a direct reference to the great crisis of Sennacherib's invasion and overthrow. The fulness and strength of the language, as applied to the days of Hezekiah, only proves that these are designedly made the type of larger spiritual blessings to follow in later times.

v. 25. "The towers," like the cedars of Lebanon, x. 19, are a figure for the warlike captains and princes of Assyria, to be suddenly destroyed; and "the day of the great slaughter" is the time of their overthrow.

It has been usual to suppose that a simoom or sirocco, the stifling wind of the desert, was the instrument of this great destruction. But for this there is no direct warrant. On the contrary, it is announced, xxix. 6, that their overthrow would be "with thunder and earthquake, and a mighty noise, with storm and tempest, with flame of devouring fire." Here,

also, we find mention of "scattering" or a driving storm, and of tempest and hailstones. Both passages thus point to a thunderstorm and electric tempest of unusual violence, as the chief outward agency by which the task of the destroying angel of the Lord was fulfilled. Such a storm usually implies a previous time of drought, which it closes, and which is then usually followed by tropical and abundant rains. There would be literally, on this view, "on every high mountain, and on every lofty hill, rivulets and streams of water," at the very time of this great calamity of the Assyrian host. Such a storm, also, would change a season of dark and cloudy days, in which the daylight is dim and lurid, and the nights are gloomy and starless, into one of brilliant and cloudless skies, when the purified atmosphere is unusually clear, so that the moonlight seems almost to be light as day, and the sun shines out by day with unwonted splendour and brightness.

v. 26. "The stroke of his wound" is the wound which God himself has made, in the sore affliction of His own people. The same thought appears in Hos. vi. 1, "He hath torn, and he will heal us, hath broken and will bind us up."

This literal fulfilment, however, at the fall of Sennacherib's army, seems clearly to be a type of wider and deeper mercies, that would range through long ages after the Captivity. After the Return, and in the time of the Maccabees, the Jewish

27 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: 28 And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with a sieve of vanity; and a bridle, causing to err, *shall be* in the jaws of the people. 29 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 to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel. 30 And the LORD will cause his glorious voice to be heard, and will show the lighting down of his arm, with fury of anger, and *with* flame of devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hail-stones. 31 For through the voice of the LORD shall the Assyrian, which smote with the rod, be beaten down. 32 And

teachers of the law rose to signal honour. Instruction in the word of God spread widely, and open idolatry was earnestly rejected and cast away. In the first days of the Gospel the seed of the word was sown abundantly by our Lord and His Apostles, attended with the "former rain" of the Spirit of God, and yielded, in large measure, the fruits of righteousness. The words of St Paul—"Doth God care for oxen?" must apply to v. 21 no less than to the law, Deut. xxv. 4, and prove that it must include a higher reference to the preachers of the Gospel. These were nourished in those days with the truth of God, seasoned with the salt of God's covenant, and winnowed from the chaff of Rabbinical traditions.

Again, in v. 25 we have a striking emblematic picture of the overflowing of truth in the high places of the earth, when heathenism was overthrown, and its bulwarks laid in the dust; while v. 26, the close of the whole, points forward to that glorious change, even in the lower creation, which seems, from other prophecies, to attend the promised times of "the restitution of all things." Thus, while there was a complete and literal fulfilment in Isaiah's days, at Sennacherib's overthrow, the same words of promise, in their fuller and deeper meaning, form a comprehensive outline of God's mercies to Israel and to the Church of Christ, reaching onward from the time of Cyrus to the full recovery of repentant Israel

in days to come.

vv. 27—34. The fall of the Assyrian is here foretold in words most impressive and sublime. They strongly confirm the view of Vitringa, that a violent thunder-storm was the chief agency by which the commission of the destroying angel was fulfilled.

v. 27. "The burden thereof is heavy." Some would render, "the smoke is dense." But the other version is to be preferred, and implies that a heavier burden would alight on the oppressor than those on the people he had oppressed. In the next verse, compared with viii. 8, there is the same parallel between the judgment he has inflicted, as a flood reaching to the neck, and that which he himself undergoes from the justice of God. The "sieve of vanity" means plainly that searching power of God's Spirit, which severs the chaff from the wheat in the Church and the world, and reserves the latter, and the latter only, for fiery judgment.

v. 30. The joy in Zion at the downfall of the Assyrian would be like the gladness of the Passover and other solemn feasts, in which the bands of worshippers drew near with loud songs to the temple of God. The title "the Rock of Israel" refers to the sure defence which God would afford His servants, when this blast of the terrible ones should assail them. The pronoun is emphatic. "The song" or "singing shall be yours," the privilege secured to you, as the people of God.

every stroke of the staff of doom, which the LORD shall cause to light upon him, shall be with tabrets and harps; and in battles of tumult he will fight against them. 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.

v. 32. The Hebrew order is more emphatic than when the words are transposed. The fierce oppressions of the Assyrian are first named, and return upon his own head. The reference is to x. 5, 15, xiv. 6, where the same description is given.

v. 33. Tophet, in the valley of the son of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, was a receptacle of filth and ordure, where also the idolatrous Jews offered their children in fire to Moloch. The slain Assyrians were mainly, it is probable,

the "great host" of Tartan, who had encamped near Jerusalem. Many of their corpses would probably be carried to Tophet, and there burned. This issue of their fierce hostility serves here as the type of an event still more awful in other prophecies, Rev. xix. 20, xx. 10, the overthrow and fiery judgment of Antichristian ungodliness in the last days. The whole picture is a most solemn warning of judgments to alight hereafter on the open enemies of the true Church of God.

#### § 4. SECOND WOE ON APOSTATES, AND ITS SEQUEL.

##### CHAPS. XXXI. XXXII.

THE warning of the last chapter is here repeated and confirmed. The former seems to have been uttered, when the envoys of Judah were setting out for Egypt, and the present one when they returned. It passes on quickly, as the danger comes near, into a bright promise of Messiah's reign, followed by further statements of the years of trial and desolation that must first arrive.

Chapter xxxii. continues this last Woe on Judah, so as to form a common sequel of all the four Woes, ch. xxviii.—xxxi.; just as ch. xviii. forms a sequel of three Burdens, though linked most closely with the last.

The words at its opening have been referred to Hezekiah, or to Messiah, or else to one in type and the other in antitype. But Hezekiah was now actually on the throne, while the prophecy of Micah, given in his reign, Mic. iii. 9—11, Jer. xxvi. 18, 19, shews that it fell very short of this description. The indefinite form, "a king," is ill-suited for an actual monarch, and the whole promise is too full and large for those fifteen years of reprieve, given in answer to Hezekiah's prayer, which were soon to be followed by heavier troubles. The peace of his later years may suggest the form of the prediction, but they can hardly be viewed as even a typical fulfilment. The main reference is to Messiah, the Eternal King.

WOE to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because *they are* many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong: but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, 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, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.

4 FOR thus hath the LORD spoken unto me, Like as the lion, and the young lion, growling over 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 will the LORD of hosts come down to fight over mount Zion, and over the hill thereof. 5 As birds hovering, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem: defending he will also deliver, *and* passing

v. 1. Egypt was noted for chariots and horses from the earliest times, and they are the most marked feature in its monumental remains. Diodorus says of Thebes, "Some report that twenty thousand chariots went forth from it to battle, and that there were a hundred stables by the river side from Memphis to Libyan Thebes, each receiving two hundred horses, and their foundations are shewn to this day." The law of God had an express warning against trust in these horses and chariots of Egypt, Deut. xvii. 16; Ps. xx. 7.

v. 2. The words here are strongly ironical. Those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight, really impute folly to the warnings of God. It is not here said that their wisdom is folly, but that the All-wise has at least a share in the wisdom they claim so proudly. "The house of the evil-doers" denotes the unbelievers in Israel, and "the help of them that work iniquity," those Egyptian allies in whom they so fondly put their trust.

v. 4. The same figure of the lion and shepherds occurs in Homer, Il. iv. 22—26, but is here much grander and more impressive. The true meaning of the

connective is not that resort to heathen was unlawful, because God's own help was at hand, but is of a still deeper kind. These worldly helps must be tried and fail, in order that the power of the Most High may be more fully displayed. The words are no threatening that God would fight against mount Zion (Hitzig, Hend., Hahn, Delitzsch), which had at this time no such multitude of defenders. But the cause why heathen helpers were so utterly to fail was to reveal more clearly the mighty help they would receive from the God of Israel. Jerusalem would be at once the scene and the object of this protecting care of the Almighty. Each of the two figures is separately imperfect, and supplies the defect of the other. One expresses the mighty power of God, whom no enemies can overcome; and the other the affectionate care He exercises, like the mother-bird, when she strives to rescue her young brood from the hand of the spoiler.

v. 5. "As birds hovering." The figure here is drawn from a mother-bird, fluttering over her nest when some one assails it. But this expresses strong desire and affection alone. The bird may be unable to preserve her nestlings. Hence a fur-

over he will also save. 6 Turn ye unto *him from* whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted. 7 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. 8 And the Assyrian shall fall by the sword, not of a mighty man, and a sword, not of men, shall devour him; but he shall flee from the sword, and his young men shall be made captive. 9 And he shall hasten to his stronghold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the LORD, who hath a fire in Zion, and a furnace in Jerusalem.

CHAP. XXXII. 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

ther promise that God's protection shall be effectual and complete. This is rendered more impressive by an allusion to the first Passover, of which the mercy would be renewed in this fresh deliverance. The absence of pronouns adds to the force. The Lord will pass over Zion, to defend and save, when He passes through the Assyrian hosts to smite and destroy.

v. 6. This call to repentance comes in suddenly after the warning and the promise. It is like the bridge from the four woes in Israel which have gone before, to the Promise of Messiah, and the Woe on the Assyrian, which presently follow. It alludes also to the early promise in the name Shear-Jashub, a remnant shall return.

v. 7. Shame and abhorrence for their former idolatries would be awakened in the men of Judah by the signal display of the power and protecting care of God. Once more, as in the days of the Passover, they would learn that the Lord was God, and He alone.

vv. 8, 9. All the main features of the coming judgment are here given. The enemies would be overthrown by the sword of no mighty captain or numerous army, but by the direct visitation of the Lord of hosts. Their king would seek his safety by inglorious flight. The survivors, panic-struck and dismayed, would many of them be made captive; and those become a spoil and prey to others, who exacted tribute before. The crestfallen

monarch would not pause in his flight till he reached Nineveh, his stronghold, "the dwelling-place of the lions, and the feeding-place of the young lions," Nah. ii. 11. His princes would also be terrified at the display of God's mighty power. Jerusalem would prove to be indeed an Ariel, a fireplace of God; where His presence would be like a fiery furnace, to consume and destroy the mighty oppressors of His people, and put out their name for ever and ever.

CHAP. XXXII. SEQUEL OF THE WOES ON ISRAEL.

v. 1. Immanuel, the heir of David's throne, has been twice revealed as a Righteous King, in contrast to the Assyrian oppressor, ch. vii. ix. xi. When the greaves and war-cloaks of the warriors have become fuel of the fire, the song is heard, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government is on his shoulder," ix. 6. When the thickets of the Assyrian forest are cut down, x. 34, the message follows of the Rod from the stem of Jesse. The transition here is the very same. When the Assyrian has fled to his stronghold for fear, the promise reveals a blessed contrast. "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment," xxxii. 1. There is a further key to this perspective of the prophecy, which travels on at once from the fall of the Assyrian to the times of Messiah. It seems to be after a similar and still more solemn judgment on a

in a weary land. 3 And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. 4 The heart also of the 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 covetous said *to be* bountiful. 6 For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will devise iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry; and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. 7 The instruments also of the covetous *are* evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right. 8 But the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he rise.

9 YE women that are at ease, rise up! hear my voice, ye care-

mighty confederacy of evil, that our Lord will "take to himself his great power and reign," Rev. xi. 19. The great and final hope of the Church is often held up to the view of faith, without unfolding clearly the long previous delay.

v. 2. This Man is the King, Messiah. So Zech. vi. 17, "Behold the Man! whose name is the Branch." The distributive sense, preferred by many modern critics, is less natural in itself, and wholly unsuited to the context. "To interpret this imagery of a mere human being, would be quite repugnant to the spirit of the sacred writers, by whom Jehovah alone is represented as the source of protection and refreshment to His people, and all trust in creatures is solemnly forbidden" (Hend.). Comp. Ps. xxiii. ; xxxii. 7; lvii. 1; lxi. 4; Prov. xviii. 10; Is. xxxiii. 21.

vv. 3, 4. The main feature of these promises is the perfecting of faculties, previously defective and imperfect. Eyes that were dim shall see clearly, listless ears shall hearken, the rash and hasty become thoughtful, and understand knowledge; and tongues, that stammered before, shall utter clearly the praises of God. The promise, then, does not refer to the conversion of open sinners, but to that spiritual growth, whereby babes become fully grown, and those who have served God very feebly attain to the full maturity of faith, holiness and wisdom.

vv. 5—8. This reign of the promised Messiah is to be marked by a higher and

purer standard of moral uprightness and benevolence. Hateful sins shall no longer be disguised under specious titles. The flatteries of the world shall cease. When vice and folly are on the throne, men call evil good, and good evil. The moral perceptions of the multitude may then be not only confused, but almost reversed. Profligates without a conscience are called free and generous spirits, and the selfish and covetous are praised for their course of self-indulgent luxury. But in these days of Messiah counterfeits of goodness will be exposed, and sin be seen in its true light.

"For the vile person will speak villany." Sins of heart and tongue against God breed sins of the outward life against the peace and comfort of men. Social morality, to be firm and lasting, needs to have its secret foundation in the religion of the heart.

v. 7. The word, rendered variously "jewels," "vessels," "weapons," "instruments," denotes the outward means or furniture, required for any object, whether warfare, song, or sacrifice.

v. 8. The last clause of this verse has received different versions. Most moderns prefer, "in liberal things he will persevere;" or if we adhere to an English idiom, like the Hebrew, "*to* liberal things he will stand." The most usual sense of the same phrase, "to rise against," is clearly inapplicable. The received version, however, seems better than the



less daughters! give ear unto my speech. 10 Year upon year shall ye be troubled, ye careless ones; for the vintage hath failed, the gathering will not come. 11 Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins. 12 They shall lament for their teats, for the pleasant field, for the fruitful vine. 13 Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; yea, even on all the houses of joy in the joyous city: 14 Because the palace is forsaken, the peopled city is left: stronghold and tower are become dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks; 15 Until the Spirit be poured upon

modern alternative, and the slight change here proposed better still. The place of the pronoun marks a stronger contrast in the clauses than simply between a plan and its persevering execution. It is rather between an upright course and its sure reward. This also suits much better the close of a distinct paragraph. It will thus end with a gracious promise of blessing on God's true servants. The exact idea seems to be that his liberal thoughts are a kind of moral pedestal, upon which the liberal man shall rise from comparative obscurity to dignity and honour. Comp. Ps. cxii. 9.

The promise of Messiah's kingdom, in these verses, is like a gleam of bright sunshine in a stormy sky. But the Prophet reverts at once to his office of a watchman, to warn his people of the coming evils. How many blessings are set before us in few words, righteous government, safety from all danger, refreshment for the weary, the removal of spiritual dimness, moral sight and hearing made perfect, the melody of praise, the end of all hypocrisy, covetousness and falsehood replaced by the love of men and the love of God!

vv. 9—20. Long desolations are here foretold, to cease only by a large outpouring of the Spirit of God. The women of Israel are first addressed, as sharing largely in the sin of the people. The address is not to the cities (Chald., Kimchi, Vittr.), nor to be confined to Jerusalem and Judah alone. The warning is general, and reaches from Isaiah's days till the wasting is complete. Those who are seated in luxurious ease are called

abruptly to rise up, and listen to the prophet's report of coming troubles.

v. 10. "Year upon year." The phrase is literally "days beyond a year," and may allude to a secret feeling of the careless women, that trouble, if it came, would be for a single year only. But the year of Sennacherib's invasion would be followed by more lasting trials. Or "days" may be used, as elsewhere, for a year. The phrase will then be nearly as ch. xxix. 1. Through many successive years luxuries would be withheld, and the autumn gathering of fruit be looked for in vain.

v. 12. Many translate, "They beat upon their breasts." But the received version (Kimchi, Sanctius, Vitring., Hitzig, Hend.) is confirmed by the use of the word in thirty passages, and of the preposition in the next clause, and the masculine participle. The deep sorrow was to arise from a double cause, decay of population, and failure of the fruits of the earth. Both were fulfilled in the later reigns. The people, before the captivity, had become few in number; while the blessing of Gen. xlix. 25 seemed withdrawn alike from Ephraim and from the whole nation.

v. 13. This verse answers to the earlier prophecy, vii. 23—25. Thorns and briers would overspread not only the fields, but the cities themselves. The houses, once devoted to careless mirth, would become a desolation, ch. v. 9—12. The words apply to the whole land of promise. The "joyous city" applies to all the towns of Ephraim and Judah, and is not to be limited to Jerusalem alone. The

us from on high, and the wilderness become a planted field, and the planted field be counted a forest. 16 Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the planted 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 And it shall hail in the downfall of the forest, and the city shall be utterly made low. 20 Blessed *are* ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth *thither* the feet of the ox and the ass!

causal particle may be rendered, "yea, even," with this meaning, that the desolation of the land must needs be complete, since even the cities themselves are forsaken and desolate.

vv. 14, 15. Past tenses are here used to mark the certainty of the coming desolation. The contrasts are most impressive. The palace, once the scene of feasting and merriment, is forsaken and lonely. The peopled city, once filled with the hum and murmur of thronging multitudes, is a deserted solitude. Fortress and tower, once garrisoned by the strength of the land, are to be dens for the beasts of the field. The careless mirth of luxurious women is to be replaced by the joy of wild asses, that rove carelessly amidst deserted ruins. These desolations, caused by national sin, will cease only when true repentance has followed the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Then the wilderness will become a planted field, like the vineyard and oliveyard; and the planted field like the forest of Lebanon, with its glorious clothing of lofty pines and stately cedars. The barren will become beautiful, and the beautiful majestic and sublime. Such a Pentecostal blessing still awaits the land of promise at the final recovery and ingathering of Israel.

vv. 16, 17. These words prove the last verse to be a climax, not a contrast. Judgment will dwell in the wilderness, once barren, but now become fertile; and righteousness in the planted field, which will thenceforth shine in all the glory of the cedar-crowned Lebanon. Among all classes, high and low, righteousness will prevail and flourish through the promised outpouring of the Spirit of God.

v. 18. The same words, used before

to describe the false ease of the careless women, are here applied to the true security of the faithful. The promise had partial fulfilments upon the fall of the Assyrian, and after the Return from Babylon. But its full emphasis seems reserved for the last days of the Church of Christ, and the times of the last vial, Rev. xvi., xix., when the fall of the mystical Babylon prepares the way for the grafting of Israel into their own olive-tree.

v. 19. The hail, and the downfall of the forest, would apply to the great Assyrian overthrow, and the abasement of the city to the ruin of Nineveh, or of Babylon. But all the features, which enter together into this sublime picture, answer more clearly to the later predictions in the New Testament, Rev. xvi. 19, 21; xviii., xix. The forest has been used already, x. 19, 34, as a natural symbol for the Assyrian army, and the cutting down of Lebanon for their sudden overthrow.

v. 20. The last verse, in its literal sense, is an encouragement to the Israelites, rescued from the spoiler, to use their new freedom from fear, and till once again the deserted fields. It will thus answer to the promise, xxxvii. 30, that in the third year the land should yield its full harvests once more. But the parable, ch. xxviii. 23—29, and also the reasoning of the Apostle, 1 Cor. ix. 9, prove that the words are meant to convey some deeper meaning. It may be thus paraphrased in its higher sense: "Blessed are those fellow-workers with the Great Husbandman, who sow everywhere the seed of the word, in that day when the Spirit of God shall be poured out from on high, and when the barren wastes shall begin to

yield abundantly the fruits of righteousness."

The prophecy has begun by pronouncing a woe on those false Israelites, who forsake their God for heathen alliances, and thus reverse His early mercies to their fathers, by trusting in the shadow of

Egypt. It closes here with a contrasted blessing on those who are "Israelites indeed;" and who are ready to fulfil the high calling of the chosen people, by sowing the word of life, wherever the soil will receive it, throughout the moral wastes of the heathen world.

## § 5. CHAP. XXXIII. THE WOE ON THE ASSYRIAN SPOILER.

THIS Woe refers plainly to the overthrow of the Assyrians, on which all these earlier predictions converge, while the later ones diverge from the contrasted event of the Babylonian Captivity. It seems to have been written rather later than the previous Chapters, and possibly when the invasion of Judah had already begun. Its abrupt style reflects the emotions of the Prophet, when the crisis he had first announced, almost fifty years earlier, is seen to be close at hand.

WOE to thee that spoilest, and thou *wast* not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; *and* when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee! 2 O LORD, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble. 3 At the noise of the tumult the people fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered. 4 And your spoil shall be gathered *like* the gathering up of locusts: as the running to and fro of locusts

v. 1. Violence and falsehood have twice before been charged on the Assyrian king, xxi. 2, xxiv. 16. Here the prediction turns to a solemn woe. The last clause refers to no willing forbearance, but to a limit of time this oppressor cannot pass, fixed by the decree of God. This wild beast from the great sea of the nations, has a chain, and cannot go beyond it. The moment this limit is reached, the just vengeance of God will alight on him, after his career of deceit and violence.

v. 2. The Prophet here prays *for* the people, and *with* the people. Morning is the time when assaults are often made on the besieged. The abrupt change of person reflects the depth of his own emotions.

v. 3. The "noise of the tumult" or

tumultuous noise is the same described in xxix. 6, xxx. 30, 31. It would seem from these three predictions that a terrific thunderstorm attended this Assyrian catastrophe. The words of ch. xxxvii. 36 refer to the men of Jerusalem, and are no proof that the surviving Assyrians were ignorant of the desolation till the morning. The "lifting up" of the Lord denotes the signal display of His Almighty power, after a time of patient long-suffering.

v. 4. The first clause is referred by some to the deprivations of locusts (Vitr., Dathe, Rosenm., Gesen., Hend.), but by others to the gathering up of the locusts themselves by husbandmen, (Kimchi, Jerome, Capellus, Doderlein, Drechsler). The latter view is the more natural and expressive. In Joel and elsewhere, the

shall they run upon it. 5 The LORD is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness. 6 And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, *and* strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD *shall be* its treasure.

7 BEHOLD! their valiant ones shall cry without; the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly. 8 The highways lie waste, the wayfarer ceaseth: he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man. 9 The earth mourneth *and* languisheth; Lebanon is ashamed *and* hewn down; Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off *their* fruits. 10 Now will I arise, saith the LORD; now will I be ex-

Assyrian and Chaldean invaders are compared to clouds of locusts. As these are gathered for food in immense numbers, easily and without opposition, so would the vast booty of the proud Assyrian host be collected without let or hindrance. The figure is then varied, and the eager haste with which their camp would be plundered by the men of Judah is compared to the voracity with which locusts devour every green thing.

vv. 5, 6. Before completing his description of the judgment, the prophet proclaims the glory that will redound to Jehovah, the God of Israel, and the blessing to His people. "The Lord is exalted, for He dwelleth on high." He has revealed Himself in a glorious work, because He is supremely and essentially glorious. "The perfection which God is giveth the perfection to that He doeth." He has made Zion a theatre for the display of His moral perfections, and a flood of spiritual sunlight has been poured around the holy city. The words that follow are addressed either to Hezekiah, or to Judah under his reign, and answer to the later promise, that there should be peace and truth in his days. The wisdom and knowledge of Isaiah, Hezekiah, and the pious Israelites, when they renounced vain confidences, and put their trust in the Lord alone, would give political stability and security, and ensure them "strength of salvation," or mighty and effectual deliverance from the hand of God himself. This fear of the Lord would be a treasure to them, far more

precious than those of which they had been despoiled by the Assyrian, and even outward abundance would follow in its train.

vv. 7—9. The Prophet returns to the impending calamity. Their Ariels, or valiant captains, would "cry without." Some refer this to the boastful threats of the Assyrian leaders. But it means rather the mighty men of Judah, who lament their want of power to cope with a mightier and most unscrupulous enemy. The ambassadors of peace, sent to secure a treaty by the offer of tribute, would weep bitterly because their message had wholly failed. Through the destructive ravages of the spoiler, all peaceful traffic and intercourse would be at an end.

Sennacherib seems first to have imposed a heavy tribute, and when Hezekiah was impoverished by the payment, to have resumed hostilities, as if no agreement had been made. He cast his own promises to the winds, despised the fenced cities, of which he soon gained possession, made his own ambition his supreme law, and was wholly reckless of the complaints of the king he had deceived, and of the people plundered by his forces. Thus Lebanon, Sharon, Bashan, Carmel, the whole land of promise, was ready to sink in one common ruin.

vv. 10—12. In this crisis the arm of the Almighty would be made bare, "In the Mount the Lord shall be seen." The word, *now*, three times repeated, sets this truth in fullest relief. That earlier message must now be verified—"And

alted ; now will I lift up myself. 11 Ye shall conceive chaff ; ye shall bring forth stubble : your breath, *as* fire, shall devour you. 12 And the people shall be *as* the burnings of lime ; *as* thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire.

13 HEAR, ye *that are* far off, what I have done ; and ye *that are* near, acknowledge my might. 14 The sinners in Zion are afraid ; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites : Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire ? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings ?

15 HE that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly ; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil : 16 He shall dwell on high : his place of defence *shall be* the munitions of rocks ; bread shall be given him, his water *shall be* sure. 17 Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty : they shall behold the land that is very far off. 18 Thine heart shall reflect on the

the loftiness of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." That day is now come, the type of one still more solemn, when the world of sinners shall be arraigned before the judgment-seat of Christ.

v. 11. "Your breath." The threats, in which they breathed out destruction against God's people, would recoil on themselves. As they had sought to do, so God would requite them. The punishment would answer to the sin. The boasts and blasphemies of Rabshakeh made keen and sharp the sword of the destroying angel. Thorns cut up were used as fuel in the lime-kilns of Palestine.

vv. 13, 14. The heathen afar, and the men of Judah, are called to own the power of the God of Israel. Above all, the hypocrites and the profane in Zion, of whom there were so many, would reflect with fear on the majesty of God, and how unfit they were to stand before Him in His final judgment. His holy anger, displayed before their eyes, would prick their conscience. The words refer back to the saying of the Law, "For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God."

vv. 15, 16. This solemn warning to the sinners in Zion brings to the faithful

a new pledge of God's favour and protecting care. The words are not an answer to the previous questions, but a transition from the deep alarm of one class to the peaceful security of the other. How safe are they whom His favour encompasses like a shield ! Their wants, even in this life, will be provided for. But above all they will eat of that Bread of life, and drink of that Water of life, which satisfy for ever.

v. 17. The King must be the same as in xxxii. 1, and again in v. 22, "The Lord is our King, He will save us." It is thus "Immanuel, God with us," the Child whose name shall be called "the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." He is the same of whom the Psalmist writes, "Thou art fairer than the children of men." The faithful will see this King in his heavenly beauty, and seeing Him, be transformed into his image. They will be like Him, for they will see Him as He is.

The last clause some refer to an enlargement of the bounds of Judah, and others, to the new liberty of visiting foreign lands, when the invasion was at an end. But the true meaning must be deeper, and answer to the warning and the rest of the promise. Those who shut their eyes from seeing evil shall see the King in his

terror: Where *is* the scribe? where *is* the receiver? where *is* he that counted the towers? 19 The fierce people thou shalt see no more, the people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive, of a stammering tongue *that thou canst* not understand.

20 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 be removed for ever, and none of the cords thereof shall be broken. 21 But there the LORD *will be* our glory, a place of rivers and wide-spreading streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall stately ship pass thereby. 22 For the LORD *is* our judge, the LORD *is* our lawgiver, the LORD *is* our king: he will save us. 23 Thy ropes are cast loose, they could not strengthen the foot of their mast; they could not spread the sail; then was the booty of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey. 24 And the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein *shall be* forgiven *their* iniquity.

beauty of perfect holiness. The "land that is very far off" is likewise a contrast to the everlasting burnings. It is the same the patriarchs desired, Heb. xi. 16, the far country to which this King went away, and whence He will return, Mat. xxv. 14.

vv. 18, 19. Freed from danger, the faithful will reflect with wonder on their deliverance. The scribe or secretary is the officer who received and noted the submission of captured cities; the receiver, he who weighed the tribute of the vassals; the counter of the towers, the military engineer, who directed the siege. All these would pass away like a dream in the common ruin. The words of St Paul, 1 Cor. i. 20, are neither strict quotation nor a paraphrase, but a similar outburst of triumphant joy. The false wisdom of the world would fail before the cross of Christ, like the Assyrian host under the sword of the destroying angel.

v. 19. A foreign tongue adds mystery and terror to deeds of violence, and shuts out all appeals for mercy. Hence it is named in the Law as one chief aggravation of heathen conquest, Deut. xxviii. 49.

vv. 20—24. Though weak and mutable in itself, like an Arabian tent, Zion should be firm and stable through God's covenant. Its peace and security should be complete.

The figure next changes to a city, seated by some noble river, which fertilizes the land and brings to it a world-wide commerce. Other capitals may borrow greatness from such a river; but Zion claims a far higher privilege, the presence of the Most High, with more than all its benefits, and free from all its dangers. The streams of His grace refresh and fertilize, but no hostile ship can gain access thereby.

The enemy are next described as a pirate vessel, loaded with plunder, which seeks to force the defences of this well-watered city of God. The Assyrian would soon become like a wreck, abandoned in the storm by its own sailors. Even the lame would be able, without fear or opposition, to share in its spoils. The promise then passes on to the times of restitution, spoken of by all the prophets. The bright and glorious hope in the Prophet's first message, ii. 1—4, struggles here, through stormy skies, into the full, unclouded brightness of an eternal day.

## § 6. CHAP. XXXIV. THE JUDGMENT ON THE NATIONS.

TWO different views have been taken of this chapter, and each has some arguments in its favour. Most moderns explain it simply as a local prophecy against Idumæa. Others give Edom here a moral sense, and refer the chapter to the judgment, called elsewhere the Vintage of God's anger. Rev. xiv. This is the view of the Rabbis, Eusebius, Jerome, Cyril, Theodoret, Luther, Pellican, Vitringa, and J. H. Michaelis. The reasons for their view are these. Ten local prophecies have their titles prefixed, which is here wanting. The object is defined from the first to be "all nations and their armies." All people of the earth are summoned to behold a wonderful work of God. Its place is not in the series of local Burdens, but at the close of these Earlier Visions. Also a Burden on Mount Seir has been given before in its natural place, xxi. 11—13. The language answers to Is. lxiii. and Rev. xviii., xix., both of which refer to the last days of the Church of Christ. The time is called "the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion." This points naturally to the period when Jerusalem shall cease to be trodden down, and when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, Lu. xxi. 24. Nothing seems plainer than the specific nature of the prophecy, whether a burden on Idumæa, or on all nations, and that it is to be marked by a lasting desolation of the main theatre of the judgment. The reasons above seem to be decisive in favour of the wider application to a solemn judgment on Gentile apostates or rebels in the last days. The desolation of Petra and Idumæa is directly predicted by Amos and Jeremiah. But here it seems only, in one or two verses, to supply a language for events more extensive and solemn.

COME near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all

vv. 1, 2. Heaven and earth have been invited before to listen to God's controversy with Israel. Here, at the close of the earlier visions, all dwellers in the world are to contemplate His further controversy with Gentile nations. The words answer to Deut. xxxii. 40—42; 1 Sam. ii. 10; 2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7; Is. lxiii. 1—6; Ezek. xxxvii. 21—23; Zeph. iii. 8. Thus applied, they retain their proper force. Rejection of the Gospel, all Scripture teaches, will be followed by sore judgments.

v. 3. The number of the slain is to be very great, and their bodies left without burial. The descriptions in Ezekiel, and those of the vintage in the Apocalypse, are equally strong.

v. 4. The language here, as in all such passages, is optical, or is referred to the senses of mankind. In violent disturbances of the atmosphere or lower heavens, the sun is darkened, the moon is blood-red or ceases to shine, and the stars may seem either to be blotted from view, or dashed violently from their places. The words, if metaphors, will denote changes by which princes and rulers are violently overthrown. But the proper sense of the words is to be preferred, that all nature will mourn and be troubled, in strange accordance with God's work of judgment.

v. 5. "Bathed in heaven." Steeped and tempered in Divine anger, as in liquid fire, to execute His judgments. Edom

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. 3 Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountain shall be melted with their blood. 4 And all the hosts 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. 5 For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Edom, even upon the people of my curse, to judgment.

6 THE sword of the LORD is filled with blood; it is made fat with fatness, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. 7 And the unicorns shall come down along with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be drunken with blood, and their

is here not a country, Idumæa, but a people, the people of God's *cherem* or curse. In v. 2 the literal rendering is—"he hath devoted them to a *cherem*," or curse of utter destruction. He is not an Edomite, just as he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly. The Edom of this place are the profane and apostate, who "bear perpetual hatred" against God's Israel, and plan their destruction.

v. 6. These strong figures express the great severity of the judgment. The lambs, goats, and rams, denote ungodly men, small and great, as victims for a strange sacrifice.

"In Bozrah." Here is the first sign of a local reference. There was a Bozrah in Hauran, east of Jordan, and another, the modern Buseirah, in Arabia Petræa, an early capital of the Edomites, Gen. xxxvi. 33. It is named by Amos and Jeremiah: Am. i. 12, Jer. xlix. 13. But the name occurs also, Is. lxiii. 1, where the reasons against its being taken literally are strong. The name denotes "a fortress," and seems to be the same with Byrsa, that of the citadel of Carthage. The ruin of the Edomite Bozrah, probably by the Chaldeans, has no plain historic record. We cannot suppose that "all nations" and "the whole world" are gathered to contemplate with awe and

wonder an obscure event, which has left no trace at all in profane history. The word must rather refer to the stronghold of the mystic Edom, or Rome, the great city that was to reign, in later days, over the kingdoms of the earth.

v. 7. The word *re'ém*, rendered "unicorn" by the LXX., occurs also Nu. xxxiii. 22; xxiv. 8; Deut. xxxiii. 17; Job xxxix. 9, 10; Ps. xxii. 21; xxix. 6; xcii. 10. It has been referred to several animals: (1) the Tsopo, or some other now unknown; (2) the Oryx leucoryx, an antelope (Bochart); (3) the Rhinoceros; (4) the Buffalo, Bison, or Urus; or (5) an animal purely fabulous. It is named only in Balaam's prophecy and the poetical books, never in the Levitical precepts, or the history. This favours the view that it was known in Palestine by report alone. Its strength is implied in the words of Balaam, its wildness in Job, its agility in the Psalms, and also the height of its horn or horns. The mention here agrees best with the idea of a clean animal, fit for sacrifice. Ps. xcii. 10 is no sufficient proof that it was one-horned, still less Deut. xxxii. 17 that it was two-horned, since it is there a collective term. The view of Bochart seems the most probable; the least likely that which applies it to the rhinoceros.



dust made fat with fatness. 8 For *it is* the day of the LORD'S vengeance, the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.

9 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; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste: none shall pass through it for ever and ever. 11 But the pelican and the porcupine shall inherit it, the great owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he will stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the plummet of desolation. 12 They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom; but none *shall be* there, and all her princes shall be at an end. 13 And

v. 8. This note of time confirms the wider application. The Chaldean inroads in Idumæa were during Israel's captivity, not at its close. The words recur lxxiii. 4, where the context assigns them to the last days.

vv. 9, 10. These words would be a strange hyperbole, if applied to Idumæa in the age before Cyrus. They describe no desertion of a rocky district through military inroads, but a bituminous conflagration. Of such a change Petra and its neighbourhood offer no trace; while the words answer strictly to the account, in the Apocalypse, of the fall of that mystic Babylon, which is also the mystic Edom. "None shall pass through it, &c." The state of Petra and Mount Seir from the times of Mahomet, though a partial fulfilment, comes very short of the full emphasis of these words. "In the fifth century Palestina Tertia embraced Edom and some neighbouring provinces; and when it became an ecclesiastical division, its metropolis was Petra. In the seventh century the Saracen conquest gave a death-blow to the commerce and prosperity of Edom. Under Mahometan rule the great cities fell to ruin, and the country became a desert. The Crusaders made several expeditions into Edom, penetrating as far as Petra, to which they gave the name it still bears, Wady Musa, the valley of Moses. About twelve miles north of Petra they built a strong fortress, now Shobek. From that time to the present century Edom remained an unknown land. In 1812 Burckhardt entered

it from the north, and discovered the wonderful ruins of Petra. Many have since followed, and a trip to Petra is now part of the eastern traveller's grand tour." (Porter, Smith's Dictionary.)

However striking this desertion of Edom for eight centuries, yet its commencement, seventeen centuries after Nebuchadnezzar, suits ill with the context. The words seem to predict a desolation more sudden in its origin, more awful in its features, and also more lasting and complete.

v. 11. "The line of confusion." Such wisdom as the architect uses in building with line and plummet, the Lord would use, in this case, to make the desolation complete.

v. 12. The race of nobles were to be extinct in the common ruin. None would be found, when required, to assume the kingdom. The word *horim* may allude to the Horites, the old inhabitants of Idumæa.

v. 13. "Dragons" some render wolves (Alex., Hend.), others jackals (Drechsler); but the change is a doubtful improvement. *Bēnoth yaanah*, "owls" A.V., are now taken rather to be ostriches; but as the name is derived from their harsh note or cry, it seems best to retain in the version a more general phrase. *Kippoz*, "the porcupine" in several early versions, "the great owl," A.V., is shown by Bochart to be the arrow-snake, an adder noted for its venom and its sudden spring, and his conclusion is accepted by most recent authorities. "Its shadow" may refer to

thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in her fortresses; and it shall be a habitation for dragons, *and* a court for birds of wailing. 14 And wild beasts shall meet with doleful creatures, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow: the night-owl also shall lodge there, and find for herself a place of rest. 15 There shall the arrow-snake make its nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under its shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate. 16 Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail; none shall want its fellow: 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 they shall dwell therein.

the dark and obscure spot chosen for incubation. The whole picture is of a land made unfit for men, and given up to unclean beasts and doleful birds. The like words recur, Rev. xviii. 2, where Babylon is said to become "a hold of every foul spirit, and a lodge of every unclean and hateful bird."

vv. 16, 17. "The book" some refer to the books of Moses, some to the prophets in general, others to this chapter alone. Drechsler says with truth—"It is plain that the prophet notes his own prophecy as part of a greater whole, to which it belonged beforehand, and in which it would be reckoned." The words thus apply to the Law, as enlarged in succession by all the later Scriptures. So our Lord gives the title "your law" to the Psalms as well as the writings of Moses. We have here a striking witness to the

high early estimation and sacred authority of the Old Testament Scriptures.

"None shall want its fellow." This alludes, not to pairs of the same kind, but to the presence of all the kinds of birds and beasts here named. No tribe should fail in this commonwealth of unclean animals.

v. 16. "My mouth," "his Spirit." The doctrine of the plurality of Divine Persons dawns already in the Prophets, though more plainly revealed in the Gospel. Comp. Is. xlvi. 16. The Word of God declares His own decree, whose sword would be bathed in heaven, v. 5; the decree also of the Father, whose indignation is upon all nations, and whose day of vengeance is come, vv. 2, 8; and a decree to be executed by the Spirit of God. The last verse implies that a lasting brand is fixed on the theatre of these desolating judgments.

## § 7. CHAP. XXXV. THE TIMES OF RESTITUTION.

THE wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. 2 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, the excellent beauty of our God. 3 Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. 4 Say unto them *that are* of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, with the recompence of God: he will come, and save you.

5 THEN the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then shall the lame *man*

v. 1. The figures here are mixed, the land and its inhabitants being joined in the promise. The wilderness shall blossom and be fruitful, in figure it will rejoice. The people shall rejoice with joy and singing; in a figure they too will blossom, and their souls become like a garden of the Lord.

The pronoun "for them" refers to the unclean things just named. These venomous or doleful creatures are tokens that severe vengeance has been inflicted on the open enemies of God's people. They are signs, on the dial-plate of Providence, that the jubilee of the earth is come.

The flower has been supposed to be the lily (Anc. V., Luther, Calvin), the narcissus (Saadias, Gesen.), and the meadow-saffron (Rosenm., Gesen., Thesaur., &c.). But the version, *rose* (Kimchi, Jerome, Junius, Vittr., Lowth, Augustus, Alex., Henderson) is certainly as probable in itself, and more beautiful and expressive. The objection that the derivation implies a bulbous plant is answered by referring it to the unopened rose-bud. This adds still more to the beauty of the figure, "as the opening rose."

v. 2. "Shall be given to it." Lit. "hath been given." In Hebrew the past tense is often mixed with futures, to express the certainty of the prediction. The promise is full of beauty. In ch. xxxiii. 9, the Assyrian ravages are described by the wasting of Lebanon, Sharon, Bashan,

and Carmel. Here the picture is reversed. Lebanon, Carmel, Sharon, resume their excellency and glory; and it will be shared by the wilderness, the desert, and the solitary place. The blessing mounts higher. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the excellent beauty of God. His uncreated goodness will be displayed, a glory higher than that of Lebanon, a grace fairer and more lovely than of Carmel and Sharon. The words are expounded by St John;—"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father."

v. 3. Here the message reverts to the days of the Prophet, so as to include every later day until the promise was fulfilled. The teachers and guides of the faithful are charged to encourage them by a sure hope of good things to come. The Apostle, Heb. xii. 12, quotes the words and applies them anew. His mention of Esau, xii. 16, perhaps alludes to ch. xxxiv., which precedes; while the charge in v. 14 to follow after holiness alludes to the highway named in this same promise.

v. 4. "Of a fearful heart." The word is the same as in xxxii. 4. Fear and precipitance are near allied. True Christian courage arises from calm reflection on the promises of God, while a weak faith is soon discouraged by seasons of delay.

Some render, against the accents, "Be-

leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. 7 And the looming sand-waste shall become a lake, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation, the lair of dragons, *shall be* a place for reeds and rushes. 8 And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be theirs *alone*: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not go astray. 9 No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk *there*. 10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy *shall be* upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

hold your God! vengeance will come, the retribution of God, etc." But the received version is preferable, with one slight change, which adds to the emphasis. The sacred name, in the first clause, refers to Messiah, Immanuel, "He that shall come," the Mighty God, Is. ix. 6. He will come "with the recompence of God," or to do the will of his Father in rewarding and punishing. The pronoun is emphatic. He, your God himself, will come and save you.

vv. 5, 6. The miracles of our Lord are here foretold, including His higher mercies to the souls of men. The words spoken to our Lord by the messengers of John, and His answer, point alike to this passage. These wonders were the revealed tokens of Him that was to come.

This reference, however plain, has been denied, not only by neologians, but by some orthodox expositors (Vitr., Alex., Hend.). But their reasons have no force. Our Lord, it is true, does not use the form of a quotation. But since the Baptist had

based his own claims on Is. xl. 3, while these verses are the exact parallel of xl. 10, 11, the Baptist's question must have been a direct allusion to these two passages; and the miracles were wrought before the messengers, to convince them that He was indeed "The Coming One." The words cannot denote merely some "sudden, extraordinary change" (Alex.), because the changes mentioned are of the most definite kind. After a general announcement of blessings to follow after the judgment, the Prophet mentions the sources from which they will flow. Literal "streams in the desert" could not open blind eyes, or unstop deaf ears. This does not prove that both are figurative, but warrants us to include both natural and spiritual cures.

v. 7. The word *sharib*, "parched ground," A.V., more exactly "looming sand-waste," refers to the mirage, of which it is the Arabic name. The vain shadows of the world, which deceive and never satisfy, are to be replaced by the enduring joys of the kingdom of God.

## CLOSE OF THE EARLIER VISIONS.

THE Earlier Visions of Isaiah, chh. i.—xxxv., in their three distinct series, point throughout to the approaching crisis of Assyrian conquest, and to the deliverance of Jerusalem by the sudden overthrow of the invading host. Already, in ch. ii., a day of solemn visitation is announced against all the splendour and beauty of the land of promise. In ch. v. the invading power is more clearly foreshown, and summoned by the voice of God himself from a distant land, to execute His judgment. In the Second Cycle of the First Series, chh. vii.—xii., the warning grows more distinct, being prefaced by the promise of Immanuel, the heir of David's throne, whose kingdom should never fail. The invasion is to be a flood, reaching to the neck; and Zion alone, the head, would escape from the wide-reaching desolation. The Assyrian would reach the heights on the north of Jerusalem, and threaten it with captivity, but then be suddenly cut down; and the vista closes with a picture of Messiah's happy reign.

The Burdens begin with one on Babylon, to be last fulfilled, just as the First Series began with predicting the final glory of Zion. Then follow judgments to be inflicted by Assyria, the rod of God's anger, on Philistia, Moab, Syria, Ephraim, Egypt and Ethiopia, and the Arabian tribes; and then on Samaria and the northern kingdom, with a promise of Jerusalem's deliverance through her recovery from sensual blindness to faith in the God of Israel. The last Burden on Tyre reaches onward to the times of Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus; and the series closes with a general warning, and renewed promises of the good things to come.

The Woes, dating from the first years of Hezekiah, first denounce the speedy downfall of Samaria, the utter failure of the worldly hopes of the scornful in Judah, and the investment of Jerusalem by the alien armies; and then reveal, more clearly than before, the overthrow of the Assyrian spoiler by the hand of God.

The closing section of these Visions, ch. xxxv., has been referred to Judah under Hezekiah, to the Return from Babylon, to the call of the Gentiles, to the whole Christian Dispensation, and to the last days of the Church of Christ. Others infer that all these alike are included in its meaning. The conclusion, however, is very groundless, that of differing expositions all must equally be false or equally true. If ch. xxxiv. refers locally to Idumæa, the next must belong to the Return from Babylon. But the objection of Vitringa has great force: "The Idumæans were not so terrible that the safety of the Jewish state depended on them; nay, they were, and were accounted, in strength, size, and fertility of their land, far inferior to the Jews. The wasting of Idumæa could not give life, vigour, beauty, and honour, to the Jewish state. Nor do the joyful and prosperous things here announced at all agree with the state of those who returned from Babylon."

On the other hand, if ch. xxxiv. refers to the vintage of Is. lxiii. and Rev. xiv., xix., its sequel must also refer to a season still future, or the promised "times of restitution." On this view the connexion is plain. Open judgment on Gentile apostates is the preface, in many Scriptures, to the predicted glory of the last days. Again, chh. xxviii.—xxxv. form a complete series, beginning with the fall of Samaria, the crown of pride, and closing with a promise of crowns of everlasting joy to the Israel of God. The interval constitutes that long course of Gentile rule, which is to cease when Jerusalem is no longer trodden down, and the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. Thus all these Earlier Prophecies will form a larger series, which begins and closes with mention of a time when nations shall learn war no more, but flow to Zion as the centre of holy worship.

On this view xxxv. 1, 2 answers to ch. ii. 1—4, and describes the joy of Israel's final recovery. The next verses announce that Coming of Messiah which was to precede, and through which alone their recovery could be fulfilled. The rest of the chapter unfolds the blessings that are to follow, or the glorious reign of the promised Immanuel, the Prince of Peace. There seems no reason for confining the words in the opening verse to Palestine, and the absence of the article justifies us in giving them the widest sense. Everywhere, except in that doomed region of judgment, the wildernesses are to rejoice. The creation will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, Rom. viii. 21.

The four chapters of history, xxxvi.—xxxix., are the natural sequel of these prophecies, and the preparation for the Later Visions that follow. They occur also in 2 Ki. xviii.—xx., with a few slight variations, and the omission of the writing of Hezekiah. But there are many internal signs that their original place is in this book of Isaiah. The changes in the Book of Kings consist chiefly in the replacement of more dramatic by simply historical expressions, as in xxxix. 2, "was glad of them" becomes "hearkened to them." Also the historical order is restored in the last verses of ch. xxxviii., with other alterations suited to a book of simple history.

Their connexion with the structure of the whole book is most intimate and vital. The Earlier Prophecies all converge on that coming Assyrian overthrow, of which chh. xxxvi., xxxvii. are the historical record; while the illness and recovery of Hezekiah, ch. xxxviii., marks the transition from times of peril and danger to a gracious reprieve in years of peace and truth. Lastly, the message of Merodach, king of Babylon, ch. xxxix., and the weakness of Hezekiah, occasion a warning of that future captivity, from which all the later Prophecies diverge; passing onward into a prediction of the days of Cyrus, the times of Messiah, and the full and final deliverance of Zion from her long sorrows.

## IV. HISTORICAL EPISODE.

### CHAPS. XXXVI.—XXXIX.

THIS Historical Episode is the Fourth Series of Isaiah's Prophecies, and forms a key to the structure of the whole book. It contains, first, the record of the Assyrian invasion, and of that sudden overthrow, towards which all the foregoing prophecies converge, as their central though not their final object. It is predicted in chh. v., vi., vii. 17—25; viii. 7—15; x. 5—34; xiv. 24—27, 31, 32; xvii. 11—14; xviii. 3; xx.; xxii. 1—14; xxiv.; xxviii. 1—22; xxix.—xxxiii. Here is the turning point, from which Assyria begins to decline, its main work being fulfilled, and Babylon comes forward on the scene. The Prophet himself, also, reaches here the highest point of historical elevation. To him the nation resorts in the extremity of danger, and from his lips proceeds the sentence of doom on the Assyrian, in tones of stern and majestic sublimity.

We have, next, the sickness and recovery of Hezekiah. His reign is thus parted into a cloudy and troubled morning, a noonday suddenly eclipsed, with the eclipse as suddenly removed, and an eventide of truth and peace, during which his faith and piety availed to suspend the downward course of national decline, just as the shadow was turned back on the dial of Ahaz. Thirdly, in the message of Merodach Baladan, and the warning that ensued, there is revealed, both in its moral and political cause, the source and character of all the later troubles.

The Prophet has thus fulfilled his first great work, and been like a tower and a bulwark to his people, as God's faithful messenger and witness, when the blast of the terrible was as a storm against the wall. And now he is called to a still higher office in his old age, as the messenger of bright and blessed hope to all later generations. The rod of prophecy, which has already, like the rod of Aaron in Egypt, smitten down the pride of the Assyrian, must now in like manner, "bud, and bring forth buds, and bloom blossoms, and yield almonds," Num. xvii. 8. A new starting point is given for all his future messages by his parting words to Hezekiah, and their warning of the coming Babylonish captivity. From this lofty watch-tower, taught by the Holy Spirit, his eye ranges far onward into the good things to come; and, with his lips newly touched with fire from the heavenly altar, he becomes a glorious messenger of hope and comfort to every later generation of the church of God.

## § 1. CHAP. XXXVI. THE ASSYRIAN DEFIANCE.

NOW it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them. 2 And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem, unto king Hezekiah, with a great army: and he stood by the conduit of the upper pool, in the highway of the fuller's field. 3 Then came forth unto him Eliakim, Hilki'ah's son, which was over the house, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder. 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 aver, sayest thou, what vain words! *I have* counsel and strength for war: now on

v. 1. From bright and glorious prophecy of the times of Messiah there is here a sudden return to plain, unadorned narrative. The word of God combines thorough historical reality with an ideal nobler than all human poetry. The same contrast is found Lu. i. 68, 79, ii. 1; Joh. xvii. xviii. 1; 1 Cor. xv. xvi. 1.

"And took them." The final result. Lachish and Libnah were not taken at the time of the first message. This campaign is noted in the prism inscription. "In my third campaign I marched towards Syria." The capture of Lachish seems recorded on the slabs found in the palace at Kouyunjik. "Sennacherib, the mighty king, sitting on the throne of judgment before the city of Lachisha: I give permission for its slaughter." A site, Um-lâkes, with some remains, still exists, and plainly derives its name from the old city, though some think the true site lies rather more to the south.

Lachish and Libnah fell also in Joshua's first campaign. The punishment, as well as the sin of Judah, was like that of the Amorites, 2 Ki. xvii. 8, 11; xxi. 2, 9, 11. The flood was to reach "even to the neck," viii. 8, and Jerusalem, the head of the kingdom, alone escaped the fierce inundation.

"Rabshakeh." Three names are given in Kings, Tartan, Rabsaris, and Rabshakeh. Some infer from the inscriptions

that these are titles of office rather than proper names; the commander-in-chief, the chief eunuch, and the chief cup-bearer. But the mention of Tartan in this book, Is. xx. 1, and of Rabsaris in Jeremiah, as one of seven Chaldean princes, where the names are clearly of persons, since Nebuzaradan has his office adjoined in the same chapter, is strongly adverse to this view. From the siege of Ashdod by Tartan under Sargon, the father of Sennacherib, there were only a very few years to the present campaign. The same general, who had brought the siege of Ashdod to a successful end, might well be chosen to lead the forces against Jerusalem.

v. 2. "With a great army." These words agree with xxix. 1—6, and the Assyrian remains, to show that there was an actual investment of Jerusalem. The king had some hope to frighten them into instant surrender. Failing this, his aim would be to reduce them by famine, so that, when he appeared before the city in person, it might be like a ripe fig, Nah. ii. 12, and drop at once into the mouth of the destroyer. Comp. 1 Sam. xii. 26, 28. The spot of this interview was the very same where Ahaz had despised God's message by the prophet, thirty years before, vii. 1—20. The threat to Ahab was fulfilled anew to the house of David—"I will requite thee in this plat, saith the Lord."



whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? 6 Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him. 7 But if thou say to me, We trust in the LORD our God: *is it* not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar? 8 Now therefore wager, I pray thee, with 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? so thou puttest thy trust in Egypt for chariots and 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,

v. 3. The promise to Eliakim, xxii. 20, 21, was already fulfilled. His presence, to those who believed the words of the prophet, was one pledge of coming deliverance. On this mention of Shebna remark has been made before. His deposition had been absolutely foretold, and here another is seen holding his former office. His exile for a time, as a hostage to Assyria, was probably fulfilled at once on Hezekiah's accession. But it is not unlikely that, upon his repentance in that affliction, like Manasseh, the threatening of his death in exile had been graciously withdrawn. His union with Eliakim in this crisis, like that of Sosthenes with St Paul, 1 Cor. i. 1, will thus imply a secret history of repentance and recovery.

v. 4. The pride of Rabshakeh shows itself in every word. He refuses Hezekiah the name of king. A report of Hezekiah's words, 2 Chr. xxxii. 6—8, must have reached him from Assyrian partisans among the men of Judah. The words are not an inquiry, but a haughty defiance. What simpletons you must be to trust in the help of your God against so mighty a king!

v. 5. Instead of the first person, in Kings the third person is used. Here we have probably the exact words of Rabshakeh, mimicking the speech of Hezekiah, and putting in as a parenthesis, What empty trash! But in Kings Isaiah, or the later

compiler, changes them to a less dramatic form.

v. 6. "This broken reed." An allusion to the recent victories of Sargon, predicted xx. 5, 7, and now confirmed by his own inscription, which states that he carried his arms into Egypt. The weakness of that ancient power is the one point of agreement between this proud blasphemer and the prophets of God. See ch. xix.

v. 7. Another reference to Hezekiah's words, 2 Chr. xxxii. 8, which allude in their turn to the promised Immanuel. Rabshakeh knew that the reform, which put down the high places in Judah, was odious to a strong heathenizing party. He represents it, then, as a double offence against the honour of God and the religious tastes of the people. In his view of royal duty, as with many in these days, to please the people is far more important than to obey the commands of God. Ceremonial laws may be set aside either from above or from below. Rabshakeh here mimics the sublime truth taught later by our Lord to the woman of Samaria, Joh. iv. 21.

v. 10. Isaiah, thirty years before, x. 6—8, had summoned the Assyrian, in God's name, to tread down Israel "as the mire of the street." Rabshakeh knew the Jewish language, and this prediction may easily have come to his ears. But

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 on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own water, along 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 will not be able to deliver you. 15 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us; this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. 16 Harken not to Hezekiah; for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make peace with me, and come out to me; and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters

the half truth became practically an utter falsehood. The pride of the Assyrian wrested these words of the living God to his own destruction.

v. 11. "The Jews' language." This phrase is no sign whatever of later authorship. From Moses to Malachi, Hebrew is never once used as a title of the language. It may have been first so used, in contrast to Greek, by the dispersion in the time of the Macedonians. Also "the speech of Israel" never occurs, but in Is. xix. "the language of Canaan," and here, and in Kings, Chronicles, and Nehemiah, the Jews' language only. So English, not British, is used to describe our own tongue, both before and long after the Union with Scotland. "Aramæan was even then, as at a later period, Ezr. iv. 7, the language of intercourse between the Empire of Eastern Asia and the people west of the Tigris, and educated Judæans not only understood it, but were able to speak it, especially those who were in the service of the state. Assyrian, on the contrary, was unintelligible to the Jews; xxxiii. 19, though this might apply less to the true Assyrian dialect, which was Semitic, than to the motley language of the Assyrian army, a compound of Aryan and Turanian elements. The name Sennacherib, 'Sin, i. e. the Moon-god, has multiplied the brethren,' is Semitic; while Tartan, which cannot

be explained from the Semitic or Aryan, may be an example of the other element, so utterly strange to a Jewish ear." (Delitzsch).

v. 12. The vulgar insolence of Rabshakeh's reply is full of instruction. The decencies of society soon perish, when the fear of God is openly cast aside. Famine and thirst of the worst kind would naturally follow on that investment which was now just begun, the first step of an Assyrian siege.

v. 16. "Make peace with me." Lit. "Make with me a blessing." Some explain this to mean "make me a present." But "blessing" seems used here for the oriental salutations of those who meet on the most friendly terms. The promise is meant as a contrast to the revolting threat just before. It was the constant policy of the Assyrians to interchange the population of the lands they conquered, in order to bring them into more complete dependence. But the policy of their ambition, in this case, was flatly opposed to the promises and covenant of the God of Israel. Besides, such promises, from cruel, selfish conquerors, are often made only to be broken. Possession of Canaan, the land of promise, was sealed to Israel by the covenant of God; and the attempt wholly to set aside these promises, in the pride of supposed triumph, was one main part of Sennacherib's sin.

of his own cistern; 17 Until I come and take you away unto 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, which have delivered their country out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand? 21 But they held their peace, and answered him not a word, for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not. 22 Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, that was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

v. 19. Hamath, and Arpad, north of Aleppo, and distinct from Arvad or Arad, have been mentioned before in the prophecy, x. 9, now fulfilled. Sepharvaim, a dual form, is the Sippora of Ptolemy, the southernmost city of Mesopotamia on the left of the Euphrates, the Hipparenum of Pliny, and probably the same as the sun-city, Sippara, where Xisuthros was said to have concealed sacred books before the great flood (Delitzsch). The correspondence with ch. x. is very close. The prophet, after thirty years, is spared to take part in, and to record, the fulfilment of his own warning. The very form of Rabshakeh's vaunting was a fresh proof of Isaiah's mission, and a direct call to seek the

word of God from his lips in this crisis of fear and danger.

v. 21. The three were silent because of the charge the king had given them, and their one transgression of it had only led to gross insult. Hezekiah had ceased to have any faith in the skill of negotiators, and rested only on the promise of God.

v. 22. Some regard the rending of their garments as a sign of horror at the blasphemies of Rabshakeh; others as a token of fear and alarm. Both feelings would naturally be combined. The crisis, long predicted by the prophet, ch. v. 30, had now come. But the roaring of this fierce lion was soon to be broken, and the prey to be delivered by One far mightier than he, Job iv. 10, Lu. xi. 22.

## § 2. CHAP. XXXVII. THE ASSYRIAN OVERTHROW.

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

v. 1. "And went into the house of the Lord." Hezekiah thus appealed to God's own promise;—"Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attentive unto the prayer made in this place... and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually." 2 Chr. vii. 15, 16. His prayer, v. 17, alludes to this promise. This was no act of superstition (Gesén.), no sign of want of energy (Hend.), but an act of earnest faith, to be followed soon by its triumphant victory.

v. 2. Joah seems to have been detained by the king; but the elders of the priests are added to the embassy, to make it more honourable and complete. The king and the chief officers of the kingdom, both civil and ecclesiastical, wait on the prophet to learn the will of God. Thus the words were fulfilled, "Thine eyes shall observe thy teachers." Thirty years before, the prophet had been sent to Ahaz and the rulers, and his words were despised. Now the king and the rulers send to Isaiah; and he seems instructed to remain at home, and to give them an audience there, as humble suppliants to the King of kings.

v. 4. Faith gives confidence in prayer, humility tempers it with submission if a present answer is withheld. The mention of the remnant left alludes to the

promise in Shear-jashub's name, "A remnant shall return." The figure used implies strong hope of a speedy deliverance, but also the need of especial help, when the danger seemed almost desperate, to bring it to pass.

vv. 6, 7. The calmness and brevity of this first message are a contrast to the fervid irony of the second, when the taunts of Rabshakeh had been followed by his master's still more open and deliberate blasphemy. But in both Hezekiah's faith is tried. Deliverance is promised, but its mode is concealed.

"The youths." This word, lads or striplings, instead of "servants," is used in contempt for these boastful warriors. They were but of yesterday, children of the dust; and still they dared to despise the Holy One of Israel, the Ancient of days, who is from everlasting to everlasting.

v. 7. "Behold, I will send a blast upon him." This has been variously explained as a simoom, a thunderstorm, a spirit of courage (Hendn.), a panic terror (Hendk.), or a simple change of purpose (Rosenm., Gesén., Hitz.). But the received version (implying a figurative wind, as in xvii. 13) gives a truer sense than these modern substitutes. The parallel is not with xix. 14, xxix. 10, xlii. 1, Nu. xi. 29,

afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the youths 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 deceive thee, in whom thou trustest, 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, which my fathers destroyed, delivered them; Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the chil-

either in thought or phrase. But the allusion is direct to xvii. 13, and indirectly to xxviii. 2. This fierce monarch, though himself like a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, shall be driven away like chaff before the blast of the Almighty. Ex. xv. 10, Nu. xvi. 38. The rumour is not that of Tirhakah's approach (Hahn, Delitzsch), which led only to fresh blasphemies, but of the stroke under which his own warriors have fallen (Hend., Alex.). At the same time God's message leaves the nature of this rumour in the dark till its fulfilment, to exercise Hezekiah's faith still further.

The course of events seems to have been as follows. The king sent "a great army" with Tartan and Rabsaris to blockade Jerusalem, and terrify it, if possible, into instant surrender. When their threats failed, they built forts of circumvallation, xxix. 3, to weaken it by thirst and famine before the direct assault was made. Sennacherib, in royal state, but with only a part of his forces, carried on the sieges of Lachish and Libnah, which he expected to fall speedily. He would thus have the first tidings from the side of Egypt, and the honour of rapid success where he was present in person. When Rabshakeh returned, Lachish had fallen, and Libnah was besieged; but

there is no hint that Tartan and his army were ever withdrawn from Jerusalem. Other troops might return with Rabshakeh; and the king might intend soon to follow, to receive the submission of Hezekiah, or to storm the city before Tirhakah arrived in Judea, or at least to reunite his forces when Libnah had fallen. But the sudden destruction of Tartan's host, and the terror of the Divine presence, increased by the nearness of a dangerous adversary, compelled him to flee with the remnant of his forces to his own land. The report or rumour, though not yet explained clearly, is the tidings of this sudden destruction.

v. 8. The text does not say plainly that Lachish had fallen. But the slabs of Kouyunjik agree with the natural course of events in the history, and the brief notice, v. 1, to prove the success of the Assyrian. The tide was turned back before Zion alone.

v. 9. Tirhakah is the Taracus of the Lists, the third and last king of Manetho's 26th Dynasty, whose reign is variously reckoned at 20 or 28 years. This Ethiopian dynasty in Egypt is one distinguishing feature of Isaiah's times.

v. 10. The words of Rabshakeh were aimed rather to destroy the people's trust in Hezekiah; but the message of the

dren of Eden which *were* in Telassar? 13 Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arphad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?

14 AND Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. 15 And Hezekiah prayed unto the LORD, saying; 16 O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth. 17 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 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

king more immediately to destroy Hezekiah's faith in God. The blasphemy is more direct, and the challenge is met by a stern and most severe reply. But the words of the letter are like an extract from Isaiah's own prophecy thirty years before, x. 7—11. Its blasphemies, like those uttered later around the cross, had all been foreseen and foretold. The truth of God's word is confirmed even by those who blasphemously fight against it.

v. 13. "Hena and Ivah." It seems hardly possible to trace the names of these two cities. But their mention here so briefly, as being well known at the time, gives still greater vividness and reality to the whole account. Haran, mentioned in Genesis, is the Carræ of the Greeks and Romans, where Crassus was overthrown. Abulfeda gives nine towns with the name of Rezep. The one here is probably his Resapha Hespurni, a day west of the Euphrates, in Palmyrene Syria. Telassar is probably the same as Ellasar, Gen. xiv.; and the Eden not that of Damascus, but more to the east, whose sons are named by Ezekiel, xxvii. 23, after Haran and Canneh. "The names describe a curve north-westerly through Hamath and Arpad, and a return in Sepharvaim to the south of Babylonia." (Delitzsch.) Ivah may perhaps be the

same with Ava in Kings, whence Avites were brought to colonize Samaria.

v. 14. "And spread it before the Lord." The natural sign of a direct appeal to the living God, who had caused His name to dwell there. Heathen Sadduceism degrades the Almighty and His everlasting truth to a level with vain idols, and the idle fancies of superstition. Hence it cannot understand the prayer of Hezekiah, or that genuine faith which removes mountains, and overcomes the world.

"The letter." A plural in form (like *literæ*) but with a singular sense. Blasphemies, when written, are more deliberate than when only spoken, and thus become a still more aggravated sin.

v. 18. "The nations and their countries." Lit. "the lands and their land," and in Kings "the nations and their land." The same word is used, in direct succession, for the people who dwell in the lands, and the land where they dwell. The later account, in Kings, uses *gôim*, nations, for *aratsoth*, lands, and thus removes a verbal harshness.

v. 21. The prophet, when younger, had been sent by Divine command to meet Ahaz and his princes, and the message of God by his lips had been rudely rejected and despised. Now Hezekiah and the princes intreat his help in

all the kingdoms of the earth may know 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, As for that which 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 tallest of his cedars, and the choicest of his cypresses; and I will enter into the height of his border, and the forest of his Carmel. 25 I have digged and drunk waters; and with the soles of my feet will I dry up all the rivers of besieged places.

their sore perplexity; and, as Elisha had done to Naaman, he contents himself with sending a message in reply. By messengers Sennacherib had sent to reproach the LORD, and by the messenger of a messenger the King of kings sends a reply to his haughty defiance. He does not permit His prophet, now about seventy years old, to wait in person on Hezekiah, still less on the Assyrian envoys. Having long been despised by an ungodly people, even now, in the time of their distress and repentance, the dignity of God's messenger must be maintained in his person.

v. 22. "Hath shaken her head at thee." Comp. Matt. xvii. 39, Mark xv. 29. No gesture of mere dissent (Hitzig), but rather of mock obeisance, the strongest expression of derision and scorn. Lit. "after thee," in allusion to the ignominious flight of the king in the panic of the great overthrow. The past tense is emphatic, to show the certainty of the coming defeat, and how surely it was anticipated by the prophet and the faithful in Zion.

vv. 23—25. Some refer these boasts of the Assyrians to the past, some to the future, and others partly to both. So

also of their literal or figurative meaning. Most moderns translate the last clause "the rivers of Egypt," the word *matsôr* being the singular of Mizraim. Drechsler applies the whole to past conquests in Lebanon and Phœnicia to the north, and by the Nile in Lower Egypt; with this further idea, that mountains, wastes, and rivers, had all submitted to his resistless power. But this view, though ingenious, is open to weighty objections. In Hebrew both tenses are used; and the blasphemy lay rather in false reasonings, from the past to the future, from actual successes against heathen idols to a sure and speedy triumph over the God of Israel. A literal march over Lebanon with chariots is improbable, almost impossible, and any mention of it would be wholly out of place. Besides, Lebanon and Carmel have already been used as figures both for the Assyrian army and for the kingdom of Judah. To boast of having actually dried up the Nile itself with his feet would be far more ridiculous than loud vauntings of his expected success against Hezekiah. Again, *matsôr* is a common noun for siege or defence in more than twenty places. Both here, and xix. 6, this rendering is much more appropriate than the

26 Hast thou not heard *how that* long ago I have done it, *and that* from ancient times I have planned it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste defenced cities *into* ruinous heaps. 27 Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded: they were grass of the field, and *as* the green herb, grass of the housetops, and *corn* blasted before it be grown up. 28 But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, yea, thy rage against me. 29 Because thy rage against me, and thy haughtiness, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and

modern version of it as a proper name. The suffixes, again, are usually referred to Lebanon. But the whole force of the passage consists in a charge of arrogant blasphemy. And this is both plainer and stronger, if we refer them to Adonai, the Lord himself, who claimed the land and people of Israel for His own.

v. 24. It was ADONAI, the true King and Governor of the chosen land and people, whom Sennacherib had reproached and blasphemed. "Thou hast said" in thy heart, if not in words, "by the multitude of my chariots," my own irresistible warlike prowess alone, am I come up, etc. The boast refers to his actual position, as now occupying the fenced cities of Judah, and confidently hoping soon to seize on its capital, and to pillage its temple and all its royal treasures.

"The tallest of his cedars, and the choicest of his cypresses." The figurative cedars and cypresses, not only of this Lebanon, the royal kingdom of Judah, but of the God of Israel, who claims it for His portion. Its kings, princes, priests, nobles, all that is highest and most stately, must fall down and become a prey to his conquering sword. "And I will enter into the height of his border, and the forest of his Carmel." I will occupy mount Zion, the seat of royalty and worship, the most honoured place within the border of Israel's God, and will seize upon all that is fairest and goodliest in the Lord's choice vineyard. "All that once was His shall very soon be mine. Shall I not, as I have done to Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols, her Elohim, in whom this Hezekiah so vainly puts his

trust?" This construction retains the keeping of the figure, and brings out the hateful arrogance of these Assyrian blasphemies.

v. 25. "And drunk waters." In Kings, briefly expounded, "strange waters." He had dug wells to supply his armies in dry places, where water before was almost unknown.

"And with the soles of my feet, &c." The change of tense (fut.) clearly implies, "As I have done already so shall I still continue to do. My past successes, so unbroken, are the sure pledge of victories still to come. So numerous are my armies that at the tramp of their march rivers and moats disappear." The idea is neither simply "drunk up to supply their thirst," nor "drained and diverted by their labour" (Vitr.), nor choked with the dust of their march (Boch.), but all combined at once in a vague and boastful hyperbole. "I can open streams in dry places, and dry them up where they now exist, and nature strives vainly to set a limit to my power." There seems to be a sarcastic allusion to the pains Hezekiah had taken, before this invasion, to divert the fountains near Jerusalem, 2 Chron. xxxii. The boast is that such efforts are in vain against a conqueror so mighty. So Juvenal—Credimus altos Defecisse amnes, epotaque flumina Medo, Sat. X. 176. And Claudian puts the same into the lips of Alaric—Subsidere nostris Sub pedibus montes, arescere vidimus amnes... Gallisque Padum victricibus hausit."

v. 26. Here begins Jehovah's stern rebuke of these hateful blasphemies. The earliest predictions of the Assyrian victories by Isaiah were forty years old, those of Hosea and Amos still earlier,



my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest. 30 And this *shall be* the sign for thee: Eating *this* year such as groweth of itself, and next year that which springeth of the same, then in the third year sow and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. 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 Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and an escaping from 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 shield, nor cast up a mound against it. 34 By the way that he came, by the same shall he

and earliest of all were the words of Balaam, recorded in the Book of Numbers. But the irony lies still deeper. "So wise and so almighty in your own esteem, are you, after all, a poor ignorant mortal, wholly in the dark on what it most becomes you to know, and blind to the counsels of the Most High, while unconsciously fulfilling them? Strange contrast! such boasts of superhuman power, and such blind and brutish ignorance of the purposes of God! His decree, not thy own prowess, is the true and secret cause of thy past success."

v. 27. "Therefore." The historical theories of Divine faith and of human pride may agree almost wholly up to a certain point. But when once they begin to diverge, the contrast is extreme.

vv. 28, 29. Forbearance is not forgiveness, and patient long-suffering is not oblivion. The same great lesson runs through the whole course of human history, from the rout of Chedorlaomer to the Moscow campaign. No leviathan is so powerful, but the King of nations can put a hook in his nose and a bridle in his lips at the most fitting season.

v. 30. This verse is obscure, and not easy to explain with certainty. It has often been supposed to mean that the next year was sabbatic, and that on this account the land was still to remain untilled. Drechsler says, probably with truth, that "as a pure hypothesis it is improbable, and as the result of calculation not proveable." He accounts for the

words by the fact that "many had perished, many fled to other lands, while the territory of the ten tribes also lay unoccupied; so that it might be some time before there was an urgent motive or favourable occasion for resuming the settled culture of the fields." This is probable. But it hardly meets the two difficulties, why a sign reaching to the third year should be given, when the overthrow was so near at hand; or why this delay of culture, even if unavoidable, should be a pledge and token of Divine mercy. But the sudden flight of Sennacherib to Nineveh could not, of itself, put an end to all fear of a fresh invasion, not even when the terrible extent of the judgment was known. It might seem unlikely that a single check should wholly turn back a tide of conquest and plunder which had set in for thirty years.

Again, the true meaning seems to be that there would be only a single year's delay before the re-occupation of the land. The years spoken of must be civil years from Tisri or October, beginning with the seed-time late in autumn. "This year" will mean, this summer, now near its close, since the invasion would probably be in the early spring, and the overthrow late in the summer. Since the seed-time, then, was close at hand, there would not be time before it to occupy the deserted land, and resume regular tillage.

The first clauses, then, are concessive. The main stress of the promise lies here, that though for one whole year, through

return, and shall not come to this city, saith the Lord. 35 For I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

36 THEN an angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when *men* arose early in the morning, behold, these *were* all of them dead corpses. 37 And he decamped, and departed, and returned, *even* Sennacherib the king of Assyria; and he dwelt at Nineveh. 38 And it came to pass, while he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia: and Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

the wasting and confusion, and the nearness of the next seed-time, they must still depend upon the chance harvest of nature, yet that with the very next seed-time but one, or within fourteen or fifteen months, such peace and order would be restored, along with freedom from the fear of enemies, that they might not only sow and reap corn, but safely plant vineyards that would last for years to come.

But in what sense could this promise be a sign or pledge of God's faithfulness? First, because the course of His Providence would thus be cast in the mould of the Sabbath law they had so long forgotten, revealing their sin in the mercy which put a close to the judgment. And, next, because the time was now fixed, after only one year's delay, for the fulfilment of the earlier and fuller promise, xxx. 23—25.

v. 36. The camp of the Assyrians, from the whole context, must be that of

Tartan and Rabsaris before Jerusalem, not that of the king himself before Libnah. Hence the tidings came on him as a blast and a rumour, v. 7, and caused his hurried return to Nineveh.

v. 38. The death of Sennacherib, by the inscriptions, was some years after his return, but still this parricide is named at once, in order to complete the picture of Divine judgment.

The name Nisroch is variously explained, but probably is derived from *Nesher* Heb., *Nisr* Arab., an eagle, and refers to the eagle-headed idol of Nineveh. Esarhaddon reigned both at Nineveh and Babylon. He subdued the sons of Merodach Baladan, and built a palace at Babylon, from which bricks have been recovered bearing his name. In one inscription he mentions his having built thirty temples. The south-west palace at Nimroud is the best preserved of his works.

## § 3. HEZEKIAH'S SICKNESS AND RECOVERY.

## CHAP. XXXVIII.

IN those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live. 2 And Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, 3 And said, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is good* in thy sight: and Hezekiah wept sore. 4 Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying, 5 Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy

v. 1. "In those days." The time of this illness must have been during Hezekiah's fourteenth year, that of the Assyrian invasion, since fifteen years were added to his life, and his reign is reckoned at twenty-nine years. It seems most likely that it was very soon after the sudden overthrow of the Assyrians, an unexpected lesson of weakness and mortality in the very hour of exultation, when he incurred the great danger of secret pride.

"Thou shalt die, and not live." Here we see the difference between a simple prediction, and a prophetic warning. A message, thus addressed to a person, not spoken of him to others, is a call to repentance and prayer, not the revelation of a fixed, unalterable decree. Such was the message of Jonah to Nineveh; and such is the address to Shebna, xxii. 15—19. The last mention of him as a suppliant before Isaiah in sackcloth, side by side with Eliakim, makes it likely that the sentence on him, while in part fulfilled, was in part repealed, as the whole is here in the case of Hezekiah. In Jer. xviii. 7—9, the law of such conditional warnings, in form resembling prophecies, is clearly laid down.

v. 6. This verse is no proof that the sickness was before the Assyrian calamity. For Hezekiah would need this assurance against the risk of renewed invasion, when rage and vexation had succeeded to panic terror, and the Assyrian armies were

recruited once more. The momentary deliverance is here enlarged into a promise for the fifteen years of Hezekiah's lifetime. But the shortness of this period, the unexpected form of the promise, and the judgment still impending, show clearly that this period could not be the proper fulfilment of those bright and glowing prophecies which Isaiah had already given.

v. 8. The fact here announced is an optical or sensible miracle, the reversed motion of the sun's shadow in the sun-dial of Ahaz. The words themselves leave it open, whether there was a change in the sun's apparent and earth's real motion, a general change by unusual refraction, or one local only. But the last seems more likely for several reasons. First, the special mention that it was "in the sun-dial of Ahaz." Next, the envoys from Babylon had heard of it as a local sign, 2 Chr. xxxii. 31. It could not, then, have extended to Babylon. It results, further, from the true emphasis in this mention of the sun-dial of Ahaz. That wicked king had set up this sun-dial, after refusing a sign "in the height above," and now it was made to supply a parable to the house of David. The noon-day of the kingdom was far past, and the shadows of evening had begun to be stretched out. But the reformation of Hezekiah, his faith and prayer, and the general turning of the nation, outwardly, to God, would

days fifteen years. 6 And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city. 7 And this *shall be* a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken. 8 Behold! I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun-dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.

9 THE WRITING OF HEZEKIAH, KING OF JUDAH, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness. 10 I said, in the still noontide of my days I shall go down into the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. 11 I said, I shall not see JAH, the Living One, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no longer, with the inhabitants of the world. 12 My lifetime is plucked up, and removed from me, as a shepherd's tent: I have rolled up, like a weaver, my life: he will

be allowed to arrest and reverse this downward course of the kingdom, and to give it a reprieve for a little season, after which the shadows would lengthen and deepen once more. The suggestion that the return of the shadow was due to a solar eclipse (Bosanq.), satisfies no condition of the history; and Chaldean envoys are the last persons who could have seen any cause for surprize in such a slight change, as a wonder done in the land. On the other hand, a world-wide disturbance of the sun's motion in the heavens, changing the length of the day everywhere, could never be described as a local sign at Jerusalem in the dial of Ahaz.

v. 9. This meditation and psalm of praise is inserted here, by the prophet, from its close connexion with the history, and with the scope of the earlier and later visions. The sickness and recovery of the king, like the troubles of Jonah, were a typical prophecy. The two halves of Hezekiah's reign, the first vexed with deep and sore trial, the second a kind of resurrection from death and despair, answer closely to the two main divisions of the whole book, and also to the double subject of all prophecy, the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Hezekiah, like David, was a psalmist as well as a king. The song is retrospective, written after his recovery.

v. 10. Three renderings have been

given of the term *dēmi*: "cutting off" (Kimch., A. V.); "stillness, calm, or pause" (Ges., Umbr., Alex., Drechsler); and "noonday," when the sun appears to rest before he begins to decline (LXX. Vulg., Schmidt, Hend.). The last two may be combined. The allusion to the sign is thus retained, and adds force to the king's plaintive recollection. Midway in life, when his troubled morning might hope to be followed by the brightness of a calm noonday, he was now to be cut down.

v. 11. The sacred name JAH, here repeated with emphasis, is full of meaning. It is a simpler form of Jehovah, meaning simply, HE IS, or, I AM. Its repetition is meant to place in full relief the relation between the Living God and living men. Hence it seems best to translate it in its second occurrence. The last word some render "the under-world," *i. e.* the state of the departed. But the structure and parallelism confirm the received version. The afflicted king made a double complaint; that he would be cut off from the presence of the Living God, who had placed His name in His temple among living men; and also that he would be shut out from the society of all that dwell upon earth. The word "no longer" implies that these things for the present would cease, but neither excludes continued being in Hades, nor the sure hope of a resurrection.

cut me off from the loom; between daybreak and night wilt thou make an end of me. 13 Till morning I counted *him* as a lion, so doth he break all my bones: between daybreak and night thou wilt make an end of me. 14 Like a swallow and a crane, so did I chatter; I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail *with looking* upward: O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me. 15 What shall I say? He hath both spoken to me, and himself hath done *it*: I will walk softly all my years for the bitterness of my soul. 16 O LORD! by these *things men* live; even in all of these *is* the life of my spirit: and thou wilt recover me, and make me to live. 17 Behold! for my peace had I this great bitterness: and thou in love hast rescued my soul from the pit of destruction; for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. 18 For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot

v. 12. The word, *dôr*, usually "generation," is here "age" or "lifetime," and not as some, "my habitation," applying it to the mortal body, a less usual sense, and a less natural figure. As the nails of a tent are plucked up, and its covering removed, so the residue of his life was suddenly taken away. As a weaver rolls up his web when he reaches its limit, so he had to renounce the hope of longer years. The hand of God himself seemed to be cutting him off from the loom. The illness was so severe, he looked for death in a single day.

v. 13. All night through, his sufferings, and the sense of God's anger, made *him* feel as if his bones were crushed by a fierce lion, and he expected death ere the next day was ended. The idea of a lion-like patience (Jarchi, Drechsler) suits neither the figure nor the context. Nor can it mean that he composed himself through the night, to find fresh sufferings with the day (Vitr., Gesen., Rosenm., Hend.). The main thought is that his suffering was unintermitted, as well as severe. The future "he will break" has the force of a continuous present.

v. 14. "Like a swallow or a crane." Bochart has shown that *sus* is the swallow, and *agur* the crane, which our translators reverse. The shrill twittering of one, the doleful note of the other, are combined to express his lamentation.

vv. 15—20. The words may be thus paraphrased: "How can I worthily ex-

press my thanks to Him for such mercies! Speedily the promise of healing was given, when He heard my prayer, and swiftly has He fulfilled it. The memory of this trial shall remain with me all the years of my life, and lead me to walk before God in grateful humility and loving obedience. By such words and acts of mingled mercy and judgment 'men live.' The warning and the illness, the promise and the recovery, are all parts of that holy discipline on which the higher life of the spirit depends."

v. 16. "And thou wilt recover me." The past tense (Rosenm., Hend.) is less exact, and obscures the true connexion; since the true object of God's discipline was 'the life of the spirit.' From the gift of bodily health, now restored, Hezekiah drew the sure hope of a higher blessing. "Thou wilt heal my spirit also, and raise me to the higher life of prayer, gratitude, and fervent praise."

v. 17. The clause here admits of three constructions. (1) "After former peace came on this great affliction." (2) "My affliction is turned to peace." (3) "Peace is the end for which my trouble was sent." On the first view the words refer back to v. 10. Instead of a calm noontide, and the rest he looked for on escaping from the Assyrian, came this sore trial. But the two others, combined, agree better with the course of thought. "Behold!" observe in my case the merciful issue of God's chastening.

celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. 19 The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I *do* this day; the father to the children shall make known thy truth. 20 The LORD *was near* to save me; and we will sing my harp-songs all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.

21 For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay *it* for a plaister upon the boil, and he shall recover. 22 Hezekiah also had said, What *is* the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord?

“For my peace had I this great bitterness.” Such was its gracious design, and such shall be the real issue. “And thou in love etc.” There is no contrast, but an expansion of the same thought. Comp. Job xxxiii. 23—30; Heb. xii. 9—11. Mercy was the end of the trial, and that merciful issue had begun to be fulfilled.

v. 18. Some, from this verse, would degrade Hezekiah into a Sadducee, who took death for a complete end of thought and being. Others have diluted or strained it, to make it agree with the view that dying believers, in every age, passed at once into the heaven of glory. But the words are not those of “extreme agitation and distress” (Calv., Vit.), since they are part of Hezekiah’s song of praise after his recovery. They mean more than the truism, that “those who have entered the invisible world no longer enjoy opportunities of glorifying God on earth” (Hend.). They mean rather that the state of the dead, as such, is one in which God is dishonoured, being a present triumph of God’s enemy, for He “is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” Their harmony with the New Testament lies in the truth, that Christ’s resurrection has made light and life to reach down even to the gates of the grave.

v. 20. Hezekiah had confident hope that this and other songs of praise, his utterances of deep thanksgiving, would be used in the solemn assemblies of the Jews for temple-worship, and become part in

the service of the people of God. Such a hope is the fitting close for this royal Psalm, simple in its pathos, and exquisite in its beauty.

vv. 21, 22. These verses at first sight seem out of place. Neologists have ascribed them to the carelessness of some compiler. Others, as Hahn and Delitzsch, take them for a marginal addition which has crept into the text. Drechsler offers an elaborate defence of their position; but his view, that they are part of Hezekiah’s writing, is very unnatural.

The key is really simple. The main object of the chapter is this psalm of praise, which does not appear in Kings. Hence the opening states the sickness, the warning, the prayer, and the promise, as briefly as possible, hastening to give this “writing of Hezekiah.” Two details, omitted before, are then added, to fasten and root the whole in the soil of actual history. In v. 9 a question may arise, how was he recovered? and the answer is given: “Isaiah said, &c.” A second question must arise, how came a sign to be thus promised? And the answer is that the king had asked for this help to his faith, and alludes to it at the close of his song. But when the account is given afterwards in Kings, without the song or writing, these two details are fitly transposed to their historical order. Thus their position here is a very clear sign that the recension in this book is earlier than the one in the Book of Kings.

## § 4. CHAP. XXXIX. THE MESSAGE FROM BABYLON.

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. 2 And Hezekiah was glad of them, and showed 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 showed them not.

3 THEN came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, *even* from Babylon. 4 Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All

## Ch. XXXIX. THE MESSAGE OF MERODACH.

v. 1. "At that time." The sacred narrative, on the face of it, implies that this embassy was after the sickness and recovery of Hezekiah, and after the defeat of Sennacherib, and was occasioned by the double wonder wrought in the land. It was a first overt sign of Babylon breaking loose from subjection to Assyria, and rising in its stead as the chief Gentile power. The inscriptions, which shew that Esarhaddon resided alternately at Nineveh and Babylon, throw thus a further light on this transition, which is partly a key to the structure of this Book of Isaiah. See Appendix III. on the Assyrian Reigns.

v. 2. "And Hezekiah was glad of them." In Kings "he hearkened to them," the words being nearly alike in form and sound. One is the dramatical and personal, the other the historical aspect, of the same event. His personal sin was that he rejoiced with a secret elation of heart; his political error, the first step in a downward course, was that he welcomed eagerly their proffers of friendship and alliance.

v. 3. The king answers directly the second question only, and some infer an intentional concealment. But this seems a groundless suspicion. The order of the questions requires them to be joined in one. What was the business of these men? whence did they come? were they

come as strangers, or envoys from a near or distant land? Both questions receive a virtual answer, that they were a friendly embassy from a distant land, from Babylon. The view of Calvin seems just, that the mention of the distance betrays some degree of vainglory in the wide extent of his own fame.

vv. 4—8. "We are reminded," says Calvin, "that men judge amiss of words and actions, and that God alone is a competent judge of them. Hezekiah shewed his treasures. Had they been heaped up, that they might always lie hidden in the earth? He received the messengers kindly: should he have driven them away? He lent an ear to their instructions. But that was when the rival of the Assyrian voluntarily desired his friendship. Ought he to have rejected so great an advantage? So far as appearances go, there is nothing for which an apology may not be offered. But God, from whom nothing is hid, saw in his joy, first, ingratitude, because he was unmindful of the distress which lately pressed him down; next, pride, that he sought to gain reputation by magnificence and riches. But his chief fault was ambition, which almost entirely banishes the fear of God from the hearts of men." In his distress he had sent messengers to the prophet, covered with sackcloth; but now, in his prosperity, Isaiah has to bring to him, unsought and uncalled, the Lord's message. Herein was seen the weakness of

that *is* in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed 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. 7 And of the 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. 8 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.

his faith. But the way in which he receives it, compared with the conduct of Ahaz, vii. 1—12, illustrates the wide contrast between faith and unbelief.

v. 7. "Which thou shalt beget." One of the minute coincidences of real history. Hezekiah had at present no sons, since Manasseh, fifteen years later, succeeded him at the age of only twelve years. It seems probable that Daniel and his three companions, of the seed-royal, Dan. i. 3, were descended from Hezekiah.

v. 8. "He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days." It is strange blindness in some modern critics, to see in this reply only a selfish egotism. Two feelings are plainly expressed, humble submission to the justice of God's sentence, and thankfulness for the merciful limitation. His sinful pride, of which he was now made conscious, was not suffered to reverse the earlier promise.

His faith, prayers, and zeal, in spite of his sin, had availed to turn back for his lifetime the deepening shadow on the dial-plate of the kingdom of Judah; and he saw in this suspense of coming judgments, long deserved by the nation, a clear token of the goodness of the Lord.

The faith and submission of Abraham, in the sacrifice of Isaac, had a most abundant reward in a covenant of blessing to a thousand generations. So here the faith and submission of Hezekiah, under this humbling message of the prophet, are like the stem from which there blossom forth all the abundant promises of the Later Visions. He owned the goodness of the Lord in a threatening which might have seemed severe; and there follows presently a glorious series of fuller promises than ever before, with their gracious preface—"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God."

### CLOSE OF THE HISTORICAL EPISODE.

Three views have been taken of these four historical chapters, and their relation to the answering passage 2 Ki. xviii. 13—xx. 18, which is almost identical, with the exception of the writing of Hezekiah, and a few slight verbal variations. First, that the text in Isaiah is the original and source of the history in Kings (Grotius, Vitringa, Paulus, Hendewerk). 2<sup>o</sup>, The history in Kings is the source of the other (Eichhorn, Gesen., Maurer). 3<sup>o</sup>, That neither is original, but both drawn from some third source (Koppe, Rosenmüller, Hitzig, Umbreit, Ewald, Hävernack, Keil, Knobel, De Wette, Davidson). The last affirms dogmatically that this is the true view, and that it needs little knowledge of Hebrew to see that the first is erroneous. It is remarkable, however, that Vitringa, a first-rate Hebrew scholar, after discussing the third view, and shewing probable reasons in its favour, closes



with these words: "When I came to the text itself, and weighed each part more accurately, I saw and recognized most clearly what is now my fixed judgment, that this whole section is from the hand of Isaiah, and that the historian of Kings has had this aim, everywhere to follow its lead in necessary things, and to explain it when too brief, as in the history of Hezekiah's sickness and cure, so that what more is found in the history of Kings is to be taken as explanations and illustrations of this history. In which judgment I now confidently rest."

The reasons for this view are clear and decisive. First, Isaiah was an historian from the first, as well as a prophet. "The rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write (2 Chr. xxvi. 22). The acts of Jotham and Ahaz, we are told, were written in the books of the Chronicles and of the Kings, but the writer is not named. But again, it is said "the rest of the acts of Hezekiah and his goodness, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel." Thus the double record is named, just as we have it now, and the precedence is given to that in the vision or book of prophecy. Now since Isaiah had prophesied from the last year of Uzziah to the fourteenth of Hezekiah, and written the acts of Uzziah, while the whole of his predictions converged on the Assyrian conquests and overthrow, of which the crisis was in the last year, it would be a natural instinct to append at once the fulfilment of his warnings as the seal and crown of the previous messages. But when he came to continue the national annals, some slight changes would be natural, to suit the history to its new context.

Now all the differences answer punctually to this view of the relation between the two narratives. The three verses, 2 Ki. xviii. 14—16, are interposed. They relate the submission of Hezekiah, and the present he sent to secure a treaty of peace, and the treacherous requital, when the present was retained, and the peace was refused. This was implied in the prophetic warning, Is. xxxiii. 1, but, as notorious at the time, did not need to be specified in the prophet's first brief record of the catastrophe.

But the chief proof that in Kings we have a later recension is the account of Hezekiah's sickness, ch. xx. The main object in Isaiah is to record the writing of the king, and hence two details are deferred to its close, and there added as supplemental explanations; but in Kings these are restored to their historical order, the request for a sign and the mode of cure.

These chapters, then, were added at this place in the series of visions by the prophet himself, and form one organic part of the whole book of prophecy. They are the historical seal of the earlier visions, and contain also three definite predictions, of which two were fulfilled at the time, the blast and rumour to Sennacherib, and the fifteen years of added life to Hezekiah, while the third had to await its fulfilment after two hundred years. The account in Kings is the same, probably from Isaiah also, but omitting the writing of Hezekiah, with a few changes to suit its purely historical purpose.

## THE LATER PROPHECIES.

## CH. XL.—LXVI.

## V. THE TIMES OF CYRUS AND MESSIAH,

OR

## FIRST SERIES OF THE LATER VISIONS.

## CH. XL.—XLVIII.

THE Earlier Prophecies have closed with the message, "Say to them of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not! behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompence of God, He will come and save you." These Later Visions open here with a prediction of the fulfilment of this Divine command. Their first chapter is a voice of comfort to the fearful-hearted, because the Lord is at hand, as the Good Shepherd, to save and bless His people. The threatenings of the Law are replaced by the promises of the Gospel. The key-note of all these later prophecies is Divine consolation to the mourners in Zion.

The questions connected with the genuineness of these Later Visions, and their internal arrangement and divisions, will be treated fully in the Appendix. But that they are the continuation of Isaiah's prophecies, and no independent work of some later unknown author, is clear from the internal evidence alone. They grow immediately out of the warning of the coming Captivity, when Judah would be carried away to Babylon, in fulfilment of the message recorded just before. Who can believe that the parting voice of this greatest of the Prophets is to be found in the words, xxxix. 7, "and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon"? On the other hand, what could be a more fitting sequel of that warning voice to the pious monarch, than new words of consolation to the mourners in Zion? And how could the unity of the Earlier and Later Visions be more clearly shewn, than by taking the central promise, xxxv. 4, of the parting message of comfort with which the former close, for the text and key-note of the first opening of these later visions? This Divine garment is without seam, woven throughout with consummate wisdom, not by the hand of man, but by "the Lord God of the holy prophets;" and no efforts of man can tear it asunder, or impair the sacred unity of the whole message.

## § I. CHAP. XL. COMFORT TO THE FEARFUL IN HEART.

COMFORT YE, comfort ye my people, saith your GOD. 2 Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; that she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins. 3 The voice of one that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way

v. 1. The redoubling of this charge which the Prophet receives is designed to shew the earnestness and depth of God's love to His people. The future (Hebr.) means, "saith, and will continue to say," till the whole promise is fulfilled. It occurs only here, and in Is. i. 11, 18, xxxiii. 10, xl. 25, xli. 21, lviii. 9, and Ps. xii. 6; and it is thus an internal sign, in the first verse, of the common authorship of the Earlier and Later Visions.

The voice is addressed to the Prophet and his partners and successors in the prophetic office. It announces, not that "the Jewish nation would soon cease to be identified with the Church" (Alex.); but rather their sure recovery, after grievous sins and sore judgments, to the enjoyment of the lasting favour of the God of Israel.

v. 2. "That she hath received, &c." This clause admits a double variety of exposition. It may assign a reason for the promise (A. V., Drechsler) or form a part of it (Hend., Hahn, Stier); and the word "double" may refer to punishment or to pardon and blessing. But the threefold charge to speak comfort, and the repetition of the same particle three times, favour the second view. The words will thus answer to the three series that follow. The first of these, ch. xl.—xlviii., dwells mainly on Israel's warfare in the midst of heathen idolatry. The second, ch. xlix.—lx., reveals the great Sin-offering, by which all the sins of God's people are pardoned; and the third, ch. lxi.—lxvi., opens with a promise, that for shame they shall have double, and possess the double with everlasting joy, ch. lxi. 7.

The past tense is prophetic, to denote the certainty of still future blessings. So in the Early Prophecies, ii. 1—4, the final

glory of Zion stands first, before predictions of that course of judgments through which alone it was to be attained. The voice is to Jerusalem, not during the Exile alone, but throughout the whole course of her earlier and later warfare. The bow of hope is to gleam brightly through every storm.

v. 3. Most moderns connect "in the wilderness" with the words that follow. But their order, the keeping of the picture, and the Hebrew accents, confirm the rendering in the Gospels (LXX., Vitruv., Hend., Alex., Stier). The mention of a herald in the wilderness is much more impressive than a direction to unnamed parties, telling them where to prepare the way. The context makes no allusion to the desert between Babylon and Palestine. In xvi. 1, 8, the desert is the one south of Judah and east of Moab; but in ch. xxvii., xxxii., xxxv. the desolate places of Judea itself, the last passage including those of the heathen world. Hence the most natural reference here is to the desolations of the land of promise; and also, by analogy, to the moral state of a sinful people.

The voice is not Isaiah's own, but one heard by him in vision, the dawn of a new era of hope and comfort. The way has to be prepared, not for the people to come from Babylon, but for the LORD himself to revisit His people, from whom His presence had been withdrawn through their sin. The angel, Lu. i. 17, expounds the true object of the voice, "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." The pathway is to be in the hearts of a waiting people. It is a voice, not a worker, who is announced. John the Baptist "did no miracle," but all things that he spake of a coming

of the LORD, 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 A VOICE that saith, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh *is* grass, and all the goodness thereof *is* as the flower of the field. 7 The grass is withered, the flower is faded, because the Spirit of the LORD hath blown upon it: surely the people is grass. 8 The grass is withered, the flower faded, but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

9 O THOU that bringest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain! lift up thy voice with strength, O thou that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem: lift it up, be not afraid: say

Messiah were true. Joh. x. 41. This voice is a first step towards a fulfilment of the promise, that the desert should rejoice and blossom as the opening rose, xxxv. 1.

vv. 4, 5. The words are quoted by St. Luke iii. 4—6 as those of Isaiah, and a prediction of the Gospel. Some render, "All flesh shall see together that the mouth, &c." (Luth., Gesen., Stier). But the constant use of this phrase, Is. i. 2, 20, xxii. 25, lviii. 14, is to ratify a previous message. This sense is the most appropriate here. The glory to be revealed is the character and work of the promised Immanuel, and the revelation is to be for the whole Gentile world, and not for the Jews alone. So great a work needs a solemn voucher for its fulfilment, which is here given. "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." The words are not those of some unknown forger, but true sayings of Almighty God.

vv. 6—8. The Prophet hears next a second voice, that of God himself to the herald in the wilderness, charging him to proclaim a heavenly message. The herald asks, What message? and the voice replies, The mortality of man, the emptiness of human glory, and the abiding excellence of the word of God. The past tense vv. 7, 8 adds vividness to the message. "One voice is the absolute Preacher, the other His messenger; and the sublime answer, v. 8, is the word of the Lord in the mouth

of His servant" (Stier). It was the especial work of the Baptist, the predicted Voice, to lay the axe to the root of all human pride, and of the false glory of the flesh; and thus to prepare the way for the Gospel, that word of God, which endures for ever. These verses represent that first stage of Divine teaching, in which a sense of the vanity of the creature, and knowledge of sin by the law, prepare the soul to welcome the grace of Christ.

v. 7. "Surely the people is grass." This clause is full of emphasis. In v. 6, is a direct comparison. In v. 7, the resemblance is unfolded and confirmed. The flower fades as soon as the wind, the breath of God, has blown upon it. So quickly does all flesh fade away. The words are then reaffirmed in their higher sense.

v. 9. The construction here is ambiguous. Zion, Jerusalem, may be either the messenger (A.V., Aquila, Theodoret, Symm., Calv., Vitruv., Ewald, Umbreit, Alex., Drechsler, Stier) or the object of the message (Marg. A.V., LXX., Chald., Vulg., Grotius, Lowth, Gesen., Rosenm., Hitzig, Maurer, Knobel, Hend.). But the former view is opposed by the order of the words, and the incongruity of the figure; since Zion is itself a mountain, and there is no other instance of such a contrast between Jerusalem and the other cities of Judah. On the second view, the

unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! 10 Behold, the LORD God will come with might, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. 11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd: he will gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and will gently lead those that are with young.

12 WHO hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in

feminine participle has been explained three ways; that it is usual in official titles (Grot.); that it alludes to the triumphal songs of women (Michael., Lowth); and that it is a feminine collective (Gesén.). But a simpler explanation will refer it at once to the Pentecostal Church, as succeeding the lonely voice of the Baptist in the wilderness by a more joyful proclamation of the kingdom of God.

“Lift it up, be not afraid.” This is usually referred, not to danger and opposition, but to doubts of the truth of the message. Both ideas may be combined. Neither doubts within, nor fears and dangers without, were to keep back “the glorious company of the Apostles” from proclaiming that the Lord was indeed come, the true Shepherd and King of Israel.

vv. 10, 11. The message itself now follows, the coming of the Lord, with all power and deepest tenderness, to save and bless His people. The arm is that whereby a man exerts his power. So Christ is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” In the coming Messiah God’s almightiness was to be signally displayed.

The reward of Jehovah is that which He bestows. The view which refers it to Christ’s own recompence (Alex., Hend.) disagrees with the choice of the Divine name here used. He receives as the Son of Man; but as Jehovah He bestows, as in that latest prophecy, “Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to render to every one as his work shall be,” Rev. xxii. 12. “His work” is often explained to mean the recompence of his work (Vitr., Rosenm., Alexr., Hend., Stier, Hahn). But there is no reason for departing from the proper sense of the word, which gives a more emphatic

meaning, and the connection is clear. “His work” which He comes to fulfil, is to be the Good Shepherd, the Guide and Comforter of His people. He comes to bless, for His reward is with Him; He comes also to labour in great humility, for “His work is before Him.”

v. 11. Our Lord himself expounds and applies this prediction, Joh. x. 11—16, xxi. 15. “Them that are with young” (LXX., Vulg., Aben Ezra, &c.), most moderns render “nursing, or milk-giving ewes” (Alex., Hend., Stier, Hahn). But Ps. lxxviii. 71 justifies the received version as much as 1 Sam. vi. 7 the other, and the plain scope of the passage favours it. The ewes would need gentle leading before, rather than after, their lambs were born. The figure is thus more complete. The Good Shepherd will use double tenderness to those weak in faith, the lambs of the flock, and to all who are under special burdens of temptation and sorrow.

The sudden transition is most heart-stirring and impressive. How great! how wise! how thoughtful and constant in love is the LORD, the Good Shepherd, who is to come! The message opens with a charge to comfort, and ends with a promise of strength restored, and comfort attained.

v. 12. This is neither a mere statement of the grandeur of creation,—Who? that is, no one: nor a simple contrast, Who beside God alone? It is the voice of adoring awe, when the soul of the prophet dwells on God’s unsearchable majesty. How inconceivably great the Being of whom these things are true! The hollow of his hand alludes to the ocean waters, and the vast bed that contains them. The figures convey a further

scales, and the hills in a balance! 13 Who hath measured the spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath enlightened him! 14 With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding? 15 Behold! nations *are* as a drop from a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. 16 And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. 17 All the nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

18 To whom then will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto him? 19 The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains. 20 He that is so impoverished that he hath no

truth. Skies, seas, and mountains, thus meted and weighed, all fulfil a Divine purpose. No drop, no grain, is in excess or defect, when compared with the secret plan of the great Ruler and Architect of the universe.

v. 13. Here the unsearchableness of God is more directly affirmed. None can add to His wisdom, no created mind can explore or fathom it. He measures and comprehends all His own works, and is immeasurable and incomprehensible. The spirit is here the mind or intelligence of God, and the distinctness of the Divine Persons is scarcely a part of the message. So St Paul twice explains it, Rom. xi. 34, 1 Cor. ii. 16. None can search out the wisdom of God, none can be a counsellor, from whom He may habitually receive instruction; nay, there is no one from whom He can ever gain the least increase of knowledge. In Him alone are hidden all the treasures of infinite wisdom. The object is not "to vindicate the Gospel from the reproaches of human folly" (Vitr.), but to cheer the faithful, by proclaiming the power and wisdom of their Almighty Friend.

v. 15. There is a progress and climax in the figures. To Him who measures the ocean in the hollow of His hand, nations are less than a handful, even as a single drop spilt from a vessel; and He who weighs the hills in a balance, counts the people as the small dust of the balance,

of which the weight is insensible, and cannot even turn the scale. If Lebanon were the altar, its pine-forests and cedar-groves the pile, and its countless beasts the sacrifice, all would be far unworthy of His greatness. The legal sacrifices not only might be rendered worthless through the guilt of the offerers, i. 11—13, but were in themselves wholly disproportioned to the majesty of God. Thus the very first message of these Later Prophecies prepares the way for their central truth, the true Sacrifice and great Sin-offering of the Son of God, ch. liii. 5—11.

v. 17. The contrast is carried further. "All the nations," the whole of mankind, are not merely like a drop from a bucket, but even as nothing, and less than nothing, before God. They can add nothing to His perfection, and need His bounty to raise them from worse than nothingness into true life and being. The digression on idolatry is like a text to that great controversy with heathenism which presently follows.

v. 21. "From the foundations of the earth." Ever since the earth was founded, and also through reflecting on the wonders of creation. The version, Will ye not know? will ye not hear? (Ewald, Alex.) perverts and obscures the true sense. The Hebrew tense denotes what is prolonged and continuous. The lesson is one which ought to have been learned, and was to be learned still afresh, every day

oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot: he seeketh unto him a skilful workman, to prepare a graven image that shall not be moved. 21 Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? 22 *It is* He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers: that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; 23 That bringeth the princes to nothing: he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. 24 Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown; yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and he hath also blown upon them, and they are withered; and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble.

25 To whom, then, will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. 26 Lift up your eyes on high, and

and every hour. The received version of the last clause is also the best (Calv., Jun., Kimchi, Ewald, Hend., Stier), and not "have ye not considered the foundations of the earth?" (Ges., Rosenm.) It is confirmed by the accents, the structure, and St Paul's comment, Rom. i. 20.

v. 22. The sentence is neither a continuation of the last verse (Alex.) nor a reply to the question of v. 18 (Vitr., Rosenm.). The Absolute Being is named absolutely, as the great and sublime object for adoring contemplation. The circle of the earth is that which is bounded by the visible horizon; over which, to our senses, the sky seems spread out, "like a tent to dwell in," but so lofty and unapproachable as to bespeak an Almighty Creator.

v. 24. "Yea." The rendering "scarcely" (Ges., Hend., Hahn, Stier), or "not even" (Alex.), is much less forcible, and probably less correct. The meaning is not that their planting would soon be followed by their overthrow, but that the planting and rooting was in appearance only, deceptive and unreal. "And he hath also blown upon them." The picture is more vivid, by describing this result as already accomplished. These idolatrous powers are seen as if already withered by the breath of the Lord, and only awaiting a whirlwind that will sweep them away.

v. 25. The emphasis is here on the

verbs, not the pronouns. The attempt is wholly vain to find any being equal to God, or even who approaches near to Him in glory. The title, Holy One, marks the contrast between the great I AM, and all creatures whatsoever. Pantheism is the creed of unholy hearts, on whom has never dawned the light of God's infinite holiness.

v. 26. If the earth, the seas, and the mountains, are not enough to convince thoughtless men of the majesty of their Creator, let them lift up their eyes to the starry heavens. "Who hath made all these?" not, which out of rival claimants of the honour; but, what kind of being, an Architect how great, how glorious, how unsearchable! The question passes then into a direct description of His power and wisdom. As a general reviews a numerous army, so "He bringeth out their host;" and by number, so that each one in their vast array is separately known. He discerns the character and the place of every star, and the part it has to fulfil in His vast scheme of creation. Night after night each one keeps its place, for thousands of years, and performs its own circuit in the heavens. The constancy of the laws of nature illustrates and confirms, but can never set aside, the dominion of God.

The last clauses neither continue the question, nor form a direct reply. They continue and amplify the ascription of

behold: Who hath created these? that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by their names, by the greatness of his might, for that *he is* strong in power; not one faileth. 27 Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God? 28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? *that* the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? *there is* no searching of his understanding. 29 He giveth power to the faint; and to *them that have* no might he increaseth strength. 30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: 31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength: they shall mount up with wings, as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint.

glory to the Creator, contained in the previous exclamation of awe and wonder. How great and glorious is He, who not only created them, but knows them so intimately, and orders their courses with unerring wisdom, and a might that never fails.

v. 27. This wonderful greatness of the Most High, revealed in His works, is now applied to strengthen and comfort His fearful-hearted people. However dark the clouds around them, one glimpse of His majesty, when joined with His promises, ought to banish all their fears. The repetition implies the frequency of their complaints, and the question itself, their folly. The birth-name, Jacob, and the covenant-name, Israel, are a secret appeal to the love of the Creator and the grace of the Redeemer. The tense (Heb. fut.) implies the pertinacity of their unbelieving fears, while they complain that their cause is left unheard, and has been wholly forgotten.

v. 28. The words here refer to something heard or learnt once for all. "Hast thou not known," even by one glance at the starry sky? "Hast thou not heard," from that silent and awful voice where-with night unto night sheweth knowledge? that He who created these countless hosts and still sustains them, "fainteth not, neither is weary." Hast thou not learned from this glorious vision, nightly renewed before thine eyes, that there is no searching of His understanding?

This Almighty Lord, incapable of weariness Himself, is also the stay of His wearied people. All besides, however strong they may appear, are liable to exhaustion and decay. But the weakest, who resort to Him who is the Fountain of life, shall receive new life and vigour from His Divine fulness; shall run swiftly onward in their journey as pilgrims to a better land, and mount upward, in holy aspirations, towards heaven. The poor in spirit will be satisfied for ever from the fulness of God.

This opening section, which combines with its message of comfort a sublime description of the majesty of God, prepares the way for His double controversy, in the two sections that follow, first, with the open idolatry of the heathen, and next, with the relapses into idolatry on the part of Israel, His chosen people. It links itself with ch. xxxv., as fulfilling the charge vv. 3, 4; with chb. xxxvi., xxxvii., since the sudden destruction of the Assyrian host was a marvellous illustration of the truth xl. 23, 24; with ch. xxxviii., as opening a bright eventide of promise in Hezekiah's days, after the sudden noon-tide eclipse had been removed; and with ch. xxxix., as following severe rebuke and a solemn warning of the captivity of Babylon, by this peace-giving assurance of brighter days of blessing and deliverance that lay beyond the times of exile and sorrow.



## § 2. GOD'S CONTROVERSY WITH THE HEATHEN.

THE five chapters, xli.—xlv., seem to part into three sections, with a break at xlii. 16, and another at xlv. 5, so as to complete a sevenfold division of the first series of the Later Prophecies, chh. xl.—xlviii. Their three subjects are God's controversy, first with the heathen, and next with Israël, and the cause and method of Israel's coming deliverance.

The opening verses of ch. xli. are referred, by most modern critics, to the victories of Cyrus (Aben Ezra, Estius, Vitruvius, Gesenius, Rosenmüller, Hitzig, Maurer, Ewald, Knobel, Hendryck, Alex., Stier, Hahn, Delitzsch); but by the Jewish expositors, and many Christians also, to Abraham, and his victory over the kings (Chaldee, Kimchi, Abarbanel, Liran., Calvin, Oecolampadius, Piscator, Grotius, Lowth, Bengel). But among the former class there is one main contrast, which greatly lessens the weight of their seeming harmony. The neologians all view it as a history of the past, not a prophecy of the future. Still Drs Henderson and Alexander think the reference to Cyrus "beyond all doubt," and Stier agrees with Gesenius that the older view "no longer even deserves refutation." In spite of these assertions, the reasons for the older view, thus condemned, are really decisive; and all the objections, when fully examined, become arguments in its favour. On this view alone every phrase receives its full emphasis, and the whole chapter becomes a firm and magnificent basis for the predictions that follow.

The opening verses of ch. xlii. are applied to our Lord by St Matthew, so that this interpretation is one integral part of the Christian faith. They are also referred to Messiah by the earliest Jewish traditions (Chaldean, Kimchi, Abarbanel). Some Jewish writers, however, and many modern critics, have rejected this view. The words have been applied to the people of Israel, or at least the better part of them (Jarchi, Rosenmüller, Hitzig, Maurer, Knobel, Koster, Ewald), to Cyrus (Saadias, Koppe, Hensler), to Isaiah (Aben Ezra, Grotius, Dathe, Döderlein), to the prophets collectively (De Wette, Gesenius), or to Messiah conjointly with Israel or the Christian Church (Alex.). In contrast to all these, the inspired comment of St Matthew, agreeing with the earliest Jewish exposition, alone satisfies the terms of the prediction.

The title "servant of God" is given elsewhere to Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, and Hezekiah, and in this book to Isaiah and Eliakim. In itself it is plainly a description, rather than a definition. There is thus no reason why it should not be applied, in the course of these Later Visions, to Isaiah, to the nation of Israel, and to the coming Immanuel, according to the context of each passage; or why, because of this title alone, three distinct, and even incompatible subjects, should be confounded together into one. The mixed view creates difficulties instead of removing them, since the characters of the people of Israel, xliii. 21—xlv. 2, and those of Messiah, ch. liii., are contradictory, and exclude each other.

## CHAP. XLI.

KEEP silence before me, O islands! and let the people renew their strength: let them come near, then let them speak; let us come near together to judgment. 2 Who raised up the righteous *man* from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made *him* rule over kings? he gave *them* as dust to his sword, *and* as driven stubble to his bow. 3 He pursued them, he passed safely; the way he travelled not with his feet. 4 Who hath wrought and done *it*, calling to 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

v. 1. The "Creator of the ends of the earth" here gives a challenge to all the people and islands of the heathen world. They are called to meet with the God of Israel in a solemn assize. The cause in debate is, on one side, the power, wisdom, and goodness of the true God; and on the other, the ignorance, worthlessness, and folly of their senseless idols. The power of God, xli. 1-8, His foreseeing wisdom, xli. 21-29, and His victorious grace, xlii. 1-8, are successively contrasted with these "molten images" which are only "wind and confusion."

The first words are an echo of the promise just before. Strength may be renewed not only by waiting on God, but in an opposite way, when sinners harden themselves in their sin, and band together against the Lord and His Anointed. The heathen nations, with a stern irony, are invited thus to renew their strength, and to gird themselves (viii. 9) for their dangerous and hopeless conflict with the God of heaven.

v. 2. This great controversy dates from the first ages of the world. A clear pledge of its final issue had been given long before. No sooner had the nations begun to plunge themselves into open idolatry, than God raised up a public witness for His own dominion and holiness against their sin and folly. The God of glory appeared to Abraham in Chaldea, stirred up his spirit to forsake his coun-

try's idols, and made him heir of the righteousness of faith. The name "righteousness" is thus signally appropriate in his case, but could hardly be applied to a heathen conqueror. God "called him to his foot," when He brought him into the land of promise. He "gave nations before him, and made him rule over kings," when he achieved that signal victory, the earliest recorded in the world's history, Gen. xiv. 15. Their discomfiture was complete and marvellous. They were "as dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow."

v. 3. "He pursued them, and passed safely." The same word is used in the narrative—"he pursued them unto Dan, &c." The Hebrew tenses are imperfects, and may be rendered by the past, but perhaps more vividly by the historic present. "The way he travelled not with his feet." It is too common for special notice that a conqueror's route has not been trodden by him before. The true meaning seems then to be (Ewald, Drechsler, &c.) that swiftly, as if on wings, rather than with feet, and by Divine help, this conqueror hastened to victory. So the He-goat "touched not the ground," Dan. viii. 5.

v. 4. Some translate "He who calleth, &c." But this confuses the persons, and destroys the balance between the question and the reply. Some expound it, "calling them into being" or "announcing them before their birth." But the

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 soldering: 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

simplest sense of the words is to address loudly, as in vi. 4, xx. 11. This is here the most forcible, and confirms the reference to Abraham's victory. The last clause, by the Hebrew accents, should be, "I the Lord, the First, and with the last I am He," that is, the same. But the received version agrees better with xliii. 10, xlvi. 12. In v. 7 some translate "saying of the solder, It is good." But the received version is preferable. Why should the smoother with the anvil praise the solder, to be applied by another workman? The finishing of the idol, the soldering of its case, the fastening with nails, would be successive stages of the work. When one is ended, another begins, and the workman who has finished his own part naturally calls on another to succeed him.

vv. 4—7. The Call of Abraham, and his later triumph, were a voice of God to those early generations of mankind, recalling them from their ungodliness and growing idolatry. He who thus revealed His Divine power is Jehovah, the Unchangeable, the First, and with the last, whose counsel endures throughout all ages. Thus the history of Abraham was the pledge of every later deliverance of the people of God. But, instead of hearkening to this voice, the nations, with one consent, plunged still deeper into idolatry and superstition. Like Adam in the garden, they strove to shield themselves from the unwelcome sense of God's

holy presence by redoubled zeal in idol-worship. Its universal spread was one main plea, by which every family and tribe hardened itself against the warnings of God. How could that be hateful folly, in which all nations were agreed? Thus from Abraham to the days of Isaiah and Cyrus, the heathen world became one vast workshop for the zealous manufacture of countless idols. The words are a severe irony. So many workmen busied in making a helpless thing for their worship, which cannot hold together without solder, or stand upright without nails!

The alarm of the nations, v. 5, and their added zeal in idolatry, have been thought to favour the reference to Cyrus, not to Abraham (Vitr.). But there is no likelihood that idolatry became more active through the victories of Cyrus. Their whole tendency was the exact reverse. But the steady growth of idolatry from Abraham to the days of the prophet is one of the most patent facts in the history of the world. Whenever miracles of Divine power do not reclaim, they may occasion an aggravation of the evil.

vv. 8—10. The blind zeal of the heathen, mad upon their idols, is now contrasted with the sureness of God's covenant to Abraham and his Seed, in whom all nations were to be blessed. The voice is to the chosen people, taken from Chaldea in their forefather, called out of Egypt by Moses; to the natural seed of Abraham, whose victory was the pledge of their own

ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. 12 Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, the men that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, 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. 14 Fear not, thou worm Jacob, *and* ye mortals of Israel: I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. 15 Behold, I have made thee *as* a new sharp threshing wain, having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat *them* small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. 16 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* shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.

deliverance. Once more they had been chosen in the wilderness; and, though withered branches might be broken off, were never to be wholly cast away. The massive strength of heathen idolatry, increasing through long ages, is set side by side with Israel's weakness, when Ephraim were in captivity, and Judah a feeble remnant, with exile and desolation near at hand. Still, the holy seed would be the substance or life thereof, vi. 13. In darkest hours the covenant with Abraham would be sure. Omnipotence is the arm and right hand of infinite holiness, whereby the Righteous King executes His decrees of love.

vv. 14—16. "Ye mortals of Israel." The title is no mere allusion to the contempt of the heathen for Jewish exiles, but is a picture of man's real weakness in the sight of God. The word is rendered "dead men" (Aquila, Theod., Jerome), or "a few men" (LXX., Vitruv., Hitzig). But since the letters are the same as for "dead men," and only the points different, and the context requires some expression of Israel's weakness, "mortals" (Hend.) is the most natural sense. The Lord will be their Redeemer both from affliction and death.

"The Holy One of Israel." This title occurs fourteen times in the Earlier, fifteen times in these Later Prophecies, elsewhere only twice in Jeremiah, and also in Ps. lxxi. 22, lxxviii. 41. It is here the seal, first of God's threatenings,

i. 4, v. 24, and next, of His glorious promises. The title is both emphatic, and inwrought into the texture of the prophecy, xli. 14, 16, 20, xliii. 3, 14, xlv. 11, lv. 5, lx. 14.

v. 15. The figure here is resumed from ch. xxviii. 27, 28. The people of Israel, described before as the corn of God's threshing-floor, are now compared to a wain, by which nations that oppose the kingdom of God will be broken to pieces. The past tense is used to denote the certainty of the future triumph. Jacob, though a worm, will thresh the mountains, and make the hills as chaff, through the mighty power of the God of Israel.

The whole passage, thus applied, is a grand and simple review of the world's past and future history. In vv. 5—7, is depicted the fatal growth of Gentile idolatry, from the days of Abraham to the height of the Chaldean Empire, when they were "mad upon their idols," Jer. I. 38. Meanwhile Israel, God's chosen witnesses, were brought through their sin to utter weakness, their bones dried and their hope lost, Ezek. xxxvii. 11. Then the covenant of God with Abraham His friend revealed its full power. This worm must prevail over all the banded strength of idolatrous kingdoms. This dying remnant shall beat into dust the confederacies of the world's ungodliness. The promise includes all the main steps in this conflict, the times of Cyrus and the Maccabees, and the triumphs of the true Israel

17 *WHEN* the poor and needy seek water, and *there is* none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. 18 I will open 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. 19 I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the olive-tree: I will set in the desert the cypress, the pine-tree, and the larch, together. 20 That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

21 *BRING* near your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong *reasons*, saith the King of Jacob. 22 Let them bring forth, and shew to us the things that shall happen: let them

over heathen Rome; but above all, the time when the Stone shall smite the divided kingdoms of the fourth and latest empire. Dan. ii. 34. Then all rule and authority that resists the dominion of Christ will be as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, and the wind of judgment will carry it away for ever.

vv. 17—20. God's covenant with Israel assures to them, not victory alone, but comfort and refreshment, and the largest spiritual blessings. As before there was a double allusion to the Call of Abraham and the Exodus, so here to the journey through the desert, when the rock was smitten, and rivers ran in dry places. The promise, xxxv. 1, 7, is resumed and repeated. The words may include mercies shewn to the exiles on their Return; but their chief reference must be to the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and also in times to come.

vv. 19, 20. The *shittah* is generally supposed to be the acacia, and the olive mentioned is the *oleaster* or wild olive-tree. The pine-tree some take to be the ilex or holm, and the last species (*box*, A. V.) is either the larch, or a variety of the cedar. The like figures recur lv. 13, with reference to spiritual blessings. The Divine purpose includes not only the instruction of the Jews, but of the idolatrous heathen themselves.

vv. 21—23. The controversy with the nations is resumed again, under the same figure of a trial or assize. The idolaters

are called to state their own case, and bring forward their strongest reasons, to disprove God's charge against them of blindness and folly. The appeal turns from God's power to His prescient wisdom, in which these idols, their priests, and their worshippers, have no share.

The exact force of each clause is open to various interpretations. The "former things" have been explained, (1) as heathen prophecies, to be compared with their fulfilment (Gesén., Ewald, Knobel, Maurer, Hitzig, Hend., Alex.); (2) past things, viewed in a prophetic light (Meyer); or (3) the earliest things still future (Vitr., Rosenm., Stier, Hahn). Like varieties occur as "to the latter end," "the things to come," and "things that shall come hereafter."

The following view seems the simplest and clearest. The former things, their latter end, and the things to come, are a sequence, of which the first are past, the two others future; yet so that the latter end of the former things, in this place, may be included in the "former things," whenever the subject refers to the more distant future. "Let them shew things that shall happen," contingent future events. The challenge then has two parts. First, let them so unfold past history, as to make it a pledge and sign of the events near at hand, the more immediate future. This is what in this chapter God himself has done. The raising up of Abraham from the east, and

shew the former things, what they *be*, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us the things to come. 23 Shew the things that will come hereafter, and we shall know that ye are gods: yea, do good, and do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold *it* together. 24 Behold, ye are of nothing, and your work worse than nought: an abomination *is* he that chooseth you. 25 I have raised up *one* from the north, and he is come; from the rising of the sun he shall call upon my name: and he shall come upon princes as on mortar, and as a potter treadeth clay. 26 Who hath declared *it* from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, He has right? yea, *there is* none that sheweth;

his victory over the kings, are made the pledge of a similar work, when Cyrus would be raised from the east to tread down princes, as the potter treadeth clay, and to deliver Israel, just as Lot was delivered of old. Sacred history is prophetic of its own "latter end." "Or declare us the things which are to come." Reveal, if you can, those greater changes, when Messiah shall appear, and all the strongholds of heathen idolatry shall totter and fall to the ground before Him. "Shew us the things coming hereafter," whether near or remote, "and we shall know that ye are gods." Again, shew godlike power, as in the ancient miracles of Jehovah; reward your servants, and punish your adversaries, "that we may be dismayed and behold it together." A sublime irony! The living and eternal God, as well as His worshippers, is to be dismayed and confounded by the proofs these stocks and stones are to give of their own superior power and wisdom.

vv. 24—26. The challenge is heard in silence. The LORD himself gives the reply, since the idolaters are speechless, and the cause has gone against them by default.

"Worse than nought." The change of one letter seems here significant (for  $\text{בְּדָבָר}$  *nothing*,  $\text{בְּדָבָר}$ , when  $\text{הַבְּדָבָר}$  is a *viper*) to express that they are not only worthless, but venomous and mischievous. The LORD then proclaims His purpose to renew once more His former mercies to Abraham, by raising up Cyrus to be the deliverer of His captive people.

v. 25. The change from the past to the future tense is not to fix a middle point of time for the picture (Alex.), but to teach that this coming of Cyrus, though future, is as sure as if already past. The promise "he shall call upon my name" is the counterpart to xlv. 3, 4, "I have called thee by thy name." The two wonders would correspond. The All-wise God here calls Cyrus by his name, long before his birth; and Cyrus owns, in his turn, the Power which has exalted and honoured him. In his decree he calls Him by His own proper name, "JΕΗΟΥΑΗ, the God of Israel, He is the God, whose house is in Jerusalem." The north and east describe the position of Media and Persia with regard to Babylon, the great centre of heathen idolatry.

The word *sagōnim*, princes, used here for the first time, occurs three times in Jeremiah, three times in Ezekiel, with reference to Assyrian or Babylonian rulers, and nine times in Ezra and Nehemiah after the Return, as applied to Jewish rulers or leaders. It here fixes the application of the message to the coming overthrow of the Babylonian Empire.

v. 26. "That we may say, He has right." Such predictions as God here gives would justify the claim of the idol to be a god, and of the idol prophet to be the servant of some power truly divine. But, far from this, they cannot even understand or receive the true predictions which God himself has given. "Your words" refers, not to the idols, but to

yea, *there is* none that declareth; yea, *there is* none that heareth your words. 27 From the first *I have said* to Zion, Behold, behold them; and to Jerusalem I will give one that bringeth good tidings. 28 For I look, and *there is* no man: even for one among them, and *there is* no counsellor, when I question them, that can answer a word. 29 Behold! they are all vanity; their works *are* nought: their molten images *are* wind and confusion.

#### CHAP. XLII. MESSIAH'S WORK AND VICTORY.

BEHOLD my Servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall

Isaiah and his fellows, the prophets of God. The whole description is true, not only in reference to these old heathen idolaters, but to heathenized critics in modern times, who see only forgeries after the event in these Divine prophecies.

v. 27—29. The received version is here very obscure, and admits of much improvement. The verb has to be supplied in the first clause from the second; and in the past tense, because the past and future tenses alternate, and also from the force of the word, *rishôn*, "from the first." The last verbs are clearly dependent.

Not only now by these words of Isaiah, but from earlier times, those of David and onward, God had encouraged Zion to look for blessings in store for her by His covenant. He promises that He will continue to give Jerusalem such messengers of good tidings. No one beside can either comfort or foresee. It is vain to look among idols and their worshippers for any knowledge of these good things to come. But Divine prophecies of a blessed future have never ceased to resound in the ears of the Zion of God.

Here a second stage of the great controversy with heathenism is closed. In the Call and Victory of Abraham the power of the Most High had been revealed from the beginning; and the nations of the earth had been recalled, by a loud voice from heaven, from their foul idolatries to the service and worship of the True and Eternal King. But mankind refused to hear, and sank deeper and deeper in the gulf of vain super-

stition. Their strength and pride increased, while Israel, God's witnesses, were brought low through their sin.

Now therefore, in these visions of Isaiah, God's fore-knowledge was to be revealed as brightly as His power had been in the days of old. His mercies to Abraham and Israel, "the former things," are here made a pledge of their own "latter end," that is, of the victories of Cyrus, and the Return of exiled Israel. The type and earnest in Abraham's victory is first rescued from the ignorance and neglect of the heathen, and fully set forth anew, that men may consider and learn its latter end, the raising up of Cyrus. This would be like a crown to the series of God's mighty acts for the preservation of the chosen race, till the true Seed of Abraham, the predicted Immanuel, should appear.

Thus the plain announcement of Cyrus, even by name, xlv. 28, xlv. 1, the stumblingblock of sceptical critics, is the very ground and basis of this solemn and majestic appeal. Those who seek to degrade these chapters into forgeries after Cyrus had arisen and prospered, only range themselves, in this great controversy, side by side with the idolatrous heathen of Isaiah's days.

CH. XLII. 1—16.

v. 1. The great controversy of God with the whole heathen world is here continued, and passes into a higher stage. His power and dominion, from the earliest ages; His foreknowledge, wherein idol gods have no share, confirmed anew by the prediction of Cyrus and his conquests; and lastly, His goodness and mercy in

bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. 2 He will not cry, nor lift up *his voice*, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. 3 A bruised reed will he not break, and the smoking flax he will not quench; he will bring forth judgment unto truth. 4 He will not fail nor be discouraged, until he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law.

5 THUS saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: 6 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

the gift of the promised Redeemer, are a threefold ground of appeal to the rebellious nations. The idols had been challenged to shew, either the latter end of the former things, or the more distant future, things still later in time. The challenge they could not meet is here answered in God's own message. As xli. 25 announced the victories of Cyrus, so here the promise of Messiah is a revelation of still later marvels of Divine Providence.

"Behold!" This word is a contrast to vv. 24, 29, where God proclaims the heathen idols to be worthless. But here He sets before the islands and nations an object worthy of all admiration and reverence, the Seed of the woman, promised so long, and more lately by Isaiah himself, ch. vii., the Divine Saviour and Redeemer of a guilty world. The favour of the LORD, resting largely on this His Servant, is the ground of an appeal to all mankind. So the Baptist in the Gospel: "Behold the Lamb of God!" The Son of God, from His birth, was His Father's delight and good pleasure in the midst of sinful men (Lu. ii. 14). "Judgment" here denotes true righteousness, or "the end of the commandment, love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."

vv. 2—4. This coming Saviour is described, first, in His personal character; next, in His tender care for the weak of the flock; then, in the completeness of His work of mercy, and its final triumph. In Him the utmost gentleness will be joined with unwearied energy of patient love. He cares for the weak, but in Him

there is no weakness. He will not be dim or faint, like the smoking flax, nor crushed or feeble, like the bruised reed. The Hebrew words correspond in the two verses. With more than a woman's tenderness He will unite more than manly strength and firmness in His great work of love.

"Unto truth." Truth is not named as the instrument, but the object of His work. So in the LXX, "unto victory." To plant truth in the hearts and lives of the Gentiles will be the object of Messiah's labour; and it will not cease, till this truth has its full victory in the hearts of His servants. The fruit of the Spirit is "in all goodness, righteousness, and truth." The work will be as wide as deep, and shall never cease till "all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God." The "waiting" of the isles may include their longing for the Gospel before its publication; but refers chiefly to the reverent acceptance of the words of Christ by Gentile nations, as their ground of hope for present peace and eternal glory.

vv. 5—8. The great Creator, the Mighty One, here proclaims Himself to be also the mighty Redeemer. It is the God of the spirits of all flesh, who has ordained Messiah to be the life and salvation of a fallen world. The people, in v. 5, are mankind; but in v. 6 the word seems to denote Israel, in contrast to the Gentiles. Jesus was to "die for that nation," though not for that nation only. The Gospel is the power of God "to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."

v. 7. "To open the blind eyes." This renews the promise, xxxv. 5, where it is



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* JEHOVAH, that *is* my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

9 THE former things, behold! they are come to pass: and new things do I *now* 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; 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 dwellers on the

equally joined with the coming of the Lord to save His people. This Servant of the Lord is Immanuel, the Mighty God, no less than the Prince of peace. Our Lord's outward miracles must be included in the promise. But the main reference is to the removal of spiritual blindness, and release from the prison-house of sin and the grave. It forms the ground of St Paul's commission—"Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles to whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God." The world, and also the soul of man, is a dark place till the Gospel comes; and, whenever the Gospel is rejected, sinks rapidly into moral darkness again.

v. 8. The name Jehovah is here emphatic, as in Ex. vi. 2—8, Mal. iii. 6. This name of God, as the Self-existent, the Unchangeable, stands out thus in full relief at the beginning, middle, and close, of the times of the Law. There is also an allusion to ch. xli. 4. He, who made known His power in the days of Abraham, abides the same even to the end. He will never cease from His works of power, till every idol is abolished, and all nations are made subject to the Son of His love. Christ is no rival, but a sharer, in His Father's glory, whose will is "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father."

v. 9. The true order of the words, as restored above, adds to the vividness of this striking prophecy.

"The former things" have been variously

explained, as the promise of the Exodus to Abraham (Jarchi); Isaiah's predictions of the fall of the Assyrian (Kimchi, Hend.); the earlier, in contrast with the later, victories of Cyrus (Knobel); the times of Cyrus, in contrast with those of Messiah (Vitr., Rosenm., Stier, Hahn); or indefinitely, all earlier prophecies then fulfilled (Calv., Alex.). The meaning, as before expounded, will include the times of the Law and the Prophets, filled up by their latter end, the times of restored Judah after the Captivity. The new things announced are the days of Messiah and the New Covenant. The events foretold in this chapter were thus to form a wholly new era in the history of the world.

vv. 10—16. This "new song" answers to the mention of new things in the former verse. The reference to the days of Cyrus is thus excluded, and also by the grandeur of the whole description. In xli. 25 was predicted the latter end of the former things, but here the latter end of the new things, the things to come.

All the prophets bear witness that ages of forbearance are to issue in signal judgment on Messiah's adversaries, who "obey not the Gospel," 2 Thess. i. 8. In Ps. xcvi. all creation are called on, in like manner, to rejoice because the Lord is coming to judge the earth. In v. 14 a contrast is drawn between God's long-suffering during the times of the Gospel, and His holy anger to be at last revealed. In v. 15 we read the effect of the Lord's presence, when He comes in flaming fire; and in v. 16 His

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. 13 The LORD will go forth as a mighty man, he will stir up jealousy like a man of war: he will cry, yea, roar; he will prevail against his enemies. 14 I have a long time holden my peace; I have been still, *and* refrained myself; *now* will I cry like a travailing woman; 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 they knew not; in paths *which* they knew not will I lead them: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: even these things will I do unto them, and I will not forsake them.

unchanging love and care towards His ransomed people in this hour of solemn judgment. Then, at length, that great controversy of the Most High with rebellious nations, which began with the Call of Abraham, will reach a triumphant and solemn close. In v. 16 we have the true goal, just as in xxxv. 10, when the ransomed of the Lord, guided by His watchful love, return with singing to Zion, and sorrow and sighing flee away.

v. 10. The new song is to celebrate new acts of God's power in the last days, when His redemption shall be complete. "From the ends of the earth" does not mean "at the extremities" (Ges., Hend.), which is much less expressive. The streams of joy are to flow together from these ends of the earth to their common source and centre. "Ye that go down to the sea" means, those who embark in their vessels on the sea, including all who pass over it. The isles include the maritime lands (Hend.), but the received version is more simple and expressive.

v. 11. Our version gives the true force of the Hebrew future. The sea and the islands may represent the lands of the west; the wilderness, and the tent-villages of Kedar, those of the east. The troubled sea and lonely desert complete a moral picture of the heathen world.

"The dwellers on the rock." Some take Sela here for a proper name referring to Petra, the capital of Edom (Vit., Mich., Hend.). But even if there be such an allusion, the received version is much to be preferred. The earth, the sea, the

islands, the desert, the rock, and the mountain, all parts of creation alike, are to yield their united tribute of praise to these works of God. Some translate v. 14 "I will pant and gasp at once." But the usual version (Kimchi, Calv., Grot., Hitzig, Hend.) agrees better with the grandeur of the description. The figure of a travailing woman is confined to one point only, the loud outcry. The main thought is that the righteous anger of God is in course of swift execution.

v. 16. The emphasis is improved by retaining the Hebrew order. Some translate, "These are the words, I have done them, and not left them," *i.e.* undone. But this is not more exact, and the thought feebler. The future tense (Heb.) is simply to denote the sureness of the promise, and answers nearly to our emphatic future, with the stress on the auxiliary;— I WILL do them, as surely as if already done.

The close of this section answers to its opening. The true Lord, who had guided Abraham of old by a way that he knew not, so that he pursued his enemies, and passed safely, will also guide His people in the last generations of the world, and bring them, even through dark and rugged pathways, to a home of perfect rest. This beautiful promise completes and crowns the whole message. All the dark mysteries of Providence, which may seem now, even to God's servants, utterly inscrutable, will find a blessed solution in the coming kingdom of Christ and of God.

## § 3. GOD'S CONTROVERSY WITH ISRAEL.

## CHAP. XLII. 17—XLIV. 5.

THE controversy between Jehovah and the heathen idolaters has been brought to a close. It reaches from the call and victory of Abraham, the friend of God, to the triumph of Messiah's kingdom in the last days. The message now returns to Israel. The plea against them had begun in the earlier Prophecies, and heaven and earth were called as witnesses of their guilt, i. 2. It is now resumed in a gentler tone, like the calm expostulation of a loving friend. A great law of God's moral government is announced, the certain shame of all idolaters. This truth no favour to the chosen people can set aside. Israel have shared in this sin of the heathen, and it has been aggravated by their clearer knowledge and greater mercies. Their guilt is further revealed by contrast with the Messiah, in whom the calling they had profaned would be truly fulfilled. There are next foretold, in succession, their deliverance from Babylon, their stubborn ingratitude, and the final outpouring on them of the Spirit of God.

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 Ye deaf, hear! and ye blind, look that ye may see! 19 Who is blind but my Servant? or deaf, as my messenger *that* I shall send? who is blind as the perfect one,

## CH. XLII. 17—25.

vv. 18—21. These words are commonly applied to the Jewish people. Of recent critics Dr Henderson, almost alone, refers them to the Messiah. But his exposition of them as ironical, or the language of the Jews, is open to very weighty objection. On the usual view the title "the servant of God" would be used twice emphatically, and in close succession, in two different senses. This objection is only strengthened by the fruitless attempt to join Messiah and the nation together, in both places, as the common subject. The title, perfect, cannot be applied, without great violence, to those whose sin is denounced in the same context, and belongs naturally to our Lord alone.

The guilt and shame of the people is here enforced by direct contrast with the true Israel, the Prince who has power with God. Blind and deaf in spirit, not in their outward senses, they are to fix their eyes on Him, that sight and hearing may be restored. Theirs was the blindness and deafness of idolatry and self-

righteous pride. He too is blind and deaf, but in a sense wholly opposite, by unspeakable forbearance and grace. So Ps. xxxviii. 13, "I as a deaf man heard not, and I was as one dumb, that openeth not his mouth." The Gospels renew the same picture, Joh. viii. 6—11. It is the same with the Divine perfection in Balaam's message;—"He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel." The person named is that Messenger whom the Lord was about to send, Joh. x. 36. He is the Perfect One, alone pure and sinless; the Lord's Servant, whose gentleness and patience have been described before, and who is to set judgment in the earth. On this view the repeated question, Who is blind as He? has a deep significance. Where sin has abounded, grace still more abounds. The marvel of Israel's blind idolatry and unbelief is to be surpassed by a greater marvel of love and grace in Israel's Redeemer, who sees as though He saw not, and hears as though He heard not, when He visits His

and blind as the LORD's servant? 20 Seeing many things, and thou wilt not observe; opening the ears, and *yet* he will not hear. 21 The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake: he will magnify the law, and make *it* honourable.

22 BUT this *is* a people plundered 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. 23 Who among you will give ear to this? *who* will hearken, and hear for the time to come? 24 Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the plunderers? did not the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? and they would not walk in his ways, and did not hearken to his law. 25 Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath burned him round about, yet he knew it not; and it hath set him on fire, yet he will not lay it to heart.

people in great mercy, to pity and to save.

v. 20. The blindness of this Servant of the Lord is now explained, with allusion to the promise, xxxv. 5, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped." It is the free choice of patient love. He can open the ears of the deaf, but refuses to hear the sounds of strife and violence. Every sense is awake for mercy. He gives voice, hearing, sight, to the dumb, the deaf, and the blind; but is deaf and blind Himself in refusing to judge when He comes to save. Thus men are blessed, God is glorified, and the excellence of God's righteous law of perfect love is for ever revealed.

v. 22. "Plundered." The word is the same as x. 6, and refers to military violence and heathen conquest, rather than accidental robberies. The contrast is the same as in ii. 1—5, 6—22. The glorious vision of Messiah's patient love is followed by a sorrowful prophecy of Israel's degradation. The warning, x. 6, there applied to the Assyrian, is here extended to the Chaldean desolations. Spiritual blindness is the procuring cause, the effects are outward calamity and political ruin. The words apply to the whole series of changes from the first deportation of Ephraim to the completed captivity of Judah.

v. 23. Some explain this verse as a reproachful exclamation—Who among

you hearkens to this? marks and hears what is to come? (Calv., Stier). But it is rather a wondering search for the small remnant, who will lay the message to heart amidst the general unbelief. These are invited to lay up the prophecy in their memories, until its truth shall be triumphantly revealed.

v. 24. The truth all are invited, but few of them are willing to learn, is that disobedience to God's voice is the real source of all their troubles. Their exile and captivity, their hiding in holes and corners, was no work of mere chance, but the direct result of their persevering idolatry, and contempt for the messages of God. The implied affirmation changes, in the last clause, to a direct assertion of their guilt. The words are either those of the prophet; or of the Word of God, condescending to antedate the time when He would actually take upon Himself the iniquities of His people.

v. 25. These words announce the gross blindness of Israel down to the completion of the Captivity, and their refusal to learn the true cause of their national sorrow. The future (Heb.) in the last clause implies the lasting nature of the blindness. The two words for burning, in the received version, are correctly given xliii. 2, but their force is transposed in this verse. Israel were scorched or burned round about, as a body may be by sur-

## CHAP. XLIII. THE CONTROVERSY CONTINUED.

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 JEHOVAH *am* thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I have given Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in thy stead. 4 Because thou hast been precious in my sight, thou hast been honoured, and I have loved thee; and I will give men instead of 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

rounding flames, and even set on fire, like dry fuel, itself inflammable. The double promise corresponds, "Thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

## CH. XLIII.

vv. 1, 2. The dark picture of Israel's shame is here followed by gracious promises, sealed by the most glorious titles of Israel's God. The direct reference is to the Return from the Captivity of Babylon. But there is a double allusion to the iron furnace of Egypt, and to the passage of the Red Sea and of the Jordan at the Exodus.

v. 3. The above translation seems the best (Hend.). Others render in the present, "I give Egypt for thy ransom" (Stier, Hahn). But this, admitting the future reference of the promise, is less vivid and exact. The name, Jehovah, is here emphatic. The Unchangeable God proclaims His threefold relation to His own people. He is their God, theirs by covenant. He is their Holy One, in contrast to the unholy vanities of the heathen idols. He is also their Saviour, pledged by promise to deliver them.

v. 4. The word here used is not a limit of time, as if once it had been otherwise, but assigns the reason of all the benefits that follow. Israel had been precious, not from yesterday, but in God's eternal counsel of love. The first effect of this

cause was the honour Israel had received. The words "I have loved thee" are a second and further effect of the same kind, and not merely the cause of what follows. Love is here used for those visible acts in which it finds expression. The two main consequences of God's favour were the honour of His people, and the outgoings of His love to them. One special form in which these would be seen was the appointment of other nations as their ransom, through whose humiliation and judgment they were to be delivered.

The statement has been variously referred to the Exodus (Jarchi), the campaigns of Sargon or Sennacherib (Kimchi, Calv., Grot.), the later conquest of Egypt and Meroe or Seba by Cambyses (Gesen., Hend., Stier, Hahn), or else taken as a general expression, like a proverb, with no precise application (Rosenm., Jahn, Alex.). But when we compare xlv. 14, and remember that in the time of Isaiah Egypt, Cush, and Seba were united under one dynasty, this last view must seem highly improbable.

An earlier vision, ch. xix. has foretold that Egypt would be given over to cruel lords, and a fierce king rule over them; when the name of Judah would become a terror from the manifested power of the God of Israel. Thus its future humiliation was to run side by side with Judah's

west. 6 I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth: 7 *Even* every one that is called by my name, *whom* I have created 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 may

deliverance. The words, here also, seem to announce some main fact of God's Providence, wherein the abasement of Egypt and Ethiopia would form a kind of political contrast to the redemption of Israel. Mercy and judgment run parallel in the moral history of the world. In the days of the Gospel the rejection of the Jews accompanied the call of the Gentiles. So also the mercy to Israel, on the return from Babylon, was to be attended with a lasting abasement of Egypt and its border lands by the very same power of Persia, which was God's instrument for that deliverance. The more general promise, v. 4, does not set aside, but rather confirm, the historical reference of the previous verse.

vv. 5—7. Some apply these verses strictly to the Call of the Gentiles (Vitr., Alex.). But the passage, Matt. viii. 11, is no warrant for this view, since Israel and the Gentiles are there plainly contrasted, Matt. viii. 10, Isa. xliii. 1. The direct promise is made to Israel in vv. 5, 6; while v. 7 is not a separate sentence, (Hahn), but defines and enlarges the promise just given. The people of Israel were called by the name of God, and His glory was involved in their deliverance. They were created, formed, and made, to be His witnesses. He was dishonoured among the heathen by their captivity, and for His name's sake He would gather them once more. Only not all who were of Israel would be gathered, but only those who were called by the Divine name; and not the natural seed only, but also those who were of the faith

of Abraham, the Gentile proselytes, who were to be grafted in.

v. 8. Many take this verse as an affirmation, and render variously, "I will bring forth" (Calv. Ewald), or "he hath brought forth" (Hitz., Knob., Alex., Hahn). Also in different senses, as a promise of Jewish restoration (Hitzig, &c.), a warning of their dispersion (Hahn), or a prediction of the Call of the Gentiles (Calv., Alex.). But the Hebrew form is imperative, Gen. xix. 12, while this rendering alone suits the context (A. V., Rabbis, Luth., Vitr., Gesen., Hend., Stier). The clause "that have eyes," lit. "and they have eyes," has been expounded, "that they may see," (Calv.), or "that now see" and "that now hear" (Stier, Alex.). But there is a plain contrast between eyes and ears and the senses of sight and hearing.

The true meaning is that clearly implied in the received version. The unbelieving Jews, and all the Gentiles, who have indeed eyes and ears, but still are spiritually deaf and blind, are called upon to contemplate the foreknowledge of God, as displayed in these predictions. The raising up of Cyrus from the sunrise, the sudden overthrow of Babylon, the prompt deliverance and return of captive Israel, the living God alone could reveal so long before. The main appeal had been once to the Almighty power of God. But in these predictions of Isaiah we reach a second stage of the same controversy with Jewish and heathen idolatry, in which the main appeal is to God's foreknowledge.

v. 10. The Jews were God's witnesses,

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 shewn, and I have saved, and have declared, and no strange god *that is* among you : and ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, and I *am* God. 13 Yea, since time *was*, I *am* He ; and *there is* none that can deliver out of my hand : I work, and who shall reverse it ?

14 THUS saith the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel : For your sakes I have sent to Babylon, and I have brought down all of them in flight ; and the Chaldeans, their cry *shall be* in their ships. 15 I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.

both by the facts of their history, and as the guardians of these prophecies, till One greater, the Faithful and True Witness, should appear.

"And my Servant whom I have chosen." The two titles of Messiah, xlii. 1, are here joined in one. This application of the words (Hahn, Stier, &c.) agrees with the latter passage, lv. 3, "Behold! I have given him for a witness to the people." So Rev. iii. 14. The other construction (Rosenm., Alex., Hahn), "Ye are my witnesses, and ye are my servant," is harsh and unnatural. There is the same contrast here as in xlii. 19—21, and v. 22, between the people generally, and the Messiah they would disown.

"That ye may know, &c." The object of these testimonies is here defined. The Jews were to know God's promise, believe in Him who gave it, and understand God's unchanging love to Israel. The last clause is a lofty irony. Jehovah proclaims that there was no manufacture of idol gods in the past eternity, and that there shall be none in the ages to come.

vv. 11—13. The pronoun, thrice repeated, is emphatic. It marks the entire contrast between the true God and all creatures, and still more, vain idols and shadows. The words that follow are a strong, indirect proof of our Lord's true Divinity. God had shewn the former things, the deliverance from Babylon, xli. 22 a. He had saved, or fulfilled the promise by actually delivering them ; and He had also "declared the things to come," xli. 22 b, the later mercies of Messiah. "And no strange god that is

among you," lit. "and there is no strange god among you" (who hath done or can do it). To give such prophecies, and fulfil them, is beyond the power of heathen idols. Their history as Jews was a series of testimonies to the power and goodness of God.

"And I am God." This simpler rendering is the most emphatic. This great truth is much more than merely the object of their testimony. It is the fountain from which all their testimony proceeds, and the ocean into which their whole history returns.

v. 13. "I am that I am" is the name and description of the true God from the beginning. With Him is no variability, or shadow of turning. His power also is irresistible. There is a double reference to xiv. 27, "who shall turn it away?" and to the message of Balaam, "Yea, and he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it."

vv. 14, 15. The Chaldeans are specially mentioned, as the ruling or dominant race. These, the most warlike, would not only flee, but utter cries of distress, in the ships where they would seek refuge. Their ships would resound with outcries, not their palaces with festal songs. This is no fresh section of the prophecy (Delitzsch &c.). The pronouns alone shew that it continues the previous address to the Jewish people. The word *barichim*, "nobles" A. V., has been rendered "fugitives" (LXX.) or "bars" (Vulg.). The fugitives, again, have been taken for the same with the Chaldeans, or distinct ; and the bars,

16 THUS saith the LORD, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; 17 Which bringeth forth the chariot and the horse, the army and the power; They shall lie down together, they shall not rise; they are extinct, they are quenched as tow: 18 Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. 19 Behold, I will do a new thing; now shall it spring forth, shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert. 20 The beasts of the field shall honour me, the jackals and the ostriches; because I give waters in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. 21 This people have I formed for myself: they shall shew forth my praise.

22 BUT thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob: but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel. 23 Thou hast not brought me the

literal, as xlv. 3, or figurative, nobles or soldiers (Hend.). The last clause has been rendered "in their ships of pleasure," "whose song is in their ships," or "whose cry (*i. e.* of distress) is in their ships." The true sense seems to be "as fugitives" or more tersely "in flight."

vv. 16—21. The fall of Babylon has been foretold with the preface, "Thus saith the LORD." With the same preface, the Israelites are now reminded of the mighty power of God at the Exodus, where chariot and horse, army and power, fell under the stroke of His hand. Those earlier acts of judgment are to be followed by new things, works of mercy more excellent than "the former things," the Return from Babylon, or than "the things of old," the deliverance from Egypt. The Branch of the Lord (*Tsemach*) shall grow up to David, Is. iv. 2; Jer. xxiii. 5, "now shall it spring forth (*titamach*), shall ye not know it?" The fulfilment was to be sure, and would not disappoint them. The LORD, the Shepherd of His people, would appear, according to the earlier promise, xxxv. 6, when rivers should break out in the desert. The "new thing" most moderns apply to the Return, but the Christian Fathers and Jewish Talmudists to the times of Messiah (Kinchi, Abarb., Jarchi, Vitruv., Stier, &c.). The event predicted is some greater anti-type of the desert journey in the days of Moses. But the Return from Babylon, Ezra ix. 8, fell very greatly short of the

wonders of the Exodus, however striking as a fulfilment of express prophecies. This seems a strong proof of the Messianic reference.

v. 20. "The jackals and the ostriches" (Hahn, Stier, &c.). This seems probably the true meaning of the names. But the main idea is that of beasts and birds, accustomed to haunt dry, solitary, and desolate places. Some expound the words, that these creatures will honour God, as sharing in the benefit of the streams (Rosenm., Knobel); others, that it is a figure for the conversion of the Gentiles (Hahn), or else relates to the share of the animal world in the coming redemption (Stier). The meaning is rather that they would forsake haunts no longer dry and solitary, and thereby rendered unsuitable for their home. It seems thus an emblem of a deeper truth. God will be glorified in the expulsion of those unclean spirits, which have haunted so long the moral wastes of a sinful world, when, by the outpouring of His Spirit, the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. The next verse is a keystone to the whole arch of promise. God must without fail be glorified in those whom He has formed for Himself, to shew forth His praise.

vv. 22—25. The Israelites are here condemned for their failure in the duties of holy worship. Their sin was partly of omission, partly that of idol offerings, and worship in high places, instead of God's



small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices: I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense. 24 Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices; but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. 25 I, *even* I, *am* he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. 26 Put me in remembrance, let us plead together: recount *thy works*, that thou mayest be justified. 27 Thy chief father hath sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against me. 28 So I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and I will give Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.

own temple, partly weariness and reluctance, and partly also their self-righteous pride. Even the law of sacrifices, when seen and used aright, was "holy and just and good." It was a wise discipline for their infant faith, and its neglect or perversion formed one main part of their national guilt. Their sin is here exposed in its deep ingratitude, that the pardoning grace of God, by contrast, might be more clearly and fully revealed.

v. 22. The renderings, "thou hast not called me" (Luth., Mich., Alex., Stier) and "thou hast been a weariness to me" (Hahn) are less natural than the received version, and unsuited to the context. God's people may choose Him who has first chosen them, but cannot call Him, as He calls them: they only call upon Him. Also the weariness of God with the sins of His people forms the climax and crown, not the opening, of this rebuke.

The complaint has been referred to, 1st, Jewish idolatry, "not to me, but to idols." But here idols are not once named. 2nd, The cessation of sacrifices in the exile. But this could be no sin, and no reason for so stern a rebuke, no proof of their weariness in God's service. 3rd, The reign of Ahaz or Manasseh, when the temple was closed. This is more reasonable, but seems too limited to account for the form of the censure. 4th, The worthlessness of the sacrifices in themselves (Stier). "Thou hast not called on me, while thou hast wearied thyself in serving me." But the render-

ing is harsh, and does not agree with the verses that follow. There is nothing Judaical (Stier) in the doctrine that the Jews were guilty before God for their neglect of the sacrifices He had ordained, or for so offering them as to make them an abomination. The law of sacrifice was burdensome through the carnal mind of the worshippers, and every precept becomes a burden without faith and love. Else it might have yielded them constant lessons of Divine grace and of spiritual wisdom.

v. 24. The sweet cane, calamus aromaticus, is in high esteem in India, Western Asia, and Africa. It was an article of traffic often brought from a distance, Jer. vi. 20, and a main ingredient in the holy anointing oil, Ex. xxx. 23. The structure of the three verses is peculiar. The first part of each recounts the sins of the Jewish people. The second half has three kindred statements. "Thou hast been weary of me, O Israel." "I have not wearied thee with incense." "Thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities." The ways of God were equal, theirs most unequal and ungrateful.

v. 26. A complaint of the people is implied, that their sins were harshly remembered, and their good works and merits forgotten. They are called upon to state their own case, and to remind God of their good works, if they have any to produce that can justify them. On the contrary, their religious teachers and guides had been foremost in sin.

v. 27. "Thy chief father hath sinned."

## CHAP. XLIV. 1—5. THE CONTROVERSY CLOSED.

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, Jeshurun, 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.

This title has received most diverse explanations. It has been referred to Adam (Kimchi, Crusius, Kurtz, Hitzig, Umbreit, Knobel), to Abraham (Jerome, Jarchi, Mich., Hahn, Stier), to Jacob (Beck, Ewald), to Saul (Kimchi), Jeroboam (Aben Ezra), to Manasseh (Grot.), and to Uriah the high-priest (Vitr.), to their ancestors collectively (Pauli, Gesen., Maurer), to their leaders (Hensler, Rosenm.), and to the series of high-priests (Hend.).

A reference to Adam seems out of place in a special charge against the chosen people. Unmentioned sins of Abraham could hardly be a cause of the Babylonian Captivity. If the epithet, "first," relates to time, the most natural reference will be to Jacob, the first father of the nation, from whom they were named, whose sin occasioned an exile like that awaiting his children. But it may be a term of rank, as when Michael is called "one of the chief princes." The whole context refers to those Levitical services, in which the Jews were so ready to trust. Hence the High-priest seems really meant, not one person, but the series from Aaron onward, as forming one political person, the chief head of the whole system of Jewish worship. Aaron had eminently sinned in that worship of the golden calf, which is expressly said to be one cause of the later captivity, Ex. xxiii. 34; Ez. xx. 23. Eli, Abiathar, Uriah,

and Seraiah, are all marked in the sacred history for public sins in the high-priesthood. Still later, it was the high-priest who chiefly filled up the cup of national guilt in the murder of our Lord, the martyrdom of Stephen, and the attempted assassination of the Apostle of the Gentiles, when the wrath came upon them to the uttermost. The tense "I will give," naturally implies a date of the prophecy before the fall of the temple and the deportation of Judah.

## CH. XLIV.

vv. 1—5. In contrast to this dark picture of guilt, the promises of mercy shine out once more. The previous titles of Messiah are now applied to the whole people, when rescued from their rebellion by the outpouring of the Spirit of God. Instead of Pharisaic services, or Sadducean ungodliness, they would dedicate themselves wholly and heartily to the God of Israel.

The name, Jeshurun, alludes to the Pentateuch, where alone it occurs Deut. xxxii. 15, xxxiii. 26. Out of many renderings that which suits best the context of these three places is the passive sense, "rightly guided," the people whom God was leading by a right way to some blessed issue. The controversy with Israel, like that with the heathen, closes here with a prophecy of the full victory of redeeming love.

## § 4. THE REDEMPTION OF ISRAEL.

## CHAP. XLIV. 6—XLV. 25.

THE message here reverts from "the new things," the future outpouring of the Spirit on all the people of Israel, to the controversy with idolatry in Isaiah's days. The King of Israel, his Redeemer, the First and the Last, are all titles given expressly to our Lord in the New Testament, Joh. i. 49; Luk. xxiv. 21; Gal. iv. 5; Rev. i. 11, ii. 8, xxii. 13. The main subject, then, is Israel's redemption from first to last, and the words "beside me there is no God," are the text of that stern condemnation of idolatry with which this new division of the prophecy begins.

Ch. xlv. continues the message by a direct voice of the LORD, addressed to Cyrus himself. There is no real confusion between the words of the LORD and those of the Prophet. Throughout these later visions the Prophet rarely, if ever, speaks distinctly in his own person. The word of God, or the Spirit of God, speaks by His servant; and this occasions and explains the frequent and striking interchange of persons in the message.

The title, anointed, is always applied elsewhere to Jewish priests and kings. Only Elijah was told to anoint Hazeel, to execute God's judgment on Israel. So Cyrus is here the LORD's anointed for their deliverance. The name, Koresh, is probably from the Persian *Khor*, the sun. He was to be raised up from the sun-rise, xli. 25, as our LORD is called the Day-spring. In the three titles, the LORD's shepherd, the LORD's anointed, the Redeemer of Israel, the typical character of this monarch stands out in clear relief.

One parallel only occurs to this mention of the name so long before. King Josiah was also named three centuries before his birth. That prophecy spans the whole range of the divided kingdom, from Jeroboam, who set up the calves, to the last days of Judah before their captivity. In like manner the last event named before this vision is the embassy of Merodach, which was the first public contact of Judah with Babylon; while its fulfilment was at the death of Belshazzar, the last Chaldean king. Thus it ranges over the whole period of temptation and oppression from heathen Babylon. Josiah was God's appointed instrument of judgment, after more than three centuries, on the public idolatry of Israel, the calves of Bethel and of Dan; and Cyrus had just the same office towards the oppressive and idolatrous power of Babylon. In each case the warning ranges over a whole period of national sin.

The heathen testimonies to the character of Cyrus are very striking. Herodotus writes of him: "He was gentle, and planned for his people all good things." "In whatever direction Cyrus might march, it was impossible for that nation to escape." Yet Plutarch thinks him too niggardly in his praise, and says of Cyrus that "in wisdom and valour and greatness of soul he seems to have been by far the foremost of all kings." Thus no other heathen monarch could be more suited to be a type of that greater and nobler King, the True Shepherd, and the Anointed of the LORD.

## § 4 (1). CHAP. XLIV. 6—28. THE FOLLY OF IDOLS.

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, can ordain, and announce it, and set it in order for me, ever since I appointed the ancient people? and coming things, and those which shall come, can they shew unto them? 8 Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared *it?* and are not ye my witnesses? Is there a Rock beside me? yea, *there is* no God; I know not *any*.

9 THEY that make a graven image *are* all of them vanity, and their costly things cannot profit; and their witnesses *are* these things, *which* see not and know not, that they may be

v. 6. "Thus saith the LORD." This weighty preface occurs twelve times in the first division of these later prophecies. Here, as in ch. l. and lvi., it begins a new section or subdivision. The two controversies against heathen and Jewish idolatry are here combined in one, against all idols, their makers, and their worshippers.

v. 7. The word "call" seems here to mean "call into being," or ordain, future things. Next comes their announcement in prophecy, and last, their actual fulfilment. The limit named is either "ever since the first generations of the world," or "ever since the covenant with Abraham," which was for a thousand generations. The predictions of mercy to Israel had begun so long before, and must continue in force till their redemption is complete. "Coming things" are the nearer future, and "those which shall come" the more remote; or the deliverance by Cyrus, and the days of Messiah, one of whose titles was "He that is to come," Mat. xi. 2. In these prophecies every reader is summoned to observe and recognize a foresight, superhuman and truly Divine.

v. 8. The servants of a God so wise and so mighty have no need to fear. His promises to Israel are not of yesterday, but from the days of their fathers. The pronoun, ye, is emphatic. The whole history of the Jews is one public testi-

mony to the reality and nature of God's moral government of the world. The true God is the only foundation of solid hope, a Rock to His people. There is no help whatever in idols, but in Him alone.

v. 9. These words have received five or six versions and expositions. The true sense is that the idols are witnesses against the idolaters (Chald., Jarchi, Kimchi, Belg., Hend.) rather than the idolaters against the idols or themselves (Calv., Vitruv., Ewald, Alex., Hahn, Stier). For this is both simpler in grammar, and more forcible in thought. The helplessness of the idols is still plainer than the folly of their worshippers, and is the proof of it. The word *their* refers to the makers and worshippers, and *these* to the objects of their worship. These neither see nor know, and the stupidity of the idols is the disgrace of those who adore them. The contrast with the previous verse is no reason against this construction, but makes in its favour. The rebuke is thus more severe. The true God has His people for His witnesses, being far above them. The false gods, the idols, on the contrary, are witnesses against their devotees, being still more worthless, utterly without sense or power.

v. 10. Some take this verse for an inquiry, which has its answer vv. 12, 13. But it is rather the voice of just surprise

ashamed. 10 Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image, that is profitable for nothing! 11 Behold! all its partners shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they *too are* of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; *yet* they shall fear, *and* they shall be ashamed together. 12 The maker of the iron axe both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with his powerful arm: also he is hungry, and his strength faileth; he drinketh no water, and is faint. 13 The carpenter stretcheth out *his* line, he marketh it out with pencil, he shapeth it with adzes, and he roundeth it off with a chisel, till he hath made it after the figure of a man, and the beauty of a man, to remain in the house. 14 He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the holm-tree and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest; he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish *it*.

and lofty indignation. Who and what are these parties, so mad and senseless, as to manufacture gods for their own worship! But since such madmen are to be found, let them hear their sentence from God. In ancient or modern times the practice, *Quem creant adorant*, betokens the lowest depth of superstitious folly. The doom of all such is inevitable shame.

v. 11. The partners are those who share in this senseless worship. The god ought to be above its worshippers, the maker above what he makes. Here maker and worshipper are both on the same level. The god is made, the thing made is worshipped. Whatever their numbers or strength, these idols and idolaters lie all under one common sentence of utter confusion.

v. 12. The folly of the idols is doubly shewn, from the process of their manufacture, and the perishable materials of which they are made. They are fashioned by the carpenter with his tools, and those tools themselves by other workmen. These tools are made with wearisome labour. The trees are planted and watered, to provide materials. The idol is then cut out with toil and care, and all the rest of the tree serves for fuel, by which bread is baked, and meat is roasted. What ignominy and disgrace, to worship such a god as this! The maker of the axe, the

adze, and the chisel, hungers and faints over his work. Still feebler and more worthless is the tool he makes, most worthless of all the idol, which that tool fashions in its turn.

v. 13. The word, *sered*, some explain chalk, or minium, rubbed upon the line in order to leave a trace. Perhaps it is rather the pencil, by which a trace is directly made (Aquil., Talm., Hend.). The word "compass" A. V., is from a root "to go round." But here, from the connexion, it must denote a finishing tool, a curved chisel, by which the shape is rounded off at the last. The idol, when made, is helpless. It "remains in the house," because it cannot stir from the spot where its owner has placed it.

vv. 14—17. The tree from which the idol is made must be planted and grow, and needs the rain of heaven to nourish it. When it has been cut down, it is only fuel. The idolater uses half of it to warm himself; or to bake bread, and roast flesh, by which he strengthens himself for the task of turning the other half into a god to which he may pray. Thus the making of the tools; the fashioning of the idol, the growth of the tree out of which it is made, and the use of the wood for fuel, are a fourfold condemnation of the senseless worshipper.

"Which he strengtheneth for himself." Some render, "which he deemeth firm"

15 Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth *it*, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth *it*; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. 16 He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth *himself*, and saith, Aha, I am warm: I have seen the fire: 17 And the residue thereof he maketh a god, *even* his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth *it*, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me, for thou *art* my God! 18 They have not known nor understood; for their eyes are smeared, that they cannot see, *and* their hearts, that they cannot perceive. 19 And none considereth 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

(Hend.), or "lets grow strong" (Hahn, Stier). In this case there would be a gradation of full-grown cedars, half-grown cypress and oak, and ash newly planted. But the meaning is rather that he chooses out a strong one (Kimchi). The nature of the case excludes the strictly causative sense, and selection is its nearest equivalent. The "cypress" is perhaps strictly the "ilex" or holm-oak, but the exact species is quite secondary to the main thought. The Hebrew tenses cannot be retained without sacrifice of our own idiom, and the received version seems judicious in using the present only. The real contrast between the planting and the nourishing is not of past and future, but of a momentary act and a continuous process.

vv. 16, 17. The repetition in these two verses, slightly varied from those before them, and their structure, serves to express more vividly the assiduity and zeal of these idolaters in their senseless worship. Earnestness alone is no proof whatever that worship is even lawful, much less acceptable to God.

v. 18. The received version, "he hath shut their eyes," or modified, "he hath smeared their eyes" (Hitzig, Knobel, Alex., Hahn), seems less correct in reality than the passive form, "their eyes are smeared," &c. (LXX., Chald., Jerome, Vitruvius, Gesenius, Hend., Stier, Delitzsch). However usual, in Scripture, the ascription to God of a judicial blinding of

sinner, it is here out of place, where God is himself the Speaker, and has not been named in the whole context. The force of the rebuke is thus greatly obscured. The active form may be retained, "it hath smeared their eyes," and the subject implied will be their practice of idolatry. The longer such corrupt worship is followed, the darker the understanding of the worshipper becomes.

v. 19. The whole force of this verse depends on the question at its close, in which the idolater is supposed to recognize and renounce indignantly his own folly. This indignant rejection of idols is what they have not the understanding to practise. The version, "I will make the residue...I will fall down to the stock of the tree" (Alex.), is wholly erroneous. Words of grossest folly could never be the sign of a restored understanding. The version, "I am making...I am falling down, &c." is allowable, but less emphatic than the interrogative form. The root *sagad* is used only in these four places of Isaiah, and in Daniel, with reference in both to Chaldean, idolatrous worship. Some render *bul*, produce (Knob., Delitzsch, al.). But the version, log or stock, (A. V., Roseman, Hend., Ewald), seems more natural.

v. 20. The lie in the right hand is not the idol itself, but the vain fancy, leading to a course of action wholly unreasonable, that a stock or stone can help and deliver. As soon as the light of truth

bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and have eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? 20 He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, *Is there* not a lie in my right hand?

21 REMEMBER these, O Jacob; and Israel, for thou *art* my servant: I have formed me, thou *art* a servant for me: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. 22 I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions; and as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. 23 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 will glorify himself in Israel.

enters the heart, what before had been worshipped as a god becomes a hateful abomination. Worship may be sincere and earnest, and still most abominable in the sight of God.

vv. 21—28. This moral hatefulness of heathen idolatry is also one main ground of Israel's redemption. The true God will not give His glory to another, nor His praise to graven images. His honour is engaged for the deliverance of those who are His own appointed witnesses against all idols. Creation would be a failure, and Providence a chaos without light or hope, if Israel were wholly forsaken, and not restored. The message, then, returns to them with hope and promise. They were to remember these idol practices of the heathen, and to learn from them, by contrast, the greatness of their own mercies.

The mention of Israel, v. 21, is here emphatic. The new name of the patriarch was given him on that night of wrestling, when as a prince he had power with God, and prevailed.

"Thou art a servant for me." The slight change of phrase conveys a distinct idea. Israel was the servant of God, not only in office, but in reality; a people whom He had created for His own glory, and was resolved to use for this end. The promise anticipates the unbelieving complaint, xlix. 14. The Assyrian Woe, the Chaldean Exile, were no real proof that God was unmindful of them. They

were only steps, by which they were to be cleansed from their idols, and made witnesses to the truth of God far and wide through the heathen world.

Many render, "thou shalt not forget me" (LXX., Syr., Vulg., Chald., Jarchi, Döderlein, Hitzig, Hend.). But the received version (Aben Ezra, Vitruvius, Lowth, Ewald, Knobel, Alex., Stier, Hahn, Delitzsch) is much more appropriate.

v. 22. The close of the captivity was to be a season of forgiving mercy and grace. As first the thick, dark cloud, and then the lighter cloud, are swept away by the wind, and there follows bright sunshine, and clear blue sky, so the tender mercy of God, like the dayspring, would shine brightly once more upon His people. Like the prodigal, He welcomes them back with gladness to the arms of His love, Zech. iii. 3—9.

v. 23. The lower parts of the earth may denote valleys in contrast to the mountains, but rather the more hidden depths in contrast to the heavens above. All nature is described as rejoicing together in Israel's promised deliverance.

"And will glorify himself." The future, alternating with the past, is used here and elsewhere to express the certainty of mercies or judgments still to come.

The return from Babylon was not only the type of a greater deliverance, but an essential step in the whole plan of redemption. Had it failed, the covenant with Abraham, the truth to Jacob, and

24 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; 25 That frustrateth the signs of the boasters, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise *men* backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish: 26 That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith of Jerusalem, She shall be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built: and I will raise up the ruins thereof. 27 That saith to the deep, Be dry; and I will dry up thy rivers: 28 That saith of Cyrus, *He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying

the promises of Messiah, would have failed together. Hence the whole universe is called upon to rejoice. It was a pledge of that stage of redemption, still future, when creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

v. 24. The general promise of mercy to Israel is here followed by a clear and full prediction of their deliverance. And this, from its importance, is opened by a solemn rehearsal of the attributes and perfections of God. The form of the address proves the intimate connexion with the verses just before, as the mention of Cyrus links the paragraph with the chapter that follows. The sentence, "Thus saith the Lord," refers to the five following verses. The Redeemer of Israel was also the Almighty Creator, and all his attributes would seal the prediction here about to be given. There is an allusion to the account of Jacob's birth, Gen. xxv. 22—26, Hos. xii. 3—5, Rom. ix. 11—13. The Exodus, also, was like a birth to the whole nation. The study of God's works of creation, in the spirit of humble reverence, is a help to His people, to confirm their trust in all the promises of His holy word.

v. 25. "The signs of the boasters." The word has been rendered, liars, prophets, impostors, babblers. By comparing xvi. 6 it appears to mean vain boasters, and to be used here with reference to false claims to prophetic foresight. The Chaldeans were famous for their astrology, and the arts of divination. The vanity of their pretended wisdom would be exposed,

when they could neither foresee nor avert the fall of their proud empire. This scattering of all delusion and falsehood, however subtle and pretentious, is one glorious prerogative of the God of truth.

v. 26. The servant here is plainly Isaiah himself, by whom this prediction was given. The "messengers" are the other prophets, by whom this message would be renewed and confirmed, or its truth publicly attested (Kimchi, Vitri., Alex., Hend., Stier, Hahn). Thus the display of God's foreknowledge in these visions of Isaiah is placed by God himself on the same level with the exhibition of His almighty power in the creation of the world. The idol gods of old heathenism, or the deified humanity of modern Pantheism, whose messengers cannot possibly declare anything beyond the reach of mere human foresight, have no claim to be rivals of the True and Living God, the Maker of heaven and earth.

v. 27. The last clause in this and the former verse may be viewed as a direct statement, depending on the opening words, I am the Lord. This sudden reversion deepens the emphasis of the passage. There is also a double allusion, one backward, to the passage of the Jordan and the Red Sea: and the other prophetic, to the parting of the Euphrates and Gyndes by Cyrus, as mentioned in the history of Herodotus. Taken in a deeper sense, the words predict the entire exhaustion of the strength and resources of the Chaldean Empire; in contrast to the earlier figure, viii. 8, of the Assyrian campaigns as a great Euphra-



of Jerusalem, She shall be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

§ 4 (2). CHAP. XLV. THE TIMES OF CYRUS AND MESSIAH.

THUS saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, 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 will make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: 3 And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden

tean overflow. So, in Rev. xvi. 12, a symbolical drying up of the Euphrates precedes the fall of the mystic Babylon.

v. 28. The mention of Cyrus by name is here the seal to the truth and consistency of the whole message. A dim or trivial prediction would be a strange and unnatural sequel to such a glorious array of the Divine titles and perfections. The preface, in its solemnity, and the prophecy, in its clearness and importance, now agree together. The fulfilment was minutely true. The Second Temple was founded under Cyrus, and through his decree, but founded only. Its completion and dedication were under Darius after twenty years' delay.

CH. XLV. CYRUS AND MESSIAH.

v. 1. The loosing is a contrast to the girding of the loins. It denotes the weakening of every adverse power, so that resistance would be vain. There is a special allusion to the night when the handwriting appeared on the wall, when "the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote together one against another." Dan. v. 6. The opening of the doors and gates has a similar reference to that night of revelry, when the river-gates were carelessly left unclosed.

v. 2. Sin infatuates, before it destroys. While Belshazzar and his nobles scoffed in their feasting, and drank wine, in scorn, in the vessels of God's temple, the warning of God, published so long before, was fulfilled, first in their folly, and then in their speedy ruin. "If now the Baby-

lonians had perceived beforehand, or learned what Cyrus was doing, they would, overlooking the entrance of the Persians, have destroyed them utterly. For by fastening all the gates towards the river, and themselves mounting on the walls along the river sides, they would have caught them as in a net. Now, however, the Persians come upon them unawares. Also from the size of the city, as those who live there report, when one end of it was taken, the Babylonians who lived in the middle did not know it; but as it happened to be a feast with them, they were dancing at the hour, and making merry, until indeed they knew it too well. And thus Babylon was taken for the first time." Herod. I. 191.

v. 3. The treasures which Cyrus took from Croesus, according to Pliny (Hist. Nat. xxxiii. 2. 15) were more than a hundred millions of our money. To these were afterwards added all the immense resources of Babylon, "the exactress of gold," of which the wealth was proverbial. But "riches profit not in the day of wrath."

A double lesson was to be taught this neat Conqueror by the prophecy and its fulfilment. First, that He who gave the promise, and fulfilled it, calling him by his name, was Jehovah, the one true and eternal God. And next, that He was also the God of Israel, who had especial favour to this chosen people. Both lessons have been learned when the decree, Ezr. i. 1—4, was published, and are embodied therein. The next verse unfolds the

riches of secret places ; that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, *am he* which call *thee* by thy name, the God of Israel. 4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I surname thee, though thou hast not known me. 5 I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else ; *there is* no God beside me: I will gird 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: I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else. 7 I form the light, and create darkness ; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these *things*.

8 DROP down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour

second, and the three that follow, the first, of these weighty truths. Great clearness in the prediction was almost essential, that one main purpose of its delivery, the moral effect upon Cyrus himself, might be fulfilled.

v. 4. One clause of this verse refers to the mention of his name, Cyrus, and the other to the titles of honour he receives, "my Shepherd," "my Anointed, whose right hand I have holden." The honour would be more striking, because Cyrus was a heathen, and knew not of the prophecy while he was fulfilling it. When Babylon had been taken, and not before, this prophecy would reach him through Daniel and the other exiles. The decrees in Ezra prove clearly how deep an impression it had made.

v. 5. The former verse taught that it was the God of Israel, who, for Israel's sake, led Cyrus to victory. Here the further truth is taught, that He is no mere tutelary, national God, like those of the heathen ; but Jehovah, the unchangeable I AM, who claims justly the reverence and worship of all creation. To make this truth more impressive, the victories of Cyrus would be complete, before he knew their secret Author.

["I will gird thee." The Hebrew future seems best retained, since the words are a prediction. The prophetic past is usual, but not constant. To introduce it needlessly in the version smooths the way for the sceptical theory of prophecy written after the event. The present "I surname thee" suits better in the previous verse, to denote a continuous act. These

honourable titles have lasted from the time of the prophet onward to this day.]

vv. 6, 7. One main result of this great work would be a wide extension of the knowledge of God among the heathen. A new religious era began with the Return from Babylon. The downfall of the tabernacle of David was attended by a fuller testimony for the true God in the midst of the idolatrous Gentiles. In v. 7 there is a further protest against the dualism of the old Zend or Persian Creed. Light and darkness, joy and sorrow, peace and calamity, are due alike to the sovereign rule of Jehovah alone.

v. 8. The figure is varied and complete. The heavens are to distil righteousness, like dew, and the skies to pour it down in copious showers. The earth is to open her bosom, and to receive these gifts of heaven. Both, in concert, are thus to yield the fruit of salvation ; and the earth is to bring forth righteousness (*tsedaga*, fem.) in response to the floods of righteousness (*tsedeq*, masc.) from on high.

There is here the first sign of transition, in this prophecy, from Cyrus to the days of Messiah. The LORD, having been revealed as the true God, in contrast to idols and Persian dualism, and also as the God of Israel, is further revealed as the God of all grace, righteousness, and salvation. The mercies to the returning exiles were an earnest of this promise. But its main fulfilment is in the Incarnation and Atonement of our Lord, and the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit. Then "truth flourished out of the earth, and

down righteousness; let the earth open, and let them be fruitful in salvation, and let it bring forth righteousness together: I the LORD have created it. 9 Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! a potsherd, of the potsherds of the earth! Shall the clay say to its fashioner, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? 10 Woe unto him that saith to his father, What begetteth thou? or to the woman, What dost thou bring forth? 11 Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker; Ask from me the coming things: concerning my sons, even 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 con-

righteousness looked down from heaven." Ps. lxxxv. 11; Dan. ix. 24, and floods were poured on the thirsty, and streams upon the dry ground.

The structure here has caused much critical debate. Five or six constructions have been proposed; but the above, hardly varying from the received version, seems the best. The verb *tatzmiach* is active as in lxi. 11, and has the earth for its subject, righteousness for its object. The other is neuter as elsewhere, and has heaven and earth for its conjoint subject, and salvation for its indirect object. The verb, *open*, is neuter, as in Ps. cvi. 17, where the subject is the same. The clauses are thus alternately parallel.

vv. 9, 10. The truth here taught is the folly of all those who fret and murmur against the ways of God, but with special reference to the Jews during the Captivity and at the Return.

There was much, in those days, to exercise the faith of God's people. The theocracy, built up with such care, by so many marvels, was sinking into ruin. The Old Covenant was dying out under heathen violence, and the New was not yet revealed. There was a strange contrast between the hopes of Israel and the actual trouble and desolation. When their hopes were revived by the decree of Cyrus, they were dashed again to the ground, and the remnant were "in great affliction and reproach," Neh. i. 3. The complaint was likely often to arise, "The Lord hath forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not," Ez. ix. 9. Hence this stern woe follows close upon the promise.

Israel is like clay in the hands of the Divine Potter, but His work is far from complete. They were blind and foolish, because of their present troubles, to doubt His love and wisdom, who is "holy in all His ways, and righteous in all His works."

v. 10. The figure here is neither the contempt of a firstborn for an infant brother, nor the complaint of a sickly or deformed child against its parents, which the tense (Heb. fut.) excludes. Nor, again, the impossible complaint of a child, before it has any being (Aben Ezra, Alex.). But the embryo is conceived as reproaching its parents for its weak and imperfect being. The tense here denotes an act not strictly future, but incomplete and in progress. The allusion is to God's work towards Israel in the times of Isaiah and the Captivity. Its wisdom would only be seen much later, when Zion should travail, and bring forth her children.

v. 11. This verse is often taken as a question, implying stern rebuke. But this is against the grammar, since the first verb is imperative, and also against the connexion. The preface, Thus saith the LORD, marks the change from severe rebuke to the promises that follow. The imperative (A.V., LXX., Vulg., Rosenm., Alex., Stier, Hahn, Del.) ought certainly to be retained; but the words "concerning my sons" are referred by the accents to the second clause. The more usual rendering of the first is, "Question me concerning the things to come." But the above construction is equally correct in grammar (Ps. ii. 8) and more expres-

manded. 13 I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will make straight all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price or reward, saith the LORD of hosts.

14 THUS saith the LORD, The toil of Egypt, and the traffic of Ethiopia, and the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and shall be thine; they shall come after thee: in chains shall they come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, and they shall make supplication unto thee, *saying*, Surely God *is* in thee, and *there is* none else, no *other* God. 15 Verily thou *art* a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour!

16 THEY shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them;

sive. The command will thus be, not to pry into the future, but to pray for blessings already promised. "The coming things," here and xli. 7, xliv. 7, are the nearer future, or the deliverance under Cyrus, so plainly announced just before. Instead of murmuring under the trials of the Exile, they should pray for the mercies which will assuredly follow. All these titles of God combine to make such prayers a duty and a privilege. Nay, when once His people are humbled before Him, like clay in the hand of a potter, they rise to the dignity of favoured children, and their earnest prayers are like commands, which the heavenly Father, in wondrous condescension, delights to obey.

vv. 12, 13. How wonderful the exhortation, to command Him who commands the host of heaven. All the discoveries of modern science should only enlarge our sense of the excellency of believing prayer. The deliverance from Babylon without price was a type of the Gospel to follow. The words of Herodotus illustrate the promise, "I will make straight all his ways." "Whithersoever Cyrus guided his course, it was impossible for that nation to escape."

v. 14. The toil of Egypt and traffic of Ethiopia are, by a common figure, the Egyptians who toil, and the Ethiopians who traffic, since the sequel refers to persons, and the Sabeans are directly named. The remnant of Israel were to eat the riches of the Gentiles, and receive a kind of tribute from those lands of the South, where their fathers had once been held in bondage.

The abasement of Egypt by Cambyzes was one main result of the victories of Cyrus; and another was the signal honour put on the temple of Jerusalem, rebuilt under royal decrees. Hence there followed a large resort of proselytes from Egypt and its border lands. This fact was doubly conspicuous after the time of the Maccabees, and was like a dawn, before the coming sunrise, of the Call of the Gentiles. St. Paul, then, applies and extends this promise to the conversion of Gentile strangers by witnessing the gifts of the Spirit in the church 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. The word "chains" occurs also in Job xxxvi. 8, in a figurative sense, "prisoners in chains, holden with cords of affliction." The phrase "they shall come over," not "they shall be brought," answers to the name proselytes (*προσλήυται*). The chains are those bonds of deep conviction, by which these Egyptian proselytes would be firmly attached to a purer faith. The homage is that of religious disciples, not of military captives. No chains of iron are so strong as those of living faith.

v. 15. Some take this verse for an exclamation of the prophet (Ges., Maurer, Umbreit, Knobel, Alex.), others of the captives or proselytes (Hitzig, Ewald, Stier), others of a chorus, or of the church (Vitr., Hend.). Hahn refers it to the proselytes, but in part as an address to their idol. "Truly thou art a god hiding thyself; it is the God of Israel that saves." But this is unnatural, since no idol god has been mentioned, and destroys the main thought. The confession of the

they shall go to confusion together, that are makers of idols. 17 *But* Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed or confounded, world without end. 18 For thus saith the LORD, that created the heavens; he is the God: 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. 19 I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I have not said unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

20 ASSEMBLE yourselves, and come: draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that

converts has been already given, and is much simpler. The words are an abrupt reflection of the prophet in the midst of the messages he has to deliver. They allude to the strange work of God, in breaking down what he had built, the tabernacle of David, and plucking up what He had planted, the vineyard of Israel. Yet the way was thus prepared for the knowledge of His great name in distant lands. Israel's history was a Divine enigma, and its key, the Messiah, was hidden, but soon to appear.

v. 16, 17. These two verses are an antithesis, and the text of those which follow. The former answers closely to xlii. 17, which opens the third section, or God's controversy with Israel. There it is followed by a prophetic description of Messiah, and here by a promise of the salvation He would bring.

v. 18. Several other constructions have been proposed, but are disproved by the absence of the article, and the weakened emphasis. The first part consists of Divine titles, and the direct address begins, I am Jehovah. The words, "he is God," "he hath established it," where the pronoun is emphatic, expand and confirm those before them. The clause that follows is a further expansion, and the words *created*, and *formed*, maintain the parallelism. "In vain" might be rendered "as a waste or desert." It is implied that the chief design of the earth was to be the dwelling of intelligent rational creatures, the servants of God. He created the heavens, and is Jehovah, the only true God. He made the earth,

not in vain, but to be inhabited; and has therefore revealed Himself in clear and just messages to mankind. He made not the earth to be a waste; but, when void and empty, He filled it with life and beauty; He made it not in vain, to be a moral waste, a home of idolaters, a spiritual graveyard, but to be the home of holy worshippers, liv. 3.

v. 19. The words of God were no ambiguous oracles, like those of the heathen, given from the dark recesses and secret caves of the earth. There is an allusion also to v. 15. The God of Israel hides himself by the depth of His mysterious counsels, whose ways are "past finding out." But He reveals himself, and always has revealed himself to His people, by clear declarations of His holy will. The two verses are the ground of the invitation that follows. The Creator of heaven and earth, and no vain idol, the God who has made known His will from the first by public messages, and no lying oracle, here invites the whole heathen world.

The middle clause has been explained, to seek without finding (Gesen., Ewald, &c.), without a reward (Hitzig), to seek a vain God (Stier) or in emptiness, with no revelation (Hahn). It refers back to the previous verse, and admits equally of a double sense. It was no vain god, whom they were to seek, nor without assurance of blessing. Unlike the worship of idols, the service of God is perfect freedom, and in listening to His voice there is a sure reward.

v. 20, 21. The controversy, xli. 1, here

set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god *that* cannot save. 21 Tell ye *this*, and bring *it* forth! yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time, or told it from the former time? *have* not I, the LORD? and *there is* no other God beside me; a just God, and a Saviour, *there is* none beside me. 22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I *am* God, and *there is* none else. 23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and it shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, *and* every tongue shall swear. 24 Surely, shall *one* say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *they* come: and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. 25 In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.

passes into another stage, in which mercy rejoices against judgment. The exposure of the folly of idols is now joined with a proclamation of God to the Gentiles, that He is not only a just God, but also a Saviour. The message is not so much to those already converted (Vitr., Stier) as to survivors of the judgment (Ges., Umbr., Ewald, Alex., Hend., Delitzsch., Hahn), that they may abandon their idols, and turn to God. The meaning is not, that "carry with them in flight," which introduces a foreign idea, but that "set up" in their temples, or carry solemnly in religious processions. A God that can be carried by priests in a procession is a heathenish idol.

v. 21. The address is not to the idols (Hahn), but to the escaped of the Gentiles. Once more they are challenged whether any one of themselves has revealed this deliverance. The change of persons, *ye*, and *them*, distinguishes between those who listen to the message, and a larger class who persevere in their folly. The foreknowledge of God, displayed in these prophecies of Cyrus and the Return, is made a pledge of the richer grace to follow.

v. 22. The full force of the word is to turn the face to an object, and the meaning,—“Turn, that you may look, and look, with a face no longer averted.” Man’s duty and God’s grace are both implied. The lesson of v. 18 is here applied by the Gospel. The only Creator

is also the only Saviour.

vv. 23—25. The oath, that all nations should be blessed in the seed of Abraham, is here renewed, the same in substance, and only varied in its form. The Word made flesh, one with the Father, is the promised Seed. The rendering “in righteousness” is substantially correct. But the exact force seems to be, a word all righteousness, the message and righteousness being one and the same thing. It is most just and right that the true and living God should have the worship of all His creatures. The decree is irreversible, “that to me,” to the Father, revealed through the Son, and to the Word the Revealer, or “in the name of Jesus,” “every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear.”

v. 24. The word “come” is singular, and refers to each of the penitents thus described, in contrast to heathen idolaters, Jewish unbelievers, or Christian apostates. The word “surely” may be rendered “only,” and both ideas seem combined. The truth is emphatic and exclusive. In Him assuredly, and in none beside, these blessings are to be found. The seed of Israel are, first, the faithful Jewish remnant, next, the engrafted Gentile olive-branches, and finally, the whole recovered nation. The words are a striking prediction of the spiritual blessings to be found in the promised Emmanuel.

The two constructions “In the Lord, he saith of me, &c.” and “In the Lord

## § 5. CHAP. XLVI. THE IDOLS OVERTHROWN.

BEL boweth down, Nebo stoopeth; their images have been *given* to the beasts and the cattle: your loads are heavy loaden, a burden to the weary *beast*. 2 They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity. 3 Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne *by me* from the belly, which are carried from the womb. 4 And *even* to *your* old age I *am* he; and *even* to hoar hairs will I carry *you*: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver *you*.

5 To whom will ye liken me, and equal and compare me,

unto me, he saith, are righteousness," are equally grammatical. The first is preferred by Vitringa, Rosenm., Ewald, Delitzsch, Stier, Hahn, the other in the received version, by Hend., Alex., and others. And this seems slightly preferable, as avoiding the abrupt change of person, involved in the other construction. The sense is just the same.

The transition is easy and natural, from the deliverance of Israel by Cyrus, and the richer blessings to follow in the days of the promised Messiah, to the downfall of Babylon and its idols. The prophecy, then, continues with a vivid picture of the images of the gods of Babylon, turned into packages on the backs of weary beasts, instead of being carried aloft in stately procession, and unable to free themselves or their owners from the power of the conquerors.

vv. 1, 2. Bel answers to the Tyrian Baal, and to Zeus and Jupiter; and Nebo to Anubis, Hermes, or Mercurius. These are named as the two chief idol gods of Babylon. In like manner Zeus and Hermes are joined in the veneration of the men of Lystra, Acts xiv. 12. In the ruin of the empire these idol gods bow down, like those wounded, or decrepit with age. Their images, once raised aloft for worship, are placed on beasts of burden, and carried away in disgrace. The gods stoop, like the beasts that pant under their idols; and "their souls," an ironical phrase, the divinities themselves, are gone into cap-

tivity.

"Their images" is clearer than "their idols," since the pronoun refers to the gods themselves. "Your carriages," A.V., is an address to the men of Babylon, and describes these same images or idols, as wont to be carried by their votaries in solemn procession; but now consigned with ignominy by the Persian conquerors to beasts of burden, to be carried away as the spoil of conquest. Since the time of our translation the word "carriage" has changed its meaning.

"Themselves," lit. "their soul." "The gods...have been unable to save their images, which were packed on the cattle, out of the hands of the conquerors. In v. 2 *b* he destroys the delusion of any real contrast; since the self of these beingless beings consists of nothing more than the wood and metal of which their images are composed." (Delitzsch.)

vv. 3, 4. The nation had its birth at the Exodus, its infancy in the desert, its manhood under David and Solomon, and an old age under the later prophets, when the first covenant was ready to decay. There is here a striking contrast between the idols, borne aloft by their votaries, or carried helplessly away; and the true God, who bears and sustains His people from infancy to old age, and in hours of sickness and sorrow.

vv. 5—7. The brief statement xl. 18—20, has been expounded in ch. xlv. with reference to wooden idols, but here as

that we may be like? 6 They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship. 7 They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove; yea, *one* shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble. 8 Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors.

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 *things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: 11 Calling an eagle from the east, the man of my purpose from a far country: yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed, I also will 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.

to more costly ones of gold and silver. Expense alone is in religion no pledge at all of a reasonable or acceptable service. These idols of Babylon were very costly and very worthless.

v. 8. Those who frame gods for their own worship from bars of silver and bags of gold, are not only childish, but brutish. Reflection on the folly of idolatry in others is one means to keep the servants of God from going astray.

The word *hithshashu*, derived from *'ish*, a man, occurs here only. It answers thus to the Apostolic charge, *ἀνδρῖσεσθε*, "quit you like men," 1 Cor. xvi. 13. In one place the reference is to manly understanding, in the other to manly courage. But the two thoughts are very near akin. All superstition and idol worship is mental cowardice, while true faith and right worship are a manly and reasonable thing.

v. 9. The appeal xliii. 8 is repeated once more: God's works of old ought to be kept in mind. There is also a direct contrast with xliii. 18. Hope for the future, even more than memories of the past, is the duty and privilege of the faithful.

v. 11. Cyrus is one of the first who is known to have used the eagle for his military standard. So Xenophon writes of him: "He had for ensign a golden eagle, stretched upon a long spear; and this even still continues to be the ensign of the Persian king." (Cyp. XLVII.) The word *אֵיט*, *ayit*, seems to be the same root as the Greek *ἀετός*, and denotes the impetuous rush of this bird of prey. The "man of my purpose" means one set apart by God's decree for a special service. The futurity of the campaigns of Cyrus, when this message was given, can alone make it intelligible. There could be no proof or sign of God's foreknowledge in a record after the event.

vv. 12, 13. Here, once more, the message passes on to the times of Messiah. The first, "hearken," v. 3, meets the earlier temptation of the Jews to open idolatry. The second voice applies to their later temptations after the Return; to that stoutness of heart, by which the Pharisees went about to establish their own righteousness, and did not submit to the righteousness revealed in the Gospel. They were far from it, and still it was not far off, but near at hand. When the previous



## § 6. CHAP. XLVII. THE DOWNFALL OF BABYLON.

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 no more be called tender and delicate. 2 Take the millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy veil, lift up the skirt, uncover the thigh, wade through the rivers. 3 Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, I will meet *thee*, not *as* man. 4 *As for* our Redeemer, the LORD of hosts *is* his name, the Holy One of Israel. 5 Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans, for thou shalt no more be called the mistress of kingdoms. 6 I was wroth with my people, I profaned mine inheritance, and gave them into thy hand: thou didst shew them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid the yoke. 7 And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever, so that thou didst not lay these things to thine heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.

verses were fulfilled, the old covenant was ready to vanish away, and Messiah, the LORD our Righteousness, was near to be revealed.

The shame of the idols is here followed by a picture of the downfall of the Empire. The proud city is figured as a royal damsel, to be stripped of her rich clothing, degraded from her lofty rank, and made a gazing-stock of shame. The stout-hearted in Israel, whose pride kept them far from God, might read here a lesson of their own guilt and danger.

v. 1. The title of Babylon resembles one given to Tyre, "O oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon," xxiii. 12. The word is used in its looser sense; for this daughter is given up to sensual pleasure, a wife and a mother, unchaste and impure. High in rank, beautiful in attire, but haughty and profligate, she is threatened with degradation and utter shame.

v. 2. Some refer these words to the crossing of rivers by captives in their march, others to the exposure of their person by eastern women in menial occupations. Both allusions may be combined. The daughter of Babylon, this royal damsel, must suffer both abasement

and captivity. She must pass through deep waters, and her pride be replaced by a painful and repulsive exposure, both of her political weakness, and her moral shame and guilt.

v. 3. All pride is abominable before God, and its vain disguises will sooner or later be stripped away. There is here a contrast to the precept—"Be clothed with humility." The figure is not the encounter of warriors, but that of a harlot or adulteress, brought before a judge for her crimes, and openly disgraced in the view of others.

The last clause has had many versions. "I will suffer no man to intercede" (Aben Ezra, Grot., Lowth). "I will ask no man," *i. e.* to avenge (Jarchi). "I will strike a league with no man" (Gesén. Maurer). "I will spare no man" (Gesén., Hénd.). "Though I should meet with no man" (Vitr.). "I shall encounter no man," *i. e.* able to resist (Rosenm., Alex., Stier). "I shall not meet a man," *i. e.* it shall be wholly desolate (Hahn). "I shall not pardon any man" (Hitz., Ewd., Delitzsch). But all seem inferior in simplicity and force to the received version (Chald., Kimchi, Belg., Piscator, Meyer) made

8 Now then hear this, O abandoned to pleasure, that sittest at ease; that sayest in thine heart, I *am*, and all beside me is nothing; I shall not sit *as* a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children; 9 Yet 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. 10 For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee: and thou hast said in thine heart, I *am*, and none else beside me. 11 Therefore evil is come upon thee; thou shalt not know its dawn: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon

slightly more terse as above. The verb thus retains its usual sense, to meet or encounter. *Man* (Adam) placed last, has its full emphatic contrast with God, and its proper meaning as the kind or race, not a class or individual. The ellipsis of the pronoun is common with the previous clause, and adds to the force, when the object is plain. The absence of the particle of comparison makes the thought still more expressive. "It is not man thou wilt meet, when I meet thee. Thou shalt suffer no common, or merely human retribution."

v. 4. The Word, who has spoken with Divine authority, denouncing vengeance, here speaks in condescending love, as one with His people. The doctrine of a Daysman and Mediator comes to light repeatedly in these visions. Babylon will experience no human vengeance, and Israel's Redeemer also is not man, but the LORD of Hosts. Superhuman judgment and mercy run side by side.

v. 5. Babylon, in the time of her disgrace, will seek to hide herself from the eyes of the world. A veil of oblivion must fall over the city, once so proud and haughty, the "excellent beauty of the Chaldeans." The political headship would pass away, and never return.

v. 6. There is here an allusion to the prophecy, xliii. 28; "Therefore have I profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and will give Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches." The Chaldeans had no compassion, 1 Chr. xxxvi. 17. But now the judgment on Israel is to be reversed,

and the oppressions of Babylon are to return on her own head.

v. 7. This boast of old Babylon is repeated in the description of Rome, as "the great city that ruleth over the kings of the earth," and in the description of her favourite poet, "Imperium sine fine dedi." The term, *ad*, is not one of time (Hitzig), but of moral result (*adeo ut*) (Rosenm., Hend., Delitzsch). Her pride would reach so far as to cause entire neglect of the clearest warnings. Future things may be said to be remembered, when linked with the past by some inseparable law of connexion.

v. 8. The sin is first described, and then God's sentence on it proclaimed. The children denote a rich and numerous population. Widowhood refers, not simply to the death of the king (Rabbis), but to all the patrons and supports of the Empire and its idols. Loss of children is the ruin of those whom she nourishes, and widowhood, of those by whom she is nourished. The phrase in the second clause has caused some perplexity. It is literally, "I am, and the absence of me beside." All beside me, says the proud city, is so worthless in comparison, that "it is not Babylon, no part of her empire," is description enough. The words are a profane parody of the Divine saying, "I am the LORD, and there is none else," xliii. 10, 11; xlv. 6, 8; xlv. 5, 6, 14, 18, 21; xlv. 9. These chapters are full of the contrast between the false pride of Babylon and the true glory of the living God.

thee suddenly, *which* thou shalt not know. 12 Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, with *all* 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 wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let them stand up now and save thee, the astrologers, the stargazers, and the monthly prophesiers, from *the things* that shall come upon thee. 14 Behold! they are as stubble; the fire hath burned them: they shall not deliver their soul from the power of the flame; *it is* no coal to warm them, no fire *for them* to sit before it. 15 Thus shall be unto thee *all* with whom thou hast laboured, *even* thy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter, none shall save thee.

v. 11. Heavy, unforeseen calamity was at hand; and their boasts of wisdom would be made foolish by their want of knowledge to prepare for it, and of power to escape from it. The word *shachrah*, "whence it riseth" A. V., has caused much critical debate. Some, thinking a dawn not applicable to the first rise of evil, render "after which there is no dawn." Others take it as a verb in a peculiar sense, "which thou wilt not charm away" (Stier, &c.). But there may be a day of judgment or calamity, as well as of joy and deliverance, and the event which was judgment to Babylon was hope and joy to Israel. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed at sunrise, and the Egyptians were overthrown "when the morning appeared." Day, in contrast to night, may denote a time of action as opposed to one of rest. The victories of Cyrus, also, are twice in this prophecy connected with the sunrise, xli. 25, xlvi. 11. Thus the day of Babel's calamity had its dawn, like natural days. It was an aggravation of her sorrow, that, with all her false wisdom, she knew not how or when this judgment would begin.

v. 12. "Wherein thou hast laboured, &c." This alludes to the previous warning. Babylon might try by her sorceries to reverse God's sentence, but all her efforts would be vain.

v. 13. These words describe the habitual state and character of Babylon before her calamity. She has abounded in wise men, diviners, interpreters of dreams, observers of the heavens, and has

consulted them even to satiety. Such has been her wealth in counsellors, that to use them all has been even a toil and weariness. The clause is not a conditional promise, "if thou art wearied," nor a question (Hahn), nor a reference to schemes of defence in the hour of danger (Alex.), nor to their being worn out with these consultations (Stier). It portrays the character of the people in days of prosperity, full of expedients of human science and worldly wisdom.

"Astrologers, &c." A threefold description of the same class, who divide the heavens into houses of the sun, moon, and planets, gaze into them to obtain horoscopes, and every month publish new predictions from the heavens. The order is contemptuous. Their titles of honour are added, like an afterthought, in the midst of a challenge to a work quite beyond their power. So pretentious are they, and still so worthless in the hour of trouble! The construction of our version (Aben Ezra, Vitruvius, Hend., Stier, Hahn) is far preferable to that of many moderns, "those that predict monthly what shall come upon thee," which is opposed to the accents, and robs the closing words of all their emphasis. The "things that shall come upon thee," in this connexion, are not future things in the abstract, but the coming judgments.

v. 14. "The fire hath burned them." The past tense (Heb.) makes the warning more vivid, as if the judgment were already come, while the meaning as a prophecy is equally plain. The last

## § 7. CHAP. XLVIII. THE FORMER THINGS AND THE NEW.

THE First Cycle of the Later Prophecies, after announcing the victories of Cyrus and the fall of Babylon, closes in this chapter with a fresh voice of rebuke and encouragement to Israel. The wisdom of God, revealed in the fulfilment of the "former things," was to prepare them for "new things," or those times of Messiah, of which fuller predictions are now to follow. The chapter has two equal divisions, each opening with a call to listen to the voice of God. The first is mainly rebuke, the second encouragement. The former, again, applies chiefly to the times from Isaiah till the Return, and the latter from the Return to the coming of Messiah; while the whole makes a transition from the days of the prophecy to the times of the New Testament.

HEAR ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth from the waters of Judah;

clause describes the consuming nature of the judgment, and does not mean simply that no remnant shall be left. These astrologers, by their rules of lucky and unlucky days, pretended to avert smaller evils, and even to turn them to account. Future evil was to be like a gentle fire under their control, whereby to increase their own reputation and comfort. But the reality would be far different. A wasting conflagration was at hand, in which they would be consumed.

v. 23. Some refer this verse to the diviners only, others to the merchants and traders. The most correct view (Stier) seems to include both. Not only the astrologers of Babylon, but all her merchants, all her science and commerce, on which she had laboured from the first dawn of her greatness, would flee from her in dismay in the hour of calamity, and be helpless to avert her ruin.

## CHAP. XLVIII.

v. 1. This Call refers mainly to the three previous chapters, in which the mission and work of Cyrus, and the doom of Babylon, have been so clearly foretold. The appeal is to the whole nation, viewed as mainly faithless to the covenant of their God. His goodness, by all these messages, was leading them to repentance. The phrase, "called by the name of Israel," reminds them that they had no proper claim to this higher title, which Jacob received as the reward of earnest

faith and prayer. "The waters of Judah" They were descended from that patriarch, like streams from a fountain. When Isaiah wrote these later visions, the ten tribes had been wholly carried away. These men of Judah made mention of God's name in vows, oaths, prayers and sacrifices, but not in truth or righteousness, for their services were heartless and insincere.

v. 2. The Divine Speaker here assigns the reason why He still pleads with a people, so insincere and rebellious, and why they were bound to listen to His appeal. Sinful as they were, by their own profession they were the covenant people of God. This is the reason why the Word of God perseveres in His invitations, and why they ought to lay up His messages in their heart. The translations "although," "nevertheless," "yea even," arise from not perceiving the true connexion, just explained. Others take the words as ironical (Stier). But the sudden change of person confirms the view here taken, as if the Speaker were reflecting with himself, and justifying His own course in continuing a task which seemed so thankless. Comp. Hos. xi. 8.

v. 3. Two things are here affirmed, the prediction of these former things beforehand, and the suddenness of their fulfilment. The title may belong either to the earlier prophecies of Isaiah against Assyria (Rosenm., Vittr., Hend.), or to these,

which swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, *but* not in truth, nor in righteousness. 2 For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel, the LORD of hosts is his name.

3 THE former things I told from the beginning; yea, from my mouth they went forth, and I declared them: I did *them* suddenly, and they are come to pass: 4 Because I knew that thou *art* obstinate, and thy neck an iron sinew, and thy brow brass, 5 I have even told thee from the beginning; before they come to pass I have declared *them* unto thee: lest thou shouldst say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image and my molten image hath commanded them. 6 Thou hast heard, *then* consider all this; and will not ye announce *it*? I have made thee to hear new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them: 7 They are created now, and not

just given, of Cyrus and Babylon (Cocc., Stier, Hahn). Plainly they are events taking place suddenly in the time of some of the parties addressed. The fall of the Assyrian, and the related events, had thus been effected suddenly, as in a moment, within the memory of those who lived in the later half of Hezekiah's reign. To these, in the first place, the words naturally apply. But as time moved on, the second series of predictions concerning Cyrus and Babylon, the latter end of the former things, were added to the predictions thus suddenly fulfilled, and became fresh earnestings of still fuller and later promises.

v. 4. "Because I knew." The foreseen stubbornness of Israel was one reason why the predictions were made so clear, in order to shame them into the acknowledgment of God's hand. Those who treat them as mere guesses, or forgeries after the event, share in the blindness here so strongly condemned.

v. 5. Inspired prophecies are the proof of God's real dominion, in contrast to the reign of mere chance, or of vain idols. The chief "molten image" of modern times is the self-developing force of human intellect. "Before they come to pass" seems more exact, since the Hebrew tense here points rather to a time before the actual fulfilment.

vv. 6, 7. The duty of the Church is to consider God's prophecies, to mark their

fulfilment, and then, as God's witnesses, to announce it to the world. Also to study those yet unfulfilled, and thereby to gain an insight into coming things, which no idol-god or mere human wisdom can bestow. "All this" refers to the whole course of prediction respecting Cyrus and Babylon. The *ye* is emphatic, "Israel, God's chosen witnesses, why desert your appointed office?"

The contrast here is either between earlier predictions of Isaiah, fulfilled when these were written, and all these later ones themselves; or between the Return from exile, and the later times of Messiah. In one case the point of sight is actual, in the other ideal. Since vv. 14, 20 still speak of the Return as future, the former is the simpler view. But it does not exclude the other. When the prophecy was given, the messages, already fulfilled suddenly in the Assyrian overthrow, xxix. 5, xxxvii. 36, would be a contrast to the new and hidden things foretold to all these later visions. But when Babylon too had suddenly fallen, the decree of Cyrus gone forth, and the latter end of the former things came to pass in the Return of the Exiles, then these prophecies, xliii.-xlvii., for the Jews after Cyrus, would be transferred to the class of things already fulfilled. All these together would then be a contrast to the direct and clear prophecies of Messiah that follow.

from the beginning; and before to day thou hast not even heard them, lest thou shouldest say, Behold I knew them. 8 Yea, thou hast not heard, yea, thou hast not known, yea, from the beginning thine ear hath not been open: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and that thy name is, A transgressor from the womb. 9 For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. 10 Behold, I have refined thee, but not as silver: I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. 11 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.

12 HEARKEN unto me, O Jacob, and Israel my called: *I am*

The view which admits these prophecies to be Isaiah's own, and still denies any reference at all in their course to the times before the Return (Delitzsch), is strained and unnatural, especially in reference to the practical addresses in the course of these visions, chh. xlvi, lvi, lvii. The same prophetic spirit, which enabled the seer to place himself among events two centuries distant, must surely include a power of reverting to his own and intervening days for practical warning and instruction. A transfer into ideal time, so complete as to exclude any reference to the actual time, would defeat one main purpose of the predictions, and render the constant appeal to God's foreseeing wisdom unmeaning. Also to extend the "former things" to all the times from the Exodus (Stier) makes the reference to their sudden fulfilment almost impossible to explain.

v. 8. Some view this as a fresh assertion that these new things had not been revealed before (Calv., Belg.), or as a reason why more had not been earlier revealed (Alex.); others, more justly, as a description of the stupor of the Israelites (Chald., Kimch., Vittr., Rosenm., Hend., Stier, Hahn). Of these some look on it as an aggravation, "even still thou hearest not" (Stier); others as a hindrance overcome by grace, "yea, though thou hearest not" (Hahn); or simply as a review of their whole course of guilt (Vittr., Hend.). The last seems the simple and true sense. But the force lies in the transfer of the words from the withholding, on God's

part, of these new predictions, to the blindness of the people to messages already given. From the days of Egypt they had sinned and been rebellious, as foretold in the Song of Moses. The connexion is not that God's foresight of their rebellion was the cause why more had not been revealed (Alex.), but that their sinful abuse of His gifts did not take him by surprise, and had been also foreseen before its actual occurrence. The perfect tense "thou hast not heard" &c., is here better than the aorist, because the purpose is to describe a long-continued state of the people, "From the beginning," *mâiz*, means, onward from the first rise of the nation.

v. 10. The resemblance of affliction to the refining of silver, often affirmed elsewhere, seems here denied. But the next clause supplies an explanation. Silver is silver, though mixed with dross, before it enters the furnace. But guilty sinners, who are as dross, may through God's grace become like silver, being chosen in the furnace of affliction itself. Calamities not only purify the faithful, but are used to bring the faithless to repentance. "Not with silver" will thus mean, not in the character of silver, as if they were silver already when the process of trial begins. The work would be wrought wholly for His name's sake, in spite of the sore demerit of Israel.

vv. 12, 13. The second, and brighter part of the message begins here. In v. 12 there is an allusion to xli. 1—10, and in v. 13 to xl., with its revelation of God's

He. I *am* the first, I also *am* the last. 13 My 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. 14 All ye, assemble yourselves, and hearken! Who among them hath declared these *things*? The LORD hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his mighty work on the Chaldeans. 15 I, *even* I, have spoken, yea, I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall prosper in his way. 16 Come ye near unto me, hear ye this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning, from the time it came to be, there *am* I: and now the LORD God and his Spirit hath sent me.

17 THUS saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I *am* the LORD thy God, which teacheth thee to profit,

almightiness. Thus the opening and close of this first series of visions are closely linked together. God's power and wisdom are both pledged to deliver His people.

v. 14. This verse is obscure from its condensed brevity. Its general reference to Cyrus is plain, but eight or ten constructions have been proposed. It may be paraphrased thus. "All ye sons of Israel, assemble yourselves, and hearken with reverence to the voice of your God. Who among the heathen and their idols has announced beforehand this great work, the fall of Babylon, and restoration of Israel? But the LORD hath loved Cyrus, His chosen and appointed instrument. He will do the pleasure of God, and his arm, or mighty work, on Babylon and the Chaldeans." The sore judgment, called the LORD's pleasure in one clause, is called "his arm," that is "his work or proof of power;" in the other, as one of the plagues was called by the magicians "the finger of God," Ex. viii. 19.

v. 15. The Speaker claims Divine perfections, and yet distinguishes Himself from the LORD of whom He speaks. The Logos, the Divine Word, here proclaims himself to be the true Author of the success of Cyrus, than whom no one had ever a more unbroken career of victory.

v. 16. Some refer this whole verse to Isaiah (Kimchi, Hitzig, Knobel), and many the second clause of it alone (Calv., Zuingl., Musculus, Gesen., Meyer, Hengst., Umbr., Hahn). Others think there is a confusion of style (Jarchi, Rosenm.). But the only consistent view makes the Son of

God the Speaker here, as in the last verse (Augustine, Basil, Jerome, Oecolamp., Vitruv., Alex., Hend., Stier). The same is true throughout the chapter, though the distinctness of Divine Persons comes into full relief only here at the close. He is the First and the Last, Rev. xxii. 13, of whom it is written, "All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made that is made," Joh. i. 3.

The voice of love is here the same as in the appeal to Jerusalem in the Gospel, "How often would I have gathered thy children together!" Matt. xxiii. 37. The Word of God "has not spoken in secret from the beginning," but from the hour of creation has been the Revealer of his Father's will. The limit, "from the time it came to be," is the same as in Prov. viii. 23, 27, "from the beginning, or ever the earth was," when creation came into being. The construction, "the LORD hath sent me and his Spirit" (Orig., Vitruv., Knobel., Gesen., Hend., Alex., Hahn) is disproved by the loss of emphasis, the last clause having thus neither the same subject nor object with the rest of the verse, by the harshness of the construction, and the want of the objective sign. The Word, who speaks, is the mental object of the whole statement, first, as the Divine Revealer, and next, as Divinely sent and revealed. The mission here is not the Incarnation, but the signal providence of the Return from Babylon. So in Zechariah, "After the glory hath he sent me to the nations that spoiled you; for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his

which leadeth thee by the way *that* thou shouldest go. 18 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: 19 Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels as the gravel thereof: their name should not have been cut off, nor destroyed from before me.

20 GO forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans; with a voice of singing tell ye, declare ye this, utter it even unto the end of the earth: say ye, The LORD hath redeemed his servant Jacob. 21 And they thirsted not in the deserts *through which* he led them: he caused waters to flow out of the rock for them; he clave the rock, and waters gushed out. 22 There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

eye...and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me," Zech. ii. 7—9. This mission of the Word to deliver captive Israel was an earnest of that fuller and later message, when "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."

vv. 17—19. After severe rebuke there is here a wonderful utterance of Divine compassion towards rebellious Israel. It is the sequel of the message, Deut. v. 29, and Ps. lxxi. 13, and finds its echo in those later words of the same Divine Person, tabernacling in mortal flesh, "O that thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace!" Lu. xix. 42. The Son of God, in every age, is the Redeemer, Teacher, Guide, and Shepherd of Israel.

v. 17. "To profit." To do what is profitable, and leads to real happiness. The voice is that of the heavenly Wisdom, whose "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

v. 19. "Their name" is the name of the seed of Jacob. The singular is collective, and for clearness seems to require a plural rendering. The Lord takes delight in the increase of the numbers of His holy worshippers. Judgment is His strange work, and He delights in mercy.

vv. 20—22. The message closes with a direct command to the exiles of Israel to set out joyfully on their way to Zion. This exhortation puts the keystone on all the previous promises of deliverance. And here too the visions enter on a new stage. Cyrus, Babylon, and the Chaldeans, are never mentioned again. The message

travels onward to the times of Messiah. The former things are seen, in spirit, as fulfilled; and the new things begin their course, all centering in the person and work of the promised Immanuel, the Messiah of God.

v. 20. The word "flee," is used here with no reference to alarm, but to the speed and joy of the coming deliverance. Or perhaps the thought in Jer. li. 45, Rev. xviii. 4, may be included in this earlier instruction to the people of God.

v. 21. This verse may be explained either as a memorial of the mercies of the Exodus, called afresh to mind by the later deliverance, or as a prediction of blessings in that later redemption. In this case the words must be figurative. The former view is perhaps the simpler, and the connexion will be very easy to explain. The returning exiles, while they celebrate their recent redemption, are to call to mind the wonders wrought for their fathers in the days of old. The whole series of mercies, from the Exodus onward, are thus summed up in one song of triumphant praise. The God of Israel was the same through every age, the unfailling Friend and Deliverer of His people. His earlier mercies might be varied in their form, but their substance would be the same in every successive age. He opens evermore "streams in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert." But these blessings belong to the faithful alone. The wicked are like the troubled sea, restless and devoid of peace, a gift which belongs only to the true Israel of God.



## CLOSE OF THE FIRST SERIES.

THIS First Series or Cycle of the Later Prophecies, has a marked internal unity, and a striking termination. It begins by taking up the charge, which closes the Earlier Prophecies, and giving a message of comfort to the fearful-hearted; a promise of strength to the weak hands and the failing knees, in the prospect of that captivity which the prophet has announced to Hezekiah in the hour of his vainglorious display to the envoys from Babylon. It announces, in its opening, three great mercies to Israel; a victory in its hard and long warfare with heathen idolatry, forgiveness of iniquity through the great sin-offering, on whom the LORD would lay the iniquity of His people; and a double recompence of blessing at last, after ages of conflict and sorrow.

The first of these promises has been unfolded in the present series. Its first section, after the advent of the LORD, Israel's Shepherd, to feed the flock of His people, gives a sublime portraiture of His greatness as the Maker of all things, and the Preserver of Israel, in contrast to all the idols of the heathen. The second is a direct controversy with the nations for their idolatry, carried on with such persevering zeal from the days of Abraham; and predicts coming things, which the idols and their worshippers could not foresee, the raising up of Cyrus from the north and east, to tread down the idols of Babylon; and then the coming of Messiah, full of grace and truth, to open the blind eyes, and set up a purer worship throughout the heathen world.

In the third section the controversy passes on to Israel. First, a picture is set before them of the grace and forbearance of the coming Deliverer; and then their sins are denounced, their spiritual blindness and deafness, and formal worship, leading to sore and long affliction, but still to be followed by a final outpouring of the Spirit of God.

The double controversy is then renewed in a most earnest and graphic sketch of the folly of idol worship, with an appeal to Israel to turn heartily to the true God, who alone can foresee, protect, and deliver. The promise of deliverance from Babylon is placed in a still clearer light, and Cyrus, its appointed instrument, is mentioned by name. The message passes on once more into the later and fuller promises of the Gospel.

This first trilogy is followed by a second, aimed expressly against the idols of Babylon, and the proud luxurious city itself, with a last appeal to Israel on their hardness of heart, which led to predictions so plain and clear, in order to convince them of the power and foreknowledge of the God of Israel. The Word, the Logos, then proclaims his own commission, in the counsels of God, to be the Deliverer of Israel, and a renewal of the mercies of the Exodus in like blessings to the faithful Israelites in days to come.

## THE TIMES OF MESSIAH.

## CHAP. XLIX.—LX.

In this Second Series of the Later Prophecies, the Spirit of God carries the prophet beyond the Captivity and the times of Cyrus, the main subject of the former series, to the coming of the promised Immanuel, and the times of the Gospel. The main subject here is "the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow," ranging from the birth of our Lord to the final redemption of Zion, when He will be "the glory of His people Israel," ch. xlix—lx. The Third Series unfolds still further the times of the Gospel, in connexion with the last days, and the new creation of God, ch. lxi.—lxvi. Many moderns (Ruckert, Hengstenberg, Hitzig, Havernick, Hahn, Delitzsch) make the chief division at lvii. 21, where the sentence which closes the first series recurs once more. But this is no sufficient proof of the real division. The promise, xxxv. 10, which closes the Earlier Prophecies, recurs li. 11, where it is plainly in the middle of a continuous prediction, and does not mark the close even of a subdivision. It is also plain that chh. lviii., lix. are very closely related to ch. lvii. and continue the same controversy. They are parts of the same series, which others (Ewald, Stier) with greater reason make to close with ch. lx., so that ch. lxi. begins a third and last division.

This Series, like the last, seems to be sevenfold, and includes, 1st, Messiah's Invitation to the Gentiles, ch. xlix.; 2nd, His Message to Israel, ch. l.—lii. 10; 3rd, His Sufferings and Exaltation, lii. 11—lv.; 4th, The controversy with Idolatry, ch. lvi., lvii.; 5th, The Reproof of Pharisaism, ch. lviii.; 6th, The Warning of Sadducean Apostasy, ch. lix.; and 7th, Zion's Restoration and Glory, ch. lx. The first three answer to the second, third, and fourth of the former series. To the three messages against idols, Babylon, and the perverse in Israel, answer the three warnings against idolatry, Pharisaism, and open ungodliness; while the Preface, ch. xl., with its promises of comfort to Zion, is replaced by a glorious peroration, ch. lx., in which those promises are seen largely fulfilled.

The First Section in this Series, ch. xlix., is a direct address of Messiah, first to the isles of the Gentiles, and then afterwards to Zion, announcing His own incarnation and ministry, when He would come as the LORD God, in great humility, to be the Shepherd of Israel, to gather His people, and bring them back, after their wanderings, to His fold. Here the controversy, ch. xli., of God, the Righteous Governor of nations, with stubborn heathen idolatry, passes into a gracious invitation to all the isles of the Gentiles, to obey the voice, and accept the mercy, of the Incarnate and glorified Son of God. This is followed by an intimation that Zion, after seeming to be long forgotten, would receive at length, through the coming Messiah, a joyful deliverance.

## § 1. CHAP. XLIX. MESSIAH'S MESSAGE TO THE GENTILES

LISTEN, O isles, unto me! and hearken, ye people, from afar: The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. 2 And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me; 3 And hath said unto me, Thou *art* my servant, *thou art* Israel in whom I will be glorified. 4 Then I said, I have toiled in vain, I have spent

v. 1. The Speaker, in this sublime appeal, is the same who has already called on the islands and the people to keep silence before Him, the First and with the last, xli. 1, 4, Rev. ii. 8; and who has just announced that the Lord God and his Spirit have sent Him on a message of love, to restore the captives from Babylon. He now announces His approaching fulfilment of a still higher mission, as the Word made flesh, born of a human mother, to be the light of the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel. The isles, invited before to hear of His coming judgment on their idols, are now to hearken to His gentler accents of redeeming love.

The prediction was fulfilled in the double message to Joseph and Mary, Mat. i. 18, Lu. i. 28. The mother here named is the same with the Virgin, mentioned before, vii. 14, and plainly confines the words to one definite Person. Thus neither "the prophetic order," nor the nation of Israel, nor "the better part of them," nor "the Church of Christ," can be here intended; but one Person alone, marked off from every other by features which none can share, the Son of the Virgin, the Messiah of God.

v. 2. The figure of the sword is unfolded, Heb. iv. 12, Rev. i. 16, ii. 12, 16, xix. 15, and that of arrows in Ps. xlv. Here, however, they refer to the force of our Lord's words during His earthly ministry, Mat. vii. 28; Mar. i. 22, 27; Joh. vii. 46. The hiding of the polished shaft in the hand of God is a striking figure of the thirty years of humility and silence, before the Son of God began His prophetic ministry.

v. 3. The Speaker is not Isaiah

(Kimch., Abarb., Jarchi, Grot., Koppe), who was neither named before his birth, nor could be called "Israel," nor an object of worship to kings; nor "the prophetic order" (Gesén.), which could have no mother; nor the Jewish nation (Döderl., Paul, Rosenm., Hitzig), whom he is to gather, but first to be despised by them, vv. 5, 7; nor the better part of them (Maurer, Knobel), for the like reason, that every verse points to a single person. Nor can the subject be "a complex person, Messiah and the Christian Church" (Alex.), a view as opposed to the plain words of the text as any of these others. For the Church is no single person, has no mother, was not named by prophecy before birth, does not restore Israel, is the receiver, not the giver of salvation.

One Person only, the Divine Speaker, born of a woman, named before His birth, despised by the Jews, the Salvation of sinners, is here foretold. The word, Israel, applied to Him, has caused some perplexity. It is not, however, strictly a name, but part of a compound, descriptive epithet, to be joined closely with the words that follow. The house of Jacob, though "called by the name of Israel," the patriarch, did not satisfy the true meaning of the name. "All are not Israel, who are of Israel." They were formed to shew forth God's praise, but had been faithless to their high calling. Messiah is that Servant of God, in whom He delights, xlii. 1; and He is that Israel, that Prince having power with God and man, in whom the LORD will indeed be glorified. Joh. xii. 28, xiii. 31, xvii. 4—6. He is placed here in contrast to the false Israel, by whose sins the name of their God had been blasphemed

my strength for nought, and in vain: *yet* surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God. 5 And now hath the LORD said, he that formed me from the womb *to be* his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel are not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength. 6 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.

7 THUS saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, *and* his

among the Gentiles, Rom. ii. 24. The great work, in which the sinful nation had failed, the true Messiah would fulfil.

v. 4. The pronoun here is emphatic. God speaks in words of promise. Messiah replies by a complaint of the seeming failure even of his own work, and still is confident of its final success because of this Divine promise. The word "toiled" denotes wearisome and exhausting labour, Joh. iv. 6; Lu. xxiii. 26. The seeming fruit of our Lord's ministry, in His own lifetime, was strangely small. But when the Spirit was poured out from on high, the converts were multiplied fivefold in a single day.

"My work." Often explained to mean the reward of work (Vitr., Alex., Hend., Stier, Hahn), but with some loss of simplicity and force. Messiah's whole work of obedience and sacrifice was with his Father, as the Righteous Judge, to be approved, delighted in, and fully rewarded. It was the central fact in the mind of the Infinite Wisdom, the great object of holy complacency to the Infinite Goodness. How, then, could it fail, in due season, of its glorious recompence? The seeming failure, for a time, should only enhance the wonders of its final triumph.

v. 5. The received version seems to give the true sense, though several others, divergent and discordant, have been proposed. Though the direct object of His ministry might seem to fail, and would be long delayed, Messiah should have a reward at once in mercies to the Gentiles.

"Though Israel are not gathered." These words begin God's answer to Messiah's complaint. Though his toil might seem fruitless, most abundant fruit should

follow in another way. The double *vau* links the result with an apparent obstacle, turned by Divine wisdom into the means for that result being attained. The first is thus midway between *though* and *since*, and the second between *yet* and *therefore*. Through their fall, as well as in spite of it, salvation would come to the Gentiles. "Are not gathered," seems slightly better, to express not merely a probable, but an actual result. The work of Messiah is too precious to be left, even for a time, without a reward.

"My God shall be my strength." The Hebrew past is here used, to denote the absolute certainty of the promise. The words refer to the mighty signs and wonders, which accompanied the first preaching of the Gospel, and made it "the power of God unto salvation," Rom. i. 16, xv. 19.

v. 6. This verse is expounded by Paul and Barnabas, Acts xiii. 46, 47, in full agreement with its own context. It predicts the spread of the Gospel among the Gentiles, after Messiah's rejection by the Jewish people. The prediction is so clear and precise, that it was looked upon as a direct command by these Apostles, who were put in trust with the Gospel. "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, &c." This is no proof that Messiah and the Church make here one complex person (Alex.), but just the reverse. This message of God, that Christ should be the salvation of the Gentiles, when rejected by the Jews, was a virtual command to the Apostles when the Jews contradicted and blasphemed. The commission of St Paul alludes to the same promise, Acts xxvi. 17, 18.

Holy One, to him whom their soul 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, the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. 8 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 raise up the earth, to cause to inherit desolate heritages; 9 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. 10 They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them:

v. 7. This promise has been verified through fifteen centuries, and on the largest scale, from Constantine down to our own days. It enshrines the duty of national allegiance to Christ in the very heart of the divine counsel. The votes of millions, when they seek to banish all religious truth from the counsels of states, are as dust in the balance against this firm decree of God.

“Whom their soul despiseth.” A singular phrase, to express the deep aversion of heart, in the Jewish people and their rulers, to Jesus the Nazarene. “Whom the nation abhorreth.” In rejecting Messiah, Israel receive the name *gōi*, applied by themselves as a name of reproach to the Gentiles. The honour will be a contrast to the shame. Kings and princes among the Gentiles will bow with reverence to the once despised Nazarene, and offer the song, “Thou art the King of glory, O Christ! Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father!”

The rest of the chapter has received three different expositions. The first applies it mainly to the return from Babylon; the second, to a Jewish restoration, still future; and the third, to the Christian Church, the figurative Zion. But since vv. 1—7 are plainly fulfilled in our Lord, it is unnatural, and destroys the connexion, to suppose that all the rest revert to earlier times. Again, the address, v. 1, is to the Gentiles, who on the second view would be named only in two clauses, and 2 Cor. vi. 2 seems to require a more direct application to Gospel times. Against the third it may be urged that Zion is con-

trasted plainly with the Gentiles, described as long desolate, and a captive, and that these seem clear allusions to two opposite states of the land of promise. The truth seems, then, to lie midway between these last interpretations; so that vv. 8—13 apply generally to the times of the Gospel, and the mention of Zion, v. 14, begins a promise of Israel's final recovery and blessing. Thus the sequence is unbroken and complete.

v. 8. The acceptable time is a “time of favour,” to Messiah himself, who receives the gifts of the Spirit to bestow on His people; and to a guilty world, reconciled to God by Christ, to whom He sends a public message of reconciliation, 2 Cor. v. 18, vi. 2. “I have heard thee.” All the blessings of the Gospel are in answer to the intercession of the risen Saviour. The spread of the Gospel is through the glorious help and power of God.

“A covenant of the people.” In v. 7 Israel has the name, *gōi*, of Gentiles not in God's covenant; and here the Church, though composed mainly of Gentile converts, have the name, *ām*, people, usually given to Israel. They who once were not a people, shall become the people of God, Rom. ix. 24—26; 1 Pet. ii. 10. With this newly adopted people Messiah is to seal His new covenant. “The next verse shews that the desolate places are not waste places in Judea, but the moral wastes of the heathen world. Comp. xlii. 6, 7 (Hend.).”

v. 9. This promise is expounded in Is. xlii. 7, and Acts xxvi. 17, 18. Souls under the power of sin, on whom the

for he that hath mercy on them will lead them; even by the springs of water will he guide them. 11 And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. 12 Behold! these shall come from afar; and lo! these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim. 13 Sing, O heavens! and be joyful, O earth! and break forth into singing, O mountains! for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy on his afflicted.

14 AND ZION hath said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me. 15 Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, should these forget, yet will I not for-

curse still rests, are the prisoners in darkness, whom the Gospel sets free and enlightens. The way of the Lord, and the ways of Christ, are constant descriptions of Christianity as a practical religion, Joh. xxi. 15—17; Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. iv. 17; 1 Pet. v. 1—4. "In all high places." The teaching of Christ, and the spiritual provision for His people, would be placed on the highest eminence, and linked with all the public and national institutions of the heathen world.

v. 10. These figures are applied, Rev. vii. 16, 17, to the gathering of the redeemed at last before the throne of God. Here they describe the guidance of Christians during their earthly pilgrimage. Manna and streams of living water shall be theirs, even in the wilderness. The promise of Ps. xxiii. is here made universal to Christian believers. "My highways shall be exalted." The ordinances of Christ, the ways of faith and obedience, are to stand out conspicuous on the eminences of the world's history, and have so done from the times of the Apostles until now.

v. 12. "From afar." From the south, like the queen of Sheba, who came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. "From the north and the west," from Asia Minor and Europe, the chief nursery, for long ages, of the Christian Church. "And these from the land of Sinim," from China and all the lands of the farthest East. Sin or Chin, as the name of China, is common to the Arabic, Turkish, Syrian, and Sanskrit tongues. This view of "Sinim" is held

by Manasseh Ben Israel, Montanus, Gesenius, Winer, Maurer, Hitzig, Umbreit, Hendewerk, Knobel, Lassen, Alexander, Hend., Stier, Hahn, Delitzsch. "The name *Θῠαι*, Strabo, *Σῠαι*, Ptol., *Τσιναῖσα*, Kosmas, did not obtain currency first from the founder of the dynasty Tsin; but, long before this, Tsin was the name of a feudal kingdom in Shensi, one of the western provinces of the Sines land, and Feitsa, the first feudal king of Tsin, began to reign as early as B.C. 897." Newmann, in Delitzsch.

v. 13. This song applies most fully to the perfected redemption of God's people. But the past and the future are joined in the promise. They have comfort during their pilgrimage, but their richest mercies at its close, and in the resurrection. The verse sums up the blessings of the Gospel in every age, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

vv. 14—21. Three or four views may be taken of these verses, 1st. That the message reverts to the first captivity. 2nd. That Zion denotes the true Church, and the complaint refers to her barrenness before the day of Pentecost. But this is hard to reconcile with the many signs of local reference to Palestine vv. 19—21. 3rd. That even the previous verses refer to a future Jewish restoration. But then there would be no clear explanation of the complaint itself. But if vv. 6—13 state the fulfilment of the promise, that Messiah would be the light of the Gentiles, even while Israel are not gathered, and the promise here returns to Zion, when the words have their fullest em-

get thee. 16 Behold! I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands, thy walls *are* continually before me. 17 Thy children shall make haste: 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 with an ornament, and bind them *on thee*, as a bride *doeth*. 19 For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants; and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. 20 The sons of thy childlessness shall say again in thine ears, The place *is* too strait for me; give place to me that I may dwell. 21 And thou shalt say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these? seeing I was bereaved and desolate! a captive, and one removed: who then hath brought up these? Behold, I was left solitary, and these, where *were* they?

phasia. While kings and princes have arisen, and been worshippers of the Son of David, Zion has been trodden down, and the Jew forgotten and despised. Other lands have been made fertile with the streams of grace, and Palestine has become a desolation. The triumphs of the Gospel, from the western ocean to Sinim in the far East, have gone on side by side with the sufferings and dispersion of God's ancient people.

v. 15. He who wept over Jerusalem is unchanging in His love to Israel, and not that of a mother to her infant suckling is so deep and unfailling. "Should these forget." The words are a climax, rather than a concession. Human affection, however strong, may be conceived to fail under some strong temptation, but the love of the LORD to Zion is unquenchable and Divine.

vv. 16—19. During the times of the Gentiles, Jerusalem has been trodden down. Here, at their close, the land is described as fully peopled once more.

v. 20. "The sons of thy childlessness" are those born to Zion during her time of desolation, while put away from God's covenant. Israel, destroyed as a nation and a church, has still survived and flourished as a race. Also Gentile believers belong, by adoption, to the Jewish olive tree. The word "give place to me" is strictly "come near for me," as persons

have to crowd and come nearer together, to receive fresh visitors into a narrow room.

v. 21. The birth, the growth, and the presence of these children, are the common subjects of Zion's wonder and surprise. Her inquiry is not, What unknown or rival mother has borne them? but how she comes to be surrounded by the richest fruits of a husband's love, when, in her own consciousness, she has been only a bereaved and desolate widow. Before she had said, "My Lord, my Husband, hath forgotten me." But now her cry will be, "How wonderful are His power and love! How else could I be provided with such a progeny, even in the time of my sore bereavement."

The phrase is not, "Who hath borne me these?" (Rosenm., Hitz., Knob., Hend., Hahn), or "Who hath produced these for me?" (Alex.), but correctly as in the received version (Vitr., Lowth, Gesen., Maur., Ewald, Umbreit, Stier).

vv. 22, 23. The same promise recurs more fully lx. 9, 10, lxvi. 20. The children of Zion are here plainly contrasted with the Gentiles. The word "nourishers" some prefer to render "bearers," the frequent name, in India and the East, for men who attend to young or infant children. There is here no confusion of figures, as if Zion herself were an infant to be nursed (Alex.). The queens are called nursing mothers, as

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 on *their* shoulders. 23 And kings shall be thy nourishers, 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, and that they shall not be ashamed who wait for me. 24 Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive be delivered? 25 For thus saith the LORD, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. 26 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 *am* thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

fulfilling this office to Zion's children. She herself is the royal queen, before whom both the kings and queens of the Gentiles do homage. The last clause is part of the truth which Zion is to learn by her own happy experience. It is also a contrast to the warnings, xlii. 17, xlv. 9, xlv. 16, 17, that all the worshippers of idols shall be covered with lasting shame. The double truth will have been learned, that God is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

v. 24. The "lawful captive" has been rendered "the captive of the strong" (Hend.), of the stern or severe (Schult., Rosemn.), of the victorious (Mich., Beck), of the terrible, by a conjectural change of reading (Hitz., Lowth, Knob, Ewald), righteous captives, that is, exiled Jews (Symm., Jarch., Aben Ezra, Hitz., Hahn), the plunder of the righteous, *i. e.* taken from them (Ges., Maurer, Umbreit). But the received version (Stier) gives the true meaning, "the captive of one who has a rightful claim to keep another in bondage." There is a climax, seldom noticed, in the reply; and a threefold gradation, of a simply rightful, a powerful, and a terrible conqueror; of one who has a just claim, one who has also power to maintain it, and one whose power is so terrible that resistance seems hopeless.

Shall the prey of the mighty be taken away, or even a captive justly claimed, though by one less mighty, be delivered? Not in the common course of things, or by human justice alone. But God's grace has a higher law, and even more than this shall be done: the prey of the most terrible among Zion's adversaries shall be delivered.

The order of the prophecy points here to something nobler in itself, and later in time, than the Return from Babylon, when Israel had "a little reviving in their bondage." It announces the final deliverance of God's ancient people from sin and Satan, from death and the grave. Those who had become, through impenitence "the synagogue of Satan," Rev. ii. 9, iii. 9, will at length be a people "all righteousness," the chosen inheritance of the king of Israel.

v. 26. These strong figures must describe the sore judgment which is called elsewhere "the vintage," or the treading of the wine-press of God's anger. Solemn warnings are given continually of His holy vengeance which will visit, in the last days, the oppressors and persecutors of Zion. The vision closes by repeating the grand hope of the Gospel, that all flesh shall see the salvation of the Lord." Is. xl. 5; Lu. iii. 1—6.



## § 2. CHAPS. L.—LII. 10. MESSIAH'S MESSAGE TO ISRAEL.

The message or voice of Messiah to the Gentiles, ch. xlix., closes with an answer to Zion's complaint that she had been forsaken and forgotten. This subject is now resumed in a direct appeal to Israel and Zion. The true cause of their rejection is explained, with allusion to the law of divorce and the sale of captives, under the same figure of a marriage separation. The warning and reproof are then followed by promises of the richest blessings still to come. Some transfer vv. 1—3 to the close of the last chapter (Jerome, Vittr., Rosenm.). But this obscures the true connexion. In those verses a second message to Israel begins, a sequel to the voice to the islands, just as in ch. xli. and xlii. 17 in the former series.

## § 2 (1). CHAP. L. THE FIRST ADVENT.

THUS saith the LORD, Where *is* your mother's bill of divorce, wherewith I have put her away? or who *is* my creditor, to whom I have sold you? Behold, by your iniquities ye have sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put

v. 1. The Bill of Divorce is a well-known ordinance of the law of Moses, Deut. xxiv. 1—4. Here it is not asked for to be cancelled (Hitz.), or that the justice of the act may be proved (Grot., Hend., Alex.). On the contrary, the question implies a strong denial of its existence; just as it is denied that God has sold them to any creditor, since He is debtor to none (Jerome, Kimchi, Abarb., Aben Ezra, Gesen., Hahn, Stier). The words of Jer. iii. 8 are no solid objection to this view. The same figure may be used diversely according to the object proposed. The bill of divorce there expresses simply the fact of Israel's rejection and captivity. But here the two things denied are causeless, capricious dislike on the part of the aggrieved Husband, and any prohibition of the wife's return. She had neither been put away without a weighty cause, nor divorced for ever. The law was permissive, for the hardness of their hearts, to prevent greater evils, but it was not the rule of God's dealings with His sinful people. His sternest warnings had been followed, from the first, by promises of final restoration. See Rom. xi. 1, 2, 11, 25.

"Ye have sold yourselves." The reflexive sense (A. V., Stier) is required by the denial, that God had sold them, implied in the question. He had put their mother away through no caprice, and for no light offence, nor yet for final separation. Her adulteries, of which death was the just punishment, had led only to a temporary expulsion from her home; and there was a promise, on repentance, of her being welcomed back once more. The first main feature of the times of Messiah is the Call of the Gentiles, when He was rejected by His own people, xlix. 4—7, and the next is this divorce of Israel for unbelief.

v. 2. The cause of this partial divorce is here explained. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." The application of the verse to the times of the prophets (Chald., Kimchi, Rosenm., Gesen.), destroys the sequence, and weakens the force. Our Lord himself expounds it, Joh. v. 43, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not." (So Vittr., Stier, Hahn.) The word "man" in "no man," is often used for men of note. Comp. Joh. vii. 48. There was "none to answer," when Messiah graciously in-

away. 2 Wherefore, when I came, *was there* no man? when I called, *was there* none to answer? Is my hand wholly shortened, that it cannot save? or have I no power to deliver? behold! at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because *there is* no water, and dieth for thirst. 3 I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering.

4 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. 5 The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away. 6 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. 7 For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my race like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. 8 *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. 9 Behold, the Lord GOD

vited;—"How often would I have gathered your children . . . and ye would not."

"Wholly shortened." This is the true force of the question, to shew their aggravated sin. They received Him as if He had no power, not as if it were slightly diminished, but as if He were quite unequal to the task of redeeming them, Joh. xi. 48. But His power, though veiled in the flesh, was not really diminished. He was still the same Lord, who rebuked the sea, and it was dry, and who led them through the deep as through a wilderness.

v. 3. The tense (Heb. fut.) here denotes not a future, but a repeated or habitual act. There seems also to be a special allusion to the miraculous darkness at the Crucifixion.

v. 4. After His voice as JEHOVAH, the mighty Creator, Messiah now predicts His own humiliation, when "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," Joh. i. 14. The earthly life of our Lord was one of unbroken communion with his Heavenly Father. "To hear as the learned" answers to "the tongue of the learned," not as one who is taught merely, but as one well instructed. A double con-

trast is implied, between the deaf and those who hear, between those dull of hearing and those of quick spiritual discernment, Heb. v. 11; Is. xi. 3. One Lord is the Pattern, and also the Giver, of this heavenly grace.

vv. 5, 6. The voice, to which the Son of God hearkens, calls Him to lay down His life for the sheep. And He does not turn away from it, but ever replies, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" He endured shame and spitting in loving obedience to His Father's will. The words are neither figurative (Vitr.), nor include the Church (Alex.), but are a distinct prophecy of our Lord's patient sufferings, recorded in the Gospels, and of these alone. He who suffers is the same LORD, who clothes the heavens with blackness, and makes sackcloth their covering.

vv. 7—9. The outward "adversary" was the Jewish Sanhedrim; but in a deeper sense it is the Prince of this world, who assailed our Lord in the hour of darkness, and found nothing in which he could prevail. Our Lord "endured the cross, despising the shame," in firm reliance on the love and wisdom of the Father.

will help me; who *is* he *that* shall condemn me? lo! they all shall wax old as a garment, the moth shall eat them up. 10 Who *is there* among you that feareth the LORD, that hearkeneth to 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. 11 Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, and compass *yourselves* about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow.

v. 10. This prophecy of Messiah's sufferings, and of His fidelity to the great work assigned to Him, introduces a double lesson of comfort to the faithful, and of warning to His self-righteous adversaries. The Servant here is our Lord himself, and the address is to His true and humble followers. The question implies that, among the Jewish people, only a small remnant would be found, Is. i. 9, to whom this description would apply. The latter clauses, parted from the rest by the relative, describe a temporary, special experience of the same parties, whose abiding character has been already given. The words are addressed, first of all, to the disciples in that hour of darkness between the betrayal and the resurrection, and then in every similar time of special temptation and conflict. They are charged to walk on confidently in that pathway of patient suffering, and faith in God's protection, in which their Divine Master has gone before them.

v. 11. A warning to the proud and self-righteous follows the advice to the faithful. The sparks and fire-light here denote the vain, transitory confidences of Pharisaic and worldly men. They are permitted, and even ironically invited, to deceive themselves for a little time with their vain hopes, and proud, self-righteous fancies. But these sparks must soon go out, and leave them in the double darkness of a guilty conscience, and of hopeless despair. Their perverse folly would expose them to the danger that an eternal night would settle down upon their souls.

The historical application of these two verses is plain. They refer directly to the little company of Messiah's true disciples, called to tread in their Master's steps amidst sorrows and temptations; and to the Pharisees and Sadducees, who

proudly rejected and opposed Him. These were suffered, for one generation, to persevere in their fatal course of unbelieving pride, and to flatter themselves with vain hopes of national greatness, and of the special favour of God. Then the sparks they had kindled went out, their hopes expired in thick darkness; and they lay down in sorrow, when the city fell, and the temple was ruined, and the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost. This separation and contrast of the true disciples of Christ, and of the nation at large, is the natural sequel to the prophecy of Messiah's sufferings, and the key of the voices to the true Israel which next follow.

The last verse has been variously explained. Some render, *zigôth*, torches, matches, or fiery darts. Some refer them to Jewish attempts at rebellion (Ges., Maur., Hengst.); others to preparations to assail the faithful (Hitz., Ewald, Umbr., Knobel); others to their kindling by their devices the anger of God (Rosenm., Stier); others to blasphemies and curses against the Servant of the Lord (Delitzsch). But Hahn justly observes that the enlightening, not the consuming nature, of the fire and sparks is here chiefly intended. Instead of walking in the light of the heavenly Dayspring, they kindled an earthly light, transient and feeble. The true reference, then, is to Pharisaic righteousnesses and human traditions, or to vain, worldly philosophy, by which the unbelieving strive to light up the darkness of the soul. The humble may walk in darkness for a time, but heavenly light will soon dawn on them. The proud may comfort themselves, by false, self-righteous zeal or worldly wisdom, with a seeming light, but it will end in darkness and sorrow.

## § 2 (2). CHAP. LI. THE MESSAGE CONTINUED.

HEARKEN to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock *whence* ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit *whence* ye are digged. 2 Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah *that* bare you; for I called him, one alone, and blessed him, and increased him. 3 For the LORD will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places:

The address, Harken, thrice repeated, and the summons, Awake, awake, also three times, li. 9, 17, lii. 1, mark the unity of this division of the prophecy, nearly to its close, li. 10. But these words also refer back to ch. l. 10, just before.

The Servant of the LORD here gives messages of truth and wisdom to the enlarging company of those disciples, who fear the LORD, and hearken to his own voice. The speaker is Messiah, as before. He now turns himself from the branches to be cut off, who say they are Jews, and are not, Rom. xi. 17, Rev. ii. 9, iii. 9, who compass themselves with an earthly, dying light of sparks they have themselves kindled, to His true Israel, now enlarged by converts from the Gentiles.

The succession in the chapter is moral rather than historical. Three addresses are given to those in the infancy, youth, and ripeness of Christian experience, in each successive age. The first verse answers to the description of "babes in Christ," and to the promise, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." To this class, like Nicodemus, the Greeks in the fourth Gospel, the Ethiopian eunuch, and the Berean Jews, a lesson is here given how they are to attain to settled faith and solid peace.

v. 1. The rock, and the hole of the pit, are usually applied to Abraham and Sarah, either conjointly, or else distinctively (Vitr., Rosenm., Ges., Ew., Knob., Hend., Alex., Hahn, Stier), but with great diversity in the further explanation. Many refer it to the strong faith of Abraham, like a rock, others to his obtaining a son when as one dead; and most to the figure of stones cut out for a building, but some to the smitten rock, and streams issuing from it. But the second figure,

that of the pit, is quite adverse to this usual view. Though Abraham might be likened to a rock, the comparison of Sarah to the hole of a pit is very unnatural. The rock is here named, not for its firmness as a foundation, but for the hardness which resists the tool of the mason, and the pit denotes what is mean and low. These are two striking figures for the moral hardness and debasement of men, unrenewed by Divine grace. The separation of souls from this rock and pit needs the power of God, and can be effected by this alone. Hence they must here allude to that Chaldean idolatry, in which Abraham and Sarah once lived, and from which they had been brought out by the Call of God alone. The God of glory had hewn them out of this rock of stubborn heathenism, and digged them out of its pit of idolatrous debasement; so that they became the foundation-stones of a living temple, the root of that tree or stock to which the faithful of all times belong.

v. 2. "One alone." Abraham received the promise when he had no child, Acts vii. 5, far less a numerous offspring. The force of these words is obscured, when the rock is supposed to be the patriarch himself. The choice of many rocks is a wholly incongruous figure. But all agrees with the construction given above. Hewn by Divine power from the hard rock of Chaldean idolatry, one single stone, by the same power, was multiplied into many living stones, builded by degrees into a temple of God. The first hewing out of this stone, and its later increase, were wholly of God's mercy, and human merit had no place in the change. The tense used (Heb. fut.) implies the continuous nature of this Divine work, ever since the Call of Abraham. "I went on, from year to year, blessing and increasing him."

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.

4 HEARKEN unto me, O 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. 5 My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people: the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust. 6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment; and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

v. 3. The victories of Abraham, and the blessing he received, were a pledge of the later conquests of Cyrus, by whom the LORD purposed to deliver His captives once more, ch. xli. So Abraham's call and blessing were the sure earnest of Zion's recovered beauty and glory. The former things are here declared, xli. 22, that Israel may consider them, and know their latter end. Three lessons are given to infant disciples; to remember their natural corruption, like the rock and the pit, as shewn in the state of the heathen world; to discern the sovereign grace of God in the history of Abraham and Sarah; and to gather, from God's past mercies, the assurance of still fuller blessings to come. The melody of our version here reflects worthily the beauty and fullness of the promise.

The especial objects of this message are the first Jewish believers, when Messiah had been rejected by His own people with shame and spitting. The lesson of God's sovereignty was then brought to light with greater clearness than before. But they will apply also to the exiles on their return from Babylon, and to the weak in faith in every age.

v. 4. The word "people," is one usually applied to the Jews, and "nation" to the Gentiles. Their union here will fitly denote the Christian Church, the peculiar people, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, Rom. ix. 24, who became the covenant people of God upon Messiah's rejection by the Jewish nation. The message is not now to those who are only

seeking after the Lord, but to believers established in the faith of Christ. The law is the perfect law of liberty, Jas. i. 25, ii. 12; or the Gospel, viewed as a practical message of holiness, to be made known to all nations for the obedience of faith, Rom. xvi. 26. "Judgment" consists in the wise and holy decisions of the great Lawgiver on all that concerns the faith and practice of His people, and the duty of all mankind. This is to rest or abide for a source of truth and heavenly wisdom to the heathen world.

v. 5. The isles wait on Messiah, when they look to Him as the great Prophet, giving oracles of wisdom; and trust in His arm, by depending on Him alone as the all-sufficient Saviour and Redeemer.

v. 6. This verse does not refer to the passing away of the Old Testament economy (Vitr.), but rather to the visible heavens and earth. The changeableness of the outward frame of nature is contrasted with the firm and enduring nature of the covenant of grace. The moral laws of God are firmer than the physical laws of nature, because these are only handmaids to those, depend upon them, and minister to them. "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." The waxing old of the earth, like a garment, plainly refers to the habitable surface, rather than to the solid globe. It implies no destruction of the planet, but a change affecting its whole condition as the home and dwelling-place of mankind.

"In like manner." Like a smoke or

7 HEARKEN unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law: fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. 8 For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation shall be from generation to generation.

9 AWAKE, awake! put on strength, O arm of the LORD: awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. *Art* thou not it that cut Rahab in pieces, *that* wounded the dragon? 10 *Art* thou not it which dried the sea, the waters of the great deep? that made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over? 11 So the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy *shall be*

cloud that vanishes away, Job vii. 9; Jas. iv. 14. The righteousness and salvation of Christ will outlast all the changes, however great, of the visible universe.

Some render, "like a gnat" or "insect," taking *kên* as a noun (Vitr., Lowth, Gesen., Hitz., Knobel, Jenour, Stier, Hahn). But the authorised version is the same with the early ones (LXX., Syr., Aquil., Vulg.), and is preferred by many critics (Koster, Rosenm., Rückert, Hend., Alex.). The phrase then answers exactly to the Greek *ὡσαύτως*. Either rendering is very emphatic. But it is an objection to the former that the singular of *kinnim* is *kinnâh* and not *kên* (Delitzsch), as appears from the Talmud.

vv. 7, 8. This third appeal answers, in its description of those addressed, to the last beatitudes.—"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." Thus it belongs to those of manly stature in the faith, whose hearts are already "established with grace," Heb. xiii. 9. They are here encouraged under the persecutions of the world by the promise of a sure deliverance. The persecutors of the faithful will become like a moth-eaten garment, but these confessors shall "receive a crown of righteousness that fadeth not away."

The close of the last chapter contrasts the feeble germs of the Christian Church, the little company of disciples, who received our Lord when he came, with the self-righteous Pharisees, and the rest of the unbelieving nation. These nine verses reveal the main steps of spiritual progress,

from the earliest stage of seeking after God, and learning to depend wholly on His grace, to that full ripeness of faith, which enables martyrs and confessors to contend, even to death, against the unbelieving world, and makes them more than conquerors in the midst of reproach and persecution.

vv. 9—11. This call, Awake, awake, like the voice, Hearken! is three times repeated, and thus marks the unbroken unity of the whole message, li. 1—lii. 10. The Son of God speaks here as the great Intercessor, and pleads with God the Father for the renewal of His mighty works in the days of old. He next turns to Jerusalem, speaks to her with authority, as her King, and bids her to wake up from her spiritual stupor, and receive the promised blessing.

v. 9. Rahab, "pride" or "haughtiness" is here a name of Egypt, from their national contempt for all foreigners. The dragon alludes to the crocodile, as an emblem of Pharaoh. The earlier wonders of the Exodus are made the pledge of a still greater deliverance.

vv. 10, 11. The miracle, once wrought in the letter, will be repeated in spirit, and in a deeper sense, in the latter days. Providence, in a sinful world, is a mighty deep, where all seems confusion and disorder to the outward eye; but through all this confusion and turmoil, and floods of temptation, the Redeemer will guide His ransomed to their inheritance. In v. 11 we have a verbal repetition of ch. xxxv. 10. It completes a series of allusions, by

upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, *and* sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

12 I, *even* I, *am* he that comforteth you: who *art* thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man, *which* shall be made as grass? 13 And forgettest the LORD thy maker, who hath stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually, every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where *is* the fury of the oppressor? 14 The captive exile hasteneth to be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail. 15 But I *am* the LORD thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: The LORD of hosts *is* his name. 16 And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand; that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou *art* my people.

17 AWAKE, awake! stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury: thou hast drunk

which the closing chapter of the Earlier Prophecies is inwrought into the texture of these later visions. To ascribe these words to Isaiah in his own person, or to a chorus, or make them simply an appeal by God to His own omnipotence, more or less obscures their real force. Their key can only be found in the truth that Messiah is one with the Father, the true God and eternal life.

v. 12—16. This Divine Intercessor, the Word of God, is also the Comforter of his people, John xiv. 16. When they are crushed by their afflictions, He reminds them of His love in earlier days, and encourages them to hope for greater wonders still to come. The mention here of the new heavens and earth is a strong reason against the application of the latter part of this chapter to the return from Babylon, and tends to confirm its reference to the second, longer dispersion of Israel after our Lord's first coming, and to their deliverance in the last days.

v. 17. After the power of God has been invoked to renew the wonders of the Exodus, Jerusalem is urged to rouse herself from long stupor, to review her own sins, and then to receive words of hope and comfort. In a third address,

she is invited to enter into the full inheritance of her promised glory.

"Thou hast drunk deep." The word rendered "dregs," A. V., means rather the bowl or the lowest part of the cup (Alexr., Hahn, Stier, Delitzsch). Thus it implies either the large size of the cup, or the thoroughness with which it has been drunk to the very bottom. There is anger, we are taught, as well as mercy, in the afflictions which God sends upon His people for their sins. But the words imply a promise. Since the cup has been drained, there is no more affliction to come.

v. 18. The want of wise counsellors, in times of extreme danger, is a sore aggravation of national calamity. Sin infatuates, before it destroys. The description applies fully to the days of the fall both of the first and the second temple.

v. 19. "These two things." Since four are named, pairs are clearly grouped together. Some make the contrast to be, "wasting and destruction" of the land, "famine and sword" to the inhabitants (Vitr., Gesen., Hahn). But the contrast is rather between slow and gradual, and sudden calamities, wasting and famine on

deep the cup of trembling, *and* hast drained it out. 18 *There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth; neither is there any that taketh her by the hand, of all the sons she hath brought up.* 19 These two *things* are come unto thee; who shall bemoan thee? wasting and destruction, and famine and the sword: how shall I comfort thee? 20 Thy sons have fainted; they lie at the head of all the streets, like a wild deer in the net: they are full of the fury of the LORD, the rebuke of thy God. 21 Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, but not with wine: 22 Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God, *that* pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, the full cup of my fury: thou shalt no more drink it again. 23 But I will put it into the hand of them which afflict thee; 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.

one side, and on the other, destruction and the sword (Aben Ezra, Kimch., Grotius, Stier, etc.). This is confirmed by Ezek. vii. 15. After the slow wasting of famine, the destroying sword of the enemy would complete their sorrow.

The construction in the last clause is peculiar—*Quis te consolabor?* To make the verb a reply to an unfinished question (Targ., Hend.) is harsh and unnatural. The constructions—Who but I? Who am I that I should, etc.? or, By whom (A. V., Hitzig) do not seem justified by the form of the phrase. "How?" is the nearest approach to the exact sense—Under what character, and by what titles being named, shall I comfort thee? As if it were needful for the LORD to single out His most expressive words of mercy and promises of grace, to comfort His people in so deep an affliction.

v. 20. "Like a wild deer in the net." The animal (*thō*), it is shown by Bochart, is the oryx, a kind of wild antelope, and not the buffalo. It is swift and graceful, nearly resembling the stag or deer. The figure is that of strength and speed made useless and hopeless for deliverance.

v. 21. The same phrase, xxix. 10, describes the pride and spiritual intoxication of the Jewish rulers. Here it de-

scribes the sorrow by which their sin would be punished. They had drained the cup of God's anger, until they were dizzy and stupefied with the greatness of their calamity. The words answer to their state, not only at the first Captivity, but through long ages of persecution, exile, and desolation. One last draught of this cup has still to be drunk, and then it will be removed from them for ever.

v. 23. This verse answers to our Lord's warning, Matt. xxi. 44—6. Judgment has lighted heavily on the Jews, who stumbled at the stumbling-stone; but the judgment on those Gentile persecutors, who have despised or perverted the Gospel, will be heavier still. The Christian nation, which renounces Christ, builds its house on the sand; and when the floods arise, and the winds blow fiercely, it must fall, and great will be the fall of it.

"Which have said to thy soul." The phrase is peculiar and striking. It means rather more than "distressed thy soul, by saying" (Alex.), and implies the thoroughness of the humiliation, as in Ps. cv. 18, "his soul came into iron." In the case of the Jewish exiles, the spirit itself has often seemed crushed and degraded by their deep sorrows.



## § 2 (3). CHAP. LII. 1—10. ZION'S FINAL DELIVERANCE.

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! 3 For thus saith the LORD,

This passage has been referred to the Return from Babylon (Pisc., Grotius, Rosenm., Gesen., Ewald, Knob., Hend.), to the first rise of the Christian Church (Vitr., Alex.), or as a call to repentance addressed to the Jews by whom our Lord was crucified (Euseb., Jerome). The last view is plainly unnatural. The first agrees ill with the promise v. 16, since to restrict its words to Chaldean strangers only (Hend., etc.) is an arbitrary limitation. Even the reference to the early church, as called out of the bondage of Rabbinism into the liberty of the Gospel, answers ill to the natural force of the words. The fulness of the promise, and the order in the vision, confirm the application to a time still future, when Jerusalem will cease to be "trodden down of the Gentiles," and to a deliverance of which the Return from Babylon was a pledge and partial earnest only.

v. 1. The first call to Jerusalem, Awake, awake! begins a review of her long and sore afflictions, at their close. This second opens out a vista of blessing and prosperity without end. The Return, and the first days of Gospel light, were steps towards this final issue, but come short of the brightness of the promise.

"Thy strength." Not "splendour" (Gesen.), a meaning foreign to the word. Zion, weak in herself, is now to become strong, because the power of the Lord is to rest upon her. A promise is couched in the command. The garments are the clothing of heavenly gifts and graces, or else the ransomed children of Zion, xlix. 18, viewed as her precious jewels and bridal attire.

v. 2. There is here a contrast to the sentence on Babylon, xlvi. 1, 2. Zion, a captive seated on the ground, with dust on her head, in token of deep sorrow, Job ii. 12, is called to shake off the dust, to rise

from the ground where she was seated, Job ii. 13, Lam. ii. 10, and to sit down on a royal throne. The reading of the Keri, *lithpatchi*, that of several MSS. and editions, is followed by the LXX., A. V., Rosenmuller, Gesen., Ewald, Knobel, Hendn., Delitzsch. Others retain the textual reading (Hahn, Stier, etc.), which also gives an expressive sense. "Loosed are the bands of thy neck." On this view the release which God has wrought for Zion is the ground of an appeal to her to arise from the dust. God's acts of grace should be motives for earnest effort.

v. 3. "Not with silver." The received version gives the main thought, and is simpler in style, but obscures an important allusion, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. The folly of their sin is placed here in contrast with the freeness of that grace by which they will be delivered. But while the redemption on their part, is "without money and without price," the next chapter, in which Messiah is said to be an offering for sin, reveals a further truth. The Apostle alludes to both, and combines them in a most impressive contrast. God's people are redeemed "not with silver or gold, ... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." The more literal version, though less free, is more emphatic; and seems preferable, as making the allusion of the Apostle more distinct. One truth is expressed, that Zion would pay nothing for her own redemption. Another is implied, that it would be by the precious blood of the sin-offering of her own Messiah. The reflexive sense "ye have sold yourselves," seems required by the whole context, as in l. 1.

vv. 4—6. The exact scope of these verses is open to various constructions.

Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and not with silver shall ye be redeemed.

4 FOR thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt, to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. 5 And now what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people are taken away for nought? Their rulers howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day is blasphemed. 6 Therefore my people shall know

Some think a contrast is drawn between the Egyptian sojourn and the Assyrian troubles; others, between both of these and the Babylonian captivity. Some render the word *be-ephes*, "at the last," in contrast with "aforetime." Some think there is a contrast of time only, others between lighter and heavier troubles; others, that there is a simple historical enumeration, to show how long and various had been Israel's sufferings. Some refer "here" to heaven, others to Babylon, others to the whole state of affliction. The general sense is plain, but the exact force of each phrase is open to rival constructions, nearly balanced in authority and internal evidence.

v. 4. The word, Egypt, comes first in the original, and shows that the main thought is the enumeration of the past trials of Israel, as a ground for their deliverance at last. "Aforetime." Not a general term for O. T. times (Stier), but a special mark of the Egyptian, as their earliest, period of sorrow. Their troubles began long ago. "To sojourn there," and yet they were enslaved "without cause." Their causeless bondage, when they went only to sojourn, is implied from the rest of the verse. Their bondage there was notorious. This heathen violence was aggravated by breach of faith, since they were invited down to sojourn as honoured friends.

"Without cause." Not "at the last" (Saad., Lowth, Hend., Havern.), but "for nothing," with no just reason. The oppression was causeless on the side of the heathen invaders, though deserved by their sins.

v. 5. "And now." The contrast is, first, between these two earlier, and the later Babylonian oppression; and next, between all their earlier sorrows, and their afflictions in the last days. But the

stress of the appeal consists, not in the contrast of lighter and heavier troubles, but in the long continuance of these successive woes.

"What have I here?" Not "in heaven" (Hitz., Hend.), nor in Babylon (Chald., &c.), but "in the present state of things" (Rosenm., Gesen., Maur., Stier). The question is not, What have I to do? (Gesen., Maurer, Stier, Delitzsch); nor, What hinders me, in heaven, from coming down to succour them (Hitz., Hend.); nor exactly, "What do I gain? only loss" (Knobel). But rather this: "How can I be glorified in suffering My people to continue in such heavy affliction, when their trials have been so severe, and have lasted so long?" In the shame and degradation of His people God is dishonoured, and thus for His name's sake He will deliver them.

"Their rulers howl." These words have received at least five constructions: Their heathen rulers make them to howl (A. V., Kimchi); they exult or shriek in triumph (Kocher, Gesen. Lex., Rosenm., Maurer, Ewald, Knob., Umbr., Stier, Delitzsch); their singers lament (Aben Ezra, Luzzati); their rulers, the Jewish leaders, howl with grief (Vitr., Hitzig, Klein., Ges. Comm., Hend., Havernick), or with wild, lawless passion (Hahn). But though the kindred words, in Greek and Latin, are sometimes used for the cries of noisy triumph, this verb, *yâlal*, in Hebrew occurs thirty times, and always to express a cry of intense alarm or sorrow. The causative sense, also, is against usage; and the same word is used, xxviii. 14, for the Jewish rulers. The meaning seems to be that the leaders of the people, instead of believing prayers, or temple-songs of praise, Hos. vii. 14, Am. viii. 3, offer only piercing cries and complaints, like the howlings of those who are in ex-

my name; therefore *they shall know* in that day, that *I am* he which saith *unto them*, Behold, here am I!

7 HOW beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth glad tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, 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: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. 10 The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

treme and hopeless anguish. Thus God's name was continually blasphemed by the unbelief and deep sorrows, both of the Jewish rulers and of the people over whom they ruled.

The Apostle quotes these words, Rom. ii. 24, with reference to sins and lawlessness of the Jews in their dispersion. God is dishonoured alike by the sins and the calamities of the people who are called by His name.

v. 6. In contrast to this state of intense sorrow, God's people shall learn the truth, that He is "a very present help in the time of trouble." The words "in that day," prove that the time of deliverance was actually future when the prophet wrote, and had been made present in prophetic vision alone.

v. 7. This apostrophe is not confined to any one period. At all times the proclamation of God's promises by His own messengers is a source of comfort and joy. The meaning is plainly, "How beautiful is the swift arrival of the joyful tidings! how welcome should be the messengers themselves!"

v. 8. "Eye to eye." Some explain it to mean that their watch-towers will be so near, that they can signal from one to another; or that each will see the eyes of the next, elated with joy; or that they shall attain full harmony of judgment. But the same phrase occurs Nu. xiv. 14, "that thou, Lord, art seen face

to face," and this seems to fix the real meaning. Zion's watchmen shall see their God no longer as one afar off, or through a glass, darkly, but face to face, and eye to eye. He will be revealed to them, as once in the pillar of fire, by clear and manifest tokens of His favour and immediate presence. Some translate, as an exclamation, "The voice of thy watchmen! they lift up the voice: together will they shout" (Vitr., Ewald, Alex., Stier, Delitzsch). But the received version is superior in simplicity and energy. The other form would only be suitable, if an address of the watchers immediately followed. The words answer to the former verse. The figure is of messengers of glad tidings, whose feet are seen on the distant hills, and of watchmen on the walls of the city, who look out for their approach, and welcome it with songs of joy.

vv. 9, 10. This section of the prophecy closes here with a glorious promise. It is rehearsed at the opening of the Baptist's message, Lu. iii. 6, but remains to be more fully realized in the last days. The two verses that follow are usually joined with what precedes. But on the view of their connexion here preferred, the controversy with Israel, which began li. 1, by a solemn appeal of Messiah himself, receives in these verses, in exact agreement with a similar conclusion, ch. xii. xxxv., its emphatic and glorious peroration.

## § 3. MESSIAH'S SUFFERINGS AND REWARD.

## CHAP. LII. II—LV.

This Second Series of the Later Prophecies, like the first, completes two successive messages to the Gentiles and the Jews by a third, more distinctly historical. The clear prediction, where Cyrus is mentioned by name, with the opening of the gates of Babylon to the Persian conquerors, has its counterpart in this picture of the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow. The God of Israel, who there announced the latter end of the former things, here fulfils the rest of His challenge to the idols, and declares new things, more remotely to come. The Section has three parts, which reveal the sufferings of Messiah and His victory, the fruitfulness of the true Church, the spiritual Sarah, and the glorious invitations and promises of the Gospel.

The former series had contained the invitation, near its close, *xlvi. 16*, "Come near unto me, hear ye this!" This appeal next unfolds itself into two prophecies, which Messiah addresses, first to the isles of the Gentiles, and then to rebellious Israel. A command, *xlvi. 20*, followed close on the invitation, "Go ye out of Babylon, flee from the Chaldeans," This links itself, in like manner, with the opening of the third section. The words "from thence," "from the midst of her," refer plainly to Babylon, whither Isaiah had foretold, *ch. xxxix.*, that Judah and all its treasures would be carried away. After that parting charge, Babylon and the Chaldeans are never named again. The sentence of perpetual oblivion begins to be fulfilled.

The clear prediction of the sufferings of Christ, with which this section begins, forms the centre and heart of these later prophecies. It reveals the Divine method for accomplishing the second part of the opening promise to Zion, "that her iniquity is pardoned;" while it sets before the Church, in plainest outlines, the great Sacrifice and Divine Sin-offering of the Incarnate Son of God. It also prepares the way for a glorious promise of the fruitfulness of the true Church, delivered at length from the reproach of long ages of barrenness, and later signs of desertion and neglect, and of her growth into a beautiful city of God; with an appeal to all the Gentiles once more, to come and partake freely of the sure mercies provided for them in the Son of David, the promised Immanuel, the Lamb of God, appointed to take away the sin of the world.

## § 3 (1). THE SUFFERINGS OF MESSIAH.

## CHAP. LII. 11—LIII.

11 DEPART ye, depart ye! go out from thence, touch no unclean *thing*: go out from the midst of her; be clean, ye that bear the vessels of the LORD. 12 For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you, and the God of Israel *will be* your rereward.

13 BEHOLD, my Servant will deal prudently: he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. 14 As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any

v. 11. The restoration of the temple-service is the main feature in the sacred narratives of the Return from Captivity, 2 Ki. xxv. 13—17; Jer. xxvii. 16—22; Dan. i. 2, v. 3; Ezra i. 5—11, vii. 19, viii. 24—33; Neh. x. 32—39. Those who “bear the vessels of the Lord” are the priests and Levites, so prominent in the same history. This restoration of the Jewish polity, and its temple-service, was the needful preparation for Messiah’s appearing; whose presence was to be the glory of the latter house, and until whose coming the sceptre of Judah was to continue. These two verses, then, referring to the history in the time of Zerubbabel and Joshua, form a natural background to the portraiture of Messiah’s sufferings.

v. 12. In the Exodus Israel went forth “in haste,” Ex. xii. 11, and Pharaoh “heard that the people fled,” xiv. 5; but the pillar of cloud went before them, and when Pharaoh pursued, it became their rearguard, xiv. 19, 20. It is here promised that the Return of the Exiles shall be more deliberate, but with like tokens of God’s gracious presence. The connexion of the two verses is not that there would be full leisure for their ablutions (Knobel), but that God’s signal mercies were a powerful motive to especial holiness and reverence on the part of His servants. It would be like a call from heaven—Be ye holy, for I am very gracious.

v. 13. Here the vision passes on from the restoration of the temple-service, Is. xliv. 28, Dan. ix. 25, to the things to come, or those times of Messiah the Prince, when He would make reconcilia-

tion for iniquity. The Servant of the LORD is the title given him five times before, xlii. 1, 19, xliii. 10, xlix. 3, 6, l. 10, with the same characters of meekness and patience. He will “deal prudently,” for His name is Counsellor, ix. 6; and He is filled with the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, xi. 2. He will “be exalted and extolled, and be very high,” for His name is Immanuel, the Mighty God. The call, Behold! is echoed first by the words of the angel, Lu. ii. 10; and next by the voice of the Baptist—“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

v. 14. The appearance and character of Messiah would be a marvel and cause of astonishment to the Jewish people. He would wholly disappoint the expectation of carnal minds, who looked for all outward signs of royalty and worldly greatness. The rest of the verse explains the source of their astonishment, the appearance of a sorrowful and suffering Messiah. The next verse foretells his later exaltation. Humbled before many persons, He would be exalted in the eyes of many nations.

v. 15. When the first covenant was confirmed at Sinai, Moses sprinkled the people with the blood of sacrifice, Ex. xxiv. 8. But this Prophet, like unto Moses, will sprinkle not one, but many nations, with the blood, not of oxen or rams, but of His own perfect sacrifice, and thus will bring them within the pale of a new and better covenant. Their kings shall shut their mouths at Him in mute wonder and reverence.

The last clause, in grammar, admits equally the received version, or that of

man, and his form more than the sons of men ; 15 So shall he sprinkle many nations, kings shall shut their mouths at him : for they to whom it had not been told shall see, and they which had not heard shall consider.

CHAP. LIII. WHO hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the LORD been revealed? 2 For he hath grown up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground : he hath no form, and no comeliness ; and when we see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him. 3 He is despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and well acquainted with grief : and they hid as it were *their* faces from him : he

the LXX., given above. But St Paul's quotation, Rom. xv. 20, 21, where this very promise, as rendered above, is made the rule and law of his own conduct as the Apostle of the Gentiles, seems decisive in favour of the latter meaning (LXX., Vulg., Luth., Crusius, Stier). Besides the authority of an inspired comment, the context favours this construction. That wide publication of the gospel, to which St Paul applies the words, and in which he was the chief instrument, explains how it would be that many nations and kings should come to do homage to Messiah. The words answer closely to lxx. 1. Nations that sat in heathen darkness were to see a great light, and heathen kings to learn and understand the truth of a new and better covenant.

CHAP. LIII.

"Who hath believed our report?" The question, Who speaks in this chapter? has received various answers. Some have even turned the whole into a dramatic dialogue. The view which alone explains the whole, without requiring any abrupt change of person, is that it is "the Spirit of Christ, which was in" the prophet, who here speaks by his lips. He is a Divine Person, vv. 8, 11, 12, distinct from the Father, of whom and to whom He speaks vv. 6, 10; and also from Messiah, the Word and Son of God, of whom He bears witness Joh. xv. 26, xvi. 14; 1 Pet. i. 11. He speaks by the prophets, and associates Himself with them, as God's messengers, liii. 1; Zech. vii. 12; Joh. xv. 27; Acts xv. 32. But He also, by a Divine condescension, associates Himself with sinners in general, and especially with the Jewish people,

vv. 2—6. The double question may be explained thus:—Who has believed the report of the prophets, who have spoken before, by the Holy Spirit, of the coming of this Just One? Who has perceived the greatness and excellence of this work of God's power, when the Word actually was made flesh, and dwelt among men?

v. 2. The point of sight is at the time when Messiah's sufferings are finished, and He is entering into glory. Hence the past tense is used, vv. 2—10, and the future at the close. The Servant of the Lord, named before, is still the subject, and the previous message is continued. The two verses seem to form an inverse parallel. God's mighty power is present in the work of Messiah, but veiled and in a mystery; for He will grow up as a root out of a dry ground. Few will be found who have believed the prophet's report; for, when the people look upon Messiah, He has no beauty in their eyes. The figures of the tender plant or sucker, and the root or shoot, are resumed from xi. 1, and express the low estate of the house of David when He appeared. The dry ground is expounded by the question of Nathanael, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

This Servant of the LORD grew up before the LORD himself. Every step in His life was by the appointment and under the eye of his Heavenly Father. He had "no form and no comeliness" in the eyes of carnal observers, though in the sight of God and the holy angels He is "fairer than the children of men."

v. 3. The word "men" is one commonly applied to those of rank or note. The common people heard the Lord Jesus

was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But he *was* pierced for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him, and by his stripes we are healed. 6 All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath made to light on him the iniquity of us all.

7 HE was oppressed, and *still* he abased himself, and opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and

gladly, at least for a time; but the question could be asked by enemies, Have any of the rulers believed on him? He was "well acquainted with grief," no casual acquaintance, but its familiar friend.

"And they hid," &c. The impersonal form refers to the men just named, or all those of note and influence. Their faces were averted from Him, as a lunatic, beside himself, or one possessed, as a deceiver and a blasphemer. The repetition implies that this contemptuous rejection by men of note spread at length among the whole people. Their hosannas turned to the cry, Crucify him! crucify him!

v. 4. The pronoun here is expressed, and most emphatic. The exact force would be shown by a varied order—"Surely it is our griefs which He hath borne, our sorrows which He hath carried." Yet they, whose sorrows He bore, knew it not, and ascribed His sufferings to His own guilt. We, for whom He suffered, mistook the cause of His griefs, and reckoned Him as one who lay, for His own sake, under the just displeasure of God.

v. 5. Here, too, the pronouns are emphatic, and the substitution of the Just for the unjust is affirmed in the strongest way. "We are healed," or "healing is ours." The pronoun comes last, to give it the utmost force.

v. 6. Here the sentence cannot be confined, as in v. 1, to the prophets. This "we" must be coextensive with the actual wandering. Comp. Rom. iii. 23; Joh. i. 29. Selfishness is the common root and essence of sin, but its forms are countless. It brings in a moral chaos. All wander, but "every one to his own way." The word "laid," A. V., means

to light, in hostile encounter, whether as many burdens on one shoulder, or many shafts aimed at one common target. Each sin of every sinner would be like a separate wound in the heart of this Man of sorrows.

v. 7. Messiah was the Lamb, whom God provided for a spotless offering, Gen. xxii. 8. In the second clause the word is the same as in xxxi. 4, "he will not abase himself for the noise of them." The structure connects the words with those which follow. The parallelism also confirms this rendering. He was oppressed, like a lamb that is led away to the slaughter; and yet he abased himself, refusing all self-defence in word or act, and offering himself up "as a sheep before her shearers is dumb." There was a strange, mysterious silence of willing self-abasement. "He answered never a word, inasmuch that the governor marvelled greatly." Matt. xxvii. 14; Joh. xix. 9—12.

v. 8. This verse has been much debated and variously expounded, almost in every word. The following paraphrase, founded on the above version, gives, I think, the true meaning.

"By violent hands he was seized upon, and hurried to trial, and by a sentence of unrighteous judgment carried off to execution. And who can reckon up his descendants? since he was cut off as one wholly childless, and his name doomed by his enemies to perish from the memory of men. Not, however for his own fault, but as a representative, a substitute for the sins of God's people, of guilty Israel, this Holy One was stricken." The word *lamo* is usually plural. Yet in its first occurrence in Scripture it is separately applied to Shem and Japhet, though single per-

as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. 8 By violence and by judgment he was taken away: and who shall recount his posterity? for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people HE was stricken. 9 And *they* appointed his grave among the wicked, and with the rich man, after he was slain; when he had done no violence, and no deceit *was* in his mouth. 10 Yea, the LORD was pleased to bruise him, *and* hath put *him* to grief. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall behold a seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of

sons, being those from whom a large posterity was to succeed, Gen. ix. 26, 27. In this book, at its last previous occurrence, ch. xlv. 15, it applies to a single idol, made out of half a single tree,—“he falleth down thereto” (*lamo*). Thus its use here in reference to our LORD is fully justified; being a representative, like that idol, and a federal head, like those patriarchs. This is confirmed by the contrast with v. 6, the order being just the same. “By his stripes there is healing TO US” (*lanu*); “for the sins of my people was the stroke TO HIM” (*lamo*). The conjectural reading *lamuth*, to death, is without authority, and greatly weakens the emphasis. That the stroke is mortal, is clearly implied, without being expressed; but the whole force lies in the contrast of persons, the guilty many and the Stricken One, which is destroyed by the change.

v. 9. The verb is impersonal. Its subject must be supplied from the previous verse. Having been taken away by a sentence of judgment, the judge or judges gave orders for his burial. There is no need to feign a contrast, not shown in the text, between appointment and execution (Hengst.). Our Lord's burial did not cease to be that of a criminal, because of Joseph's service of love. It was a hurried burial, on the evening of His crucifixion, under instructions that included the two malefactors, and under a law that applied to criminals only, Deut. xxi. 22. The part performed by Joseph, the rich man of this prophecy, was by the appointment of the same judge who condemned Him, namely, Pilate, Matt. xxvii. 58. The Sanhedrim, by setting their watch, shared in the public sanction Pilate had given to His burial in the rich man's tomb. Our Lord was

buried among malefactors, a class, but with the rich man, a single person, by the appointment of the judges who condemned Him, in minute agreement with the prophecy. “After he was slain,” lit. “in his deaths.” The plural, Ezek. xxviii. 10, is used to denote a violent death. The phrase refers, not to the act of dying, but to the after-state of the dead, and belongs to both clauses alike. He was slain, and then buried, as a criminal, yet striking tokens of honour mingled with the shame. The last words are neither the cause, nor the impediment, “though,” or “because.” They seem to note simply the fact of the strange contrast between His spotless innocence, and His dishonourable death.

v. 10. The statement here is a climax, rather than a contrast. It was not unjust judges alone, but the LORD himself, who laid on Messiah this heavy burden. He was “well-pleased for his righteousness' sake,” xlii. 1, 21, in bruising that Beloved Son, in whom He took delight; since by these sufferings the law was magnified, and made honourable. But the recompense would be sure and speedy.

The “soul” here expresses the offering (A.V., De Dieu, Koppe, Hitzig, Hend.), rather than, as most moderns translate it, the offerer. The construction is thus simpler, and the nature of the offering is expressed, which must otherwise be supplied. The words, also, have a signal emphasis as the voice of the Holy Spirit to God the Father, concerning the great Sin-offering of the Son of God. Here alone, in laying the great cornerstone of redemption, in passing from the finished sacrifice of Christ to His reward, the consent is implied of three



the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11 From the travail of his soul he shall behold, *and* be satisfied: by his knowledge shall the Righteous One, my servant, make many righteous, and himself shall bear away their iniquities. 12 Therefore will I divide him *a portion from* the many, and he shall divide the mighty for a spoil; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors; and himself bare the sin of many, and will make intercession for the transgressors.

Divine Persons; and the Spirit not only speaks of the Son, but to the Father.

The history of the sacrifice is finished, and its blessed fruits begin at once to be proclaimed. The question, Who shall recount his posterity? is answered by the promise—"He shall behold a seed." So Ps. xxii. 30, another prophecy of the same event. Childless in the eyes of man, and cut off by violence, still a large posterity is assigned Him, of whom He will say with joy,—“Behold I, and the children whom God hath given me,” Heb. ii. 13, 14. His days, which seemed to be brought to an end prematurely, shall be prolonged by a joyful resurrection, Ps. xxi. 4. The LORD, who had been pleased to bruise Him, will now take pleasure to give Him a name above every name, and to make Him the fountain-head of countless blessings for the sons of men.

v. 11. The toil or travail is the suffering of Christ, when His soul was made a sin-offering. It is here promised that he shall behold the blessed effects of those sufferings, and be satisfied with them.

“His knowledge” is commonly taken in a passive sense, for knowledge of which He is the object (Vitr., Hend., Alex., Stier, Hahn). But, however true and weighty the doctrine thus conveyed, the connexion points to another truth no less weighty, which does not involve so harsh a construction. A pronoun with “knowledge” always denotes the subject, not the object, of the knowledge. It has been said before that on Messiah would rest “the Spirit of knowledge,” and that hereby His ear would be open to His Father’s voice, which called Him to His great work of suffering, xi. 2, l. 4, 5. His own words in the Gospel correspond, Joh. x. 15. It was our Lord’s own

knowledge of His Father’s wisdom and goodness which sustained Him in drinking the cup of anguish, and thus provided for sinners a justifying righteousness in His all-perfect sacrifice. Righteous himself, He has thus procured righteousness for many.

v. 12. The word “great,” A. V., is rendered “many” both before, and in the close of this verse, and must plainly have the same meaning here also. It refers back to lii. 14, 15, and binds together the whole prophecy. The construction is the same as in Job xxxix. 17, and the “many” are those who form the portion, by or from whom it is provided, not those who share in it. So the mighty are those who constitute the spoil, and not, as in Prov. xvi. 19, where the order is different, those who seize on it. Here the word comes first, as the main object; there it follows as a supplemental idea at the close. Messiah pours out His soul on behalf of many, and therefore many souls shall be His portion. He was numbered with the transgressors, and therefore even the mighty, kings, lii. 15, and strong nations, Mic. iv. 3, shall become His inheritance, Ps. ii. 8. The word, *therefore*, refers to what precedes, and the cause of this honour is amplified in the rest of the verse.

The end of this section answers to the beginning. Messiah shall sprinkle many nations; and kings, the noble and the mighty, shall shut their mouths before Him in deepest homage. The future tense, in the last clause, either denotes that the whole was still to come, though the prophetic past has been chiefly used; or else that our Lord’s intercession would not be finished, like His sacrifice, but go on for ages to come, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for His people.

## § 3 (2). CHAP. LIV. MESSIAH'S REWARD.

SING, O barren, thou *that* didst not bear! break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou *that* didst not travail 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 thy habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes. 3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. 4 Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed;

v. 1. The figurative woman has been applied to the Jews of the Return, to the Jews of the last days, to the Gentiles brought in by the Gospel, or to the spiritual Church under the Old Testament, and in the Apostolic age. This last exposition has the direct sanction of St Paul, Gal. iv. 26, 27, and alone agrees with the context, and gives a consistent meaning to the whole figure. The barren one is the true, spiritual Church, from Abraham onward, or the Covenant of Promise, under which Isaac and all the faithful are born. The married wife is the Covenant of Sinai, bringing forth to bondage, and answering to Hagar and Peninnah. Her children are "Israel after the flesh" from Moses to Christ, or the spiritual Ishmael. The season, here announced, of fruitfulness and joy, is the first days of the Gospel after our Lord's sacrifice and resurrection.

The true Church is described as barren from Moses to Christ, because the faithful were comparatively few; and even these were "kept under the law," and shut up to the hope of a promise not yet revealed. In Isaiah's time, as in the Psalmist's and Elijah's, they were "a very small remnant," i. 9. Out of the millions of Jews in Palestine, the whole fruit of our Lord's ministry was about six hundred disciples, Acts i. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 6; Is. xlix. 4. But when once His soul had been made an offering for sin, three thousand were added in one day, and there were numerous accessions to the enlarging company of true believers.

v. 2. The Church, like an Eastern tent, was to be enlarged to receive her

growing family. Its foundations were to be confirmed by the fuller and clearer promises of the New Testament, and her cords lengthened by the direct provision for the free reception of the Gentiles, Acts xv. 19—29. The command, "spare not," seems an allusion to the backwardness of the Apostles and first disciples to learn the freeness of this new economy of grace, Acts xi. 1—18, xv., xxi.

v. 3. The desolate cities are those of the heathen world. To "inherit the Gentiles" is here not to dispossess them by violence (Gesén., Alex.), but rather to replenish the places with new inhabitants. Cities, full only of idolatry, are, in the sight of heaven, like graveyards of the dead. These desolate places, by the spread of the gospel, are now to be peopled with living worshippers.

v. 4. This promise refers back to xliv. 16, 17. The shame and confusion of idolaters is there contrasted with the honour and salvation of the true Israel. Here shame, in both clauses, refers to the time of youth, and reproach to that of widowhood. This distinction is required by the context. One refers either to the delay of marriage, or barrenness after early marriage, and the other to seeming rejection and divorce. The key, as Vitringa well observes, is given by Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea, Jer. iii. 24, 25, ii. 2, li. 5; Ezek. xvi. 60; Hos. ii. 14, iii. 3, 4. The waiting time is divided, Matt. i. 1—16, into three periods, from Abraham to David, from David to the Captivity, and then to Christ. The first answers to the "shame of youth," including the bondage in Egypt, the rebellions and wandering

neither be confounded, for thou shalt not be put to reproach: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and the reproach of thy widowhood thou shalt remember no more. 5 For thy Maker *is* thy husband; the LORD of hosts *is* his name: and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. 6 For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit; even *as* a wife of youth, *grieving* because she is rejected, saith thy God. 7 For a small moment I forsook thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. 8 In sudden wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness have I pitied thee, saith JEHOVAH, thy Redeemer.

in the desert, and the conflicts and spiritual barrenness under the Judges. The third period, onward from the Captivity, brought with it the reproach of widowhood. First in the Exile, and the rule of Gentiles, and then by the total withdrawal of prophecy, the Church seemed forsaken by her heavenly Spouse.

v. 5. The double plural (Heb.), often called the plural of majesty, seems to allude here to the Three Persons, who in liii. 10 are the Divine Speaker, the Sovereign addressed, and the Divine Sin-offering. The thought may be either, "Thy Maker hath become thy husband, and hath betrothed thee once more after a seeming divorce" (Gesén., Stier, Hahn); or "thy Husband is thy maker" (Umbr., Alex.), one who will not forsake thee, but has all power to deliver. But the former seems the sense which agrees best with the structure. "It is thy Maker who is become thy husband, even He whose name is the LORD of hosts. It is the Holy One of Israel, who is become thy Redeemer, even He who shall now be called the God of the whole earth." The Redeemer hoped for, and almost despaired of, does exist. The Holy One of Israel has now made himself the near kinsman, Heb. ii. 16, Lev. xxv. 48; and He it is that will ransom His people from their bondage. The last clause alludes to one main feature of the Gospel era, the wide and rapid spread of Divine truth throughout the world.

v. 6. Many versions of the latter clause of this verse have been proposed. But the above is the most literal, and quite clear and simple, the word "griev-

ing" being supplied from the first clause. The main thought is thus rendered more definite and exact. The figure is that of a wife under double grief, not only as barren, but as rejected and disowned by her husband. Such was the state of the true Israel, when the theocracy was in ruins, and still the promised Messiah delayed to appear.

vv. 7, 8. This moment has been referred to the whole time of the Law (Cocc.), to the Babylonian Captivity and the persecutions of Antiochus (Vitr.), to the present rejection of the Jews (Delitzsch), or to the "momentary casting off of Israel which seemed to accompany the change of dispensation" (Alex.). This last, of all views, is the most unnatural. It turns a most solemn statement into an illusive semblance only, and makes the time of rejection and of recovery one and the same. The first view is too wide, the second rather too narrow; but both hold, with strong reason, that some definite time is here intended. The imaginary improvement of referring such statements to all times alike turns the Divine prophecies into a sea of mist.

The small moment here is the whole time of widowhood, from the fall of the theocracy till the birth of Christ, when the LORD once more "visited and redeemed His people." It is the third period of waiting in the opening of the Gospels, until Messiah, the Son of Abraham and of David, should appear. The Captivity and the days of Antiochus were alike seasons of wrath, when God's face seemed to be hidden from His people.

9 FOR this *is as* the waters of Noah unto me, when I swear that the waters of Noah should no more cover the earth: so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. 10 For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.

11 O THOU afflicted, tossed with tempest, *and* not comforted, behold, I am laying thy stones with fair adornment, and I will lay thy foundations with sapphires. 12 And I will make thy pinnacles of rubies, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy circuit *to be* of pleasant stones. 13 And all thy children

v. 9. The word "this" refers to the whole event, mercy following after judgment (Rosenm., Alex.), and not to either separately (Jarch., Kimchi, Knob., Hend., Stier). The middle clause, by the accents, belongs to what precedes. The waters of Noah, when named the second time, are to be taken strictly, but the first time for the whole event. Hence the relative may be rendered "whereof," or else simply as a mark of time (Vitr., Lowth). God's dealings with His people should resemble those in the time of Noah, when He promised solemnly that no such flood should ever return. The mercies of the Gospel should be both world-wide and irrevocable. Their symbol is the same, the rainbow around the throne, Rev. iv. 2.

v. 10. The rendering "may depart" (Vitr., Knob.) or "should the mountains depart" (Hend.), is grammatically lawful. But the simpler version is confirmed by the words of our Lord himself,—“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” The firmest things in the natural world are not so firm, so free from change, as God's covenant of grace. Here, as in v. 8, the sacred name stands with emphasis at the very close.

v. 11. The figure now changes, from a wife restored to favour and blessed with children, to a city after storms and ruin rebuilt in magnificence and beauty. The Apostle clearly applies it to “the Jerusalem above,” the mother city of all true believers. But it is here viewed at an earlier period than in the visions of Apocalypse, while its foundations are

being laid, which are “the twelve Apostles of the Lamb,” Rev. xxi. 14. The first days of the Gospel have a like excellence, compared with those of the Law, as the future glory will have, compared with themselves.

The word *pink* (fair colours A. V.) is rendered by many, *stibium*, or antimony, used for eye-paint by eastern women (Rosenm., Gesen., Knob., Hend., Alex., Hahn). But in 1 Chron. xxix. 2, stones of *pink* (glistening stones, A. V.) mean plainly either gems or sculptured stones; so that the word had passed into a figurative use. Hence Stier renders “I lay thy stones with ornament” (mit Schmuck), and justly condemns the tasteless notion that antimony is described as the cement. The true meaning is that the stones would not be coarse and rude, but costly and beautiful, like the sapphire foundations. The mingled present and future tenses imply that the work, at the time of the vision, has been lately begun, and is still in progress. The great Corner-stone has been laid, Is. xxviii. 16, liii. 1—12, the twelve foundations, the Apostles, Rev. xxi. 14, bright like sapphires with heavenly wisdom, are just being laid also, but later courses are to be added still upon them.

v. 12. The word “windows” A. V., or “battlements” LXX, is literally “suns,” and here is a contrast to the deep foundations of the city. It seems, then, to denote those spires or pinnacles, which catch and reflect the beams of sunlight. So Milton, “With glistening spires and pinnacles adorned, Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams.”

*shall be* taught of the LORD, and great *shall be* the peace of thy children.

14 IN righteousness shalt thou be established: be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear *it*; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee. 15 Behold! they shall surely gather together, *but* not by me: whosoever shall gather against thee, against thee shall he fall. 16 Behold! *it is* I *who* 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. 17 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the LORD.

The border or circuit is not the neighbouring cities, nor boundarystones (Meyer, Stier), but the circuit of the city itself (LXX., Kimch., Ewald, Rosenm., Hitz., Knob.). The whole is a complete picture of grandeur and beauty, and still each part has its symbolic meaning. The poetry is only enhanced, when the resemblance between the sign and the reality is full and various. Thus the pinnacles of ruby, in contrast with the foundations, may probably denote those Christians of the last times, who "accomplish the number of God's elect," and catch the dawning beams of the returning Sun of righteousness.

v. 13. This promise is quoted by our Lord, Joh. vi. 45, and applied to the Divine teaching enjoyed by all His true disciples. This further confirms the interpretation of the chapter here given.

v. 14. The spiritual peace of the faithful is attended by righteousness of heart and life, and this brings also safety from outward dangers. To be "established in righteousness" is nearly the same with the Apostle's description, "It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace," Heb. xiii. 9. It implies a calm rest of soul on the sure protection of God, Is. xxvi. 3, 4. The imperative, Be far from oppression, conveys a promise in the most emphatic form. He who said, "Let there be light," and there was light, says to His people, "Be far from oppression and destruction," because these shall never be suffered to vex them again.

v. 15. The word means *to gather, to sojourn, or to fear*. But here the whole scope points to a hostile gathering, as in Ps. lvi. 7, lix. 4. The last clause many expound, "shall fall unto thee," or come to thy side, as 1 Chr. xii. 19, 20. But it is plain, from Jer. xlvi. 16, 1 Sam. xxxi. 4, 5, that the Hebrew phrase may also be used for falling against an obstacle or impediment. This meaning is here confirmed by the scope of the verse, and the order of the words. The idea is that of stumbling against some obstacle, falling, and being overthrown, Is. viii. 14; Rom. xi. 1; Zech. xii. 3. All enemies, however mighty, who fight against this city of God, shall "stumble, and fall, and not be found," Dan. xi. 19. There seems a special reference to the last revealed gathering of God's enemies, Rev. xx. 7—9, and to the solemn issue which is there foretold.

v. 16. The pronouns are emphatic. The great Creator permits the plots of evil men to prosper for a season, but condemns them at last to disappointment and utter shame.

v. 17. A glorious topstone to these blessed promises to the true Church of Christ. The great Accuser shall be cast down, and accuse no more, nay, shall be judged by those whom once he accused. The saints shall "judge angels," 1 Cor. vi. 2, and sit with Christ himself on His throne.

## § 3 (3). CHAP. LV. THE PROMISES OF THE GOSPEL.

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. 2 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. 3 Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live: and I will seal with you an everlasting covenant, *the mercies of David, the sure mercies.* 4 Behold! I have given him *for* a witness to the people, a leader and a commander to the people. 5 Behold! thou shalt call a nation thou knowest not; and a nation *that* knew thee not shall run

v. 1. The great central prophecy of the sufferings of Christ, ch. liii., and of the blessings to the Church through His death and resurrection, ch. liv., is here followed by an earnest call to receive the heavenly gift.

The first word, in the Early Prophecies, has often been used as a voice of woe to Israel and the Gentiles, Is. iii. 9, 11. Once, also, it has been used to summon the Assyrian spoiler to his work of judgment, x. 5; once as a voice of woe to him when his work is done, xxxiii. 1; and once, after a prediction of his fall, to call the nations to do homage to the God of Israel, xviii. 1. That invitation was an earnest of the call of the Gentiles. Here it is renewed, and blossoms out into the full message of the Gospel. All are invited, without difference, Rom. iii. 22, who are hungry and thirsty, and need the bread of life, and the waters of salvation, Rom. x. 12; Joh. vii. 37, vi. 35. The phrase, to "buy without money," teaches at once the freeness and preciousness of the offered blessings. These are such as not only to quench the thirst, like water, but also to delight the taste, and satisfy the purified instincts of the renewed heart. Man's natural desire for happiness is here made the starting-point of the heavenly invitation.

v. 2. All the pursuits of the world are "vanity and vexation of spirit." The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing. Nothing less than God's love, revealed in the cross of Christ, can

meet the deep craving of the immortal soul. "Hearken diligently," lit. "hearken, yea, hearken." The word is repeated to express the urgency of the invitation, and to enforce a double measure of attention.

v. 3. The promised blessings are now more plainly defined. They consist in the New Covenant of grace, to last for ever; and in the fulfilment of the oath, sworn to David, that God would raise up to him a Son, greater than himself, his own Lord, to sit on his throne. These are the mercies which, in his last words, are said to be "all his salvation and all his desire." This feature of the Gospel, as fulfilling the promise to David, meets us in the first verse of the New Testament.

v. 4. The pronouns, in this verse and the next, refer neither to David, nor to Messiah as intended under that name; but rather as the great, well-known Object of these well-assured mercies, which are all summed up in the person of "Him who was to come."

v. 5. The address is not to the Church (Grot., Vitruv., Rosenm., Gesen., Hitz., Scholz). The word is singular and masculine, while the plural is used here for the receivers of the Gospel, and the Church has been figured as a woman just before. It refers to Messiah, who has just been mentioned as the great Witness of Divine truth to all the nations (Jer., Musc., Calv., Sanct., Mich., Jenr., Hendl.). The word, "nation" denotes, not the Gentiles at large, but the Christian Church, called mainly from among them, the holy nation

unto thee ; because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, for he hath glorified thee.

6 SEEK ye the LORD, while he may be found ; call ye upon him, while he is near. 7 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. 8 For my thoughts *are* not *as* your thoughts, neither my ways *as* your 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

and peculiar people, to whom the kingdom of God would now be given, Matt. xxi. 4, Rom. ix. 2—4. It is a nation which Messiah, at the date of the prophecy, did not own as within His covenant, and who had been ignorant of the salvation of God. 1 Cor. xii. 2, Gal. iv. 8. The last clause repeats the earlier promise, ch. xlix. 5, "Yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord."

vv. 6, 7. The first appeal is to that deep craving of man's heart for happiness, which the Gospel alone can satisfy. A second follows, drawn from the danger of unrepented sin, since the long forbearance of God will be followed by a time of solemn judgment. Abundant mercy is now within reach ; but the Master of the house will soon rise up, and shut the door, Luke xiii. 25.

v. 8. The contrast here is not between the holiness of God's ways, and the unholiness of the thoughts and ways of sinners ; but between the largeness of His ways of grace, the vastness of his thoughts of mercy, and the selfishness of the sinner, or the low conceptions of the penitent, when first he turns to God. This is the earliest and simplest exposition (Cyril, Jerome, Aben Ezra, Kimch., Oecolamp., Piscator, Hendk., Stier). "Let the sinner forsake his evil ways, and turn to the LORD," not as to one who is a hard Master, but one who is rich in mercy, whose name is Love. As the depths of His

wisdom, so the heights of His grace are unsearchable.

vv. 10, 11. The thoughts and ways of God are wonderful, even in the works of nature, but far more in the kingdom of grace. The rain, the snow, the fruitful soil, the herbs and fruit that clothe the earth with beauty, and sustain the life of men, are emblems of deeper truths that affect the soul, and types of the powerful operation of the word of God. The Gospel will never cease its mighty work in the hearts of sinful men, until the Divine Redeemer, the Man of Sorrows, shall be satisfied with the fruits of His atoning sacrifice, and reap a full harvest of ransomed souls.

vv. 12, 13. These verses cannot be limited to the returning exiles, without severing them from their context, and obscuring their true force. They express rather the joyful experience of the first Christians, who heard the word of life from the lips of the Apostles, and that of Christian believers in every later age. But they also look forward to those days of restitution, when "the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." The chapter thus reveals the moral laws, the later progress, and the glorious results of the Gospel, and completes a wonderful outline of "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in *that* whereunto I send it. 12 For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing; and all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands. 13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign, *that* shall not be cut off.

#### THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID. CHAP. LV. 3.

The sure mercies of David (*τὰ ὄσια Δαυὶδ τὰ πιστά*, LXX.) have received three interpretations. Some refer them to favours like those enjoyed by David (Rabbis, Grot.); others take David here as a name of Messiah (Cocc., Stier, Hend.); while most explain them of the mercies promised to David, with reference to 2 Sam. vii. 8—16 (Alex., Jen., Delitzsch). Again, some refer v. 4 to Messiah as a greater David (Hend., Cocc., Stier, &c.), others to Messiah, as implied in these sure mercies (Vitr., &c.), but Delitzsch retrospectively to David himself. But the sudden use of the name David for Messiah, with no added or distinctive epithet, when it has been used nine times in the book for the Jewish king himself, would be very unnatural. Still more so, when the phrase *וַיִּשְׁמַח* is found elsewhere, Ps. lxxxix., with such a prominent notice of David himself, as receiving an eternal covenant of mercy. "The mercies of David, the well-assured," are the same spoken of in Nathan's message, and in the last words of David; that is, Messiah, with all the blessings He would bring to His people. Hence the transition to the mention of a person in the next verse has no real difficulty. The work, the sufferings, and the triumph of this greater Son of David, have been described just before at length. Hence the words, "Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people," refer back to the double promise, "Behold my Servant, whom I uphold," xlii. 1. "Behold, my Servant shall deal prudently," lii. 13. Also the emphasis in the original is not on the name, David, but on the word *וַיִּשְׁמַח*, the sure, or well-assured, which closes the former verse.

Still further, this mention of Messiah, as the fulfiller of the sure covenant sworn to David, here links the Later with the Earlier Prophecies. For the promise of Immanuel had been given to Ahaz and the house of David in their hour of alarm, as a renewal and expansion of that earlier covenant. It had been repeated, ch. xi., with further reference to the previous decay of the royal line. Hezekiah's reign had been announced as a pledge and earnest in the deliverance then to be given, xvi. 5; and again, the exaltation of Eliakim, xxii. 22. In the warning to Jerusalem, xxix. 1, the promise of the Assyrian overthrow, xxxvii. 35, and the recovery of Hezekiah, xxxviii. 5, there is the same reference to this Davidical covenant. Thus the mention here of Messiah, as that Person in whom all the sure mercies of David would centre and be fulfilled, binds together the whole series of Isaiah's messages.



## CHAP. LVI—LIX.

THE Prophets, while announcing a distant future, never cease to be watchmen for their own time. These Later Visions, where Isaiah seems transported onward, first to the days of Cyrus, and then to those of Messiah, would seem wholly parted from the rest, and their common origin be seriously obscured, if they had no marks of internal connection with Isaiah's own days. But these chapters are a clear proof that the prophet, in the Later as well as the Earlier Visions, is commissioned with warnings to Judah for times before, as well as after the Captivity.

The resemblance in ch. lvi. 9—lvii. to the features of Manasseh's reign is very striking. Hence some of those critics, who refer the later visions to the time of Cyrus, take this part for a fragment from Isaiah himself or some prophet of his age. Their place, on the other hand, between ch. lv. and ch. lx., would lead us, if the prophecy is at all continuous, to refer their subject to the middle times of the New Testament. The union of these two principles is the best key to their interpretation. To turn them into moral aphorisms, applying equally to all ages, does away with prediction altogether. Their definite application to special events, instead of lessening their moral use for all ages, adds double force to every warning and promise.

The Earlier Prophecies had been based on the events of Isaiah's times, from the last year of Uzziah until Hezekiah's recovery, and the message from Babylon. The years of peace and truth that followed, were the fit occasion for his later visions of hope and comfort to Zion. But before his death the shadows were growing dark once more, and the reign of Manasseh was infamous for rebellion and idolatry. Its main features, also, answered closely to the evils predicted elsewhere of the latter times of the Gospel, 1 Tim. iv. 1. Hence, when the prophecy reaches the middle passage from the first rise of the Gospel to its final victories, a warning against the sins and idolatries of Manasseh's reign is made the vehicle for a prediction of similar evils in the middle and later ages of the Church of Christ. On this view the whole is consistent and harmonious. These chapters are a direct voice of Isaiah to Israel in the prospect of idolatrous corruptions, already reviving, about the close of Hezekiah's reign. But they also fill up the prophetic outline between the first days of the Gospel, and the bright and joyful time of Israel's recovery in the last days.

In ch. lvi. 8, a promise is given, which is an earnest and pledge of the future call of the Gentiles. The message then passes, lvi. 9, into a direct warning of the judgments coming upon Judah, because of the idolatries of the king and people, under Manasseh and the following reigns; while the same language applies, in the series of the Visions, to the corruptions which followed the large and rapid extension of the visible church of Christ.

## § 4 (1). CHAP. LVI. MESSAGE OF HOPE AND WARNING.

THUS saith the LORD, keep ye judgment, and do justice; for my salvation *is* near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. 2 Blessed *is* the man *that* doeth this, and the son of man *that* layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. 3 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. 4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose *the things* that please me, and take hold of my covenant; 5 Even unto them will I give in my 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,

v. 1. This new section of advice and warning belongs to the whole period from Isaiah to Christ; but its emphasis would deepen, as the time of Messiah's advent drew nigh. The faithful Jews, in dark times, are taught to wait on God in the way of His judgments, in faith and obedience, and are assured that fuller light and mercy are soon to dawn. The like message applies now to the Church of Christ, and its prospect of the Second Advent.

v. 2. "This" denotes judgment and righteousness. The truth, on which it is blessed to lay hold, is the promised near approach of the salvation of God. Comp. Tit. ii. 11-13. The Sabbath is here singled out, as the earliest of God's revealed commands, representing the first table of the Law. The next clause includes the second table, or the whole range of social duty. The great worth of the Sabbath is plainly implied, as forming by its observance a test and mark of the truly pious.

vv. 3-5. The Old Covenant gave no clear and full promise of immortality. The laws of inheritance and promises of posterity were a provisional substitute. Each Israelite thus survived in his children, and his name was not cut off. But here there dawns the light of the new

Covenant, through Him who seemed to die wholly childless, but who received the promise of a glorious spiritual seed through His victory over the grave. Through Him the eunuch, hopeless of sons and daughters, shall receive an everlasting issue; while the sons of the stranger shall share in Israel's blessing.

This promise to eunuchs, of a special share in the "salvation near to come," refers back to Isaiah's warning to Hezekiah, xxxix. 7. It may probably include a special reference to the beloved Daniel, and the signal honour given to him through all later generations. The warning and the promise answer to each other and confirm their common origin.

vv. 6, 7. The influx of proselytes, from Cyrus and the Maccabees to the birth of Christ, was an earnest of the later Call of the Gentiles. The words of v. 7 were quoted by our Lord, when He drove out the buyers and sellers from the temple, and have a secret emphasis not always noticed. It was the court of the Gentiles which these traffickers profaned. Now these words had given it a Divine consecration. After this message, even this court of the Gentiles justly claimed a full share in the sacredness of the whole temple. (Mede, on Mark xi. 17.)

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: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices *shall be* accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.

8 THE Lord GOD, which gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather *others* unto him, beside those that are gathered unto him.

9 ALL ye beasts of the field! *yea*, come to devour, all ye beasts in the forest. 10 His watchmen *are* blind, they are all ignorant: they *are* all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; dreamers, lying down, loving to slumber. 11 *Yea, they are* greedy dogs *which* can never have enough, and they *are* shepherds *that* can-

v. 8. This promise sums up the message of the previous verses. A partial gathering, it is implied, is past, but a greater is to come. The influx of proselytes, before the coming of Messiah, was thus to be followed, on a far wider scale, by the conversion of Gentiles to the faith of Christ.

v. 9. This verse has received diverse, and even opposite, interpretations. Some view it as a Call, like lv. 1, to enjoy the blessings of the Gospel (Cyr., Jerome, Stier, Hahn). But the next verses make it strange that able and thoughtful men could so invert the natural sense of the passage. The flock, the watchmen, the dogs, the shepherds, and the wild beasts, form a picture in which all the emblems define one another. The construction is not less strange, which makes it a call on the beasts of the field to prey on other beasts of the forest (Rabbis, Cocc.).

The words are plainly a Divine summons to hostile powers, in judgment upon the sins of the people and the sensuality of their shepherds, to ravage and lay waste the flock of God. They apply forcibly to the state of Judah from the accession of Manasseh to the fall of the first temple. But they are not less expressive of the history of the Church, the flock once tended by the apostles, from the fourth and fifth centuries onward, when hordes of fierce northern barbarians and Saracenic invaders ravaged all Christendom with desolating judgments. This application

(Vitr.) has nothing arbitrary (Alex.), but results naturally from the order and sequence of the visions. Gradual corruption of the Church was followed by desolating judgments; and the mediæval state of the Church resembled closely the reign of Manasseh, with its persecution of a faithful remnant, and its widespread worship of the host and the queen of heaven, 2 Kings xxi. 3, 16; 2 Chr. xxxiii. 3.

vv. 10—12. This Call to execute judgment, like that to the Assyrian, x. 5, is joined with a portraiture of the sins which are its cause. The watchmen and shepherds, who ought to feed and tend the flock, are greedy, selfish, and insatiable, given up to sensual pleasures. The words apply, first of all, to the Jewish leaders and teachers under the reign of Manasseh, when Jerusalem was filled with idolatries and innocent blood; and then further, to like evils on a far larger scale, after the first times of the Gospel, which have been mournfully realized in many generations of church history.

CH. LVII. v. 1. The word "righteous" may refer to some one eminent person; or be distributive, with the thought implied that the number is only small. The past tense (Heb.) is often rendered by the present, which turns the passage into a kind of moral proverb. But the word refers more naturally to a fact realized in prophetic vision. Thus it points naturally, in the first place, to Hezekiah, whose faith and prayer turned back the shadow

not understand; they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter. 12 Come, I will fetch wine, *say they*, and we will make ourselves drunk with strong drink; and to-morrow shall be as this day: *there is* very great abundance.

§ 4 (2). CHAP. LVII. JEWISH IDOLATRY.

THE righteous hath perished, 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. 3 But *as for* you, draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the adulterous seed of the whore. 4 Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make

on the dial, and arrested the decline of the guilty kingdom. The short reprieve was made to depend on his life. With Manasseh's accession those times of truth and peace ended, and new calamities began.

The picture that follows corresponds in every point to known features of Manasseh's reign. Viewed in its later and wider application, the removal of leaders eminent for piety has always been one sign of trouble near at hand. "It is ill when there is no sense, no feeling, in a land for the worth of the righteous, when none sighs for him, and his name decays before his body. The Lord takes him away before the calamity, whose approach was for him a sufficient grief" (G. Müller).

"From the evil to come." Before the face of the evil, that is, before its arrival, and that he may be spared its actual endurance. The idea is not that of martyrdom by the strength of dominant evil (Hitz., Ewald, Hahn), but of a gracious removal by the hand of God, which should be a warning to the survivors, if they were wise to understand the ways of Providence. The exact sense is "while yet there is none that considereth." So strange, it means, is the blindness of the sensual to God's warning.

v. 2. "He" and "they" answer to the righteous man, and the merciful, of the former verse, and fix their common reference. When he perishes, or disappears from the eye of sense, the righteous shall enter into peace, and his soul be kept safe in the hand of the Lord; and merci-

ful men shall rest peacefully in the Paradise of the departed, awaiting a joyful resurrection. The last clause is a weighty caution, restricting this blessed promise to the upright alone.

v. 3. The pronoun here is emphatic. It marks a strong contrast between the righteous and merciful who have been taken from the evil, and the corrupt and sensual survivors who have to fear the stroke of coming judgment. Like the islands and nations, xli. 1, these are called to draw near, that God may plead against them. Not as to the grave of the righteous (Umbr.), but to the presence of the Most High; from whom they would strive in vain, like Adam, to hide themselves in guilty concealment.

The sorceress, the mystic Jezebel, is the company of the idolaters, the apostate church or synagogue. Her children are the corrupt and sensual among the people of God's covenant, whether of the Old or New Testament. They are called "an evil and adulterous generation." In the old age of Isaiah this idolatry and profligacy must have been ready to break forth anew. The description cannot apply especially to the Exile, the time, not of God's forbearance, but when His heavy judgment on their idolatries had already come. The words are a picture, equally exact and truthful, of the times of prevailing saint and image worship, joined with bloody persecution, in the visible Church of Christ.

vv. 4, 5. Two sins are here described,

ye a wide mouth, *and* draw out the tongue? *are* ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood? 5 Inflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree, slaying the children in the valleys under the clefts of the rocks?

6 AMONG the smooth *stones* of the brook *is* thy portion; they, they *are* thy lot: even to them hast thou poured a drink-offering, thou hast offered a meat-offering: shall I by these things be appeased? 7 Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set thy bed: even thither hast thou gone up to offer sacrifice. 8 Also behind the door and the posts hast thou set up thy memorial; for away from me thou hast discovered *thyself*, and gone up: thou hast enlarged thy bed, and exacted for thee *an agreement* from them: thou hast loved their lying *with thee*, and hast sought occasion. 9 And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and

contempt for the true servants of God, and zeal for idolatrous rites in groves and valleys, and especially for Moloch worship. Comp. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 5, 6. The counterpart is exact in the persecutions of the Church of Rome, and the religious murders in the Alpine valleys.

v. 6. The received version (Chald., Aben Ezra, Kimch., Grot., Rosenm., Maurer, Knob., Hend., Stier) seems to agree best with the context. Some, instead of "smooth stones," render "open tracts," as being one scene of idolatry; others take it as a prediction of the idolaters' punishment. They chose out idols from among the smooth stones of the "brooks," the wadys, or dry water-courses, where they carried on their worship. These, in contrast to "the Portion of Jacob," Jer. x. 16, were their self-chosen portion; their inheritance, instead of the Psalmist's, Ps. xvi. 5.

The last clause is an indignant irony. Could they hope that the anger of God for their social iniquities would be appeased by these idol offerings, which only doubled and heightened their sin? "From tree-worship with its orgies the prophet passes to the leading Canaanitish abomination, human sacrifices. Judging from the localities named, the reference is to children offered to Baal on his *Bamoth* or high-places. . . . The stones are those which the stream in the valley has washed smooth with time, and rounded. The

mode of worship confirms this view. In Carthage such stones were called *abbadires*, and among the ancient Arabs, the *asnam*, or idols, consisted of rude blocks of this kind. Herodotus, III. 8, speaks of seven stones the Arabs anointed, calling upon the god Orotal. Suidas states that the idol of Ares in Petra was a black stone; and that of the Kaaba was, according to a very inconvenient tradition for the Mahometans, an idol of Saturn. Stone worship of this kind was practised by the Israelites before the Captivity. In the East Indies we find stone worship among the Vendya tribes, and also among the Vaishnans, who worship Vishnu in the form of a stone from the river Gandak" (Delitzsch p. 373).

v. 7. Mountain-tops and high-places were the favourite scenes of Jewish idolatry. The words describe their bigoted zeal and shameless publicity in the service of their idols.

v. 8. Besides public, shameless idolatry in high-places and on mountains, there was private idol-worship in their houses. Where God had commanded His words to be written for a memorial, they set up the memorial of their own shame. Their zeal in false worship was like the course of an adulteress, who not only prepares her bed for lovers who visit her, but solicits their presence, exacts their visits as a favour, and looks out for occasions to multiply her hateful sin.

didst send thy messengers even far away, and hast debased *thyself even* unto hell. 10 Thou art wearied with thy much journeying; *yet* saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the life of thy hand, therefore thou wast not grieved. 11 And whom hast thou been afraid of, or feared? that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor cared *for me* in thy heart? Have I not been holding my peace, even from of old, and thou fearest me not? 12 I will declare thy righteousness; and thy works, that they shall not profit thee. 13 When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee: but the wind shall carry them all away, a breath shall scatter *them*: and he that putteth his trust in me shall inherit the land, and shall possess my holy mountain; 14 And *one* shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling block out of the way of my people.

Some expound that God's memorial, the words of the Law, Deut. vi. 9, was put out of sight (Delitzsch). But the whole account plainly refers to private, in contrast with public idolatry; and the memorial is the idol image, by which their false worship to the god it represented was to be kept always in their mind. The word *yad*, hand, is used nearly as in lvi. 5, for "opportunity." The shameless one seeks out times and occasions for inviting her lovers, and renewing her sin.

v. 9. Two questions here arise; whether "the king" refers to Moloch and idol gods, or to the heathen kings of Assyria, Egypt or Babylon; and whether the ointment and perfumes are presents, or the means of personal adornment. A third may be raised, whether the messengers are sent to procure these ointments, or directly to the king. But the resort to heathen alliances is so constantly joined with idolatry in other places, and its growth under Manasseh answers so plainly to the warning to Hezekiah, ch. xxxix., as to establish this for the true meaning. The worship of idols, and slavish adulation of heathen despots, were two kindred forms of the same evil. But the idols were stocks and stones, and mere shadows, while the king of Assyria or Babylon was the central reality in a vast system of ungodliness.

This harlot sorceress, then, is described as decking herself with ointment and costly perfumes, to solicit adulterous love

from a foreign king, who has the place in her heart due to the King of Israel alone, Is. xliii. 15; Joh. i. 49. The figure then passes into the reality. The messengers were sent "even far away," to Nineveh or Babylon, the royal residence of the idol-king. "Even to hell." They had submitted to the lowest degradation, as if courting eagerly their own shame. As true religion is most ennobling, so superstition and idolatry sink men below the level of the beasts of the field.

v. 10. "With thy much journeying." Their strength had been well nigh exhausted with their sedulous idol-worship, their search after lovers, and messages to the king. They were wearied *with* sin, but not weary *of* sin.

"Yet saidst thou not, There is no hope." Superstition blinds and infatuates. "The life of thy hand" is either the life of the moment, when men live from hand to mouth; or else, alluding to v. 8, the life of the place sought out for sensual vice, her pleasure in the momentary success of her disgraceful assignations with her lovers.

The exact force of v. 11 is rather obscure. Vitringa translates, "Whom... that thou liest? certainly me thou fearest not, nor callest to mind. Do not I keep silence, even from long ago, so that thou hast not feared me?" It is thus viewed as an ironical charge to lay aside the pretence of fearing God, when the reality is wanting. De Wette explains

15 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* contrite, and humble in spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. 16 For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be angry for evermore: for the spirit would fail from before me, and the souls *which* I have made. 17 For the iniquity of his covetousness I was wroth, and went on smiting 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 I will heal him: I will also lead him, and restore comforts to 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, that cannot

the last clause, "I have held my peace, so that thou needest not have feared me." Stier paraphrases, "Before whom art thou afraid and terrified, that thou so liest? Before me? No! for thou thinkest not of me, nor layest it to heart, go then entirely away from me. My long-suffering has occasioned thy ungodliness. Am not I he that keep silence, and that for long time, and thou fearest me not?" Hahn takes the last clause oppositely, "And dost thou not fear me? a God of such goodness and long-suffering?"

The following seems to give the real force and scope of this appeal.

"And who, then, are these rivals, of whom thou hast been afraid, forsaking the fear of thy true King? Men that shall die, sons of men that are as grass, and idols still more worthless, wind and confusion. Through fear of these thou hast lied, and been wholly false to my covenant, hast forgotten God, and ceased to care for Him. Am I then so little to be feared? My great long-suffering, hadst thou a heart to feel, would only deepen thy reverence. But I have long held my peace, and refrained myself, and still thou fearest me not. The goodness, which should have brought thee to repentance, has been abused to embolden thee in sin."

vv. 12—14. The folly of these vain and wearying superstitions should soon be exposed. "Thy righteousness" is a direct contrast to "the righteousness of

God," Phil. iii. 9, or the righteousness of faith. "Thy companies" are either the gathered troops of idols, or all the variety of human succours. All these would prove worthless in the hour of need.

"And he that trusteth, &c." The simple connective is here the most forcible rendering. The threatening and promise are not so much contrasted, as made the common proof of God's righteous dominion. The rebuke refers directly to Judah under Manasseh and the later kings, and the promise, to the Exiles at the Return. But the words have also a wider range in the times of the Gospel. The word in v. 14 is impersonal—A voice shall say—in direct reference, first to the days of Cyrus, next to those of the Baptist, and then to the final deliverance of Israel, Rom. xi. 15, 26, 31.

v. 15. Here the light and hope of the Gospel dawns once more amidst the threatenings. Mercy and grace to the humble and contrite forms the message in the first beatitudes, and the great law of gospel promise.

v. 17. Covetousness is near akin to open idolatry. One was the besetting sin of the Jews before the Captivity, the other of their chiefs and rulers after the Return, Neh. v. 1—15; Mat. xxiii. 14; Lu. xvi. 24. The presence of God had been veiled, while the heathen ruled over them, and the light of prophecy was withdrawn. But, far from wholly forsaking them, God

rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. 21 *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.*

### § 5. CHAP. LVIII. JEWISH PHARISAISM.

SELF-righteous formalism is one main evil which grew up among the Jewish people along with open idolatry, and survived it in the times after the Return from Babylon. Direct idol-worship then almost wholly disappeared. But the other evil, more subtle in its nature, though present from the first, became conspicuous under the Second Temple, and reached its height when our Lord began His ministry. After rejecting the Gospel, it hardened into the Talmudical Rabbinism of later times. In the visible Church of Christ the succession has been almost the same. The open prevalence of saint and image worship has been followed by a wide prevalence of various forms of lifeless orthodoxy, or zealotry, near akin to the Pharisaism of the Jews in the days of Isaiah. In ch. lviii. we have a distinct warning against this second great evil in the Jewish and Christian Churches.

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 And *yet* they seek me daily, and delight to know

would speedily send to them a new message of richer grace than before.

v. 19. This promise is repeatedly referred to in the New Testament, and taken for an express warrant, Divinely given, for preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, Acts ii. 39; Eph. ii. 13, 17.

#### § 5. CH. LVIII.

v. 1. The Call is addressed to Isaiah himself. This verse, and ch. xlv. 26, seem almost the only places where he is distinctly addressed, or comes forward in his own person, in these Later Visions. Like the Baptist of whom he speaks, xl. 3, he becomes simply a voice, to utter the messages of the Word of God, and of the Spirit, who speak by his lips. But here, in his old age, he receives a charge to raise his voice once more against the sins that were spreading, like a dark cloud, over the land. The limitation to the exiles (Delitzsch) is a faulty concession to the theory of a later origin at that date. For here the prophet is not commanded to write, as for a distant time, but to rebuke with loud voice the men of his own day. Yet this direct address to

his contemporaries (Rabbis, Grot., Piscator) includes an implied prophecy of the Pharisaism, which would succeed idolatry as the master evil among the Jews, and also of the prevalence of like evils in the later times of the Gospel.

v. 2. The pronoun, in Hebrew, comes first, and is emphatic, and the connective has thus an adversative sense. It is God himself, and not heathen idols, to whom the objects of this rebuke seem to offer their devoted service. The prayer or boast of the Pharisee is to the LORD himself. "God, I thank thee, &c." The character described is one of vain pride in religious services, without humility, faith, or love.

"That do righteousness, &c." The present tense (Hend.) seems here to give the force of the Hebrew past, as simply defining the act without reference to time. The main feature is a pretended eagerness to learn the commands and will of God, as shewn in ceremonial details, and still a neglect of the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith.



my ways, as a nation that do righteousness, and forsake not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice, they take delight in approaching to God. 3 Wherefore have we fasted, *say they*, and thou hast not seen *it*? afflicted our souls, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. 4 Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as *ye do* now, to make your outcry be heard on high.

5 Is it like this, the fast *which* I choose, the day of man's afflicting his soul? *is it* to bow down his head like a bulrush, and spread for his couch sackcloth and ashes? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD? 6 *Is* not this the fast *which* I choose, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? 7 *Is* it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and to bring the poor, the homeless, to thine house? when thou seest the naked, that thou clothe him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

v. 3. The complaint is that they had made God largely their debtor, and that the debt was unpaid. Religious pride breeds discontent, and discontent open blasphemy. Their religion left them selfish and contentious. Their heart was full of passion, their lips of strife, their hands of violence.

"Hast not seen it." The past and future (Heb.) are combined, to express that they complained of God's past neglect, and of its continuance still. The rendering "pleasure" (A. V., Vittr., Alex., Hahn, Stier), rather than "business" (Ges., Hend., Knobel, Delitzsch), is confirmed by the scope of the passage, and the constant use of the term.

v. 4. "Ye shall not." The form is the same as in the Decalogue, and the words are an emphatic prohibition of their false and immoral worship. The phrase "on high" refers back to God's title, "the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity," and to His dwelling in "the high and holy place." Their outcries of passion and violence on their fast-days, like the cry of Sodom, went up to heaven continually, to bring down judgment.

v. 5. "The fast I choose." The future (Heb.) denotes here what is habitual, the kind of fast in which alone God can take delight. The words that follow refer directly to the charge given them as to the day of atonement,—"Ye shall afflict your souls by a statute for ever," Lev. xvi. 31. That mere outward fasting, in which they indulged their spiritual pride, was far different. Even a bulrush might rival such heartless worship.

v. 6. Some refer this to judicial oppression (Grot.), others to impositions on the conscience (Cocc.), or of burdensome formularies (Vittr.), or to the detention of Jewish servants after the seventh year. But the words are quite general, and refer to oppression of every kind (Alex.). "And that ye break." Lit. "And ye shall break." The definition of the fast, which alone is acceptable to God, passes thus into a direct command, implied in all the previous clauses. Outward fasting is not forbidden; but its worth is affirmed to be wholly dependent on the faith and humility of the worshipper, and on its leading to practical humanity in all the relations of life. "He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how

8 THEN shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee, the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward. 9 Then shalt thou call, and the LORD will answer: thou shalt cry, and he will say, Here I *am!* If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; 10 And *if* thou wilt draw out thy soul to the hungry, and wilt satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light arise in obscurity, and thy darkness *shall be* as the noon day: 11 And the LORD will guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and he will strengthen thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. 12 And thy children shall build the ancient ruins; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations:

can he love God, whom he hath not seen?"

v. 8. "Before thee," not "before God," where the truth of Rom. iv. 2 would apply, but in the sight of men. These works of love would be joyful heralds, preparing the way for Israel's acceptance and honour in the sight of the nations. "Thy reward." Both before and behind, and on either side, the favour of God would encompass His true worshippers like a shield. The figure is borrowed from the history of the Exodus and the journey through the wilderness. No outward pillar of cloud could be so sure a pledge of blessing as the moral elevation of the whole people to sincere, heartfelt worship, the love of God and the love of man. A holy people must be a blessed and a glorious people.

v. 9. "The putting forth of the finger." A gesture of contempt, common to the East and the West. A scornful temper, whether the object be piety or poverty, is equally opposed to the Law and the Gospel. A mocking, cynical spirit is one of the special dangers of the last times.

v. 10. To "draw out the soul," denotes the cordiality of a cheerful giver (Vitr.). Comp. 2 Cor. ix. 7. The clauses form a climax, "darkness" being here a stronger term than "obscurity" (the usual Heb. word for darkness), and noon-day brightness than light. There seems an allusion, not commonly observed, to v. 2. A pretended desire for religious knowledge, when joined with the practice of sin, never can

attain its object. But "if any man be willing to do His will, he shall know the doctrine." Sincerity of heart is a condition for the real growth of spiritual life. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

v. 11. "In drought." A plural, of which the singular occurs, Ps. lxxviii. 6, "a dry land." Here "in dry places," but in a figurative sense. There are three stages in the promise; blessing in circumstances the most unfavourable; one that makes fruitful, like a well-watered garden; and one that makes the soul a source of blessing and fruitfulness to others, "like a spring of water, whose waters fail not."

v. 12. "Thy children." This is the true force of the elliptical phrase, not "some among you," nor descendants (Hitz.). The singular has passed into a collective sense, to express the whole people, and here the promise returns to the individuals who compose it. "Ancient ruins" expresses the sense more clearly than "old waste places;" since the reference is to houses and cities long deserted, and fallen into ruin. The "many generations" refer to the past, and not the future. There is nothing to restrict the words to the Exile at Babylon. In the days of Isaiah desolation had already come to a large part of the land of promise; while the earlier calamities have been succeeded, through long ages, by those of Romish, Saracenic, and Turkish desolations of Palestine.

and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths for habitation. 13 If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, *from* doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, *and* the holy *day* of the LORD honourable; and shalt honour it, not doing thine own ways, not finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking idle talk: 14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and I will feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

“For habitation.” Dwellings require paths to lead to them, not to be dwelt in themselves. The meaning is, “the restorer of paths,” needful or desirable for the dwellers in the newly peopled cities. Tropical lands, dispeopled, become arid wastes, or pathless jungles.

v. 13. “The holy day of the Lord.” God’s own title of the Sabbath. His people are to account it a delight, and honourable; in contrast both to the weariness of a formal, heartless observance, and to open, careless profanation. The same message, which exalts moral duties in contrast to mere ceremonies, also exalts sabbath-keeping as the crown of true morality. In the fifth commandment religion stoops into the sphere of social morality, and in the fourth, morality rises into the sphere of religious faith.

There is nothing, in this whole pas-

sage, to fix its reference, as some suppose, to the exiles in Babylon. On the contrary, the appeal to the prophet, to lift his voice aloud, supposes the first application to be to the generation then alive; and all the features agree with evils at the close of Hezekiah’s, or the opening of Manasseh’s reign. Oppression of the poor, side by side with public fasting, often took place before the Exile, and was one of the chief sins which caused it. Afterward the people were oppressed themselves, and had fewer temptations to oppress others. But the Pharisaism here condemned, after open idolatry had been rooted out by heavy judgments, became the leading sin of the Jewish leaders till the days of our Lord. Viewed in its connection, the chapter predicts like evils, and warns against them, in the later times of the Christian Church.

## § 6. CHAP. LIX. THE EVE OF JUDGMENT.

The Pharisaism of the Jews in the time of our Lord was followed by a time of singular depravity and social violence (Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* v. 13. 16). The New Testament predicts a similar corruption of Christendom in the last days, 2 Tim. iii. 1—7; Jude 11, 18; 2 Pet. ii. 10, 22, iii. 3, 4. The judgment on Israel was to light afterward on the Gentiles. So also ch. lix. describes a Sadducean apostasy, a state of moral degeneracy, preparing the way for some sore and heavy judgment.

The evils here described were already conspicuous at the beginning of Manasseh’s reign; and, though restrained by Josiah’s reformation, continued and increased until the wrath of God came without remedy in the Chaldean

desolation. The state of the people at that time was repeated, more fully, before the Fall of the Second Temple. The place of the next chapter in the series of visions confirms the application of ch. lix., finally, to the apostasy of the last days, when iniquity shall abound, and love wax cold, before that redemption of Zion, and recovery of Israel, which are to be life from the dead to the whole Gentile world.

It must be plain, on a perusal of this chapter, how little it can naturally apply to the season of the Exile, when the captive Jews were subject to heathen rule. It must belong, either to the days when a complete Jewish polity existed in Palestine, whether before or after the Captivity, or to a similar stage in the history of Christendom in the latter days. With this chapter ends a second Trilogy of the Middle Series of the Later Prophecies.

BEHOLD! the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have been separating between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear. 3 For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue muttereth perverseness. 4 None calleth *on me* in righteousness, and none pleadeth in truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity. 5 They hatch eggs of the basilisk, and weave spider's webs: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is hatched cometh forth a viper.

§ 6. CH. LIX.

v. 1. Rich promises have just been given, to be fulfilled through Israel's faith and repentance. It is now shewn why their fulfilment is so long delayed. It is from no want of power in God, but from their own obstinate perseverance in sin. Their transgressions are like a thick wall between them and their God, so that their prayers cannot pass through. Evil, so long as it prevails, must breed questionings of the Divine power or goodness. But both will be cleared at last from all the reproaches of sinners, who claim that God shall deny himself, and work moral contradictions, in order to throw on the All-wise Creator the blame of their own sin.

v. 4. Most refer both clauses to sins against men, but others (Hahn) to sins against God. But both kinds seem in-

cluded. The LORD will not hear, for no one calleth on Him in uprightness, whether in prayer or praise; and none pleadeth in truth, for their dealings with each other, in all social questions, are without truth or equity. Their plans and their actions alike are steeped in evil.

v. 5. The basilisk, a venomous serpent, and the spider, a venomous insect, are a double emblem for these plans of iniquity, hatched or woven with pains and care, only to ensnare and destroy. "He that eateth of their eggs dieth." Their schemes work mischief, like moral poison, even before they are ripe for execution. "And that which is hatched cometh forth a viper." The word "crushed," A. V., denotes the chipping of the shell, the last stage of incubation. When their schemes are ripe, they only cause mischief and destruction.

6 Their webs shall not become a garment, and they shall not 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 roads: they have made their paths crooked; whosoever walketh therein doth not know peace.

9 THEREFORE is judgment far from us, and justice doth not 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; yea, we grope as if *we had* no eyes: we stumble at noon day as in the night, amid rich abundance *are* like the dead. 11 We roar, all of us, like bears, and mourn mournfully like doves: we look for judgment, but *there is* none; for salva-

v. 6. The spider's web is now made to yield a further lesson. These subtle schemes, whereby they ensnare and destroy others, shall be worthless to themselves, as the spider's web is too flimsy to form a garment. The second clause resembles ch. xxviii. 20, but the figure here is still more expressive.

v. 7. St Paul quotes from these verses, to prove the common guilt of Jews and Gentiles. The actual state in times of abounding crime shews the tendency of sinful nature at all times, without restraining or converting grace. "Thoughts" means plans or devices. "Wasting and destruction," as in li. 19, seem to denote gradual desolation as of famine, and sudden calamity, like the slaughter in a city taken by storm. The words refer mainly, not to the evil they inflict on others, but to the sure judgment that must follow on their sin.

v. 8. "The way of peace" is the way of holiness, xxxv. 8; of life, Prov. iii. 17, x. 17; and of true wisdom, into which the Son of God came to guide the feet of sinners, Luke i. 79. Sinners know it not, their course leads only to trouble and sorrow. Judgment means here sound reason. Sin is a moral madness, infatuates, and then destroys. The last figure is that of a tortuous or winding footpath. Contempt of right and wrong is often joined with a perverse ingenuity and

cleverness, that seems to prosper awhile, but is fatal to peace of conscience, and leads to misery.

v. 9. Judgment and justice here denote the gracious work of God in delivering from outward troubles. Each sinner is plagued through the sins of many. While God forbears to judge, they become more and more a source of mutual torment, hopeless of cure, and their hopes of better times end in bitter disappointment.

v. 10. The word "grobe," repeated, is not inelegant (Houbig., Lowth), but most emphatic, and forms a climax. The dim-sighted, in a mist, might grope like the blind, and yet give some signs of actual eyesight. But the groping here is that of utter blindness, when the eyes are gone. There is a threefold allusion, to the men of Sodom, Gen. xix. 11, the threatening of the law, Deut. xxviii. 28, and the case of Samson, Jud. xvi. 21—26. The picture is of those, like faithless Jews under the Law, or Christians under the Gospel, who have light, and will not use it.

The last clause has had many versions, "desolate places" (A. V., J. Kimchi), "the tombs" (Targ., Saad., D. Kimchi, Grot.), "darkness" or "thick darkness" (Vulg., Luth., Michael, Rückert, Knobel, Alexr.), "the fat or wealthy" (Aben Ezra, Rosenmr., Ewald, Umbreit). But the above (Vitr., Lowth, Koppe, Gesen., Hitz., Maurer, Hend., Stier) seems to

tion, *but* it is far from us. 12 For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins, each of them, 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 backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. 15 Yea, truth faileth; and he *that* departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw, and it displeased him that *there was* no judgment. 16 And he saw that *there was* no man, and was astonished that *there was* none to interpose: so his own arm brought salvation for him, and his righteousness, it sustained him. 17 And he put on righteous-

give the true emphasis. As dead corpses, that can see and use nothing even in the richest banquets, so these sinners, though ample provision for their wants is around them, are too senseless to profit by it. There seems to be an allusion to lv. 2, "let your soul delight itself in fatness." The riches, promises, and hopes of the Gospel may surround the profane; but they fail to see or taste them, being "dead in trespasses and sins."

The attempt to confine the description to "the last decade of the Captivity" (Delitzsch) has no ground in the text, which refers to a state of great moral corruption before heavy judgment, and not to a time of sore judgment, like the Exile. There is no ground for the view that the real time of the prophet is completely lost by prophetic rapture, least of all in passages of direct exhortation. The words suit the first days of Manasseh much more than those of the Exile.

v. 11. Two kinds of complaint are described; fierce murmurs of discontent in those wholly profane, and plaintive undertones, Who will shew us any good? in those who share dimly the sighing of all creation for deliverance.

vv. 12, 13. "Each of them." The singular verb has a distributive force. Their sins were not merely two or three, but countless witnesses.

Many take these words as a hearty confession, and the last clause as denoting the knowledge which implies true repent-

ance and faith; others (Calvin), as the voice of reluctant conviction. But the confession is offered on behalf of the people by the prophet, or by the Divine Word, and is a picture of guilt and unbelief. Thus the true meaning will be—Our transgressions are with us in their fatal consequences; and "our iniquities, we know them," as if married to them in close, inseparable union. The confession is not made by these sinners, but for them, and against them, to prove the need for Divine judgment.

vv. 14, 15. When not even ten righteous were found in Sodom, its hour was come. So when truth faileth, and uprightness only leads to persecuting violence, the Righteous King must appear in judgment.

v. 16. The words describe no work of simple grace (Stier), but one of severe judgment; yet so displayed that rich mercies follow. Here, towards the close, the typical reference almost loses itself in the application to the last times, before the recovery of Israel, ch. lxiii. 1—5; Rev. xiv. 17—20, xvi. 19, xix. 15.

The mention only of weapons of defence belongs to the keeping of the figure. This Heavenly Warrior needs no spear, and His own mouth is like a sharp sword. Salvation, when man is the subject, is put for the hope or expectation of it, but in God himself, for His purpose and high decree to save. The meaning is that the aim of God's sorest judgments is salva-

ness as a coat of mail, and a helmet of salvation upon his head, and he put on garments of vengeance *for* clothing, and was clad with jealousy as *with* a cloke. 18 According to *their* deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies: to the islands he will repay recompence. 19 So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD will lift up a standard in the midst thereof. 20 And there shall come for Zion the Redeemer, even for *them that* turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. 21 As for me, this *is* my covenant *with* them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.

tion, not destruction. As the helmet and its crest are most conspicuous in the warrior's equipment, so this purpose of God's sore judgments shall be clearly revealed in the sight of men.

v. 17. "With jealousy." True love is jealous of all unworthy rivals. So the Holy God is jealous for the dishonour done to his Name through the continuance and seeming triumph of the world's ungodliness.

v. 18. The passage clearly relates to a solemn retribution on open enemies of God. It is the contrast of the promise, *Iv.* 1—5, and not its repetition. The mention of the islands, "the isles of the Gentiles," *Gen.* x. 5, peopled by the sons of Japhet, who were to dwell in the tents of Shem, implies a reference to the Western or European kingdoms. The event is thus the same with that of the Stone smiting the toes of the great image.

v. 19. This judgment of God will produce awe and reverence, both in western lands, and those of the rising sun. That deep reverence for God's majesty, which dies out in times of long-suffering, will revive once more.

The received version seems mainly the best, though various others have been proposed (*Vitr.*, *Belg.*, *Alting*, *Hend.*, *Rosenm.*, *Stier*, *Hahn*). But in the last

clause the pronoun seems better rendered as above. Even in the midst of the raging flood of hostile violence will the Spirit of God lift up His banner, *Ps.* xciii. 3—5, and those proud waves will dash themselves against it in vain. [Other versions are (1) "the breath of Jehovah shall raise a standard against him" (*Hend.*). (2) "When the enemy cometh like a flood, he will put him to flight by blowing upon him" (*Rosenm.*). (3) "For it shall come like a straitened stream, the Spirit of Jehovah raising a banner in it" (*Alex.*). (4) "For the adversary shall come down as a stream, the Spirit of the Lord sets a standard against him" (*Hahn*). (5) "For he will come like a stream dried up, which a tempest of Jehovah drives away" (*Delitzsch*)].

v. 20. "And there shall come for Zion." The renderings "unto Zion," *A. V.*, "for the sake of Zion," *LXX.*, "out of Zion," *Rom.* xi. 26, are not inconsistent. The Hebrew is "for" in the sense, "on behalf of," which "unto" nearly expresses, only not being understood in its local sense. The Apostle's version "out of" seems an allusion to *Ps.* xiv. 7. That this Redeemer will "turn away ungodliness from Jacob" is implied, though not clearly expressed. After the dark description in *vv.* 11—15, the fact that so many converts are found is a proof

that this Redeemer has been exalted "to give repentance to Israel."

v. 21. The plural refers to the converts, but the singular to Israel, the people among whom they were found. From the true Israel, xlix. 3, righteousness will now overflow to the whole people. They will

be raised at length to their high calling as God's royal priesthood; and the oath to Abraham, and the truth to Jacob, be fulfilled through successive generations, as it had been sworn to the fathers from the days of old.

## § 7. CHAP. LX. THE FULL REDEMPTION OF ZION.

THIS glorious prophecy has been referred to the Return from Babylon, to the first rise of the Christian Church, to its whole course, or to a still future restoration of Israel.

The first view (Grot., Gesen., Ewald &c.) is opposed by the sequence of the prophecy from ch. xlix. onward, and by the fulness of the promise. The second has stronger reasons in its favour. The Gentiles were then in thick darkness, and light dawned on them from Zion. But in other respects there is a striking contrast. For then Jerusalem was visited with wrath, and trodden down by the Gentiles, and her children led captive into all nations. Still less can the vision apply to the middle ages, when the Church was covered with superstition, and gross darkness settled on the nations once more.

The fourth view has many reasons to confirm its truth. First, the place and order of the vision, which completes a division of the prophecy, commencing with Messiah's birth, xlix. 1, and reaching to the full triumph of His kingdom. This last section of it, then, must naturally belong to the last days of the Gospel. Secondly, the immediate context. It follows a prediction of the coming of Zion's Redeemer, which St Paul clearly applies to a still future recovery of Israel, when the broken olive branches shall be grafted in once more. Thirdly, a comparison with the Apocalypse. The descriptions, Rev. xx., xxii., are partly borrowed from this chapter, and plainly belong to a time of blessing still future. Fourthly, the nature of its contents. These are too bright and glorious to be satisfied by any past event; and predict a gathering of nations to one centre for holy worship, such as never yet has occurred. Fifthly, the contrast to our Lord's own warning prophecy,—“Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” Lastly, the chapter plainly refers to the land of promise, and to its occupation by the children of Zion in spiritual blessing and outward honour. Zion, described before as “a booth in a vineyard, and a besieged city,” is to be “redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.” When the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, Jerusalem will cease to be trodden down, the dispersed of Judah will return, and Divine comfort be given to the mourners in Zion.

This close of the second cycle of the Later Prophecies has clearly a most intimate relation with the opening chapters of each earlier series. The charge to comfort Zion, xl. 1, 2, is here gloriously fulfilled, and her sorrowful complaints, xlix. 14, 21, are silenced by a rich abundance of Divine blessing. But there is also a relation, no less intimate, with the opening and close of



the Earlier Visions, i. 26, 27, ii. 1-5, xxxv. 1-10. The same key-note of mercy to Zion, after sore judgment, resounds from the beginning to the close of the whole book. And indeed the whole series of these Later Visions may be viewed as an expansion of that opening promise, ch. ii. 1-5, which seems to have been Isaiah's first public message; and which refers to a time plainly not yet arrived, when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more!"

ARISE, shine! for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. 2 For behold! the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. 3 And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. 4 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be borne at *thy* side. 5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine

§ 7. CH. LX.

v. 1. This sudden call is a contrast to xlvi. 1, where Babylon is told to come down, and sit in dust and in darkness. It repeats the voice, lii. 1, that bids Jerusalem awake and arise. Here Messiah calls on her to arouse herself once more from her long sleep; and to shine with brightness reflected on her from the LORD her glory. The command was given at our Lord's first coming, but His own were rebellious, and refused to obey. In the last times it will be given once more, and joyfully obeyed; when He who has been so long "the light of the Gentiles" will become manifestly "the glory of His people Israel." The figure is that of a bright sunrise. A morning without clouds, 2 Sam. xxiii. 4, will then dawn on a sinful world.

v. 2. "The people" (Lit. peoples, *Jemminim*) refers to the Gentiles in contrast with Zion. In spite of real progress in art and science, spiritual darkness, blindness in the things of God, will before Israel's recovery have settled down on the nations once more in the last days. The recovery of Israel will thus be "life from the dead," Rom. xi. 15. Death and life, darkness and light, describe the same moral contrast.

v. 3. This promise differs from the first

Call of the Gentiles, as the full harvest from the first-fruits. Pentecost was the feast of first-fruits, when, around a handful of believers in Zion, there began to be gathered a first-fruits of the nations, Ps. lxxii. 16. But in this day of "ingathering at the year's end," around Israel, become a people all righteous, are to be gathered many and strong nations, Mic. iv. 3, and the riches and the kings of the Gentiles, vv. 3, 5, 11. They will come to the light of Zion, as those who are attracted suddenly by a light that breaks on thickest gloom. The phrase, Rev. xxi. 24, extends and enlarges the figure.

v. 4. The sons and daughters are not Gentile converts (Alex.), but Zion's own children returning from their former dispersion (Hend., Hahn, Delitzsch, Stier), when "he that scattered Israel will gather him," Jer. xxxi. 10. Their captivity in all nations, and the treading down of Jerusalem, Lu. xxi. 24, began and must cease together. One clause reverses the long and sad separation; the other opens a bright future, when Zion's daughters shall be tended with greatest care in her own presence, in the land whose name is Beulah.

v. 5. The resources of the Gentile world, and specially the maritime nations, the isles of the Gentiles, will minister to

heart shall tremble, and be enlarged: because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee; the wealth of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. 6 A stream 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 doves to their windows? 9 Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish, from the first; to bring thy sons from far, their silver

the greatness of restored Israel. The heart of the nation will throb with wonder and exultation, when they see the rich blessings procured to them through Him whom their fathers crucified.

v. 6. "A stream of camels." A lively figure to describe their constant succession, laden with Eastern treasures. Not the Queen of the South alone, as in the days of Solomon, nor a few, like the wise men, but "all they from Sheba shall come" with tributes of which these were only dim earnest. Midian, Ephah, Sheba, Kedar, Nebaioth, all children of Abraham after the flesh, the sons of Keturah (*i.e.* incense) and of Ismael (God shall hear), will have a main share in the promise, when the words are fulfilled;—"In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," Gen. xxii. 18; Acts iii. 25.

v. 7. Some take the flocks and rams as a figure for the men of Kedar and Nebaioth; and it has even been held that they are described, by a bold metaphor, as mounting the altar of their own accord. But these flocks, with the camels and dromedaries and their burdens, are named here as the "riches of the Gentiles," which shall minister to Zion. The version, "with acceptance," is simplest and best, for another preposition is used to express the free will of the offerer, Lev. i. 3. The exact meaning is that God's acceptance is the ground, not the effect of the offering. They are not sin offerings, but sacrifices of thanksgiving. The Gentiles will first be accepted themselves, and then their gifts also. The word *bikr* some render a young camel (Bochart,

Hend., Hahn, Delitzsch). But the idea of "foals" is here plainly out of place; and the word "dromedary" as a variety of the camel of finer breed, seems to agree best with the scope of the passage (Rosenmr., Bochart.) The tribe of Midian had its seat on the east of the Ælanitic Gulf, where is a town, Madyan, five days south of Aila. Sheba is the land of the Sabæans (Strabo), "in which myrrh, frankincense, and cinnamon grow." Nebaioth, the Nabatæans, rose into a cultured nation in the centuries before Christ, and had a kingdom from the Ælanitic Gulf to the land east of Jordan, and across Belka to Hauran. The question of the bearing of this passage on the revival of animal sacrifice is too wide for a brief and passing notice.

vv. 8, 9. The ships of Tarshish, with their outspread sails, crowding the seas to restore the wanderers, are compared to a fleecy cloud before the wind, or doves flocking home to their young. The isles include the sea-coasts and maritime countries. These have been rebuked, ch. xli. 21, and pleaded with for their gross idolatry, and have been urged by Messiah to listen to His voice, xlix. 1—6. They will now wait on God, in readiness to fulfil their appointed task in His great work of final mercy to Israel.

v. 9. "And the ships of Tarshish, from the first." In this compound phrase Tarshish loses its local sense, 1 Ki. xxii. 48, and the meaning is ships suited for long and distant voyages. They are not put in contrast with the isles, as one place with many, but are the means by which

and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy GOD, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. 10 And the sons of the stranger shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, and in my favour I have had mercy on thee. 11 Thy gates also shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that *men* may bring unto thee the wealth of the Gentiles, and their kings *shall be* brought. 12 For the nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, *those* nations shall be utterly wasted. 13 The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the cypress, the plane tree, and the cedar to-

the islands fulfil their task. The judgment, ii. 16, on "the ships of Tarshish" and "all their pleasant merchandise," is here exchanged for a blessing, and their merchandise will become "holiness to the Lord," xxiii. 14, 18. The word "first" has been rendered "as at the first" (Kimchi, Jarchi), or as Tyre in the days of Solomon; "among the first" (LXX., Grot., Rosen.); "in the foremost place" (Ges., Ewald, Umbr.); or "from their origin" (Stier); that is, in the secret appointment of God. But the simplest sense is "from or at the first" (Hahn), from the very opening of this work of Israel's restoration. Britain and America, the great maritime powers, will probably take precedence in the steps which minister to Israel's final recovery. The title, "Holy One of Israel," is almost peculiar to Isaiah. It is used here in v. 14 for the last time, with fullest emphasis, to announce that the people of this Holy One are to become for ever a holy people.

v. 10. The walls are not those of Jerusalem only, but of the cities of Palestine, "the ruins of many generations," lxi. 4. A very strange reason is urged by Vitringa against the literal fulfilment, that the site of Jerusalem is unknown, and the modern has nothing in common with the ancient city. The zealous efforts lately made to rediscover the really lost sites of Palestine, are like an earnest of the full promise here given. "I have had mercy on thee," not "I will pity thee" (Lowth, Hend.), which is less exact and forcible. The blessing is described as if already come.

v. 11. A double blessing is here pro-

mised, perfect freedom from danger, and the daily influx of wealth and honour. The commerce of the world must become "holiness unto the Lord," xxiii. 18. "And their kings shall be brought," not as reluctant captives, but willing trophies of the love and grace of the King of Zion. The statement of the reason why the gates are open passes here into direct promise. The description is transferred, Rev. xxi. 25, to the heavenly Jerusalem. But the addition, "there shall be no night there," marks the contrast of a still higher glory.

v. 12. This promise, applied literally to Zion and the people of Israel, has nothing strange and unaccountable (Alex.). It results naturally from the whole tenor of sacred history. The first promise to Abraham contains the germ of this threatening, "I will curse him that curseth thee." Subordination, in heaven and earth, is the great law of the kingdom of God. To refuse honour to those whom God has honoured, is rebellion against His authority. When "the Holy One of Israel" crowns His ancient people with signal honour after ages of judgment and sorrow, the sons of pride alone will find it strange or irksome to honour God himself in the people of His choice; and them that walk in pride He is able to abase.

v. 13. The trees here named are the three last named in xli. 19. The first, it is now commonly agreed, is the cypress. The second is either the plane-tree (*platanus indicus*, Saad., Kimch., Stier, Delitzsch), the holm-tree (*ilex*, Gesen., &c.), or the pine-tree (*pinus sylvestris*, Rosenm.,

gether, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. 14 The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all 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, and no man hath gone through *thee*, I will even make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. 16 And thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings; and shalt know that I the LORD *am* thy Saviour, and

Hend.). The third, by several, the box-tree (A. V., Bochart, Vulg., Rosenm., Hahn), seems rather to be the *sherbín*, a kind or variety of cedar.

The place of God's feet denotes sometimes the ark of the covenant, 1 Chr. xxviii. 2, Ps. xcix. 5; sometimes the temple, Ezek. xliii. 7; or even the whole earth, Is. lxvi. 1. According to the context, it may be taken in a wider or narrower sense. Here Jerusalem is "the place of the sanctuary." The spot of earth, where the heel of the promised Seed was bruised, is consecrated by this title of honour; though all earth, in a wider sense, is the footstool of the Most High. "The Lord will again adorn and beautify His kingdom in Israel, which through judgment had been turned into a waste, by transforming the same into a delightful garden" (Hahn). The prediction is here renewed, that "He will make her wilderness as Eden, and her desert as the garden of the Lord," li. 3. There is an allusion also to the promise xxxv. 1, 2. But the words will apply to the earth, God's footstool, in a wider sense. "Many a Lebanon on earth, many a beauty of nature, has its own glory, wherein the glory of God in days to come will shine out once more, that a requital may follow for its long abuse through sin; and that the beautiful creation, not having been made in vain, may receive at length its due honour" (Stier).

v. 14. The promise here refers to the first threatening and description, i. 7, 8, vi. 12, vii. 16, and the message of hope, i. 21, 26, 27, thus binding together the whole course of the visions. The objection which leads

some to explain it away, or transfer it to the Gentile Church (Alex.), has no real force. Jerusalem had never a monopoly, but only a preeminence of blessing. Since then it has had a double measure of shame and desolation. There can be no moral reason, then, why it should not be restored once again to peculiar honour. On the contrary, this hope agrees with the fixed laws of God's moral government, for "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance," Rom. xi. 29.

Some render "the pillar of the Holy One of Israel" (Hitz.), or "Zion, the holy place of Israel" (Maur., Alex.). But the usual version is confirmed by the parallelism, and is the simplest and best. This title of God, "the Holy One of Israel," almost peculiar to Isaiah, comes here for the last time, with especial force. It has been forgotten or denied by Zion's oppressors in the ages of her degradation; but will shine out at length with redoubled brightness, when He, who has been "the light of the Gentiles," reveals Himself as "the glory of His people Israel."

v. 15. Jerusalem was "forsaken and hated" during the seventy years of the Captivity; and a long treading down during the times of the Gentiles was again foretold by our Lord, and has been since fulfilled. The future glory of Zion, here foretold, will be a contrast to these earlier times of desolation. The reason assigned by Vitranga against a literal fulfilment, that it would need a miracle to rediscover the lost site of ancient Jerusalem, is strange indeed, and rather illustrates the truth that Zion has been

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 rulers 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: but the LORD

forsaken and hated, even by Christians themselves. But squalid filth and long treading down shall be exchanged for signal honour and preeminent beauty.

v. 16. To suck the breast of kings means the full enjoyment of all which Gentile kings can contribute to enhance her splendour. The title "the Mighty One of Jacob" occurs near the beginning of this middle series of the Later Visions, xlix. 26, as here at its close. The parallel of the verses is complete. At the opening of the Earlier Visions, i. 24, the similar title, "the Mighty One of Israel," marks the opening of that controversy with rebellious Israel, which is here brought to its close.

v. 17. Here we have another correspondence with the opening of the book. The structure of this verse is the same as in iii. 24, and the subject also, only reversed. There the deep shame of Zion and her daughters is foretold, and here her honour and exaltation. There is a further contrast with i. 23—25. The silver become dross is a figure of social degradation, when princes are the partners of thieves. But now there will be outward wealth and honour, and also moral elevation. The rulers of Zion will be peace, that is, peaceful and peacemakers; and her exactors (used elsewhere only in a bad sense) will be righteousness, that is, eminently and excellently righteous. The series of metals here is the same as in the Great Image, and the main idea is that of abounding wealth even beyond the days of Solomon, who "made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars as sycamore trees," 1 Ki. x. 27. One half of this description has been borrowed, in the Earlier Prophecies, to describe the vain boasts of the Ephraimites, ix. 10; and the other is here enlarged and varied (2 Chr. ix. 20) to express the final glory of Zion.

Some invert the construction, and render, "I will make peace to be instead of magistrates, righteousness thy exactors" (Gesen., Ewald, Umbr., Stier, Delitzsch). But this is most harsh, especially in the second clause. "Exactors" is a personal plural, and ch. i. 26 confirms the usual construction (Vitr., Grot., Rosenm., Knob., Alex., Hend., Hahn, &c.). The promise is not that all government shall cease, but that its sinful defects shall be replaced by the pure and perfect ideal of peace-loving, upright rulers.

v. 18. The cause of judgment had been assigned ch. v. 7, that God "looked for righteousness, and behold! a cry." Again the effect of their sin had been announced, li. 19, "wasting and destruction, famine and the sword." Now this sentence will be reversed, and the later promises, xxvi. 1, xxvii. 2, 3, be verified, and even enlarged and made richer than before. The builded walls of Zion, v. 10, will be visible symbols of a higher truth, her deliverance from all enemies, and her full salvation by the hand of God. Her gates will now be open continually, that a full tide of praise may flow in from all the sons of Zion, and flow out unto all lands.

vv. 19, 20. From these verses it has been inferred (Stier) that a time is meant "when there will be no more turning into the shadow, when the whole planetary system, including the earth, will be changed, and the earth itself become a sun, &c." But this travels beyond the natural force of the passage, which implies that the sun and moon, and their natural light, still exist, v. 11 (Hoffmann, Delitzsch). The words are comparative, not absolute, as Lu. xiv. 26 comp. Mat. x. 37. The spiritual light of God's presence shall be so full, bright, and constant, as to make the changes of sunlight and moonlight, of day and night, seem insig-

shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.  
 20 Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. 21 Thy people also *shall be* all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever; the branch of his planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. 22 The little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in its time.

nificant. Then, in v. 20, "thy sun" and "thy moon" denote this higher light itself, which is never to set, but to pour its ever-increasing radiance on the Zion of God. The promise is carried still further in Rev. xxi. 23, 25, and applied to the state of resurrection glory, where dependence on created, inferior luminaries wholly disappears, and the ransomed see light in the light of God.

v. 21. This promise has never been fulfilled, in the Jewish people or any Christian nation, in any past age. Applied to the spiritual church, defined by the righteousness of its members, it would be a mere truism. It belongs, then, to restored Israel, when the branches have been grafted once more into their own olive-tree. The words answer to the earlier promise, xxvi. 2, and supply a glorious hope of good things to come.

The Keri, "my planting," is followed by most critics and versions. The other reading, if referred to the land (Rosenm.) or to the people (Grot., De Dieu), is weak and strained. But a simpler explanation results from a review of the chapter; since the first person is used seven times vv. 7, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, and the third person also seven times vv. 1, 2, 6, 9, 14, 19, 20. Messiah, the Word, the promised

Immanuel, is the true Speaker. It is natural, then, after this sevenfold mention of each Person, that both should here be joined together at the close. So God and the Lamb are joined in the similar prophecy, Rev. xxi. The last word is impersonal, and might be referred to either Person, or to both, Joh. xiv. 23, xvii. 4, 5.

v. 22. The promise is either that Israel or the Church shall be enlarged to a powerful nation, (Vitr., Hend., Alex., Stier, Hahn), or to the separate children of Zion in this time of blessing (Cocc., Gesen., Ewald, Knob., Delitzsch). The latter gives the more natural meaning of the words. The original blessing to Abraham himself, Gen. xxii. 17, will now apply to all the restored remnant of Israel.

These last words remind us that there is no slackness in God's fulfilment of His promises, even in ages of long delay. All the past is preparing the way for that final triumph of the Redeemer's love, when "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit;" after they have welcomed their once despised Messiah with that exulting voice of gladness,—“Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.” Matt. xxiii. 39.

## CLOSE OF THE SECOND SERIES.

THIS Second Series of the Later Visions is distinguished from the first by one striking contrast. It contains no mention of Babylon and her idols, of the Chaldeans, or of Cyrus, by whom the two-barred gates were to be opened, and the mighty city overthrown. Its only distinct allusion to the return from Babylon is in the charge, lii. 11, 12, to those who should restore the temple vessels to Jerusalem. On the other hand, it begins with a voice to the isles of the Gentiles, from One whose words agree with no other than the promised Immanuel, the great Messiah of God. As the former series resolved itself into a Preface of comfort, and two successive trilogies, the present consists of two similar trilogies, one chiefly of promise, ch. xlix.—lv., one chiefly of warning, ch. lvi.—lix., and a sublime peroration. And as the third section of the First Trilogy in the former series, ch. xlv. 6—xlv., was remarkable for the clearness with which it predicted Cyrus by name, and his great work as the rebuilder of God's temple, and the executioner of God's judgment on Babylon; so also the third section, which closes the First Trilogy in this second series, ch. lii. 11—lv., is no less remarkable for a prediction of our Lord's life, death, and resurrection, and of the sudden enlargement of the true Church after His resurrection, which almost rivals the Gospel history itself in the clearness with which all the main outlines are revealed.

The Second Trilogy of the former series contained solemn warnings of judgment on Babylon and her idols, crowned with a charge to Israel, to escape from their bondage, and return with gladness to their own land. But here the Second Trilogy consists of direct denunciation against the sins of Israel, as they revived and flourished in the reigns after the death of Hezekiah. These national sins of Israel, under Manasseh, Amon, and Josiah, also represent accurately the kindred evils in the middle times of the Church of Christ, when there appeared in succession, first, idolatrous corruptions; next, various forms of Pharisaic and lifeless orthodoxy; and lastly, a grievous Sadducean apostasy of the last days; till the sad declensions of the Jewish and the Christian Church are to be closed at length by the promised Coming of the Redeemer, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob, to ingraft the broken branches once more into their own olive-tree, and thus to bring in the promised "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

## VII. MESSIAH THE GLORY OF ISRAEL.

## CHAP. LXI—LXVI.

THE six chapters which remain form the Third Series of the Later Prophecies, or the seventh and last division of the whole book. Their subject is the work of Messiah, chiefly in connection with the last times, and the final ingrafting of Israel into their own olive-tree. But they contain also internal marks of their close relation to the last years of Hezekiah, and the first opening of Manasseh's reign.

This Closing Series is more brief than those before it, but seems to admit easily, in like manner, a threefold, and virtually a sevenfold division. It consists of three sections, and the first and the second each of three subsections. The First Section, ch. lxi.—lxiii. 6, announces Messiah's Work of Mercy and Judgment: 1st, His Earthly Ministry and Resurrection, ch. lxi.; 2nd, His Heavenly Intercession, ch. lxii.; 3rd, His Judgment on the Nations, ch. lxiii. 1—6. The Second contains Messiah's Last Controversy with Israel: 1st, The Review of Israel's Mercies and Sins, ch. lxiii. 7—19; 2nd, Israel's Confession and Prayer, ch. lxiv.; 3rd, Messiah's Answer of Reproof and Promise, ch. lxv. The Third and Last Section, ch. lxvi., announces Zion's last conflict and full redemption.

The opening of the first chapter has its application fixed, by our Lord himself, to His own personal ministry; while it blossoms out into a promise of double blessing to Zion for ages of sorrow and shame, which formed the third promise in the first message of these Later Visions, ch. xl. 2, and has not yet been fulfilled. The second chapter applies with equal clearness to our Lord's intercession in heaven, of which a promise had been given before, ch. viii. 16, 17, in the heart of the earlier prophecy of the coming Immanuel.

The opening of chapter lxiii. is referred by many of the Fathers to the crucifixion, by others to the Maccabean victories (Grot., Hend.), or to some undefined judgment on ancient Edom (Calv., Alex.), or to the vintage of the last days, so named, Rev. xiv., xix. (Jarchi, Piscat., Vit., Stier). This last view alone agrees with its place in the series of visions, and with the grandeur of the whole description. There is a marked resemblance to ch. xxxiv. at the close of the earlier prophecies, where the subject is "all nations," as here it is "the peoples." That Edom is used figuratively appears from the next verse: "Wherefore art thou red (*Adôm*) in thine apparel?" Esau received that name, when he sold his birthright for the red pottage. The name, Bozrah, means "a stronghold," and admits of a similar explanation.

In the Earlier Prophecies the Burden of Babylon is the first of ten burdens of different heathen powers. When the last is complete, including a warning voice against Seir, there follow woes on Ephraim, Judah, and the Assyrian; then a final sentence on all nations, where alone these two names



of Edom and Bozrah appear, and then is announced the full redemption of Zion. In the first series of these Later Visions, Babylon and the Chaldeans alone are named; the second mentions no heathen power by name, but only an enemy who comes in like a flood; while the third describes the same conflict of Zion's Redeemer with her adversaries, and names only Edom and Bozrah once more. The mystic Babylon is also the mystic Edom.

In ch. lxiii. 7—19, which begins the Second Section, we have a review of God's mercies to the chosen people, from the days of Moses onward, with a penitent confession of their folly and shame, and that hardness of heart, which has caused their troubles to last so long, and made them seem like utter outcasts from God's covenant. The confession passes into an earnest prayer for speedy deliverance.

There follows, in ch. lxv., the reply of Messiah to these complaints of Israel. The first verses of this chapter are quoted by St Paul, to shew that the Call of the Gentiles had been foretold to the Jews in their own Scriptures. So far, their sense is fixed by Divine authority, in full agreement with the natural force of the words. The Rabbinical reference of v. 1 to the Jews is excluded by the words, "a people not called by my name." To turn the whole into a question (Hahn) not only contradicts the Apostle, but the whole current of Scripture, as if God would never invite those who had before neglected Him.

What is the relation between this statement of the Call of the Gentiles, the preceding prayer of repentant Israel, and the glorious promises that follow? In the former chapters Messiah pleads with God, in the name, and on behalf of Israel. He now answers in God's behalf, and first of all in conviction and rebuke, vv. 1—7, afterward in gracious promises, vv. 8—25. The rebuke answers to the prayer, and is no less comprehensive. As the former called to mind God's early mercies to Israel from Moses onward, and contrasted these with their later sorrows and long desolation; so the latter proclaims God's rich grace to the Gentiles, while Israel were cast off, and the greatness of those sins, which caused the long divorce of Israel, till a fixed measure of punishment was complete. The next section then proceeds to promise the richest blessings, when Zion's warfare is accomplished, xl. 2, and the year of God's redeemed is come, lxiii. 4. Its closing verses bear a fresh witness to the unity of the whole book, since they renew, in the same words, the promise which closes the First Series of the Earlier Visions, ch. xi. 6—9.

The last section begins with a message of reproof to Israel, while rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem in a spirit of self-righteous pride. The words may have had partial fulfilments in reference to the Second Temple of Zerubbabel, and the third of Herod. But they seem only to be fully satisfied, when we refer them to an event still future, that will attend the close of the long treading down of Jerusalem by the Gentiles.

## § 1. MESSIAH'S WORK OF MERCY AND JUDGMENT.

## CHAP. LXI—LXIII. 6.

## (1). MESSIAH'S MINISTRY ON EARTH.

THE Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach glad tidings to the poor: he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and full deliverance to *them that are bound*: 2 To proclaim an acceptable year of the LORD, and

v. 1. These opening words were chosen out by our Lord at Nazareth for the solemn introduction of His public ministry, Lu. iv. 16, 17. He opened the book of Isaiah, found this passage, read the first six clauses, and then added: "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." That Messiah himself speaks in these words rests on His own Divine authority. But it results no less plainly from the context. No mere prophet could appoint and give to all Zion's mourners the oil of joy, and the garment of praise, or assume the title in v. 8, "I JEHOVAH love judgment." "There is no need," says Cocceius, "of long controversy. He, in whom these characters are found, is He of whom Isaiah speaks." Our Lord claimed to be the great Prophet, as attested by His mighty miracles, vv. 21, 23, to whom this promise refers. Not only is He this Anointed One, but His work of mercy, in preaching glad tidings to the poor, was then actually begun.

In ch. xlix. there is a direct address of Messiah to the Gentiles. In ch. l. there is one to the Jews, but it begins with rebuke, not with comfort, and his Divine title, JEHOVAH, stands at the opening. Here alone is a direct voice of comfort, in which the human character of our Lord comes first, and is only followed later by the mention of his Divine glory. The messages, ch. xi. 2, xlii. 1, are here continued and confirmed.

"Because," not "therefore." The Spirit rested on Messiah, that He might accomplish His appointed work as the Preacher of righteousness and grace. The pronoun "me" is emphatic, being no suffix, but

a separate word. Messiah is thus set in contrast with the earlier prophets, who told before of His coming, but who could not share in His work as the great Prophet of grace, any more than in His priestly atonement.

"To preach glad tidings to the poor." (So the LXX., St Luke, Rosenm., Hitz., Hend., Stier, &c.). The context shews that not meekness as a grace or virtue, but poverty or affliction, defines the especial class to whom this message comes. The previous messages to Zion from the first, xli. 27, were to be crowned by one still nobler, xl. 9, the Gospel of the Son of God, Mark i. 1. The first blessing of our Lord is to "the poor in spirit," Mat. v. 3.

"He hath sent me." So the Divine Word had announced before, xlviii. 16. Hence the name Apostle, Heb. iii. 1. "To bind up the brokenhearted." So His second blessing is on them "that mourn," Mat. v. 4.

"Full deliverance." The word, "opening of the prison," A. V., is used elsewhere only for the opening of the eyes, and has here an intensive form. Hence the double version of the LXX., used in the Gospel, probably gives its true force: "and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty the bruised." The work of our Lord was to raise up all who were crushed by the bitter effects of their own sin. So the woman, whom Satan "had bound eighteen years," Lu. xiii. 16, was loosed from her bonds by the voice of Christ, and the eyes of the blind were opened.

v. 2. "An acceptable year of the Lord." A season of grace and mercy to

a day of vengeance for our God ; to comfort all that mourn :  
 3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness ; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified. 4 And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the desolations of former days : and they shall repair the wasted cities, the desolations of many generations.

5 AND strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the

the lost and guilty, which the LORD has set apart for Himself, the more brightly to reveal His grace. The absence of the article (Alex., Delitzsch) adds to the force. It was not to announce a period well known before, but to proclaim that such a year of mercy, a great antitype of the year of jubilee, was now begun. Here our Lord paused at the opening of His message, and only added much later the warning of "the days of vengeance," Lu. xxi. 20—24, when this mercy had been despised.

The title belongs to the whole time of the Gospel, till the day of vengeance begins, 2 Cor. vi. 2 ; Is. lv. 6. But this set in to the Jewish people long ago, Lu. xxi. 22, though to individual Jews and Gentiles the acceptable year still continues.

"A day of vengeance for our God." One which He has set apart for the display of His anger against the oppressors of His people. A longer period, a year of mercy, is to be followed by a shorter, a day of judgment and severity. So Dan. xii. predicts "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." "To comfort all that mourn." After this day of vengeance, the promise blossoms out once more into still fuller beauty. The opening message, xl. 1, is renewed, enlarged, and confirmed.

v. 3. Here Zion is first named. The message, as quoted at Nazareth, and then fulfilled, was of mercy to the Jews ; but, on their rejection, equally to the Gentiles also. So St Paul was sent to the Gentiles, "to open their eyes, &c." Here the promise includes the actual bestowment of these rich blessings on all the mourners in Zion. They are to become, thenceforward, trees laden with the fruits of righteousness, Phil. i. 11 ; Gal. v. 22.

"The planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified." Here is a direct reference to the promise which ends the former series, lx. 21. The last word, in each, is impersonal, and applies equally to the Speaker, the Word of God, and to the LORD God, of whom He speaks as a distinct Person. The song of the ransomed in the New Testament corresponds, Rev. vii. 10.

v. 4. The threatening of the Law had been, "I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries into desolation... and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste," Lev. xxvi. 31, 33. So too Isaiah's own commission began, in the last year of Uzziah. "Until the cities be wasted without inhabitants...and the land be utterly desolate," vi. 11. The warning, which thus begins Isaiah's message, is graciously reversed by this promise near its close. "Of former days" (Umbr., Stier), seems more exact than "former desolations," which the grammar hardly allows, and more expressive than "of the ancestors" (Ges., Ewald, Delitzsch). The reference is to cities and sites, which have long been brought to ruin and desertion, and of which Palestine and its border lands have been full for ages.

"The wasted cities." The word is often used for desolation caused by drought. Comp. v. 6. The last clause refers to i. 7, vi. 11, xvii. 9, where the same description is given. The "many generations" imply naturally a longer period than the Exile of Babylon, and most fitly apply to the long series of Zion's times of desolation, from the days of the prophet to the end of the treading down of Jerusalem announced by our Lord.

v. 5. The word, strangers, commonly

sons of the alien *shall be* your plowmen and your vinedressers. 6 But ye shall be named the priests of the LORD, *men* shall call you the ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. 7 For your shame *shall be* double *honour*, and *for* confusion, rejoicing *shall be* 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 in burnt-offering: and I have appointed their recompence in truth, and will seal to

refers to hostile oppressors, i. 7, xxv. 2, 5, xxix. 5; Jer. v. 19; Ezek. vii. 21. But the survivors of nations, once hostile, shall do Zion willing service. The words denote neither degrading servitude (Cler.), nor mere amity and friendship (Alex.); still less that Gentiles will replace Jews as Christian pastors (Jerome, Procop.); but honourable subordination, like that of Israel to the Levites, or the Levites to the sons of Aaron. The employments of ploughmen and shepherds were honoured in Israel, but inferior to the priesthood of those who ministered before God. The view which makes Israel and Zion here not mean the Jewish people and Jerusalem, but the Christian Church (Alex.), does violence to the natural sense of every verse, and destroys the clear contrast with the Gentiles which marks the whole. The objections to the literal view arise from confounding accidental figures, which enter into all prophecy, with systematic allegory, which is wholly different. Or else they arise from the inconsistency, which accepts the main idea of the promise to Israel, and shrinks from details, clearly revealed, such as the subordinate place to be held by Gentiles in the land of promise.

v. 6. The promise to be "a kingdom of priests," Ex. xix. 6, given to the whole nation of Israel in the Old Covenant, has been forfeited by their sin. It is now to be fulfilled under that New Covenant to "the house of Israel and the house of Judah," which pardons all sins, imparts inward holiness, and crowns the double gift with outward honour. "In their glory shall ye boast yourselves." This version (A. V., Chald., Syr., LXX., Jerome, Kimchi, Aben Ezra, Vitruvius, Delitzsch) is less harsh and more emphatic than that of many moderns, "in

the possession of their glory shall ye substitute yourselves" (Rosenm., Ges., Ew., Hitz., Alex., Stier, Hahn). Comp. Ps. xciv. 4, Delitzsch, tr. II. p. 430. The words express a holy exultation of restored Israel in the abundance of the gifts of God.

v. 7. The third promise of the opening message is here resumed, xl. 2, that Zion should "receive at the Lord's hand double for all her sins." The text of this third series is thus "abundant recompence to Zion" for her long shame and desolation. It sums up, in contrast, all the threatenings of the early prophecies. Before it was said: "The strength of Pharaoh shall be your shame, the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion." But for shame there shall be double honour, and for confusion, rejoicing. This decree of the God of Israel shall be followed by its sure execution. The last words allude to the closing promise of the Early Prophecies,—"*and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads,*" xxxv. 10, li. 11.

v. 8. The Speaker here is the same as before, the Messiah of God. In ch. I., He first, as JEHOVAH, complains that when He comes, His people refuse to hearken; and then describes himself as learning from God to comfort those in sorrow. Here He first speaks of His mission from the Father to comfort the mourners, and then assumes His title as JEHOVAH once more. He of whom it is written, Ps. xlv., "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity," here proclaims in like manner, "I the LORD love judgment."

"Robbery for burnt offering." So A. V., Vulg., Luth., Calv., Vitruvius, Jarchi, Kimchi, Aben Ezra, &c. Most moderns render "rapine of wickedness" (Hend., Delitzsch), or some kindred phrase (sub-

them an everlasting covenant. 9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring amidst the nations: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are a seed 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 garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom putteth on priestly array, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels. 11 For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

stituting *avlah* for *olah*). But this general departure from the natural sense of the text has arisen solely from the failure to see in it any appropriate meaning. So Delitzsch: "What object could there be in mentioning sacrifices, since only heathen sacrifices could be intended?" But a key is found, by comparing i. 10—15. The charge against Israel, at the opening of the whole book, is criminal profaneness amidst their burnt offerings, "iniquity and solemn meeting," which God would not endure, a service sacred in name and form, polluted by flagrant wrong. Here, where the promise returns to Israel, after ages of sorrow, this charge is brought against the Gentiles, the nominal Christians, who have been foremost among their despisers and oppressors. Their burnt offerings and acts of worship have been joined with flagrant oppression and persecution of the Jewish people. They have robbed them of their goods; and even of God's promises, applying the curses to the Jews, and taking the blessings to themselves. This crime of the Gentiles is here reprov'd, a counterpart to the rebuke of Israel at the opening of the whole prophecy.

The promise has a double reference. The sin of the Jewish people, in whom great religious zeal had been joined with habits of iniquity, should be wholly done away; and the wrongs of the Gentiles, who have turned the wresting of the promises from the Jews into a supposed burnt offering to God, shall be one further reason why richest and fullest blessings shall be given to long despised Israel.

Their recompence in double honour shall compensate for their long enduring shame. It is appointed in truth by the God of truth, and by that Messiah whose name is "The Truth;" whose gifts and calling are without repentance.

v. 9. The contrast between restored Israel and the Gentiles is here most plain. The words allude to xlvi. 19. Those breathings of Divine love shall now be fulfilled, and the Gentiles shall see the reality of God's special favour to the seed of Israel, so long obscured, and seemingly reversed, by their stubborn unbelief. See Rom. xi. 28.

v. 10. The Speaker is not Jerusalem, the Church, or the prophet, but still Messiah as before. Hence the figure of the bridegroom takes the lead, not that of the bride. It is a prediction of His joyful resurrection, and a glad anticipation of the rich fruits of His great work of love. So Ps. xvi. 11: "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy." And Ps. xxi. 6: "Thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance." The risen Saviour, the King of righteousness, crowned with glory and honour, stands in glorious priestly apparel before the Majesty on high. He is both the Bridegroom and High Priest of the church. But the figure of the bride, adorned with her jewels, is added; because Messiah accounts the glory promised through Him to His church as a part of His own.

v. 11. The title "the Lord God" refers back to v. 1, and links the whole

## (2). CHAP. LXII. MESSIAH'S HEAVENLY INTERCESSION.

FOR Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness shall go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth. 2 And nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD will name. 3 Thou shalt also be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. 4 Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken, neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou

together. The Lord GOD has sent his Anointed on this great errand of mercy, and it shall not be in vain. The phrase "spring forth" (*tsamach*) alludes to the earliest title of Messiah in this book, the Branch (*tsemach*) of the LORD, iv. 2. The promise refers also to xxxv. 1, lv. 10-13, and includes all the fruits of the Gospel, from Pentecost onward to days still to come.

## § 1 (2). CH. LXII.

v. 1. From the work of Messiah on earth, the message passes on to His heavenly intercession. It renews and enlarges the previous statement, viii. 17; "I will wait for the Lord, who hideth His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him." He who wept over Jerusalem, when on earth, has not ceased to pity them and plead for them, when exalted in heaven. He is the true Joseph, the loving and compassionate Elder Brother of His guilty brethren, even while their eyes are holden in unbelief, and they know Him not.

v. 2. The righteousness and glory of Zion are to be a reflection from the glory of the LORD, who will rise upon her. The new name denotes a new character, openly recognized. Hephzi-bah, Beulah, Sought out, A city not forsaken, are like letters composing this new name of honour. "Which the mouth of the Lord shall name." The word here means to express, mark out, or define. The future glory of Israel will be, in all things, by the decree and determinate foreknowledge of God.

v. 3. The figure here is still bolder than in xxviii. 5, where a similar promise occurs. The crown "in the hand" has

been referred to the practice of wearing wreaths on the arm (Aben Ezra), to the admiration of him who holds it (Brent., Ewd.), as for exhibition to others (Cocc), or denoting that it is at God's disposal (Mich.) or under His protection (Vitr., Ges., Maur.), or as the crown of redeemed humanity (Stier). All these ideas, except the first, may be included, but do not fully account for the figure. It implies ownership and powerful protection, and delight in its beauty; but also Divine workmanship, and a higher distinction still to come. Redeemed Zion will be the work of the Lord, the crown and diadem framed and woven by His hand. The flowers of the garland, the jewels of the diadem, belong to that earth which is God's footstool; and, though now raised to eminent honour, will not have received their final destination of heavenly glory. Then only will the blessed company of the ransomed become, to the LORD himself, His diadem of beauty, as if to encircle His brow for ever and ever.

v. 4. The book opens with the charge against Israel, "They have forsaken the Lord," i. 4; and the sentence corresponds, vii. 16, that the land should be forsaken, and its strong cities be "as forsaken ruins," xvii. 9, their habitation "forsaken like a wilderness," and "the peopled city left," xxvii. 10, xxxii. 14. But now this double sentence on Zion and Palestine, of desertion and ruin, shall be wholly repealed. The common version preserves the beauty of the passage, as far as it seems possible for a translation to do. Whether we translate Hephzi-bah and Beulah, or retain all four names in

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 OVER thy walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchers; all day and all night they shall never hold their peace: ye remembrancers of the LORD, keep not silence; 7 And give him no rest, until he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. 8 The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by his mighty arm, Surely I will no more give thy corn *to be* meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger

Hebrew, and append a version to each, there is a sensible loss of grace and power. The two first names are transient, and pass away, and therefore are best given in their English meaning. But the others are abiding titles of honour, of which an exposition is given, and their Hebrew form is best retained.

Hephzi-bah was the name of Hezekiah's wife, the mother of Manasseh, 2 Kin. xxi. 1. And since her son was only twelve at his accession, her marriage was probably after Hezekiah's recovery from sickness, that figurative resurrection of the king of Israel, when he went up after three days to the house of God. Isaiah would probably be present at these royal espousals, when the watch-words of joy were Hephzi-bah and Beulah. We have thus a delicate, indirect sign of the date and authorship of these chapters. A very beautiful picture is borrowed from this recent marriage of Hezekiah, and the name and honour of the actual queen, or queen-mother, in the old age of Isaiah, to foreshadow the espousal of Zion, in the last days, to the risen and glorified Messiah, the true and exalted King of Israel.

v. 5. Various suggestions have been made, to remove the harshness of the metaphor in the words, "So shall thy sons marry thee." 1st, "By a change of vowel points, "So shall thy Builder, or builders, marry thee" (Lowth, Koppe, Döderlein, Müller, Hend.). 2nd, By a change in the sense of the verb, "So shall thy sons inhabit thee" (Alex.). But this destroys the correspondence of the clauses. 3rd, "So shall thy Son (i.e. Messiah) marry thee" (Stier). But this is disproved

by the plural verb (Hahn), and leaves the difficulty the same. But the parallel supplies a simple key. In the first clause "thee" is put for "thy land." The sons of Zion marry the land, when it is possessed, tilled, and made fruitful, by their renewed occupation. But Zion herself, the whole people, is married to her God, when He betroths her with lovingkindness and great mercies.

vv. 6, 7. The figure here is commonly taken for that of watchmen actually stationed on the walls of the city. But the promise really belongs to the time of desolation, and watchmen are not stationed upon heaps of ruins. The word is quite general for keepers and overseers of any kind, and the words, over thee, over thy walls, answer to each other. The figure seems thus to be not, as usually explained, of watchmen placed on the walls when rebuilt, but of watchers or overseers, to whom a charge is given to help on the rebuilding of Zion out of its ruins. The words may apply to angels (Chald., Kimchi, Jarchi, Rosenm., Ewd., Hahn), or to men, especially Christian believers (Vitr., Lowth, Hitz., Umbr., Hend., Stier). There is no need to exclude either view. Angel watchers on high, and human intercessors on earth below, are provided by Messiah, who shall echo constantly His own Divine intercession, plead for God's ancient people, and favour the dust of Zion, while still in ruins. So Zech. i. 12: "The angel of the Lord answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah?" As the pleading of Christ, so

shall not drink thy wine, for which thou hast laboured: 9 But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD: and they that have brought it in 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 every stone; lift up a standard over the nations. 11 Behold! the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the earth, 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.

the prayers of His people, will never cease, till the veil of Israel is taken away.

vv. 8, 9. This oath refers directly to the freedom of Palestine, the land of promise, from the power of oppressing strangers. Zion shall have abiding plenty and peace. There may also be a further and deeper sense. Believers of the Gentiles have long feasted on the histories, promises, and messages of Divine grace, made through Jewish prophets and apostles, while the Jews themselves have pined for ages in spiritual famine. This contrast shall now cease. The stores of heavenly nourishment in the word of God shall henceforward be enjoyed, first of all and chiefly, by the people of Israel, and by Gentiles only as grafted into the stock of Abraham, to whom God's mercy overflows, after satisfying the wants of His chosen and peculiar people.

vv. 10—12. Some think the speaker is Isaiah, others a prophetic chorus, others the watchers of v. 6. But there is no reason to suppose a change, and the Messiah speaks as before. Again, those addressed have been said to be Jews remaining in Jerusalem after the temple was burnt, or exiles in Babylon, or the Gentiles, or returning Jews of the last days. But in the first clause the message is to repentant Israel, and in the rest, to the Christian Church, or Gentile believers, before their return. The passage has been explained of entering in or going out; and the gates referred to the temple, to Jerusalem, the cities of Judah, or Gentile cities in the route of those who return. But ch. xxvi. 2 seems to supply the true sense. That charge, to open the gates

for returning Israel, is completed by a second command to the outcasts, now become a righteous and truthful people, to enter in. A charge follows, to remove the stumblingblocks caused by the idolatry and persecution of nominal Christians, which have very grievously hindered the recovery of Israel to the faith of Christ, and thus delayed their attainment of the promised blessings.

v. 11. These words answer nearly to ch. xl. 10, where they relate to the First Advent. But they are also repeated, with little change, Rev. xxii. 12, where their subject is plainly the Second Coming. The context fixes them here to this later application, after the law of progress and development in all inspired prophecies, especially in those of Isaiah. Four successive predictions of our Lord's first Advent separate the earlier from the later promise: ch. xlii. 1—7, 18—21; xlix. 1—6; l. 1—8; liii. 1—12.

v. 12. The message closes with a twofold promise to the people, and also to the city, the Zion of God. The people shall now be holy, all of them, and righteous, because the Spirit has been poured upon them, Isai. lx. 21; Ezek. xxxix. 29, and will be the "redeemed of the Lord" rescued from every foe, Luke i. 68, 74. Zion, once left like a booth in a vineyard, i. 8, and her palaces forsaken, xxxii. 14, "whom no man sought after," Jer. xxx. 17, will have double honour instead of former shame, and be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken. Where sin hath abounded, grace will much more abound, and sorrow be swallowed up in joy.



## (3). CHAP. LXIII. 1-6. THE VINTAGE OF JUDGMENT.

WHO is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this *that is* glorious in his apparel, stately moving in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. 2 Wherefore *art thou* red in thine apparel, and thy garments like *one that* treadeth the wine-press? 3 The wine-trough I have trodden alone, and of the nations *there was* no man with me: and I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their life-blood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my raiment. 4 For the day of vengeance *was* in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. 5 And I looked, and *there was* none to help; and I was astonished that *there was* none to uphold: so

v. 1. The two questions here correspond, as sin with its punishment. Edom, the red, is the people and land of him who sold his birthright, and in heart shed his brother's blood. But "wherefore art thou red in thine apparel?" refers to garments dyed with blood by judgment on Edom's sin.

"This Edom is plainly a typical, prophetic, mystic name for the hostile, haughty, heathen world in general, to be judged, and certainly the same with Babel in the horizon of the prophet. From the first type until now it is used with various allusions (the red, the earthly, Adam), the natural humanity, in contrast with Israel, the people of God. The chief point of resemblance is the state of mind, profane, contemptuous, despising salvation" (Stier). This application is so far from being purely fanciful (Alex.) that it results most plainly from a comparison of the related prophecies. The word *tsôch* "travelling" A. V. is rather "bending," used, ch. li. 14, of the crouching of a captive, but here of the head inclined backward with a stately gesture.

"I that speak in righteousness." The question is from the prophet when the vision appears. He who answers is the Divine Word, Rev. xix. 13, the same who has spoken through the previous chapters. His words are acts of Divine power. This clause answers thus to Rev. xix. 11, "In righteousness he doth judge and

make war." But even in judgment He is "mighty to save," and salvation is the final aim of His war with the powers of evil.

vv. 2, 3. This glorious Person, seen first afar, has drawn near and made answer, and the question is addressed to Him as now present. The past and future tenses express the certainty of the event, the real and ideal point of sight being assumed in turn. In vision the treading is past, but in the exposition remotely future. The blood, v. 3, and "strength," v. 6 (A. V.), is the same, and seems here to mean the life-blood, as the source of strength.

v. 3. "The nations." The Gentile nations, in contrast to the Zion of God. A time seems implied, when the faithful in once Christian lands have been removed, and there are left ungodly men alone for a season. This agrees with St Paul's words, that the recovery of Israel will be "life from the dead," Rom. xi. 15. A contrast also to the promise, lii. 15. In the day of grace "Messiah sprinkles many nations" with the life-blood of His atoning sacrifice. In this day of vengeance His own garments are to be sprinkled with the life-blood of the presumptuous despisers of His grace.

v. 4. This "day of vengeance" was announced before, lxi. 2. It was to follow the acceptable year, the long season of Divine grace, and usher in the full

mine own arm brought salvation for me, and my fury, it sustained me. 6 And I will tread down the nations in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their life-blood to the earth.

## § 2. THE LAST CONTROVERSY WITH ISRAEL.

### CHAP. LXIII. 7—LXV.

#### (1). ISRAEL'S FORMER MERCIES AND SINS.

7 I WILL recall to mind the lovingkindness 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 And he said, Surely these *are* my own people, children *that*

gift of beauty, joy, and praise, to the mourners in Zion.

v. 5. This verse is the same as lix. 16, with a change of person only. Messiah, the LORD'S Anointed, claims here for His own work what is there ascribed to JEHOVAH. The words "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save," unfold that earlier message, "I, even I, am JEHOVAH, and beside me there is no Saviour," xliii. 11.

"I was astonished." Rebellion so wide and deep, after such riches of grace, is marvellous even to the All-wise Redeemer. He is the same who, at Nazareth, "marvelled because of their unbelief," Mark vi. 6.

#### § 2 (1). CH. LXIII. 7—19.

v. 7. That the confession which begins here is that of the Jewish people, or of the faithful among them, or one made in their behalf, is plain, and denied by few. That the period is just before their future and final conversion results from the order of the visions. As to the speaker or speakers there is more room for varieties of judgment. The simplest view, however, is that Messiah is still the Speaker, as before; but now as the great Intercessor for Israel, joining them with Himself, and speaking and pleading with God in their name. The opening words allude to the command He has given to the LORD'S remembrancers not to keep silence, and to give Him no rest, till Jerusalem be

a praise in the earth. He now fulfils this same work, and recalls to the mind of God His mercies to Israel in the days of old. The transition in v. 11, which is commonly felt to be obscure, thus receives a simple explanation. He pleads here for Israel, as once for Himself on the Cross,—“Our fathers trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them,” Ps. xxii. 3—5.

v. 8. The simpler version of the connective is more exact. He shewed them great mercies, not through a confidence in their fidelity, which was disappointed; but rather this hopeful, loving expectation, repaid only by ingratitude, was one link in a long, connected chain of undeserved blessings.

“Surely these are my own people.” The rendering “only” (Hahn, Alex.) obscures the true sense, both here and xvi. 7, xix. 11, xlv. 14, 24. It has here “its primary affirmative sense” (Delitzsch, Rosenm., Hend., Stier). So Gen. ix. 5, xxvi. 5, xxix. 14; Ex. xxxi. 13; Jer. x. 19; Lam. ii. 16. The second is also plainly a relative clause, and not a command (Alex.). The force of the particle rests on the word “my people” and hence “my own people,” (Hend.), gives the real emphasis.

The statement answers to v. 2—“And he looked that it should bring forth grapes;” or to the words in the parable, “These three years I come seeking fruit

will not lie: and he was unto them a Saviour. 9 In all their affliction, his *was* the conflict, 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 Yet did they rebel, and grieve his holy Spirit; so he was turned to be their enemy, *and* himself fought against them. 11 But he hath called to mind the days of old, Moses *and* his people—Where *is* he that brought them up from the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where *is* he that put in the midst of them his holy

on this fig-tree," Lu. xiii. 7; or again, Zeph. iii. 7, "I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction." Love "hopeth all things," and "God is Love." Omniscience does not blot out or destroy this hopefulness, one essential element of His all-perfect love. It only blends with it, in mysterious union, in this verse and its contrast, xlviii. 8,—"I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and that thy name is, A transgressor from the womb." His love kept out of sight His foreknowledge, and He dealt with them as a father with children, whom he would win by love to grateful obedience.

v. 9. The received version, based on the Keri, seems here in substance the best, and yields a most emphatic sense (Luth., Vittr., Cler., Hitz., Ewald, Knob., Umbr., Hendk., Alex., Stier, Delitzsch). The order of the words, which has been made an objection (*Ges.*), confirms this reading, since the stress lies on the pronoun. But the slight change "his was the conflict" seems to give the sense more exactly, the reference being to controversy rather than suffering. The allusion is to the promise, Ex. xxiii. 22: "Then will I be an enemy to thine enemies, and an adversary to thine adversaries," (*vetsarti eth tsorer'aka*). The last clause corresponds exactly to this passage. In no conflict were they abandoned, but God undertook their cause, and fought against their enemies.

"He redeemed them." The pronoun is emphatic, and some refer it directly to "the Angel of his presence," (Vittr., Stier). But it refers directly to Jehovah. His was the conflict, and He redeemed them. The mention of the Presence Angel, "the Messenger of the Covenant" in Malachi, alludes in passing to Ex. xxiii. 23,

as the former clause does to the verse just before. The Word, the Presence Angel, is here the Speaker, and bears witness to the love of the Father even more than to His own. So the Spirit is named subordinately in the next verse.

v. 10. The pronouns here mark an emphatic contrast. He redeemed them, yet did they rebel, therefore He fought against them. His dealings were changed, through their sin, to a holy severity, and their Redeemer himself became their adversary. So ch. v. 6, "I will lay it waste;" and Judg. ii. 15, "Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil,...as he had sworn unto them."

v. 11. The difficulty of this verse may be seen by the following summary of opinions: Grotius and others (A.V., &c.) make Jehovah the subject of the first verb, which avoids an abrupt change of person without sign of it in the text. But since what follows can only be the language of the people, most refer this clause to the people also. Cyril and Jerome combine both, referring "he remembered," to the Lord, and what follows to the people. So abrupt a transition should not be assumed without necessity. The Targum supplies 'lest they say' before the second clause, as the voice of the enemies of Israel. Vitringa's is a fatal objection, that the essential idea has then to be supplied. The Dutch Bible makes it the complaint of the people: "Once he remembered it, but now where is he? &c." Here again the main thought has to be supplied without authority. Moderns, since Vitringa, agree that the first clause describes the repentance of the people, and that the second gives their words, but still vary as to the

Spirit? 12 That led *them* by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? 13 That led them through the deeps, like a horse in the wilderness? they did not stumble. 14 As a herd *that* goeth down into a valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused them to rest: even so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name. 15 Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy strength? the sounding of thy bowels,

construction. Rosenm. and most follow Jarchi in making his people the subject (Ges., Hitz., Ewald, Umbr., Knobel, Hahn, Delitz., Scholz). Gesenius renders "the ancient days of Moses." This harsh construction has been adopted by later writers, except Maurer, who revives the construction of A. V. and Vitringa as a new discovery. Henderson differs from A. V. in the second clause only, and renders it thus, "Where is he that brought up from the sea the shepherds of his flock?" (Alex. p. 91).

Again, Hahn renders "And his people will remember the days of old, and Moses: where is he (Moses) that hath brought them up from the sea with the Shepherd of his flock (the Presence Angel)? Where is he, who hath put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit (also the Presence Angel)?" Stier otherwise: "And one remembered the days of old, the Moses (drawer forth) of his people: where is he (Moses) that brought them forth from the sea (of affliction) with the Shepherd of his flock? Where is He (the Angel) who put in them the Spirit of his holiness?" This is harsh throughout, in the change of subject in the first clause, the use of Moses as an appellative, and the reference of each question to a distinct person.

The key to this passage will be found by referring back to v. 7, and the further thought that here, as from lxi. 1 onward, Messiah is the Speaker. He first declares His purpose, as the great Intercessor, to remind the LORD of His former mercies to Israel. This purpose is now fulfilled. In contrast to the years and ages of rejection and shame, the LORD has remembered the days of old, Moses and his people; so that now, according to those

earlier days, He is about to shew to them marvellous things, Mic. vii. 15. In this confidence that JEHOVAH has now called to mind the days of old, Messiah continues His intercession by a direct appeal to the Father for the renewal of His wonderful works: "Where is He, JEHOVAH, *i. e.* the present display of His power, who brought them up from the sea with the Shepherd of His flock, the promised Presence Angel? Where is He that put his Holy Spirit in the midst of them, by the gift of prophecy in Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and the seventy elders? Neh. ix. 20." The facts of the Exodus, in their deeper aspect, are brought to light, and reveal distinctly the love of the Father, of the Word, the Angel of God's presence, and of the Holy Spirit, towards the people of Israel.

vv. 13, 14. The question here passes into a direct averment of God's merciful care. They passed the Red Sea safely, as a horse crosses a level plain. The tense at the close (Heb. fut.) denotes their continued actual preservation. Their journey through the desert, toilsome and dangerous in itself, became like the peaceful descent of a herd into the valley where they pasture. The last words plead with God to renew these wonders of love.

v. 15. Some take the last clause for an exclamation of affirmation (Ges., Ewd., Alex., Delitzsch), or as a relative clause, "which are restrained" (Vitr., Hitz., Knobel, Hahn, Stier), or as a further question, "Are the sounding, &c." (Hendn.). The last seems the best, but is better expressed by the received version, the pointing only being changed, as above. The complaint is like the Psalmist's: "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? etc."

and thy mercies towards me, are they restrained? 16 For thou *art* our Father, though Abraham hath not owned us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, *art* our Father; our Redeemer *is* thy name from of old. 17 Why wilt thou make us to err, O LORD, from thy ways, *and* harden our hearts from thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance. 18 Thy holy people have possessed *it* but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary. 19 We are become long ago *as* those over whom thou dost not rule, which have not been called by thy name.

v. 16. The name of God, as the Father of His people, and their Redeemer, is the ground of this earnest prayer that He will look down on them in mercy from heaven. Their earthly forefathers cannot avail them. They cease not to say in their pride, "We have Abraham to our father," and learn to depend wholly, like stones or clay, on the new-creating power and grace of God. The transfer of the words to Gentiles (Alex.), as if it denied a natural descent from Abraham, destroys the chief emphasis of the confession. The words mean rather, "We are too remote in time, too unlike in character and conduct, to hope that Abraham or Israel will own us as their children. It is vain to look to these fathers after the flesh in our present need." The last clause, by the points, requires the varied rendering above (Vitr., Rosenmr., Knobel, Stier, Hahn, Delitzsch), and is thus still more expressive. In His love and pity He redeemed them from Egypt; and therefore, even from the days of old, His name had ever been, The Redeemer of Israel.

v. 17. The confession grows deeper still. By the change of number, the great Intercessor links Himself still more closely with the cries of His people. Their strange blindness is owned with shame and sorrow; yet so as to read in it a just sentence of God. The question

answers to that early sentence on God's vineyard, "I will command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it," ch. v. 6. Strange indeed is the hardness of man's heart, when the strivings of the Spirit are wholly withdrawn. They plead on the ground of their high calling, not repealed, "as the tribes of his inheritance."

vv. 18, 19. The received version of v. 18, with one slight change, seems the best; but in the other the relative construction gives the true sense (Vitr., Hendn., Rosenm., Knob., Stier, Hahn). "From of old" is not a Divine title (Del.), but expresses the length of Israel's sad rejection. The confession of Israel's sin and shame here finds its climax, before the eager supplication that follows. Their whole possession of the land of promise had been short, a little while, compared with the terms of the covenant to Abraham, or even with their own times of exile and oppression. The temple is in ruin, not one stone left, a dream of past ages. Instead of the signs of God's chosen people, they have long been as if He had never marked them out for His own. The verses, thus rendered, fix their own reference, in agreement with the context, to the Roman dispersion, and to a future date, when the times of the Gentiles and the treading down of Jerusalem are almost at an end.

(2). CHAP. LXIV. ISRAEL'S PRAYER FOR MERCY.

OH that thou wouldest rend the heavens, and come down, that mountains might flow down at thy presence! 2 As fire kindleth brushwood, *and* waters boil with the fire, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, *and* at thy presence nations shall tremble. 3 When thou didst terrible things, *which* we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence. 4 Even from of old *men* have not heard, nor perceived by the ear; no eye hath seen, O God, beside thee;

v. 1. The Masoretic pointing joins the first verse of this chapter to the verses before. But the other division (LXX., Syr., Vulg., A. V., Ges., Ew., Maurer, Hendn.) is plainly required by the construction of the verses that follow, and also by the change from deep confession to earnest and intense prayer. Still the two passages, as a whole, are very closely linked together. Out of the depth of their shame rises this piercing cry.

v. 2. The word rendered "melting," A. V., occurs here only, and is now commonly held to mean dry twigs or brushwood. The rendering above, though not quite literal, retains the emphatic mention of fire first and last in the double clause. One figure is of swift, rapid, noisy consumption by the flames; the other of violent agitation and tumult, like water that boils over a glowing fire. The former has occurred before, xxvii. 11. The nations, with all their might, will be agitated, dismayed, confounded, when the mighty King of nations reveals His presence.

v. 3. This verse may be taken as a retrospective statement (Kimchi, Jarchi, A. V., Gesen., Hendn.); an historical comparison, "O that thou wouldest do, as when thou camest down" (Rosenm.); or as a prayer for the future, "Doing fearful things we expect not, O that thou wouldest," etc. (Hitz., Ewald, Knob., Alex., Stier). Or quite otherwise (Hahn), "From thy doing terrible things, should we not hope that thou wilt come down?" But the received version is the earliest and the best. In agreement with the whole context, their hopes and prayers for

future deliverance are based on their memories of the past, lxiii. 7, 9, 11. The allusion here is to the giving of the Law on Sinai, and completes those already made to the passing of the Red Sea, and the journey through the wilderness. This is no needless repetition (Stier), but a most forcible appeal from what the Lord has already done to what He has promised still to do. The tense (Heb. fut.) of the relative clause is no difficulty (Alex.), but has its frequent force of denoting actions not momentary, but continuous, "which we were not looking for." Israel could not anticipate that glorious theophany of Sinai, which forms the subject of the later appeal, Deut. iv. 32, 33. The parallel reappears, Heb. xii. 18, 22, 26—29.

v. 4. Many render the last clause "No eye hath seen a God beside thee, who will so work for him that waiteth for him" (Chald., Kimchi, Grot., Cocc., Gesen., Ewd., Maurer, Umbr., Knob., Alex., Hendn.). But seeing and observing God is a harsh construction, and the meaning thus given varies widely from that assigned by the Apostle. Hahn strangely refers it to the idolatry of the Jews: "They have not heard nor understood; their eye hath not seen: he makes a god beside thee, to wait thereon." This turns upside down a glorious promise. The received version (Vitr., Rosenm., Jarchi, Stier, &c.) seems alone correct; but the first word is more exactly "even from of old." Again, "he will do" is more literal, though nearly the same in force as "he hath prepared;"

what he will do for every one that waiteth for him. 5 Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, even those that remember thee in thy ways: yea, thou hast been wroth, and we have sinned, and still by these we are preserved from of old. 6 And 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 carried us away. 7 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 by the hand of our iniquities. 8 But now, O LORD, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy

and the rendering, "every one," makes the distinction of persons more plain. The last pronoun is emphatic. The abrupt apostrophe, in the midst of the statement, reflects vividly the deep earnestness of the whole confession and prayer.

The connection of this verse is rather obscure, and has been variously explained. But the words "even from of old" are a key to its meaning. The wonders of Sinai had been terrible things, unlooked for by the people. The grandeur of that display of God's power took them wholly by surprise. As it had been from the first, so would it be to the last. Fresh wonders of God's providence and grace had surpassed, and would still surpass, the feeble, dim-sighted expectations of His servants. So Jer. xxxiii. 3, "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not." The Apostle quotes this verse, 1 Cor. ii. 9, varying it slightly in construction, to link it with the new context. The waiting on God, in the O. T. promise, becomes the love of God in the New.

v. 5. Few texts have caused interpreters more perplexity than this, and twenty or thirty renderings have been proposed. Without staying to enumerate them, the following seems to me the true construction and paraphrase.

The words of this verse are a brief exposition of the ways of God towards men; of His delight in the righteous, and His forbearance and mercy to sinners. "Thou meetest," art accustomed (Heb. fut.) to meet suddenly, Thy faith-

ful servants, and then to bestow on them unexpected favours. Sudden, not always hostile encounter, is the proper force of the word. The allusion is to Gen. xxxii. 1, "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him." It was a sudden and joyful surprise. "That rejoiceth, &c." Joy in God is one mark of a true faith, a contrast to the impenitence that only frets and murmurs under the hand of God, viii. 21, ix. 3. The next words are a further description of the faithful, alluding to xxvi. 8, "In the way of thy judgments have we waited for thee." In these ways there is not only love to the upright, but forbearance and grace to the guilty, as made known in the words to Moses, "forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin." The next word (*hen*) is used to place this view of God's character in clearer relief. "The dark background of our guilt has only rendered thy mercy more conspicuous;" "and still," in spite of our many sins and thy just displeasure, "by these," the ways of rich forgiving mercy, "we are preserved from of old." The word *šlam* must here be adverbial, and used in the same sense as in lxiii. 9, 11, 16, 19, lxiv. 4. The last three words form one clause, as the points indicate. The closing words do not express a hope of future salvation, which would quite disturb the order of thought in this deepening confession; but are an appeal to the fact of Israel's continual preservation, from the Exodus onward through more than three thousand years, in spite of their aggravated sins. The tense implies

hand. 9 Be not wroth very sore, O LORD, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we *are* all thy people. 10 Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. 11 Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, hath been burned up with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste. 12 Wilt thou refrain thyself for these *things*, O LORD? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?

(3). CHAP. LXV. THE ANSWER OF REPROOF AND PROMISE.

I HAVE answered *them that* did not ask; I have been found by *them that* sought me not: I have said, Behold me,

here a long-continued, not a future salvation.

v. 6. God's ways of rich mercy through past ages, and the actual guilt and shame of Israel, are here put side by side, and a plea is founded on this comparison of rich grace and extreme need, for the work of the Divine Potter in creating His people anew. The simple connective gives the true force of the appeal.

"As filthy rags." The works of the flesh and of Pharisaic pride are here meant, not those fruits of the Spirit, which are "an odour of a sweet smell, acceptable to God through Christ." So Vitringa well remarks;—"This saying, against the scope of the prophet, is often applied by unskilful interpreters to the acts of the faithful through the grace of the Spirit, because of some adherent imperfection, and even in public prayer they most absurdly obtrude this upon God. It is far otherwise. The acts of the regenerate, done in faith through the Spirit, are sacrifices well-pleasing to God. How have those who so interpret destroyed the true aspect of Christianity! The utmost humility becomes us before God, and to renounce our own strength is deserving; but the work of God in us ought to receive its own due praise." (Vitr. in Es. II. 1030.)

v. 7. This is a present confession, not simply a review of the past, and completes their abasement before God. They had been asleep in sin. The figure is the same as xxvii. 5, where Israel are exhorted to lay hold on the strength of

their God.

v. 8. The "now" is not a mark of time, but of transition from deep confession, and guilty sleep in sin, to earnest cries for deliverance. They appeal to God's love as their Father, to His power as of a potter over the clay.

vv. 10, 12. The holy cities are those of Palestine, not Jerusalem only (Vitr.). The words will apply to the exile in Babylon. But they apply, even more forcibly still, to the later and longer Roman desolation, in which one stone of the temple has not been left on another, and Jerusalem has been trodden down for long ages.

§ 2 (3). CH. LXV.

v. 1. The first clause refers to the consultation of a religious oracle, the second to a search as for a lost friend or treasure. "I have been inquired of" means not "consulted" only, but with success, so as to give a gracious answer. Those, who once did not inquire at all into the will of God, had now been visited in mercy, and received from the Son of God the lively oracles. Those who had not sought after God had found the "pearl of great price," the hidden treasures of the Gospel (Mat. xiii. 44; Col. ii. 3), and been enriched by the "unspeakable gift" of redeeming love. The repeated "behold me," shews the urgency of the invitation, God himself beseeching these Gentile strangers to receive the blessing. This had been promised to Messiah, lv. 5, as one main part of His reward. Here He proclaims it fulfilled.



behold me! to a nation *that* were not called by my name. 2 I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walk in a way *that is* not good, after their own devices; 3 The people that provoke me to anger continually to my face, that sacrifice in the gardens, and burn incense upon the bricks; 4 Which dwell among the tombs, and lodge in the caves; which eat swine's flesh, and broth of unclean *things is in* their vessels. 5 Which say, Stand off by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou: these *are* a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burneth all the day. 6 Behold! *it is* written before me; I will not keep silence, until I have recompensed, even recompensed into their bosom, 7 Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the LORD, which have

There is also a deep undertone of rebuke in reply to Israel's complaint. He who had shewn such rich grace to strangers would never have cast off His own people, unless their guilt and perverseness had been extreme.

vv. 2—5. The two sins denounced are idolatry and Pharisaism, as in ch. lviii., lviii. One prevailed most before, the other after the Captivity; and they formed together the moral ground of God's long rejection of them, of which they complained, and under which they mourned. The latter reached its height in the days of our Lord, and was the main object of His sternest rebukes. Spreading out the hands is the gesture of earnest expostulation, and "all the day" refers to the long series of prophetic warnings, crowned by the voice of the Lord and His Apostles.

"Which walk." The plural is more exact. Each one walks in his own way, but all in a way that is not good.

v. 3. "The people." The article has much force. Once defined as the holy people, the LORD has now to define them by their sins. The warning in the song Deut. xxxii. 16, had been verified, "With abominations provoked they him to anger." "To my face" refers to the first commandment. "Thou shalt have none other gods *before my face*." Idol worship is an open affront to the Divine majesty.

"In the gardens." The former clause referred to the last threatenings of the Law. This resumes Isaiah's earliest

warning,—“Ye shall be confounded for the gardens ye have chosen,” i. 29. Their idolatries, in the days of the kings, were “under every green tree,” Jer. ii. 20. “Upon the bricks” has been referred to the tiles of houses, where they offered incense to the queen of heaven, or to heathen inscriptions on the bricks of Babylon. But the more probable reference is to altars of forbidden worship in the garden (Alex., Hahn, Stier). As Ahaz corrupted God's worship by a heathen altar of burnt offering, so the people are charged with offering incense to their idols on base and unworthy substitutes for the golden incense altar, which God had ordained.

v. 4. The words refer to necromancy and offerings to the dead. There is here a close resemblance to the man possessed with the legion in the Gospels. Eating swine's flesh, and drinking their broth in sacrifice, would be a contemptuous rejection of the law of God. Perhaps the charge is to be explained by lxvi. 3, that their pride and rebellion made even their legal sacrifices like illegal abominations.

v. 5. A striking picture of the pride of the Pharisees. The meaning is not that they were like a smoke from without, which enters the nostrils and causes annoyance; but that their sin awakened the fierce displeasure of a holy God, and made His jealousy burn like fire.

vv. 6, 7. The heavy judgment on Israel was not only fixed in God's decree, but announced in His law from of old,

burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills; so I will measure their work, first of all, into their bosom.

8 THUS saith the LORD, As new wine is found in the cluster, and *one* saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it, so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I will not destroy the whole. 9 And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, even out of Judah to inherit my mountains; and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. 10 And Sharon shall become a fold for flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down in, for my people which have sought me. 11 But *as for* you that forsake the LORD, which forget my holy mountain; *you* that prepare a table for the troop, and

Ex. xxxii. 34; Lev. xxvi.; Deut. xxxii. "I will not keep silence" is a severe irony, with reference to the prayer—"Wilt thou hold thy peace (the same word), and afflict us very sore?" The judgments of which they complained were a loud voice of God to His guilty people. "But have recompensed." The past tense marks the transition from actual to ideal time. The retribution would be in full measure, Lu. vi. 38. The sudden change of person is a summons to each successive generation to bear their own sentence.

v. 7. The word *rishonah*, by the accents and position, seems here to be adverbial, and the sense as in Jer. xvi. 18. A Divine key is here given to Israel's long desolation. The judgment on their sin must come first, and not until after long ages of shame and sorrow would the measure of their chastisement be complete. Then times of refreshing and restitution, and wonderful blessings, should follow.

This passage thus resumes and reviews the whole course of Israel's guilt from the days of the Prophet to their final recovery. But its pictures are taken from the days of Ahaz and Manasseh, rather than those of the Exile, Is. i. 29, viii. 19, xvii. 8, xxx. 22, 2 Chr. xxxiii. 3, 5, 6, 19, and confirm the genuineness and unity of the whole book. Its earliest and latest descriptions of national sin agree closely together.

v. 8. "Thus saith the LORD." This weighty preface occurs more than twenty

times in the Later prophecies, and first, ch. xlii. 5, in predicting the Call of the Gentiles. Here it occurs four times, to seal and confirm the recovery of Israel in the last days. The figure has been explained of the contrast between the juice, and useless skins and seeds, or between one or two good grapes and the rest of the cluster, or one good cluster and others bad or rotten, or else (Stier) between the vine and less honoured fruits. The contrast lies, perhaps, rather between an unripe cluster, and the same when fully ripened. New wine "is found in the cluster," belongs to it as the usual result, when the vintage comes. "And one saith," even while it is unripe, and the grapes are sour and worthless, "Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it." The wise vinedresser restrains every rash hand that would destroy the cluster, because at present worthless, by reminding them of the blessing when the full ripeness is come. So God would deal with His people, still beloved for their fathers' sakes. With such rich promises of future blessing in store, they should be sorely chastened, but not crushed or utterly destroyed. At length, like the clusters of Eshcol, they should yield, in a righteous generation, the precious new wine of the kingdom of God.

vv. 9, 10. This seed from Jacob and Judah, who are to inherit the land once more, are the ripe vine-clusters of the previous figure. The titles of Messiah, the Servant of God, and his Chosen, xlii. 1, are here applied to the whole

fill out a drink-offering to the multitude; 12 I have even numbered you for the sword, and ye shall all bow down for slaughter: because I called, and ye did not answer, I spake, and ye did not hearken; but did evil before mine eyes, and chose *that* wherein I delighted not. 13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold! my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold! my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold! my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: 14 Behold! my servants shall sing for joy of heart; but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit. 15 And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen; and the Lord GOD will slay thee, and will call

people. It is the true Joshua, who will bring these grapes of Eshcol, this rich vine-cluster, and present them as an offering to God. Sharon and Achor are named as the western and eastern limits of Palestine, connected with their first entrance, and the fullest beauty and blessing, Josh. vii. 24—26; Hos. ii. 15; Is. xxxv. 2; Cant. ii. 1. The words "my people who have sought me" alludes to the promise v. 1, and the eager prayer of ch. lxiv. Since the Lord has shewn rich grace even to Gentiles who had not sought Him, how much more will He bless His ancient people, whose are the fathers and the covenants, when they turn to Him in godly sorrow! Comp. Rom. xi. 24.

v. 11. The pronoun, placed first, makes a strong contrast between the penitent remnant and the transgressors here condemned. The construction runs on to the twelfth verse.

Of Gad and Meni, the idol names in v. 11, there have been various explanations. (1) That they denote Baal and Astarte, or the Sun and Moon, or Bel and perhaps Nebo. (2) Jupiter and Venus, as stars of luck or fortune. (3) That they denote Fortune or Chance, and Fate or Destiny; but with these varieties, Gad = Fate, Meni = Fortune, or the reverse; or both one and the same power. The reference of Meni to the Moon has been sustained by the likeness to the Greek names  $\mu\eta\eta$  and  $\mu\eta\eta\eta$ , common to many Japhetic languages. In this obscurity it is safest to take the Scriptures, if possible, for their own key. We may assume

that they refer to actual forms of idolatry in the days of the prophet, representing some kindred evils of the last days.

The chief form of Jewish idolatry in the old age of Isaiah, or under Manasseh, was the worship of the host of heaven, 2 Ki. xxi. 5. The word, Gad, is the name of the patriarch, expounded in the blessing, "A troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at last." A troop, instead of "host," as a diminutive, may be used in contempt to describe the object of this popular idolatry. The mention here of a table answers to the mention, in Jeremiah, of cakes to the queen of heaven. Again, *Meni* is from the root, *to count*, and its sense is fixed by the threatening, "I have numbered you (*mánlthi*) to the sword." It may thus be rendered, "the multitude," and refer to the same idolatry, the difference being that between leaders and an army, or a troop and a confused throng. The words will thus serve to describe that Christian idolatry, in which the host of heaven, angels, martyrs, and saints, became the objects of forbidden worship; and perhaps a later, Sadducean apostasy, where military power and the voice of the multitude are held supreme, and practically worshipped, while the living God is forgotten or despised, and His promises to Israel are scorned and cast away. The sentence answers to the sin. The worshippers of mere number shall be numbered to the sword, and those who bow down to forbidden worship shall bow down for slaughter.

v. 12. The warning here answers closely to ch. l. 2. One refers to the First, the other

his servants by another name: 16 So that he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself by the God of truth, and he who sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

17 FOR behold! I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. 18 Yea, be glad and rejoice for ever and ever *in that* which I create: for behold! I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. 19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. 20 There shall

to the approach of the Second Advent, and the great apostasy before the recovery of Israel.

vv. 13—15. A solemn contrast between the impenitent, and the contrite and penitent, is here drawn. The name turned to a curse, and the new name given, are often applied to the titles, Jew and Christian. And not without reason, since the message includes the sins of Israel from the reign of Manasseh and earlier, and also those later days of vengeance, when the second Temple fell. But the chief reference, from the whole context, is to a time still future, and to sins and crimes before Israel's final gathering. The name, Christian, has now been profaned by millions as much as that of Jew ever was by the Pharisees and Sadducees, and may once more have to be replaced by some new title of the faithful; though to be a Jew inwardly, and a Christian inwardly, must remain titles of high honour for evermore.

v. 16. "So that." The effect of the solemn judgment predicted will be deep reverence for God, as the God of truth. The restoration of Israel, the ingrafting of the olive branches after ages of unbelief, will put an open seal to the truth of all God's prophecies, and the word of God be shewn to be "settled for ever in heaven." Appeal to God by oath is not only lawful, but one main form of Divine worship. Duties and privileges will alike be sanctified, in days to come, by this solemn appeal to the God of truth.

v. 17. The new heavens and new earth include both ideas, of moral renewal and

physical change. Outward nature, since the Fall, has been made to reflect higher moral truth. These heavens and earth will be new, as the present are new compared with those before the Deluge, 2 Pet. iii. 5—7. There is meant no change of our planet, or of the solid globe, but of the earth and its atmosphere, so far as respects the senses of men, and their dwelling upon it. It will be wrought by the mighty, new creating power of God.

"And the former things shall not be remembered." The dwellers in the new earth will look back on the past history of our world, almost as we now look back on the world before the Flood, the memorials of which have passed away. The long night of sin will be like a dream, when the daybreak has come.

vv. 18, 19. The City of the Great King, Mat. v. 35, so long trodden down, yet dear to the hearts of Christians, even in its ruins, from the sacred memories of earlier days, will be made once more "a praise in the earth," and a fountain whence living waters flow forth on every side, Zech. xiv. 8; Isa. xxxv. 10, lii. 8.

v. 20. The prophecy grows fuller as it proceeds. Here it links itself with the first chapters of Genesis. The length of life will be restored to a patriarchal standard. "There shall be no more from thence," from the land of promise, and its Achor and Sharon, v. 10, growing up like plants from the soil, "an infant of days," one who dies in his infancy, whose lifetime is an infant's only; "nor an old man, who doth not fill up his days," feeble and decrepit with age, before he has reached

be no more from thence an infant of days, nor an old man who doth not fill up his days: for the youth will die a hundred years old, and the sinner, a hundred years old, shall be accursed.

21 AND they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. 22 They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. 23 They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for calamity; for they

an ample term of years. There shall neither be early death nor premature decay. "For the youth will die a hundred years old." Since none die as infants, and a hundred years are those of childhood and youth only, those who die earliest will attain this limit. "And the sinner, a hundred years old, shall be accursed." Though the rebellious may come under the sentence of premature decay, even this curse, like the death of the righteous, shall not begin until he has reached the term of a hundred years.

vv. 21, 22. To length of days will be added other signs of an earthly life enriched and ennobled by the blessing of God. Creation, free from the bondage of corruption, shall minister largely to man's comfort and honour, as in the days of Paradise. "As the days of a tree," of which many kinds last more than a hundred, and some more than a thousand years. Length of days, even on earth, may be a rich blessing, when this earthly life is the continual preparation for still higher and heavenly glory. The main idea is that the earth will not be destroyed, but delivered from the curse of sin, renewed and repaired; and the chosen seed, and the land of promise, will be the first-fruits of this promised "restitution of all things."

v. 23. There is an allusion to the legal threatening, Lev. xxvi. 16, which is now to be reversed. These righteous dwellers in the land will not "bring forth for terror," or calamity. Their children will never be exposed to sudden alarm, hurried into captivity, or cut off by the sword; but fathers, children, and children's children, shall abide secure under the protecting

care of the King of Israel.

v. 24. An allusion again to the earlier promise, xxx. 19,—“He will be very gracious to thee at the voice of thy cry: when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.” But even this promise shall now be exceeded in the largeness of God's mercy. The promise made to Messiah the King shall now be extended to His ransomed people,—“Thou preventest him with the blessing of goodness,” Ps. xxi. 3.

v. 25. An allusion, once more, to the earlier prophecy, ch. xi. 6, 7, 9. Thus the whole book is knit together by many secret links, and reveals, from first to last, the unity of design which marks the whole. But here there is an addition, which refers back to the sentence, Gen. iii. 14, and thus links the close of the book with the opening of the Law, as it is linked by its very first words with the message near its close, Deut. xxxii. 1. “And the serpent, dust shall be his meat.” The Vision of Immanuel, and this closing message, allude thus to the two main features of the earliest promise, the gift of the Seed of Woman, and the sentence upon the old serpent. All his devices for evil will be so defeated and overcome, that the only fruit he will gain, from his persevering malice, will be disappointment, and utter and perpetual shame.

“All my holy mountain,” as in xi. 9, seems to denote the whole extent of Palestine, the chosen mountain-range of the LORD's inheritance. But when Israel shall thus blossom and bud, and the chosen vine yield its richest clusters, the face of the whole world will also be filled with fruit, xxvii. 6.

are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. 24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer: and while they are yet speaking I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and the serpent, dust *shall be* his meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

### § 3. THE FULL REDEMPTION OF ZION.

The historical scope of the opening verses of ch. lxvi. has been the subject of much debate. The principle there laid down is a grand, universal truth, and condemns the ceremonial superstition of all times and all nations; but specially of the Jews from the days of the prophets, onward through the times of the First Temple of Solomon, the Exile, the successive rebuilding by Zerubbabel and by Herod, and in every later age. The special features, however, of a temple actually being rebuilt, and sacrifices offered in pride and unbelief, belong chiefly to the days of our Lord and his Apostles; and to a future time, when Pharisaic zeal may revive among the Jews of the last days, after they have been in part restored to their own land, and before they have been sifted and purified by the predicted season of Jacob's trouble.

This last application of the message seems alone to maintain the order of the prophecy, and the closeness of relation between the first opening of the chapter and the message of bright hope which presently follows. Three main features, however, of the times of the Gospel, the actual rebuilding and adornment of the temple by Herod the Great and his successors, the persecution of the faithful, the infant Church of Christ, by the Pharisees and the main body of the nation, and the judgment on and around the temple in the days of Titus, agree very closely with the description here given. But in that case the sequel was a contrast to the issue here foretold. History often seems to repeat itself in part, but never wholly, or without some important variations. The prophecy suddenly stopped short in its partial fulfilment in those early days, and the warning, xxvi. 17, 18, instead of the promise, lxvi. 7—10, followed close on the persecutions of the Pharisees, in the judgments by the Roman armies on the city and the temple.

In the last times we are taught here to expect an opposite issue. A time of sorest trouble will light on the self-righteous Israelites in Palestine, who will persecute the faithful remnant, and then be crushed by Gentile armies in their turn. But its issue will be a national repentance, deep, solemn, earnest, and sincere; and a birth of the whole nation, who survive the judgment, into newness of spiritual life, and a fulness of dignity, blessing, and honour, unknown before.

## CHAP. LXVI.

## THE LAST CONFLICT AND DELIVERANCE.

THUS saith the LORD, The heavens *are* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* this house that ye build unto me? and where *is* this place of my rest? 2 Yea, all these *things* my hand hath made, and all these *things* have begun to be, saith the LORD: but to this will I look, *even to him that is* poor, and contrite in spirit, and trembleth at my word. 3 He that killeth an ox slayeth a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb breaketh a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation *offereth* swine's blood; he that burneth incense blesseth an idol: yea,

1. The same weighty preface is used once more, as in lxxv. 8, 13, and still earlier xliii. 14, 16; xlv. 6, 24; xlv. 1, 11, 14; xlviii. 17; xlix. 7, 8, 22; l. 1; lvi. 1, to introduce this crown and topstone of the whole series of visions. The prophecy began, i. 10—15, by denouncing the sin of formal worship, with especial reference to the time of Ahaz. And here a similar warning and reproof is repeated at the very close. Through twenty-six intervening centuries this has been one grand snare and temptation of the Jewish people.

"The heavens, &c." There is an allusion to Solomon's prayer at the consecration of the temple. Four times in succession heaven is there called the dwelling-place of God. Here, however, not the ark of the covenant, as in 1 Chr. xxviii. 2, but the whole earth, is called God's footstool. There is an advance from the special and ceremonial to the wider and larger view of the Divine presence and majesty. There is a further allusion to ch. xl. 22 at the opening of these later prophecies. The unspeakable grandeur of the Creator condemns every form of barren, mechanical, and superstitious worship.

"Where is this house that ye build unto me?" A speck, a mote, lost in the immensity of God's creation, it needs an effort of Divine condescension that it may not be wholly overlooked by that glorious Being who is the Owner of countless worlds. How unmeet, then, to

be viewed, strictly and properly, as a place wherein the Most High God can dwell and take His rest! It may be a help to weak faith to realize His gracious presence, but can be no real home or dwelling-place of that God, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, who inhabiteth eternity.

v. 2. Heaven and earth are the work of God's hand, and came into being, or began to be, through His power alone. The two clauses resemble Rev. iv. 11, "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created." The word, *this*, without addition, is emphatic. One object in creation, amidst suns and stars, and plants and animals of countless kinds and varieties, secures the complacent gaze of the great Creator. Not stones and wood, not gold and silver, the materials of any outward temple, but the living spirit of man, when moulded into true obedience to the will of God, so as to welcome in faith the gifts of His love. There seems a double allusion to lvii. 15 and lxiii. 15 before.

v. 3. Each ceremonial sacrifice is here identified with some kindred act, most impure and hateful under the Levitical law. Comp. Ex. xiii. 13. The sin of their formalism is shewn to be increased by the eager zeal with which they pursued these self-righteous and unprofitable services.

These verses, by their context, seem clearly to predict a rebuilding of their temple by restored Jews in the last days,

they have chosen their own ways, and their soul hath delighted in their abominations. 4 I also will choose their delusions, and will bring upon them their terrors: because I called, and none did answer; I spake, and they did not hearken: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose *that* wherein I delighted not.

5 HEAR the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word: Your brethren that hate you, that cast you out for my name's sake, have said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. 6 A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the LORD that rendereth recompence to his enemies. 7 Before she travailed, she hath brought forth; before her pains came on, she is delivered of a man child. 8 Who hath heard such a thing?

with a revival of animal sacrifices, and of the Pharisaism of earlier times. It has been objected to the doctrine of future Jewish restoration, that their pride would be aggravated by the means intended to work a final cure. But this revival of Jewish pride, still chastened by a time of heaviest affliction, is the key of the whole prediction. It points to a race of Jews, still strangers to Christ, restored to Palestine, and bent eagerly on restoring the temple-worship and sacrifices on the pattern of Solomon or Ezekiel, as in the days of their national greatness. This revival of blind Jewish zeal will be the preface to Israel's last and sorest hour of trouble. Jer. xxx. 7; Dan. xii. 1.

v. 4. This verse and lxxv. 3 throw light on each other, and reveal the double leaven of the Sadducee and the Pharisee at work in the last days of the Gospel, and both equally condemned, and hateful to God. Those who forsake God, and forget His holy mountain, transferring their worship to the army and the multitude, and those who seek to revive all the legal ceremonies and ritual in blind superstition, fall under a like sentence of condemnation and shame. The delusions and terrors refer to a disappointment of their hopes of prosperity, after their long dispersion has seemed ready to close, by some new stroke of sudden and surprising calamity.

v. 5. The faithful remnant, the poor and contrite, in whom God takes delight, now receive words of encourage-

ment. They are to expect persecution for a little season from their unbelieving countrymen; but a speedy judgment on the persecutors will follow, while the sufferers shall receive a marvellous deliverance. So far, the vision answers alike to the times of the Apostles, and to the predicted features, elsewhere, of the last times of the Gospel. What follows marks the contrast between the two periods. The first was followed by the long dispersion of the people, and the treading down of Jerusalem; but the last by the full redemption of Zion, when the recovery of Israel shall be life from the dead to the Gentile world.

v. 6. This verse answers closely to Zech. xii. 3—6; xiv. 3, announcing an appearance of the LORD in a time of Gentile apostasy, and of sore distress to Israel already in part restored, to accomplish the long delayed redemption of Zion. The "voice of noise" is the war-cry, used here, as in xlii. 14, for the terrible display of Divine anger. A type of it may be seen 2 Ki. vii. 6. The sudden change from threatening to promise is very impressive. Once more, as of old, "in the mount the LORD will be seen."

vv. 7, 8. Zion is here compared to a woman, whose travail is scarcely begun when her child is born. In other passages the severity of the trial is taught, here its exceeding shortness, so as scarcely to deserve the name of travail. The questions revert from the figure to the reality. The wonder is that a whole



who hath seen such things? shall a land be made to bring forth in one day? *or* shall a nation be born at once? for Zion hath travailed, and at once hath brought forth her children. 9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth, saith the LORD? I which cause to bring forth, shall I *then* shut the *womb*, saith thy God?

10 REJOICE ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: exult with joy for her, all ye that mourn for her; 11 That ye may suck, and be satisfied, with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted, from 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

land shall bring forth, and a whole nation be brought forth, in one such brief hour of suffering. The man-child here is the "righteous nation, keeping the truth," xxvi. 2, redeemed Israel, born to a new and manly faith in the true Messiah through bitterest sorrow for their own and their father's unbelief, lxii. 12; Zech. xii. 9—14. The gradual conversion of the Gentiles in the days of the Apostles (Vitr., Alex., &c.) answers in no respect to this especial figure, which points to a great change suddenly completed in a very short time. The persecution of Diocletian, and the national triumph of the Gospel that followed (Rev. xii. 5, 10), is the fullest earnest, in past history, of this still unfulfilled triumph of Divine grace and judgment.

v. 9. This is God's answer to the whispers of unbelief. The event, even to those who witness it, will be so strange, as to seem almost past belief, Ps. cxxvi. 1. But still the power, wisdom, and truth of God are engaged for its fulfilment. The whole history of the Jewish people, through long ages, has been like a slow and tedious gestation for this joyful birth at the last. "Shall I preserve through long ages to this crisis of trouble, and then not pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication, to stir the heart of repentant Israel with godly sorrow? I, which cause to bring forth, divinely announced as 'exalted to give repentance to Israel,' shall I then refuse to my sorely chastened and contrite people the

great deliverance promised long ages before?" Deut. xxx. 1—9.

The future here used (*yomar Yehovah*), and peculiar to Isaiah, links this parting promise with the first threatening, ch. i. 11, and also with the key-note of these Later Visions, ch. xl. 1. The figure itself alludes to the sad complaint of Israel, ch. xxvi. 18, and to the contrasted promise, ch. xlix. 18—21, where Zion is described as rejoicing suddenly in the multitude of her children.

vv. 10—12. The opening promises, ch. i. 27, ii. 1—5, are now at length to be fulfilled, and also the later words of the Apostle, Rom. xi. 15. Zion, while she receives honour from the Gentiles and their kings, ch. lx. 16, shall bestow in spiritual blessings more than she receives. Comp. ch. xxxiii. 21, ii. 2. All nations are now to flow to Zion. The last clause renews the promise of ch. lx. 4, "Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side."

v. 13. The threefold charge, ch. xl. 1, "Comfort ye my people," implies a prediction, now to be largely fulfilled. A man is named, not an infant. The previous figure is completed here by a loving mother's welcome to a returning prodigal, or her tender sympathy with a son worn and fretted by the busy cares of life; tenderness, complacency, honour, all being mingled together. But the title of mother is never directly applied in Scripture to a Divine Person. The LORD, the Holy

upon *her* side, and be dandled upon *her* knees. 13 As a man whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. 14 And when ye see *this*, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like the green herb; and the hand of the LORD shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation, *even* against his enemies.

15 For behold! the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. 16 For by fire will the LORD plead, and by his sword, with all flesh; and the slain of the LORD shall be many. 17 They that sanctify and purify themselves for the gardens, after one in the midst, they that eat swine's flesh and the abomination and the mouse, shall be consumed together,

One, has all the tenderness, but none of the impulsive weakness, of a mother's love.

v. 14. Every main stage in God's work of mercy involves a passage through sharp and sore trial to abiding joy. Comp. Joh. xvi. 22. This is true alike of the gathering of the early Church, at the casting away of Israel after crucifying their own Messiah, and of the main subject of this chapter, their receiving back into God's covenant in the last days.

"And his indignation, &c." Nearly all the moderns, after Aben Ezra, translate "and he will be wroth against his enemies." The points are those of the verb, or of the noun only before a pause. But the version as a noun (A. V., Luth., &c.) seems plainly more emphatic. The noun occurs in this form ch. xxvi. 20. The parallelism favours the received version, and a pause, which removes the grammatical objection, adds further to the emphasis: "And the hand of the Lord shall be known, towards his servants, and his indignation—but the indignation against his enemies alone." Both alike shall now be revealed and made known.

vv. 15, 16. It was said before of the Assyrians, ch. v. 28, that "their wheels shall be like a whirlwind." The same figure is here transferred to a Higher Power, the Redeemer of Israel. Comp. 2 Thess. i. 8, Ps. lxxviii. 17. "To render his anger with fury." The phrase used, ch. xlii. 25, for God's judgments on

Israel, is here applied to the work of judgment on their Gentile oppressors. The following clauses may be compared with ch. xvii. 13; Rev. xix. 20, 21; Dan. vi. 11; Is. xi. 4. The double controversy, with Israel's ungodliness in the Earlier, and with Gentile idolatry in the Later Prophecies, chh. i., xli., is here combined in one common, final judgment both on Jewish and Gentile unbelief. "And the slain of the LORD shall be many." Comp. ch. xxxiv., lxiii. 1—6; Ezek. xxxix., xix. 17—21.

v. 17. This verse has been much debated as to its exact reference. Some refer it to Adad or Achad, to Achath, or Hecate, as a proper name of some heathen god or goddess. Others supply "one tree, grove, pool, priest, or idol." Others, varying the text slightly, would translate "one after another," or "far back" (Ewald), or "crowd after crowd" (Peshit., Targ.). The applications are as various, to the days of Manasseh, to the Exile, to the Jews in the days of Titus, and again by Jewish writers to Mohammedans and Christians of later times.

A comparison with lxxv. 3 seems to shew that the historical groundwork of the rebuke is taken from actual forms of idolatry under Manasseh. But the context implies that these represent certain marked features of ungodliness in the last days. Also the words favour the construction that two classes, of which one is marked by falsely pretended sanctity, the other by open impurities, are denounced

saith the LORD. 18 Yea, I *know* their works and their devices: *the time* is come to gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory. 19 And I will set a sign among them, and 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 the report of me, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. 20 And they shall bring all your brethren *for* a meat-offering unto the LORD, out of all nations, upon

for a common destruction.

Constant ablutions, and ceremonial purifications, are one striking feature in the creed and worship of Islam. The words "for the gardens," compared with i. 29, will refer directly to idol feasts in the days of Manasseh, held in groves or pleasant gardens. But, in the wider and later application, no words could more fitly describe the zealous, ceremonial worship of Islam, of which the aim is to gain the worshipper admittance to a sensual Paradise. To go *after* strange gods, is the usual phrase for any false worship. "The word, *Achad*, One, is that which Mohammedans have constantly on their lips, to express the object of their worship. The 112th Surah of the Koran teaches: 'Say, God is Achad (One), the Eternal God; He begetteth not, nor is begotten, and he is without an equal.' This Surah is entitled the chapter of salvation, and repeating it is reckoned equal in value to one-third part of the Koran" (Hend.). There is no need, however, to alter the pointing of the next word (Hend.), and render "among those that eat, &c.," which denotes rather a distinct class, to be sharers in the same judgment.

"One in the midst," an object of worship, not the God and Father of our Lord, nor the Only Begotten Son of God; a Being to whom Fatherhood and Sonship are wholly denied, but whose metaphysical Oneness is extolled, dwelling in gardens of sensual delight to which He admits His worshippers, is the false centre of worship to nearly one-fourth of the world's population, and those, from their pride, the least accessible to the Gospel of Christ. The other clause will describe, with equal exactness, those heathens, or apostate Christians, who cast

off all restraints of religious law, and give the reins to depraved and sensual appetite. "The abomination," between the swine and the mouse, may signify those unclean fowls, which come in the law between unclean beasts and creeping things, to which class the weasel and mouse are referred.

These three forms of pollution will thus correspond, by a close analogy, with the three features in St Paul's description of ungodly men: "Whose god is their belly (sensuality); whose glory is in their shame (selfish, ambitious pride, like the unclean birds of prey); and who mind earthly things" (low, sordid worldliness, like the creeping things).

v. 18. The construction is elliptical and rather obscure. A double supplement, "I know and will destroy," seems required by the clause itself, and the words just before. So Ezek. xi. 5, "I know the thoughts that come into your mind, every one of them," and Zeph. iii. 8. The *Vau* is intensive, not a term of inference, "yea" not "for," and the pronoun emphatic, Messiah's answer to the scoffers of the last days—when they say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" They shall see His glory in judgment on the profane, and long-delayed mercy to Zion.

vv. 19, 20. Many refer the escaped to Jews (Vitr., Rosenm., Gesen., Jenour, Stier, Hahn), but others, more justly, to the Gentiles (Ewald, Hitz., Umbr., Knob., Hend.). The first thinks, very strangely, that no one with a clear conscience can dissent from his view, which contrasts Gentiles to be gathered with the objects of the judgment. Henderson, more truly, calls the application of the pronouns here to Jews, "a violent supposition."

horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD; as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD. 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, all flesh shall come

The sequence is clear, if many had not striven, against the context, to apply it to past events, which bear a striking resemblance to this prophecy, but with contrasts no less striking. The judgment is on "all flesh," which includes the Jews, but must refer mainly to the Gentiles. Two classes of sinners are specified, the self-righteous and the profane. The LORD declares His knowledge of their thoughts, and His decree to gather them for judgment. So Zeph. iii. 8; Ezek. xxxviii. 23, xxxix. 13. "I will set a sign among them" refers plainly to this gathering of the nations. "The escaped ones," who are to be sent, must be some who have escaped the threatened fire and sword of the LORD, who are afterwards to bring the still dispersed of Judah to Jerusalem, "as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel to the house of the Lord."

v. 19. Tarshish, Tartessus in Spain, will here denote the lands of the West. Pul, hardly Phylæ in Egypt (Boch., Vittr.), or Apulia (Hahn), is either to be corrected *Phut*, for North Africa, or else taken for Eastern Assyria, being the name of the first Assyrian king mentioned in the sacred history. Lud, or the Ludim, Gen. x., will be Ethiopia, or the farthest South; Tubal = Tobolsk, northern Asia or Siberia. Javan will denote Greece and South-Western Europe; and the isles afar off, the maritime lands of the farthest east and west.

v. 20. Awe-struck by the mighty hand of God, the Gentiles who receive tidings of the judgment in Palestine, like that which lighted on the Assyrian army in Isaiah's own days, will bring back the dispersed Jews to their brethren, the Jews in the holy land who survive the affliction. In every part there is a re-

semblance and a gradation, the Gentiles, and the children of Israel; dispersed Israelites, and a clean meat-offering; Jerusalem, and the holy altar and temple of God. The Gentiles, by this act of submission, are consecrated themselves, and enter anew within a covenant of blessing.

The word, *kirkaroth*, "swift beasts," A. V., by others, "dromedaries," may be from the same root as *curro*, *currus*, *circulo*, and denote thus "rolling carriages." One striking characteristic of modern times consists in the rapidity of distant journeys, and the new inventions by which men "run to and fro" through the earth.

vv. 21, 22. That Jews are here meant (Kimchi, Aben Ezra, Grot., Hitz., Knob., Hend.), and not Gentiles (Vittr., Gesen., Ewald, Umbr., Alex., Stier, Hahn), results directly from the next verse. A choice of Gentiles for priests and Levites, would be no proof that the seed and name of Israel would remain. See Jer. xxxiii. 19—21; Ezek. xlv. 9—15.

The difficulties raised against this natural construction of the words are an argument in its favour. Doubtless the economy predicted must differ nearly as much from the present as the present does from the past. The former change was hardly credible even to the faithful among the Jews. It is not surprising that the later, beforehand, should perplex even believing Gentiles. Hence the solemn confirmation of the promise in the 22nd verse.

vv. 23, 24. The whole prophecy closes with a solemn contrast between the blessings to the righteous, and the shame and misery of the rebellious and profane. Earth, redeemed from the curse, will become the scene of holy and perpetual worship.

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: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

The mention of "all flesh" in both clauses is emphatic. When the Lord God has pleaded with all flesh in judgment on open and flagrant iniquity, v. 16, the result will be, that "all flesh" shall come and worship before Him. The destruction of the sinners, that solemn contrast in a scene where righteousness and peace are to prevail, shall only deepen in upon "all flesh" the impression of God's holiness and majesty. In some mysterious way the sentence on the profane shall be visible to the Jews and Gentiles who have been spared, the blissful and holy inhabitants of "the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

The words of this last verse are borrowed by our Lord to announce the irreversible doom of the unfaithful. It does not follow that they directly refer to the judgment of the ungodly in the life to come, but rather that a solemn outward judgment on a confederate host, like that of Sennacherib, in Palestine, issuing in a terrible and visible destruction, is taken to represent another truth still more solemn. Most of the predictions in these closing

chapters of Isaiah are resumed in the Apocalypse, and pass there into a still higher and nobler stage. Israel is to be restored, the earth is to be redeemed, and earthly blessings, most rich and various, are to be enjoyed, in the promised restitution of all things. But these earthly blessings of Israel, when the wilderness of Zion becomes as Eden, and her desert as the garden of the Lord, though glorious in the extreme, point onward and upward to the higher glories of the New Jerusalem, where the children of the resurrection, made equal to the angels, will abide for ever.

The key-note of these Later Visions is comfort to the mourners, but their last words return into the severe majesty of the Old Covenant. The warnings of New Testament prophecy are no less solemn, but it closes with accents of overflowing grace. "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen! even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen."

## APPENDIX I.

### ON THE GENUINENESS OF THE LATER PROPHECIES.

THE Prophecies of Isaiah chh. xl.—xlvi., which follow the Historical Episode, have been received as genuine, and one main part of Isaiah's writings, by the common faith of Jews and Christians for more than two thousand years. During the last century, however, a school of critics arose in Germany, who ascribe them to one or more unknown writers near the close of the captivity. So Koppe, Eichhorn, Döderlein, Justi, Paulus, Bauer, Bertholdt, De Wette, Gramberg, Vatke, Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Hitzig, Maurer, Knobel, Ewald, Hendewerk, and Umbreit, and others. In some circles the modern theory has even been turned into an axiom, and a test of critical learning.

Their authenticity, however, has been upheld in Germany by many able writers; as Hensler, Piper, Beckhaus, Jahn, Dereser, Greve; Möller, Kleinert, Schleier, Hengstenberg, Hävernich, and Keil. More recently Stier has vindicated and expounded these chapters in his *Esaias, nicht Pseudo-Esaias*, a learned work of a thousand pages. Drechsler, also, in his commentary on the earlier visions, Hahn and Delitzsch in their continuation, and the last in his own complete and able commentary, share the same view, and maintain strongly the organic unity of the whole work. In our own country Dr Davidson's Introduction contains a zealous defence of the negative theory, and Dean Stanley, in his Lectures on Jewish history, lends his name to the same view; while the commentaries of Dr Henderson and Alexander, with Hengstenberg's article in Kitto's *Bible Dictionary*, give some of the chief arguments to confirm the usual faith of the Church of Christ. Without entering further on the history of this important controversy, I shall proceed to sum up the arguments under four heads, the External Evidence, the Negative Internal Evidence, the Positive Internal Evidence, and the Alleged Objections to the Authenticity.

#### I. EXTERNAL EVIDENCE.

All the external evidence, which is various, weighty, and decisive, proves that these chapters are the writings of Isaiah, and no other. The following are some of the chief testimonies, given in order of time.

1. Cyrus himself is the first witness, in his well-known decree in Chronicles and Ezra.

"Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people?"

his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD, the God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem." Ezra i. 2, 3. Compare Is. xlv. 28: "That saith of Cyrus, He is my Shepherd, and shall do all my pleasure: even saying of Jerusalem, She shall be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid."

Here the decree alludes to the prophecy, and the prophecy accounts for the language of the decree. Each alone is an enigma, to which the other supplies a key. Why the prediction should be so plain, even mentioning the name of this great conqueror, is shown by the historical result thus secured. Why a heathen monarch should own so fully and strongly the hand of the God of Israel in his own victories, and even say that he had received a charge, from God himself, to build the temple in Jerusalem, is explained by the earlier existence of this prophecy. And this conclusion, plain in itself, is confirmed by the direct evidence of Josephus, who professes in these words to give an undisputed tradition of the Jews.

"Now Cyrus learned this by reading the book Isaiah had left of his own prophecies, 210 years before... These things Isaiah foretold 140 years before the temple was destroyed. When Cyrus, therefore, had read them, and had admired their divine character, an impulse and emulation seized him to do what was written. Calling together the chief of the Jews in Babylon, he said they were at liberty to go to their own country, and restore the city of Jerusalem, and the temple of God," &c. *Ant.* XI. 1. 1, 2.

The genuineness, then, of these prophecies, so that Cyrus himself was satisfied of their earlier existence and Divine character, is inwrought into the very texture of the whole Jewish history, and is the secret mainspring of that great event, the Return from Babylon.

2. Jesus the son of Sirach, the writer of Ecclesiasticus, about B.C. 270, is a second witness. His words prove how early and deep seated was the conviction that these chapters are Isaiah's own writing. He calls him "great and faithful in his vision;" and then adds this brief description:

"In his time the sun went back, and he lengthened the days of the king. He saw by an excellent spirit what should come to pass at the last, and he comforted the mourners in Zion. He shewed what should come to pass for ever, and hidden things before they came."

There is here a distinct reference to ch. xxxviii. 5, 8, 22, xlii. 9, lxvi. xl. 1, 2, xlix. 13, li. 3, lxi. 2, 3, lxvi. 13, xli. 23, xlviii. 6. All these texts, to which allusion is made, to fix the main characters of Isaiah as a prophet, are found in the Later Prophecies. These chapters, then, were not only ascribed to Isaiah without any shadow of doubt, three centuries before Christ, but were those by which he was chiefly known, and because of which, even more than the rest, he was styled "great and faithful in his vision."

3. The Baptist, our Lord's forerunner, is a third witness, later in time, but still higher in authority. None surpassed him in real dignity among the prophets, and he was filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb. Of him our Lord says to the Jews, "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness to the truth." To what truth did he thus bear witness, and in what words? The truth, so styled emphatically by our Lord, is contained in his public reply, as

a prophet, to the inquiries of the Pharisees, Why baptizest thou? What sayest thou of thyself? "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, AS SAID THE PROPHET ESAIAS."

The Baptist thus bore witness to a double truth; that he was truly fulfilling an office assigned to him in God's message by Isaiah, xl. 3; and that the office thus Divinely given him was to go before the face of the Lord, the good Shepherd of Israel, who was now at hand. If these words were not Isaiah's, and do not really refer to the Baptist, then he must have borne witness to a double falsehood in those very words, in which our Lord solemnly declares that "he bare witness to the truth." In this case he offered false credentials to the Pharisees, and must have been either a blind fanatic, or a wilful deceiver. Our blessed Lord would also then be a sharer in his guilt, and have put light for darkness, and darkness for light, in the testimony he has given.

4. St Luke, in his Gospel, thus records the opening of our Lord's ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth.

"And there was given him the book of the prophet Esaias, and he found the place where it is written: The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me," &c. Is. lxi. 1—3. "And he closed the book and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears."

Here the Evangelist himself plainly affirms that ch. lxi. is part of the work of Isaiah. But our blessed Lord evidently, by His conduct, affirms the same. The whole roll was given to him as "the book of Isaiah the prophet." As such He receives it. He then turns to a part, according to modern sceptics wholly spurious, and chooses its words as a sacred and solemn witness to His Divine mission. He claims to be received and honoured as God's messenger, nay, as the long-expected Messiah, because His work was fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy. If the words were not those of Isaiah, but of some unknown party in the days of Cyrus, whose horizon was bounded by his own days, and could not possibly reach forward through five centuries to come, what conclusion must follow? Plainly, that the Lord of glory was a public deceiver of the people, as the Pharisees affirmed Him to be; that He opened His public ministry by an act of deceit, or at least by confirming a great delusion by which He too was deceived; and that He publicly appealed to a false interpretation of a spurious writing, as one first and chief ground why He should be received and welcomed, by the men of Nazareth and the whole nation, as the Great Physician of souls, the true Messiah of God.

5. Our Lord, in the course of His ministry, often charged those whom He healed not to make him known. Whence arose this strange prohibition? St Matthew assures us that it was to fulfil an inspired prophecy: "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, Behold, my servant whom I uphold, &c." Is. xlii. 1—5. Did, then, our blessed Lord mould and regulate His own ministry, in its most vital element, by a spurious prophecy, that refers to a different subject, in order to procure a seeming fulfilment, which was a mere illusion? Did the Holy One of God thus join himself to those seducers, who "wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived"? Such is the plain and inevitable consequence, if the sceptical



hypothesis about these chapters were true. Every Christian is bound to reject a supposition so blasphemous with loathing and indignation.

6. St John thus describes our Lord's rejection by the Jewish Rulers.

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report?... Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, &c., &c. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him." Joh. xii. 37-41.

The beloved disciple, the great Prophet of the New Testament, here testifies that the Early and the Later Prophecies of this book belong equally to Isaiah. In one of the two passages cited he received his first commission, and in the other he reached its crowning honour. In one he saw the glory of Christ, and in the other he spake of His sufferings with clearest voice. But the testimony of the Apostle goes further, since he assures us that the central fact of our Lord's ministry was a direct fulfilment of Isaiah's warning message.

7. Our Lord's own testimony, at the very close of His ministry, is, if possible, even still more striking: "For I say unto you, that this which is written must yet be fulfilled in me, And he was numbered among the transgressors; for the things concerning me have an end." The exact force of the words is rather, "For even the things which concern ME have their fulfilment."

The gloss, "that the subject is not himself, but another of whom He was the antitype," is an open contradiction of the text. For the reason our Lord assigns why these words needed to be fulfilled in Him is this, that they were part of τὰ περὶ ἐμοῦ, the things of which He was the proper subject. The whole force of His declaration turns on this point, that the words refer to Him alone. On this ground, they must come to pass, or the Scripture would be broken, however strange the exposure of the Son of God to such extreme indignity and utter shame. Let us accept the theory of negative critics, and His words assume this strange meaning, that the Lord of heaven and earth must endure a humiliation almost incredible, rather than a spurious prophecy should fail of a fulfilment, which after all entirely perverts its true meaning! Surely the rashness of immoral paradox can hardly be carried to a worse extreme.

8. The Gospel of Christ was to have its first entrance to a distant nation through the Ethiopian eunuch; and Philip the evangelist, for this great end, receives a miraculous commission. "The angel of the Lord spake unto him, Arise, and go toward the south, &c." He finds the eunuch reading "Esaias the Prophet." "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some one should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the Scripture which he read was this, 'He was led as a sheep to the slaughter,' &c., &c. (Is. liii. 7, 8.) And the eunuch answered and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then

Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."

If these verses, which the eunuch was reading, are not Isaiah's, and do not really predict the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, but are a doubtful guess at the sufferings of Israel or of the prophets by a nameless writer in the days of Cyrus, or the history of "some other man," what conclusion will follow? The eunuch would have been deceived, and taught a double falsehood, by a conspiracy of no less than three parties, the evangelist Philip, an angel of the Lord, and the Holy Spirit of God! This grand religious fraud would then have been the first step in the conversion of Ethiopia to the Christian faith. Thus the modern theory compels its disciples to renounce the Book of Acts as a spurious history, if they would avoid the sin of open blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

9. St Paul, in his Epistle to Rome, the Gentile metropolis, has for one main object to prove the Divine call of the Gentiles, that doctrinal and historical foundation of the Church of Christ. He uses for this end five main Scriptural arguments. The first is taken from these Later Prophecies, without naming their author, Rom. x. 15. The next is from these same prophecies, ascribing them expressly to Isaiah, x. 16. His third proof is that the Jews had a prediction of this fact in the Law of Moses itself, x. 19. His fourth is that Isaiah had announced it still more plainly; and his fifth and last, that Isaiah, once more, had placed it side by side with a warning of Jewish unbelief, Rom. x. 20, 21; Is. lxxv. 1, 2.

Thus, in this main argument of the Apostle of the Gentiles, to confirm a great doctrine of Christianity, the chief warrant for his own manifold labours, three proofs out of five directly involve the genuineness of these Later Prophecies, as Isaiah's own, while a fourth rests on their character as inspired messages of God. The theory, which ascribes them to some unknown hand in the days of Cyrus, turns his whole reasoning into a heap of mischievous errors, a tissue of deceptive and worthless fallacies. And thus, before the spuriousness of these chapters can be received, the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles, St Matthew, St Luke, St John, Philip the Evangelist, St Paul, the angel of the Lord; nay, worse still, the Son of God himself, and the Holy Spirit, must be condemned together. All of them, on this hypothesis, must have practically conspired, either in hateful frauds, or ignorant and blundering falsehoods on the largest scale.

The question is thus settled, by an authority from which there is no lawful appeal, for every Christian who does not affect to be wiser than our Lord and His Apostles on a vital question of religious faith. But on account of the confidence with which the unbelieving theory has been proposed, it seems right to carry the inquiry still further, and shew how the internal evidence conspires with these testimonies, human and Divine, to establish the Isaian authorship of these Later visions.

## II. NEGATIVE INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

The modern hypothesis, that Is. xl.—lxvi. was written by some nameless writer or writers near the close of the seventy years' Exile, is disproved by

the internal evidence, both negative and positive ; by the entire absence of the features which such an origin requires, and by the presence of many which prove a common authorship with the Earlier Visions. This is no esoteric inquiry. It does not depend on the guesses of a few clever Hebraists of the last century or the present, who contradict each other in nearly every detail, on the tone and Hebrew style. It is an inductive inquiry, depending on plain, definite laws of historic evidence, that lie within the reach of the plain English reader. Have these chapters, they may ask, the proper marks of a distinct work, either of prophecy or history, near the close of the Captivity? And the true answer is, Not one.

1. First, the Prophet is wanting, and cannot be found. Jeremiah and Ezekiel lived almost to the first years of Cyrus in Persia. Daniel survived throughout his conquests, and Zechariah and Haggai began to prophesy within fifteen years after the Return. Their works exist entire, and are wholly unlike Isaiah's Later Prophecies. These, indeed, are brightest and noblest among the prophetic messages of the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit has placed His seal on their peculiar excellence and dignity ; for, in the New Testament, these twenty-seven chapters are quoted more frequently than all the succeeding books together from Jeremiah to Malachi.

To whom, then, on the new hypothesis, shall we ascribe them? One critic only, Baron Bunsen in his *Bibelwerke*, has been bold enough to answer—to Baruch ! To Baruch, of whom two things only are on record. First, that he was asked how he copied Jeremiah's words, and said : "He pronounced all these words with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book." And next, that he was charged not to seek great things for himself in the troubles of the Captivity ; a charge strangely reversed and disobeyed, if he became then, by his writings, the greatest of all the prophets, or in modern phrase, "the Great Unknown!"

Dismissing this wild freak of fancy, we are thrown on the other alternative. This Deutero-Isaiah must be also a Deutero-Melchizedec, "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life." Still of Melchizedec, though the account is made brief for a special purpose, the name and the home, the royal and priestly rank, and his public interview with Abraham, are all on record. But this author of the noblest and most sublime of all the prophecies is to be a shadow and nothing more, his name, birth, residence, commission, reception, and death, all totally concealed from our eyes. One critic places him in Palestine, another in Egypt, and a third in Babylon.

One guess alone has been offered by one of the latest English opponents of their genuineness, to explain this total disappearance of the author. "The Great Unknown," it is said, "seems to have been more a writer than an actor. Had he been a man of less genius and divine inspiration, we should probably have known his name and history as fully as those of any prophet of the exile. But his peculiar inspiration isolated him from his own countrymen, and led him into a region where the multitude lost sight of the sublime prophet."

It seems, then, that poets of great genius, like Dante, Milton, and Shakspeare, are likely to have their name and age forgotten, while second-

rate authors are remembered with care; that prophets of threatening would be studied and cherished, while one whose words breathe mainly hope and comfort would naturally be left to drop into oblivion; and that a prediction of Cyrus, so plain as to be a stumblingblock to modern infidels, was too abstract, ideal, and sublime, too remote from their own present interests, for the exiles in Babylon at the close of the Captivity to care about its author!

But besides these outrageous paradoxes, the explanation offered is consistent in an atheist alone. Once believe in a Providence, and what does it assume? That the more weighty and important a Divine message may be, the more likely it is that it will be sent into the world, like a mere foundling, without any test or pledge of its claim to be received as a message from God. With minds accustomed to the laws of moral evidence, this one objection alone should be fatal to the theory. No known prophet of the exile could be the author. But the Only Wise, the Lord God of the holy prophets, would never permit the writer of these glorious visions to have lived and died without a trace or a name.

2. The Title and Name are also wanting. The Old Testament contains sixteen books of prophecy from as many different authors. But in every case, without exception, the name of the prophet meets us at the opening of his work. Had these chapters proceeded, then, from some prophet near the close of the Exile, his name, without doubt, would have stood at their opening. This results, not only from these sixteen precedents, but even from the laws of common sense. No king would commit a royal message, claiming the obedience of his subjects, to nameless hands, or to parties left without any proof or sign of their royal commission. How much less could these noblest prophecies form a solitary exception to this universal rule! The Only Wise God would never suffer one of His choicest gifts to be flung into the world in the dark, and then to pass current under false pretences for 2,500 years.

3. The Date and Place are wanting, as well as the Prophet himself, and his Name.

All the four leading Prophets, and seven of the other twelve, have dates given, besides their name, to fix their historical standpoint. Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, in whom alone this is wanting, are assigned to persons historically defined; and besides, their writings are together less than one half the length of these Later Prophecies. In books of greater length this second anchorhold is constantly given, to fix their place in the series of Divine messages. The reason is plain. The date has much to do with the right construction of their visions, and is needful to decide where history ends, and prophecy begins. The disputes of modern critics prove that such marks of date are nowhere more desirable than in these very chapters, to remove obscurity and ambiguity, and to help us in understanding their true force and meaning. And yet on the sceptical hypothesis, this will be the solitary instance of a long prophecy, where the place and date, as well as name, are withheld.

4. The Prophetic Call and Commission is wanting.

This marks all the other leading books of prophecy. It occupies the sixth chapter of Isaiah, the first of Jeremiah, the first and second both of Ezekiel and Daniel, the first of Hosea, several verses of Amos, one half of

Jonah, and is present both in Haggai and Zechariah. Had these chapters been from a prophet at the close of the Exile, they would doubtless have contained some account, however brief, of his public commission. This would have been essential to their reception, by the whole Jewish Church, as of Divine authority.

5. Contemporary Persons and Names are also wanting.

These form one striking feature of all the more important books of prophecy, whereby their intimate connexion with the actual course of God's Providence and of the sacred history is maintained. Seventeen persons are thus named in Isaiah, fifty in Jeremiah, eight or ten in Ezekiel, besides definite groups, like the elders and the sun-worshippers; about the same number in Daniel, and thirty in the books of the Minor Prophets. But in these Later Prophecies, written, by the hypothesis, in stirring times, and at a most critical season of Israel's history, not a single personal or historical name, except that of Cyrus only, can be found. There is no mention of Jeconiah, Shealtiel, or Zerubbabel; of Josedech or Joshua; of Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-Merodach, Neriglassar, or Belshazzar; of Ezekiel or Daniel, of Nehemiah, Seraiah or Mordecai, or the other companions of Zerubbabel; of Amasis or Cræsus, or Darius the Mede. Viewed as prediction, the solitary mention of Cyrus gives reality and vividness to a picture of bright and distant hope, which would else combine a misty vagueness with its rainbow-like brilliancy of colouring. But, when deposed from its rank by sceptical critics, and turned into mere history, the total absence of places and names reduces these chapters to the plight of the stricken sorcerer. A mist of darkness comes over them, and they seem to grope about for some one to lead them by the hand.

6. The Prophetic Structure, also, is wholly absent.

The Early Prophecies of Isaiah, and every other book from Jeremiah to Malachi, have one common feature. They begin with history or prophetic warning, and then pass on to the utterance of bright hopes and gracious promises. There is one slight exception, because Haggai and Zechariah prophesied together, and Haggai's earlier voice, mainly of rebuke and warning, was continued at once, by his brother prophet, in words of comfort and promise. In every other case this order is observed, and thus forms a kind of law in every complete prophetic message. The warnings of the law constantly prepare the way for the hopes of the Gospel.

This rule is fully observed on the usual view of these Chapters, that they are later portions of Isaiah's own work. But the moment they are referred to a different and unknown author, it is contradicted and reversed. This message, unlike the voice of every known prophet, would then hurry at once, without a word of caution or rebuke, into utterances of fullest and brightest promise.

7. The strong assertions of Divine foreknowledge in reference to the victories of Cyrus are a further disproof of the later date. This appeal is made strongly and repeatedly, Is. xli. 23, 25, 26, xlii. 9, xliii. 9, xliv. 25, 26, xlv. 3, 4, xlvi. 10, 11. The transfer of these predictions to the days of Cyrus himself robs them of all their force, and contradicts their plain meaning. It degrades a series of striking prophecies into profane falsehoods, the work of

some reckless and unscrupulous forger, who habitually takes the holy name of God in vain, to disguise his forgeries. Instead of proving the Divine wisdom and foreknowledge, they could in this case prove nothing but the shameless effrontery of him who ventured to compose them.

Thus every feature of name, title, structure, and internal contents, which would naturally belong to a prophetic writing near the close of the Exile, so far as these can be inferred by strict induction from existing prophecies, is wholly wanting in these Later Visions of Isaiah.

### III. POSITIVE INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

That Isaiah himself is the true author of these last chapters of the book which bears his name, according to the constant faith both of the Jewish nation and the Christian Church, may be directly proved by a large variety of internal evidence.

1. The Structure of the Book confirms its real unity. It consists of two parts, separated by four historical chapters. Each of these parts is a trilogy, or falls naturally into three divisions. We have one close at ch. xii.; a second, after the Burdens and their Sequel, in ch. xxvii.; and a third in ch. xxxv., completing the Earlier Prophecies. The Later are also composed of three portions, the first closing at ch. xlvi., and the second at ch. lx. The whole book thus falls naturally, and without effort, into a sevenfold division. And the intimate relation of these two parts to the life of Isaiah shews their common authorship. From the last of Uzziah to the fourteenth of Hezekiah he prophesied in troublous times, when there brooded over the land a dark cloud of Assyrian conquest and desolation. But when the crisis came, Isaiah had reached the height of influence and honour. Events had fully proved the truth of his earlier warnings. The scourge was then removed, and in answer to his own and Hezekiah's prayers, days of peace and truth, for a little season, were given to the land. The Earlier Prophecies, in which burdens and warnings chiefly abound, answer to the first period; and the Later, in which bright hopes and joyful promises abound, answer to the second. Each part corresponds to the life and circumstances of the prophet in the answering period. The first was chequered with many changes in times of fear and sorrow; but the other was spent chiefly in those years of brief sunshine, in which God's promise gave an assurance of days of peace and truth.

The Earlier Prophecies, as was natural from this contrast in the history, are interspersed with many historical details and marks of separation. But these Later Visions, in a period of the prophet's life marked by few external changes, flow on in one unbroken stream of hope and comfort, chequered only by a few chapters of renewed warning, from their opening to their close.

2. The two portions of the book have also a close and intimate relation to the history which is interposed between them. The main subject of the first part is the progress and triumphs of the Assyrian power, which was to reach even to the neck, and cover the whole land; but then to dash itself vainly against the rock of God's covenant, and the bulwarks of Zion. These

warnings begin ch. v., and reach their climax in ch. xxxiii., when the last invasion seems to have been actually begun. The history, chh. xxxvi. xxxvii., first recounts this very crisis, and Sennacherib's overthrow. Next, in the narrative, ch. xxxviii., of Hezekiah's sickness and recovery, and the reversed decline of the shadow in the dial of Ahaz, it marks the transition to a gracious though short reprieve in the decline of the kingdom. This Episode of history closes, in ch. xxxix., with a clear announcement of the coming Captivity of Babylon. The Earlier Prophecies all converge on the first of these three events, and the Later ones all diverge from the last. They assume the fulfilment of this predicted captivity, and open out the fulness of those hopes of Israel which lay beyond it. The middle event, which parts the reign of Hezekiah into a morning of cloud and tempest, and an eventide of peace and truth, is also represented by the plain contrast of warning and promise in the two main portions of the book which precede and follow.

3. These two portions correspond also with the position and character of Isaiah, the chief of the prophets, and with the moral object of the prophetic word, as the Divine bridge between the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ.

In the usual chronology, the year of Hezekiah's recovery is just midway between the Song and Death of Moses, the last year of Israel in the wilderness, and the preaching of the Baptist, the first dawn of the Gospel. Now the Earlier Prophecies answer to the warnings of the Law, to which they allude in their first sentence, Is. i. 2; Deut. xxxii. 1; while it is from the Later that Isaiah has received his title of the Evangelical Prophet, because they contain such clear and full anticipations of the Gospel. And this relation is still more complete. For while the first portion begins with a direct reference to the warnings in the Song of Moses, which it proclaims as fulfilled, the second portion opens with a direct prophecy of the Baptist, the forerunner of our Lord. Thus the two parts link themselves, in their opening sentences, with the latest warnings of the Law, and the earliest notes of Gospel promise.

4. These Later Prophecies, also, on close examination, will be found to have their text in ch. xxxv., the close of the earlier ones, which they amplify and unfold.

(1) The first charge to the prophet and his fellows, in ch. xxxv., begins with the words: "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say unto them of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not." Now this is the very subject of the first and opening section, ch. xl., of the Later Prophecies. It begins with a message of comfort to the fearful in heart, and ends with a renewal of it under the same figure, the reversal of weak hands and failing knees: "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up on wings as eagles: they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." The ground of comfort is the same in both, and expressed nearly in the same words: "Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God: he will come and save you," xxxv. 4. "Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with might, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him," xl. 9, 10.

(2) The next promise follows, xxxv. 5: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped."

This promise is renewed and unfolded in the three next sections, ch. xli.—xlv. It meets us at the close of the second section in the double promise: "I will give thee...for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes;" and again, "I will bring the blind by a way they knew not...I will make darkness light before them," xlii. 6, 7, 16. It meets us in the beginning and middle of the third section, in a double appeal to the spiritually blind and deaf to listen and understand: "Ye deaf, hear! and ye blind, look that ye may see," xlii. 18; "Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears," xliii. 8. The whole of the fourth section, xlv. 6—xlvi. 25, is based on the same figure. The idolatries of the heathen are denounced as utter deafness and blindness, xlv. 18, 19; and Israel first, and next the heathen, are called to gaze, with recovered hearing and opened eyes, on the coming salvation of God, xlv. 6, 22.

(3) "For in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert," xxxv. 6.

This aspect of promise is joined with the last, and reaches beyond it, the order in ch. xxxv. and in chh. xl.—li. being the same. We find it repeated, first, in xli. 18—20, almost in the same words: "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." It recurs in xliii. 19, 20: "I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert." "I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen." And, once more, it marks the close of the third section, xlv. 3—5, and also of the seventh and last of the first main division, xlviii. 21. The special thought is twice repeated, xliii. 18—20, xlv. 3, 4, that the parched ground, the lair of dragons, shall become a pool, and a fertile pasture.

(4) "And a highway shall be there, and a way; and it shall be called the way of holiness," xxxv. 8.

This same idea of a Divine pathway, which God provides for His people, meets us at the close of the second section, xlii. 16: "I will bring the blind by a way they knew not: in paths they have not known will I lead them." It recurs in xliii. 19: "I will even make a way in the wilderness." But it forms one main, central thought in the first chapter of the second division, xlix. 8—13, where we have the release of the prisoners, to enter upon their journey, the nature of the pathway provided, and then the joyful issue.

(5) "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy *shall be* on their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away," xxxv. 10.

These words are the parting promise of the earlier visions, like the keynote of their sacred melody. And we find them repeated, without change, in li. 11, in the middle of the second section of the middle portion of the Later Prophecies. They are woven into the texture of this prophecy, and do not form a separate sentence, added at its close. It is thus shown, in a simple and striking manner, that these later visions are really an expansion of the brief text, full of bright and cheering hope, which formed the close of Israel's Earlier Prophecies. All the main promises in ch. xxxv. are found



ramified and expanded throughout the first twelve chapters of these later visions.

5. The third and last division of the Later is full of allusions to the Early Prophecies, which prove the organic unity of the whole work. Some of the chief, in succession, are these.

(1) "The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me, &c., &c.," lxi. 1, a prophecy of Messiah, speaking in His own person. So in xi. 2 it is written: "The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him."

(2) "To preach good tidings to the poor." So in xi. 4: "With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth."

(3) "To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God," lxi. 2. Also in lxiii. 4: "For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." There is here, apparently, a direct reference to ch. xxxiv. 8: "For it is the day of the LORD'S vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion."

(4) "The oil of joy for mourning." This sums up the earlier warning and promises, iii. 26, ix. 3, xii. 3: "Her gates shall lament and mourn, and she will sit desolate on the ground:" "They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest:" "With joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation."

(5) "The planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified." The same figure appears ch. iv. 2.

(6) "And they shall build the old wastes...the former desolations...the waste cities, &c.," lxi. 4.

So we read i. 7: "Your country is desolate, your cities burned with fire." And vi. 11: "Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the land be utterly desolate." And again, xvii. 9, xxiv. 12: "In the city is left desolation, and the gate is battered down into ruin."

(7) "And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks," v. 5. So in xiv. 2: "And the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the LORD for servants and handmaids."

(8) "For your shame ye shall have double, and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion," v. 7.

A plain contrast to the early warning, i. 29: "For they shall be ashamed of the oaks ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens ye have chosen." The similar change from the third to the first, and from the first to the third person, in the clauses of the threatening and the promise, makes the correspondence more complete.

(9) "Everlasting joy shall be unto them." So xxxv. 10, li. 11: "Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads."

(10) "I hate robbery in burnt offering." This seems an allusion to one of the earliest threatenings, i. 11—15: "The calling of assemblies I cannot endure, iniquity and solemn meeting."

(11) "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace," lxii. 1. The intercession of Messiah, announced in these words, has been foretold before, viii. 16, 17: "Seal the law among my disciples: and I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him." Compare viii. 18, Heb. ii. 13.

(12) "Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." So conversely we read, xxviii. 5 : "In that day will the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people."

(13) "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken, nor thy land any more be termed Desolate," v. 4.

The former title is applied to the land, ch. vii. 16, and to its cities, xvii. 2, 9, xxxii. 14, xxvii. 10; and the latter to the country, i. 7, vi. 11, xvii. 9; to which threatenings this promise clearly alludes.

(14) "I have set watchers over thy walls," v. 6. The same picture is found, in the Early Prophecies, of watchers for the tidings of deliverance, xxi. 6 : "Thus hath the LORD said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth."

(15) "Go through, go through the gates," v. 10. This instruction answers to the earlier promise, xxvi. 2 : "Open ye the gates, and a righteous nation, that keepeth the truth, shall enter in." The main thought is the same in both passages, and the phrase is similar.

(16) "Cast up, cast up the highway." So xxxv. 8 : "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness."

(17) "Lift up a standard for the people." So xi. 10 : "There shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people." And v. 12, in connexion with Israel's return : "He shall set up an ensign for the nations." Also xiii. 2, xviii. 3, xxxi. 9, where the same figure recurs.

(18) "Thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." So again i. 26 : "Afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, The faithful city."

(19) "Who is this that cometh from Edom? with dyed garments from Bozrah?" lxiii. 1. The same apposition of these names, in connexion with a time of solemn judgment, is found ch. xxxiv. 6 : "The LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom." Compare xxxiv. 8, lxiii. 4.

(20) "Look down from heaven, and behold from thy habitation," v. 15. So in xviii. 4 : "I will rest calmly, and look down in my dwellingplace." The Hebrew word is different; but the form of the phrase, and the conception, are the same.

(21) "Why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our hearts from thy fear?" v. 17.

There seems here a direct allusion to the charge the prophet had received in his first commission, vi. 10, denouncing the hardness of heart under which the people would lie, and to the passages, xxix. 10, xxx. 28 : "And there shall be a bridle, causing to err, in the jaws of the people."

(22) "And all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," lxiv. 6. The same figure as xxx. 22. So also the clay and the potter, and the phrase, "the work of thy hand," v. 8, have occurred, xxix. 16, 23.

(23) "That sacrifice in gardens," lxv. 3. This message of warning and rebuke, near the close of the whole book, answers to the threatening in the first chapter, v. 29 : "Ye shall be confounded for the gardens ye have

chosen." In both cases there is the same allusion to forms of Jewish idolatrous worship.

(24) "A smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burneth all the day," v. 5. The same figure to express God's anger occurs before, xxx. 27: "His lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire."

(25) "And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks," v. 10. Sharon is named by no other prophet, but twice by Isaiah in the Earlier Prophecies, once in connexion with the Assyrian curse, and once in connexion with a blessing, xxxiii. 9, xxxv. 2.

(26) "The voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying," v. 19.

In ch. xxx. 19, we have a kindred promise: "Thou shalt weep bitterly no longer: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy crying." The Hebrew word is the same, with a slight difference in the grammatical form.

(27) "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock...They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD," v. 25.

In xi. 6, 7, 9, we have exactly the same prediction: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb...and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock...they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." The correspondence here is very plain.

(28) "Before she travailed, she brought forth," lxvi. 7—9. There is here a double contrast, first to the sorrowful complaint of Israel, xxvi. 17, 18; and next, to the confession of Hezekiah in the time of the Assyrian distress, xxxvii. 3.

(29) "For behold the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind," v. 15. There is here, again, a close resemblance to the warning and promise, xxx. 27—33.

(30) "And I will set a sign among them, &c.," vv. 19, 20. This is like an expansion and repetition of three earlier promises, xviii. 3, 7, xxvii. 13, xxxi. 9.

6. There are two warnings, especially, which run through the main course of the Earlier Prophecies, and give their colouring to the whole, forsaking and desolation. Thus we read in the prophet's commission, vi. 12, that there would be "a great forsaking (עֲזוּבָה) in the midst of the land;" and in vii. 16, and the message to Ahaz, that "the land shall be forsaken (תִּעָזֵב) before whose two kings thou art afraid." In xvii. 2, "the cities of Aroer are forsaken (עֲזוּבוֹת)." Again xvii. 9, "In that day shall his strong cities be as forsaken ruins (בְּעֲזוּבוֹת), which they forsook (עֲזָבוּ) because of the children of Israel." In xxvii. 10, "the habitation shall be forsaken, and left (נֶעְזָב) like a wilderness;" and in xxxii. 14, "the peopled city shall be left (עָזַב)." So in like manner we read the repeated warning or description, i. 7, "Your country is desolate (שְׁמָמָה)...and it is desolate (שְׁמָמָה) as overthrown by strangers;" vi. 11, "and the land be utterly desolate (תִּשְׁאָה)

שָׁמָה);” xvii. 9, “there shall be desolation;” xxxiii. 8, “the highways lie waste (נִשְׁמָו).”

In the Later Prophecies we have a sevenfold reversal of each of these threatenings. First, that of Divine forsaking and abandonment: “I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them,” xli. 17; “These things will I do unto them, and will not forsake them,” xlii. 16; “For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee,” liv. 7; “The LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, &c.,” liv. 6; “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,” lx. 15; “Thou shalt no more be termed, Forsaken,” lxii. 4; “And thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken,” lxii. 12. And, secondly, that of desolation: “I will give thee for a covenant of the people...to cause to inherit the desolate heritages,” xlix. 8; “Thy waste and desolate places shall be too narrow by reason of the multitude of inhabitants,” xlix. 19; “The children of the desolate shall be more than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD,” liv. 1; “And thy seed shall make the desolate cities to be inhabited,” liv. 3; “They shall raise up the former desolations; and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations,” lxi. 4; “Neither shall thy land any more be called Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah,” lxii. 4.

Thus a double curse of abandonment and desolation, repeated fourfold and fivefold, runs through the Earlier Prophecies from their opening chapter almost to their very close. And a sevenfold reversal of this double curse runs in like manner through the Later Prophecies, in strict verbal correspondence with the threatenings, from their second chapter to the height and crown of the promise, ch. lxii. 4; where they are replaced together by the new names of Hephzibah and Beulah, “for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.”

7. Still further, there is a special connexion of these Later Prophecies with a message of comfort, which marks the close of each of the three main series of the Earlier Visions. Thus we read in xi. 6—9, at the close of the first series: “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid...and the lion shall eat straw like the ox: they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.” In the Sequel of the Burdens, ch. xxv. 8, we read among other blessings: “And the LORD God will wipe away tears from off all faces.” Once more, at the very close of the third series, xxxv. 10, we meet with the words, “And everlasting joy *shall be* on their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

Now in the Later Prophecies, towards their close, these golden threads of earlier promise are inwoven together, and in the inverse order, mounting up to the first and earliest. The promise xxxv. 10 recurs in the same words, li. 11, and completes a first series of allusions to that closing chapter of the earlier division. But it is resumed, lxi. 7, in the words: “In their land they shall possess the double; everlasting joy shall be to them,” a double reference to xl. 2, xxxv. 10. Next, the promise of xxv. 8 is repeated lxv. 19: “And I

will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying." And lastly, the promise, xi. 6—9, finds an exact repetition in lxxv. 25, at the close of the whole book, if we except the one chapter which answers to the Preface as a glorious peroration of the whole prophecy.

The organic unity, then, of the Later with the Earlier Prophecies is confirmed by direct and positive internal evidence of the strongest kind. They correspond to each other like the curtains of the tabernacle. Some of the evidence lies plainly on the surface; and the rest reveals itself on patient and close examination, in a way which bespeaks, not only the genuineness and Isaian authorship, but the inspired wisdom and Divine authority of the whole.

#### IV. HEBREW DICTION AND STYLE.

The difference of style in these chapters, on which great stress has been laid by some modern critics to prove their later authorship, is not explained in the least by referring them to an unknown writer near the close of the Exile. They are unlike all the known writings of that period. On the other hand, the difference is just what we might expect, if they were written by Isaiah during those later days of "truth and peace," xxxix. 8. For here, in agreement with that temporary and merciful change, the details of the earlier Prophecies, the stern rebukes with which they begin, their Woes and Burdens, blossom out into rich and beautiful promise, like the opening rose. Just as the rose-bud, then, differs from its parent stem, so do these chapters of promise and hope differ from that stem of earlier Isaian Prophecies, on which they grow. New subjects demand some new words and phrases. A denial of the genuineness on this ground must be simply puerile, unless the contrast were extreme. It would require us to infer that hardly one book of considerable size is throughout from the same author. But many of the alleged contrasts, when examined, prove erroneous and illusive; while the resemblances, which attest the common origin of both parts, are various and important, and cannot be referred to chance alone.

##### (I). ALLEGED NEGATIVE EVIDENCE OF STYLE.

I. "The titles, Israel's Creator, Father, Redeemer, Saviour, He that hath mercy, He that comforteth, are applied to God here only."

This is true of the formal epithets. But all the facts on which they repose have been plainly affirmed in these Earlier Prophecies: "Therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour," xxvii. 11; "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment," i. 27; "Thus saith the LORD, even he that redeemed Abraham," xxix. 22; "The redeemed of the LORD shall return," xxxv. 10; "Behold, God is my salvation...he also is become my salvation," xii. 2; "The God of thy salvation," xvii. 10; "We have waited for him, and he will save us," xxv. 9:

"The LORD is our King, and he will save us," xxxiii. 22. Also xiv. 1; xxx. 18; xli. 1.

2. "It is peculiar to the writer to represent the LORD as the Father of the Israelites."

A very strange oversight. The Early Visions, on the contrary, set forth this truth from the outset, as the ground of all their severe expostulations. "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me," i. 2. The appeal once more to this relationship at the very close, lxiii. 16, lxiv. 8, is a strong sign of the internal and essential unity of the whole work.

3. "He doubles the same word for emphasis, as, Behold, behold!"

Just so we find in the Early Prophecies: "Misery, misery! the treacherous ones have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous ones have dealt very treacherously," xxiv. 16; "Thou wilt keep him in peace, in peace, whose mind is stayed on thee," xxvi. 3; "The lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, to the ground," v. 5; "Precept on precept, precept on precept, &c." xxviii. 10, 13; "Woe to Ariel, to Ariel!" xxix. 1.

4. "He often uses personification and prosopopœia, xl. 9; xliii. 6, 20; xlv. 23; xlix. 13; lv. 12; lxiii. 5."

Their larger use would be a natural result of the freedom, largeness, and range of these later Messianic visions. But similar instances, though slightly less frequent, occur before, from the very opening onward, as in i. 2; x. 30; xiii. 2; xiv. 8, 9, 12, 31; xvi. 9; xxiii. 14, 16.

5. "מִשְׁפָּט is used for true religion, xlii. 1, 3, 4; li. 4; and צֶדֶק for deliverance, prosperity, and happiness, xli. 2, 10; xlv. 8, &c."

On the contrary, these words have their true and proper sense throughout, judgment and righteousness, as truly given in the received version. The assertion that they have a different and peculiar meaning in these passages is wholly gratuitous. It is no fault of the prophet if these two grand ideas recur too often to suit the taste of some modern grammarians, so that they strive to replace them by others less intensely moral, and more earthly.

6. "צֶמַח, to sprout or germinate, is applied to the origin of events, xlii. 9; xliii. 19; lviii. 8."

This argument may with much reason be reversed. For these are Messianic passages, and it is Isaiah by whom the name צֶמַח, the Branch, is first applied to the promised Messiah, iv. 2.

7. "קָרָא is used in the sense of preaching or prophesying here only, xl. 2, 6; xlv. 7; lviii."

This word is another mark of identity, not of contrast. It means to cry aloud or to proclaim, vi. 3; xxx. 7; viii. 4; xii. 4; xxi. 8; xxxiv. 14; and again, xl. 2, 6; lviii. 1; lxi. 1, 2; &c. Also to summon or invite, xiii. 3; xxii. 12, 20; xxxiv. 12; and again, xli. 9; xlii. 6; xlvi. 15; l. 2; li. 2; &c. Thus in each of these two main senses it is used alike in the Earlier and Later Prophecies, and with similar frequency.

8. "To break forth into joy occurs here only, xliv. 23; xlix. 13; liv. 1; lv. 12."

This very same phrase is found, xiv. 7, in one of the six chapters of the earlier portion, to which alone the name of Isaiah expressly belongs. It is thus a distinct reason to prove that chh. xl.—lv. have the same author with "the Burden of Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see," since the phrase occurs in no other book of Scripture.

9. "שָׂר וְשָׂר, wasting and destruction, occurs here only, li. 19; lix. 7; lx. 18; and once in Jeremiah, not in Isaiah," i.e. not in chh. i.—xxxv. But שָׂר alone occurs three times, xiii. 6; xvi. 4; xxii. 4; the last time with the same reference to Israel's calamity. Also שָׂר occurs five times, i. 28; xv. 5; xxx. 13, 14, 26, in the same connexion. Thus the Later Prophecies only combine repeatedly the two elements, which have been supplied by eight passages of the earlier visions.

10. "כִּנְה, to address soothingly, xliv. 5; xlv. 5; is found beside only in Job, ch. xxxii. 21, 22."

Its meaning in these two passages, plainly fixed by their context, is "to surname." The book of Job only proves the early use of the word, but the idea which requires its use does not occur in the Earlier Prophecies.

11. "נִשְׂק, to kindle, xliv. 15, is found only in Ezek. xxxix. 9, and Ps. lxxviii. 21, which is of later origin."

Yet this Psalm bears the name of Asaph, and closes its historical summary with David's accession to the throne; and even those who deny it to be Asaph's own have ascribed it to the reign of Asa, long before Isaiah. What a strange proof of the spuriousness of these later chapters, that this word, used so much earlier, occurs in them in one verse!

12. "סִגְנִים, Babylonian prefects, xli. 25, is from the Persian, and found also in Jeremiah and Ezekiel."

The word is not exclusively "Babylonian prefects," for Ezekiel applies it to Assyrian, and Nehemiah to Jewish princes. There is no proof of its Persian origin. Max Müller says that the etymology is not clear. It is a title of princes, borrowed probably from the Chaldeans, with which Isaiah must have been familiar, even from the embassy of the *Sagans* whom Merodach sent to Hezekiah, if not much earlier. It is used once only, in immediate sequence to that history, and in connexion with the predicted overthrow of Babylon. It links ch. xli. with ch. xxxix., and thus tends to confirm the common origin of the whole.

13. "בָּחַר, to prove, try, purify, xviii. 10, is used only in 2 Chron. and Job."

There is no proof of any peculiar sense, either in that verse, or in Job or Chronicles. The word occurs four times, ch. i. 29; vii. 14, 15; xiv. 1, in the Earlier, and sixteen times in the Later Prophecies, and in all ages of Old Testament writing, from Genesis to Zechariah.

14. "חָרַשׁ, to rebuild or repair, lxi. 4, as in 2 Chron." It means, in agreement with its derivation, to renew, which is of course equivalent to the

other term, when the subject is ruined cities. It is so used in 1 Sam., Job, and Ps. li., ciii., civ., or from before the time of David.

15. "המליט, to bring forth, lxvi. 7," is another alleged sign of diverse authorship. It is really the exact reverse. For the same part of the verb occurs besides only in ch. xxxi. 5, and the same sense in xxxiv. 15, while it appears also xxxvii. 38; xx. 6, and xlvi. 2, 4; xlix. 24, 25; and five times oftener, among the other prophets, in those of early than in those of later date.

16. "הפין, affair, business, xliv. 28; liii. 10; lviii. 3, 13," is simply a false version, and the word has plainly its usual sense, "pleasure, wish, or desire." So also "הין, if" ch. liv. 15, is only a mistranslation which weakens the force of a striking passage.

17. "יתר, abundantly, lvi. 12, as in Dan. viii. 9." The word is used alike in xxxviii. 10, and again in xliv. 19; lvi. 22, and in each as "residue." In the same sense it occurs in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, the First and Second of Samuel, in Job, Psalms and Proverbs, and both in the Earlier and Later portions of Isaiah, but once only in the Prophets after the Exile.

The only other arguments of the same kind (Davidson, *Introd.*) are drawn from ten or twenty words, which occur only in these later chapters. But such evidence is clearly neutral, and can have no tendency to prove or disprove the Isaian authorship. The whole proof of diversity, when thus examined in detail, disappears; while some of the words or phrases are a direct confirmation of the common origin of the whole book.

## (II). POSITIVE EVIDENCE.

The Positive Evidence, tending to prove the Isaian authorship, consists of words or phrases, which these Later Prophecies have in common with the Earlier, but which are not found in the writings of the prophets at the close of the Exile, in Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the length of which, when taken together, is nearly the same as that of the Earlier Visions. The comparison extends only to the first letter Aleph, or includes probably not more than one-fifth of the whole.

1. אבה, to be willing, i. 19; xxviii. 12; xxx. 9, 15, and also xlii. 24.

Never in the later prophets.

2. אבין, needy, xiv. 30; xxv. 4; xxix. 19; xxxii. 7, and also xli. 17.

Never in the later prophets.

3. אביר, mighty, strong, x. 13; xxxiv. 7. Also xlvi. 12, אבירי לב, the stout of heart. In use from the Book of Judges to Jeremiah, not found in the later writings.

4. אבל, mourn, mourning, in iii. 26; xix. 8; xxiv. 4, 7; xxxiii. 9, and in lvii. 18; lxi. 2, 3.



5. **אָנִים**, a pool, in xiv. 23, (xix. 10, A. V. &c.); xxxv. 7, and also xli. 18; xlii. 25. Never elsewhere in that sense. The context, in xxxv. 7; xli. 18; xlii. 25, is also very similar.

6. **אָנְמוֹן**, rush, bulrush, ix. 14; xix. 15, and lviii. 5. The use in the third passage, as a figure of dejection, and in the two others, to represent the lower classes of society, is very similar.

7. **אֹהֶל** (sing.), a tent, xvi. 5; xxxiii. 20; xxxviii. 12, and also xl. 22; liv. 2. In later prophets plural only.

8. **אָוֶן**, vanity, iniquity, i. 13; x. 1; xxix. 20; xxxi. 2; xxxii. 6, and also xli. 29; lv. 7; lviii. 9; lix. 4, 6, 7; lxvi. 3. It occurs also twice in Jeremiah, but of the later prophets only once in Zechariah.

9. **אוֹר**, shine, kindle, xxvii. 11, and in lx. 1, 19. Also **אֶהְיֶה אֵשׁ**, light, in ii. 5; v. 20, 30; ix. 2; x. 17; xiii. 10; xxx. 26, and also xlii. 6, 16; xlv. 7; xlix. 6; li. 4; lviii. 8, 10; lx. 1, 3, 19, 20. In Zech. xiv. 6, alone of the later prophets. The frequency of this illustrative figure in both parts of Isaiah is one sign of the unity of the whole. So "the Light of Israel," as a Divine title, occurs only ix. 2; x. 17, and lx. 1, 20.

10. **אֵשׁ**, fire or fire-light, xxiv. 15; xxxi. 9, and also xliv. 16; xlvii. 14, l. 11. Elsewhere only in Ezek. v. 2.

11. **אוֹת**, sign, token, vii. 11, 14; viii. 18; xix. 20; xx. 3; xxxvii. 30; xxxviii. 7, 22, and also xliv. 25; lv. 13; lxvi. 19.

This idea is characteristic of the Early Visions, from the promise of Immanuel to Hezekiah's recovery. In the Later Visions it is applied to three main events, the false signs of the Chaldeans, to be made void through Cyrus, the moral triumphs of the Gospel, and the promised recovery of Israel from their long rejection and dispersion in the last days.

12. **מֵאָז**, from that time, from the beginning, xvi. 13, and also xliv. 8; xlviii. 3, 5. It is hardly found elsewhere in this form.

13. **אָזֶן**, to listen, to give ear, i. 2, 10; viii. 9; xxviii. 23; xxxii. 9, and also xlii. 23; li. 4. So "mine ear, or ears," applied to God, v. 9; xxii. 14, xxxvii. 29, and in l. 4, 5. A double mark of unity.

14. **אָזַר**, to gird, viii. 9, and also xlv. 5; l. 11. The word occurs also in Psalms, Samuel, Job, and once in Jeremiah, but in no other prophet.

15. **אֶחָרָי**, behind, after, backward, i. 4; ix. 12; xxviii. 13, and xli. 23; xlii. 17, 23; xliv. 25; l. 5; lix. 14. Not in the later prophets.

16. **אֶחָר**, another, xxviii. 11; and also xlii. 8; xlviii. 11; lxxv. 15, 22. So **אָחַר** (verb), tarry, continue, v. 11, and xlvi. 13.

The first of these kindred words does not occur in the later prophets, the second twice, the third once in Daniel.

17. **אֵי**, island, maritime country, xi. 11; xx. 6; xxiii. 2, 6; xxiv. 15, and also xl. 15; xli. 5; xlii. 4, 10, 12, 15; xlix. 1; li. 5; lix. 18; lx. 9; lxvi. 19.

This word thus occurs 17 times in the Book of Isaiah, five times in the

earlier, twelve times in the later portion; but once only, Dan. xi. 11, in the prophets after the Exile.

18. **אִיב**, to hate, in Pres. Part. i. 24; ix. 11, and six times in chaps. xlii. —lxvi., not in prophets after the Exile.

19. **אִלִּים**, dumb, xxxv. 6, and lvi. 10.

20. **אִמּוֹנָה**, faithfulness, xi. 5; xxv. 1; xxxiii. 6, and lix. 4. There is also a close relation between the first three passages, and the two contrasted verses, lix. 4, 17.

21. **אָמַן**, to be firm or true, Niphal, i. 21, 26; vii. 9; viii. 2; xxii. 23, 25; xxxiii. 16, and also xlix. 7; lv. 3; lx. 4 (*nursed*). Hiphil, vii. 9; xxviii. 16, and xliii. 9; liii. 1. In these parts not in the later prophets.

22. **אָמַר**, say, speak. In Niphal Fut., iv. 3; xix. 18; xxxii. 5, and also lxi. 6; lxii. 4. The earliest use of this part is in Gen. x. 9, and the latest in Ez. xiii. 12. It is repeated in the same verse in Hos. i. 10 (B. C. 785), and in Is. lxii. 4, in these Later Prophecies, alone. Again, **אָמַר**, word, occurs xxxii. 7, and xli. 26 in the earlier books, and once in Hosea, but in no other prophet later than Isaiah.

23. **בְּאֵמֶת**, in truth, x. 20; xvi. 5; xxxviii. 3, and also xlvi. 1; lxi. 8; never in the later prophets. The passages, also, have a very close relation of subject to each other.

24. **אֲנָחָה**, sighing, xxi. 2; xxxv. 10, and li. 11, these two verses being the same. Peculiar to Isaiah and Jeremiah amongst the prophets.

25. **אָמַץ**, in Piel, to strengthen, xxxv. 3, and xli. 10; xliv. 14. Here also the second passage, in the Later Prophecies, is a fulfilment of the instruction given in the first. Elsewhere, only in Amos ii. 14; Nah. ii. 1.

26. **אֲנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ**, ships of Tarshish, ii. 16; xxiii. 1, 14, and xliii. 14; lx. 9. Also in Ezek. xxvii. 25. The phrase occurs in no other prophet, but in the Psalms, and the Book of Kings.

27. **אָסַף**, in Niphal Pret., take away, occurs in xvi. 10; lvii. 1, and Jer. xlvi. 33 alone; but in Mic. iv. 11; Zech. xii. 3 in a different sense, and in twenty other passages.

28. **אָסִיר**, prisoner, x. 4; xxiv. 22, and xlii. 7, used in these three texts alone in this form.

29. **אִפִּים**, the nostrils, ii. 22, and lxxv. 5. Only once beside in Amos, and once in Lamentations, in this literal sense, though frequent in the derived sense of anger in all the prophets.

30. **אֲפֵלָה**, darkness, viii. 22, and also lviii. 10; lix. 9, in reference to the gloom and desolation of the Jewish people. Once besides in Exodus and Deuteronomy, twice in Proverbs, once in Joel, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah.

31. **אָפֶס**, nothing, v. 8; xxxiv. 12, and xl. 17; xli. 12, 24, 29; xlv. 6, 14, 22; xlvi. 9; xlvii. 8, 10; lii. 4; liv. 15. Once only in Daniel in a kindred sense, Dan. viii. 25, once in Job, and three times in Proverbs. It occurs at the beginning and close of the Earlier, and in seven chapters of the Later Prophecies.

32. **אָפֶע**, worse than nought? xli. 24. **אָפֶטָה**, viper, xxx. 6 and lix. 9. Both are found in Isaiah only.

33. **אָרְבוֹת**, windows, xxiv. 18 and lx. 8. Once Mal. iii. 10. **אָרְבוֹת**, plots or spoils, Is. xxv. 11 only.

34. **אָרַג**, to weave, xix. 9; xxxviii. 12, and again lix. 5, and in no other text of the prophets.

35. **אָרַח**, way, path, ii. 3; iii. 12; xxvi. 7, 8; xxx. 11; xxxiii. 8, and also xl. 14; xli. 3. Besides, of the prophets, once in Joel and once in Micah only.

36. **אִשְׁפָּה**, quiver, in xxii. 6 and xlix. 2. Besides, once in Job, Psalms, Jeremiah, and Lamentations.

37. **אִשְׁרֵי**, blessed, xxx. 18; xxxii. 20, and lvi. 2. Frequent in the Psalms and Proverbs, but elsewhere in the prophets only Dan. xii. 12.

38. **אָתָה**, to come, to happen, xxi. 12, 14, and also xli. 5, 23, 25; lvi. 9, 12; xliv. 7; xlv. 11. The word occurs in earlier books, once in Micah, a contemporary of Isaiah, and once in Jeremiah, xii. 9, in a verse which is like a repetition of lvi. 9 in these Later Prophecies.

There are thus forty words, under the first letter of the alphabet alone, in which the Later resemble the Early Prophecies of Isaiah, and which do not appear at all, with one or two slight exceptions, in the writings which are known to belong to the close of the Exile, or the return from Babylon. There is thus a strong internal presumption, on this ground alone, in favour of the unity of the whole book, and against the modern theory. The verbal argument, on which its advocates have relied in the teeth of all the external evidence, when once fairly and inductively examined, is a powerful refutation of the hypothesis of a Deutero-Isaiah. To these may be added another mark of unity in phrases and titles employed.

1. **יֹאמֵר יְהוָה**, &c. "The LORD will say" (Heb. Fut.), occurs thrice in the Early Prophecies, i. 11, 18; xxxiii. 10, and five times in the Later, xl. 1, 25; xli. 21; lviii. 9; lxvi. 9, in their first and their last chapter. Elsewhere it is found only in Ps. xii. 5, while the past tense, in such phrases, is of constant occurrence. It forms thus an internal sign of Isaian authorship, in the very first verse of the Later portion.

2. **קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל**. The Holy One of Israel, as a Divine title, occurs fourteen times in the Earlier, and fifteen times in the Later Prophecies. It is scarcely met with elsewhere; that is, only in the parallel text in Kings, thrice in the Psalms, and twice in Jeremiah.

3. אֱבִיר יִשְׂרָאֵל. The Mighty One of Israel, i. 24 and xlix. 26 ; lx. 16.

Besides these texts, one of them in the Earlier, two in the Later Visions, only in Gen. xlix. 24 ; Ps. cxxxii. 2, 5.

4. "Your God," xxxv. 4, and xl. 9 ; lix. 2. The name, with this pronoun, occurs elsewhere only in the compound title, "the LORD your God."

This internal evidence of style and diction in favour of common authorship is of a cumulative kind. The marks, though some of them may separately be slight, acquire a decisive force when they are combined in one view. But they become still more forcible, when the objections alleged on the opposite side have been examined.

## V. ALLEGED OBJECTIONS.

The chief reasons, which have been alleged to justify a desertion of the constant faith of the Church of Christ, and of the direct testimony of our Lord and his Apostles, have been summed up as follows in a recent English work.

1. "It is a first principle that the historical horizon of a prophet belongs to his own time. He takes his stand in his own generation, and looks onward from it. His starting-point lies in the circumstances of the age he lives in. This analogy is violated by such as attribute these chapters to Isaiah, since their visible horizon is the time of the Exile."

This first principle is a plain self-contradiction. A standpoint and an horizon, the centre and the circumference of a landscape, are not the same. The true first principle is that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and could therefore announce whatever the Spirit of God, who sees the end from the beginning, was pleased to reveal. It is another first principle, clearly laid down in these same chapters, that He "declareth the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done," xlv. 10.

The objection, so far as it implies a truth, yields a direct proof of the genuineness. The starting-point of a prophet, though not his horizon or limit of view, is in the circumstances of his own age. So the starting-point of this book, if all be genuine, is in its first chapters, and these abound in references to Isaiah's time. But these Later Visions, if spurious, have *their* starting-point in ch. xl., where no single person, place, or circumstance of the Exile is introduced. They would thus float in the air with no historical starting-point whatever.

2. "Isaiah could not have taken such a bound as to predict a far distant personal Messiah, consistently with the analogy of prophecy. Such leaps into the future are unknown."

Our Lord said to the Jews—"Abraham your father rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad," and, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." Yet Abraham lived twelve centuries, and Moses seven centuries, before Isaiah. The assertion, then, flatly contradicts Him whose name is the Truth. The exact reverse is really true, that "all the prophets bear witness" of Messiah, Acts x. 43, and that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," Rev. xix. 10. Such predictions were

unknown of old to those whom Isaiah has so well described, xxix. 9—11, 13, 14, and they have not been without successors in modern times.

3. "The prophet indicates very clearly his own position, historically and geographically, in ch. lii. 4, 5. Whether *these* be referred to place, Babylon, or mean 'in the present case,' he alludes to the Chaldean Exile as then present."

This remark combines four errors. First, the date of these Later Prophecies can never be fixed by one text midway in their course, where the LORD himself, not the prophet, is plainly the speaker. Next, this chapter has plainly no fixed standpoint, but a varying horizon. For in the second verse Zion is described as still captive, and in v. 9 has been comforted and redeemed. Thirdly, we have a clear indication that prophetic or ideal, not actual time, is expressed, by the remark which follows: "Therefore they shall know *in that day* that I am he that doth speak, etc." The time of the fulfilment is there contrasted with that of the prophecy. Lastly, a reference to the Babylonish Exile, except allusively, or as an earnest, seems disproved by the context, which points us to a time when Jerusalem shall be no more defiled by the presence of the unclean. This may apply to the future close of the times of the Gentiles, but was not true of the Return from Babylon.

4. "It is implied, in various places, that Jerusalem and the cities of Judah are depopulated and decayed, but that they shall be rebuilt, xlv. 26—28, li. 3, lii. 9, lviii. 12, lxii. 4, lxiv. 10, 11, xlv. 28, lviii. 12, lxi. 4."

All these passages imply and require some previous mention of the desolation, either in the form of historical statement or direct prophecy. If the chapters are from Isaiah, this condition is amply satisfied by eight or ten clear predictions of this great change, i. 24—26, iii. 25, 26, vi. 11, 12, vii. 23—25, xiv. 3, 4, xvii. 9—11, xxiv. 12, xxxvii. 10, xxxii. 13, 14. But if spurious, or from an unknown writer at the close of the Exile, this essential condition wholly fails to be satisfied. This "Unknown" would rush at once into bright predictions of Israel's Return, before one word was given to throw light on his own circumstances, or to affirm the present state of exile. Thus it comes to pass that one critic of the negative school places him in Palestine, another in Egypt, a third in Babylon; some just after the fall of the temple, others just before the Return. The objection is really fatal to the theory it is brought to confirm.

5. "The people are described as robbed, spoiled, and imprisoned, whose time of deliverance is nigh, xlii. 22—24."

This text, also, is a strong disproof of the view it is said to confirm. For the appeal is there openly made:—"Who among you will give ear to this? who will hearken and hear *for the time to come?*" The message of calamity is thus given to the people beforehand, that, when it is fully arrived, they may lay it to heart. From this it follows, by natural inference, that the prophecy dates before the Exile.

6. "The writer shows a minute acquaintance with the relations of the oriental world in his day. The Chaldean Empire is depicted in the height of its splendour, but its fall is near. He refers to intestine wars, xlix. 26, Evil-Merodach murdered by Neriglissar, etc. Cyrus is named, and his conquests referred to, and his designs against Egypt, which Cambyes

carried out ; and the Persians rewarded by the gift of Egypt, Ethiopia and Meroe. Such specific details could only proceed from one living near the end of the Exile, when Babylon's fall was at hand."

This objection consists of five elements. First, that the Spirit of God could not know, and therefore could not reveal, the state of the Eastern world so long beforehand as two centuries. Secondly, that the predictions of Cyrus and his conquests, made here the ground of a solemn appeal to all the heathen on the vanity of their idols in the presence of an All-wise God, who sees the end from the beginning, were profane forgeries after the events, which were foretold in pretence only. Thirdly, that the appeal concerning the oppression of Babylon and its fall, "I have even from the beginning declared it to thee, before it came to pass," means really that a forger described it after all Asia had beheld it. Fourthly, that the threatening, "I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh," means that Evil-Merodach had been murdered fifteen or twenty years before the words were written. Lastly, that xliii. 3, "I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee," describes the conquest of Egypt by Cambyses, and still was written by a forger, whose horizon was the Exile, fifteen or twenty years before the expedition occurred !

7. "Exhortations to the exiles, encouraging them to return, are an anomaly in one like Isaiah, living in the Assyrian period, when the Exile was unknown, and not predicted by any prophet, Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Nahum. Our prophet takes his stand in the Exile, and does not predict its desolation and misery."

The Exile could not be unknown to "the LORD God of the holy prophets," who sees the end from the beginning. It had been announced by Moses long before, and in Isaiah's own time by Amos, v. 27, and even Babylon as the scene of exile by Micah, iv. 10. "Our prophet" also has predicted its misery and desolation eight or ten times. Israel, too, were one people, and the exile of Ephraim had already come. For a false Isaiah to urge the exiles to return, without one single hint, date, person, or place, by which we might learn who were the persons addressed, and their actual condition, would be most unnatural. On the other hand, what can be more simple and natural than for a prophet, who has ten times foretold the calamity, in a later and still fuller message to proclaim the deliverance ?

8. "The writer often appeals to old announcements as in course of fulfilment, xlii. 9, xliii. 9, xli. 22, xlvi. 3."

Such an objection is startling and prodigious, since these four texts supply one of the plainest disproofs of the sceptical theory. For in xli. 22, 23, 25, a coming of Cyrus, still future, is declared to be such a proof of God's foreknowledge, that by means of it all idols and their worshippers will be confounded and brought to shame. In xliii. 9, also, the declaration of former things, namely, the return of Israel's captives, is again made the reason of a public challenge to the nations and their idols, "Who among them can declare this?" In ch. xlvi. 3—8, the clearness of these very predictions is explained by their moral design, to bow the stubborn hearts of the Jews into submission and reverence. "Because I knew that thou art obstinate...I have even from the beginning declared it to thee ; before it came to pass, I shewed

it thee." To adduce these very texts as so many proofs that the predictions they contain followed the events, is no common form of scepticism, and seems to call for wonder and sorrow, rather than formal refutation.

9. "The people seem to be without the external ordinances of worship, for the sacrifices and services of the temple are never referred to. They only keep fast days and sabbaths."

To such an objection quotation is the best reply. "But thou hast been weary of me, O Israel. Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings,...neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices," xliii. 23, 24; "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood," lxvi. 3. If all texts alike are to be expounded of actual, not prophetic time, these speak as plainly of an actual temple, and of sacrifices either neglected or perverted, as others do of a temple in ruins. But if once we admit the use of prophetic time, the whole argument vanishes away.

10. "The writer describes the theocracy of the future in splendid poetry, but without a visible king. But Isaiah always associates a king with the flourishing theocracy, ix. 6, xi. 1, xxxii. 1."

This objection implies and requires some entire contrast between these three earlier, and the later predictions of Messiah. But, on the contrary, the allusions to the earlier in the later are clear and full. Thus "the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him," xi. 2, has its exact counterpart in the words of xlii. 1, "I have put my Spirit upon him," and in the words of Messiah himself, lxi. 1, "The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me." The next words, "a Branch shall grow up out of his roots," are re-echoed in the description liii. 2, "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and a root out of a dry ground." Also Messiah is described in the later visions, first, as an object of worship to kings and princes, xlix. 7; next as God reigning, lii. 7; thirdly, as inheriting the strong for his portion, liii. 12; fourthly, as the leader and commander, in whom the sure promises to David are fulfilled, lv. 3, 4; and lastly, as the Divine Bridegroom and Redeemer of Israel, lix. 20, lxi. 10, lxii. 5. The only difference is that the later messages reveal more clearly, not royalty alone, but the sufferings of Christ, and His divine glory.

11. "Favourite topics of the unknown prophet do not appear in Isaiah, his delineation of the Servant of God and vicarious suffering. Idols are combated with arguments; and a defence of Jehovah as the only true God is conducted; and a proof of it founded on His declaring beforehand things future, as a fact which shews the heathen gods to be nothing, because it is beyond their power."

The first part of this objection is that the Messiah is described under new titles of honour. It assumes that a prophet must go on repeating the same phrases to the end, and may not, without pain of losing his identity, reveal in new forms, or under varied titles, "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

The next part of it makes an admission fatal to the sceptical theory. It is owned that ch. liii. predicts vicarious sufferings, which can

only be those of Messiah. If so, the whole is inspired prophecy, and reaches onward to a future, which was still distant even in the days of Cyrus. Thus the attempt to find a mark of contrast between Isaiah and the "unknown prophet" defeats itself. For if the writer, whoever he were, could predict the vicarious sufferings of Christ five centuries before they occurred, the whole basis of the sceptical hypothesis is overthrown.

The last remark is still more adverse to the theory it is intended to sustain. For the argument by which, in these later chapters, idols are denounced and condemned is the clear proof of God's foreknowledge which He has here given, in announcing the fall of Babylon, the conquests of Cyrus, and the return of the Jewish exiles, at a time when these events could not have been foreseen by merely human wisdom. It follows plainly that these messages could not have been written at the close of the Exile, when those facts were patent to the whole world, unless we suppose this "unknown prophet" to have been just as foolish, blind, and senseless, as the idols he so sternly condemns.

Is it not strange that a critic of eminence should attempt to prove the spuriousness of these later chapters by features which are consistent, logical, and impressive, if referred to Isaiah himself, but which, when ascribed to some unknown writer or pseudo-prophet at the close of the Exile, become nothing better than one tissue of impudent and ridiculous folly?

12. "The tone is tenderer, and more uniformly evangelical than that of Isaiah, and the ideal hopes and pretendings of the theocracy take a higher, wider, and purer range. Political relations enter into them far less than into Isaiah's. The Gentile nations are little regarded; and their destruction is not dwelt upon with fierce rejoicings over it. Accordingly the heart of the Christian more nearly sympathizes with the poetic strains in which the unknown seer expatiates on the trials and hopes of Zion, and the promises of Divine aid to her, than it does with the sublimest descriptions of Isaiah."

These words are an example of the bold manner in which critics who have ceased to be disciples bring the words of God to the bar of their own tastes and careless errors. First, the objection is fatally adverse to the theory it is meant to support. Every prophetic message, by a constant and unvaried law, deals more on bright hopes towards its close. Its Sinai comes before its Olivet. This is doubly natural in the case of Isaiah. His earlier prophecies were uttered in times of deep anxiety, in the midst of political storms, and the ravages of the Assyrian spoiler. But he survived till the brief reprieve of judgment after the fall of Sennacherib, and the days of "peace and truth," xxxix. 8, when the storm of the terrible had passed away.

Again, for an Old Testament prophet to begin his message abruptly with simple promises, before a single word of caution, reproof and remonstrance has prepared the way, contradicts every known precedent. It sets aside a truth, which lies deeper than those precedents, and occasions them, a settled law of Divine revelation, expressly taught us by Isaiah himself in his earlier prophecies. The Great Husbandman always convicts of sin before He convinces of righteousness, and plows and harrows the ground with warnings



and judgments before He casts in the incorruptible seed of the promises of the Gospel.

The sceptical theory involves an error like that of a superficial observer, who would infer that a rosebud, being so different both in form and colour, is really a complete and separate plant, and wholly independent of the rough and prickly stem on which it has grown.

The other remark is untrue, as well as irreverent. For the Gentiles are as prominent in the Later as in the Earlier Prophecies. They are the subject, first, of solemn reproof and warning, chh. xl., xli., then of repeated promises, xlix., lii. 15, lv. 4, then have solemn judgments denounced against them, lix. 19, lxiii. 1—6, and then are addressed in words of rich promise once more, lxvi. 12, 19. The "fierce rejoicing" in the destruction of the Gentile oppressors, Is. xiv. 3—27, is not one whit more severe than the woes pronounced by our Lord on the Pharisees in Mat. xxiii., or than the counterpart in the New Testament denunciation of the Fall of Babylon, Rev. xviii. And there is nothing, even in the Later Prophecies, which has gathered round it deeper Christian sympathy, love and joy, than Is. ix. 6, 7, the keynote of every Christmas celebration, and the promises xxv. 6—9, xxvi. 1—4, and the outburst of prophetic gladness which closes the whole series in the thirty-fifth chapter.

13. "Jeremiah, a much later prophet, suffered ill-treatment and persecution for predicting a captivity, and none believed him. Had these prophecies been current in the name of a prophet so celebrated as Isaiah, Jeremiah would doubtless have appealed to them. Such a predecessor he could hardly have overlooked, especially as his defenders appealed to an independent prophecy of Micah's, Mic. iii. 12, Jer. xxvi. 17, 18. The discourses before us therefore did not exist in Jeremiah's day, and are not Isaiah's." (Dav. Int. III. p. 40.)

Now it is true that an appeal was made by some of Jeremiah's friends to the prophecy of Micah, and the conduct of Hezekiah and the people of his days, to repel the malice of those who sought to put him to death, in these earnest words—"Did Hezekiah and all Judah put him at all to death? did he not fear the Lord, and besought the Lord, and the Lord repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus might we procure great evil against our souls."

From this incident it is inferred that the Later Prophecies were not then in existence, or else an appeal would have been made to them also in defence of Jeremiah. A very strange argument! For if it has any force, it would prove the nonexistence of the Earlier Prophecies, admitted to be Isaiah's, and not of the Later, whose authenticity is denied. For in Is. iii. 25, 26, vi. 9—12, xxvii. 9—11, xxxii. 11—14, xxxix. 5—7, we have repeated predictions of the desolation of the land and exile of the people, and in the last a distinct announcement of the deportation to Babylon. On the other hand, the Later Prophecies predict only comfort and delivery to Zion, and judgments on Babylon and the Chaldeans.

No appeal is made, in order to justify Jeremiah's warnings, to warnings of Isaiah, repeated and explicit, of whose existence there is no doubt. And

yet it is argued that the later messages of grace and comfort could not have been in existence, or else an appeal to them would certainly have been made. Such reasoning is worthy of the cause in defence of which it is made.

The fifty pages of Dr Davidson's Introduction, in which this question is discussed, began with a complaint that "doctrinal prepossessions have had to do with its discussion, and interfered with a calm and impartial examination." Does he then so far deceive himself as to reckon his own argument a model of impartiality? The one feature apparent in the whole, is a settled plan to assert positively everything that may make a seeming presumption against the genuineness, to depreciate everything which can be urged in its favour. It is the tone of a lawyer who has received a brief to maintain the forgery of these later chapters at any cost, and then attempts to disguise the real drift of his argument by disingenuous evasions of the real issue.

On whatever side we pursue the inquiry, if only it be thorough and complete, the external and internal evidence, each of them full, various and decisive, conspires to prove the genuineness and real Isaian authorship of these later Prophecies. The repeated testimony of the Apostles and of the Lord of glory himself, in the opening of His great mission at Nazareth, ought to settle the question, and dispel every doubt, among all who call themselves His disciples. But it is well to see that the internal evidence keeps pace with the external, and confirms the unity of the whole Book by an amount of proof which becomes clearer, deeper, and fuller, the further the inquiry is pursued.

The adverse opinion does not rest, as sometimes alleged, on superior accuracy of Hebrew scholarship, but on the concurrence, in a small number of celebrated critics, of great technical knowledge of Hebrew grammar, with an entire lack of the logical instinct, and of all insight into the real harmonies and relations of the work they undertake to dissect. Their skill and learning reach only to the husk and mere exterior of the prophecies, while they seem wholly blind as to the substance of the whole. The result is what has been fitly called "the theory of despair." The Book, in their hands, becomes a mere cento from various writers, all unknown but one, of dates ranging through three centuries, and thrown together without order, method, or unity of any kind.

## VI. SUMMARY OF THE NEGATIVE THEORY.

The view of the work, proposed as a substitute for the constant faith of Jews and Christians from the first, confirmed by the voice of the Apostles and of Christ himself, needs only to be clearly stated, to reveal its utter helplessness and confusion. It may be summed up in the following statements of its leading English advocate. (Dav. Intr. iii. pp. 1—86.)

"The parts of the book are not arranged in chronological connexion. How could they, when they proceed from different prophets of different times, and do not shew the hand even of one Editor? Neither have they been grouped on the principle of similarity of contents. In fact, no one principle has guided the arrangement.

"There are four groups, (1) ch. i.—xii. (2) ch. xiii.—xxiii. (3) ch. xxiv.—xxxix. (4) ch. xl.—lxvi. But in none of them is the purely chronological arrangement to be found; nor is any of them arranged solely according to subject."

"In ch. ii. 2—4, either Isaiah borrowed from Micah, or the reverse, or both adopted an older prophecy. If chh. ii.—iv. were written in the reign of Jotham, as we suppose, Isaiah's text must be the older, because Micah prophesied later than Jotham. Thus we cannot agree with Vitringa, Lowth, and Umbreit. It is more probable that Isaiah quotes Micah, as Michaelis, Gesenius, Hengstenberg, Keil and Henderson suppose." Thus the opinion that Isaiah wrote under Jotham and Micah later, is made the reason for dissenting from those critics who make Micah quote from Isaiah, and agreeing with those who make Isaiah quote from Micah. "But the view is preferable that both borrowed from some older prophet: Vogel, Hitzig, Ewald, conjecture Joel, which is probable."

"Ch. v. belongs to the commencement of the reign of Ahaz. Ch. vi. refers to the inauguration of the prophet, but was not composed at the time, for he could not then know that his addresses would only tend to aggravate the guilt of the people. Hence we must assume an interval of time. The composition belongs to the early part of the reign of Ahaz. It is too late to place it, with Hitzig, in the invasion of Sennacherib, or with Ewald, at the accession of Hezekiah."

"Ch. vii. plainly belongs to the time of Ahaz, about 742, hardly later. Ch. viii.—ix. 6 is perhaps a year or two later, as Bleek supposes, about B. C. 741. Ch. ix. 7—x. 4 is after Tiglath-pileser had annexed part of Israel, about 739. Ch. x. 5—xii. 6 is after Samaria had been conquered by Shalmaneser and when Judah was subject to Assyria, that is, in the reign of Hezekiah. Gesenius, Rosenmüller, Maurer, &c. think it written soon after the fall of Samaria, perhaps in 722. This is preferable to the hypothesis of Lowth, Koppe, and Ewald, who date it at Sennacherib's invasion, 714. But the eleventh chapter is entirely Messianic." That is, the dates of the others are to be settled by placing them after the events they respectively announce, while this relates wholly to events seven centuries after it was written! "The legs of the lame are not equal."

Ch. xiii.—xiv. 23 "did not proceed from Isaiah, but from a prophet living at the close of the Exile. Maurer and Ewald think the author identical with the writer of ch. xxi. 1—10, which is probable. Hitzig opposes that view. We may put the composition about B. C. 556. The authenticity of xiv. 24—27 is unquestionable. These are the fragment of a longer prophecy, from which they were separated by the insertion of xiii.—xiv. 23. They belong to x. 5—xii. 6, to which they are an appendix and conclusion."

Ch. xiv. 28—32. "This is a prophecy against the Philistines. The title is not authentic, but proceeded from a compiler. The Philistines did not exult in their freedom in the last year of Ahaz, but early in his reign. It is best to refer the prophecy, with Knobel, to the invasion of the confederate kings, about 740."

Chh. xv., xvi. "It is commonly admitted that this oracle is older than Isaiah. It proceeded from a former prophet, and Isaiah appended the

epilogue, xvi. 13, 14. The reason why it is so assigned is a perceptible difference of manner, style, and diction." But in fact the real reason is a thorough misunderstanding of the last verses. "What is the hostile power the prophet does not mention. It may have been the Assyrians. Perhaps it is better to assume Jeroboam II. It is difficult to tell when Isaiah repeated it. *He* had the Assyrians in view. Hitzig and Credner suppose he repeated it in the time of Sargon, B.C. 717. Knobel dates it 745, 744, and that it was not fulfilled."

"Ch. xvii. 1—11 belongs to the reign of Ahaz, perhaps before the confederates invaded Judah rather than during the invasion, or B.C. 742. Ch. xvii. 12—xviii. belongs to the reign of Hezekiah, about 715." That is, a break of seventeen years is interposed in a continuous prophecy, that each part may come after the event to which it is guessed to refer. But the end is not secured, for "this prediction (ch. xviii.) was not fulfilled."

"Ch. xix. is a prophecy respecting Egypt. Doubts of Isaiah's having written some verses have been expressed, but there is no good foundation for them. The anticipations are indefinite, but pervaded by an expansive charity towards Gentile enemies, which is rare and un-Jewish. The conversion of the Egyptians is predicted, but such statements are ideal. Ch. xx. is of the same date with the last, but a little later, about 714."

Ch. xxi. 1—10. "This was written by an unknown author, living towards the close of the Babylonian exile. It does not belong to Isaiah himself. By this interpretation prophetic foresight is not denied, because the oracle was delivered before the event took place. The author is probably the same as in xiii. 1—xiv. 23, and the piece a little later, about 538." The passage is torn from its context, held to be spurious, and referred to some unknown writer two hundred years after Isaiah, on the ground that a prophet of God may predict an event truly two years beforehand, but not two whole centuries. "There is nothing," Dr Alexander says, "in the reasonings of such writers to shake the faith of any who do not hold their fundamental principle of unbelief." But for this very natural and self-evident remark, he receives a terrible rebuke. "Dogmatism, ignorance, and uncharitableness usually go hand in hand, and compensate for the absence of argument by railing."

Ch. xxi. 11, 12. "If the Assyrian expedition of Tiglath-pileser be the dreaded thing, the prophecy belongs to the reign of Jotham, 745, but this date cannot be relied on. Ch. xxi. 11—15 conveys the impression that it belongs to an older poet than Isaiah. The latter seems to append his own words in vv. 16, 17."

Ch. xxii. "The former part belongs to the invasion of Sennacherib. The Assyrians did not take the city. Shebna and the nobles were not carried away. The prophet merely uttered what he expected to happen. The principles of historical interpretation must not be violated to uphold the exact fulfilment of every prophetic anticipation."

Ch. xxiii. "The authenticity of this prophecy has been questioned. Ewald ascribes it to a younger disciple of Isaiah. The style is weak and tiresome. It wants force. The inferiority of the composition is evident.

Isaiah was master of a style elevated and majestic. Here it is lame, and the ideas are loosely connected. The unknown writer was well acquainted with Isaiah's prophecies. Hence he has much resemblance to him in ideas and words, but he failed in an equal command of style. The sentiment in v. 18 is mean and unworthy of Isaiah. The inferiority is too marked to be attributed to a less happy mood...A Chaldean power could not be spoken of till 625, as Hitzig rightly remarks, and prophetic inspiration does not comport with prediction of the distant future!" Yet Gesenius, Knobel, and Hendewerk maintain that Isaiah himself was the writer. Thus even neological critics are divided, and many think it less difficult to explain away the signs that the prophecy predicts events two centuries later, than to resist the external and internal proofs that Isaiah is the author.

"The integrity too has been doubted. Eichhorn and Ewald look on vv. 15—18 as a late appendix of the Persian period. The choice lies between the two invasions of Phœnicia by Shalmaneser and Nebuchadnezzar. We refer it to the siege by the latter, because it bears the marks of a later writer than Isaiah, and also mentions the Chaldeans as the besiegers. The unknown prophet exults over the downfall of Tyre in a spirit hardly consonant with Isaiah's. Movers and Bleek have endeavoured to shew that the writer was Jeremiah. Of course their arguments are only presumptions, and the latter afterwards modified his view, making it much more improbable."

Chh. xxiv.—xxvii. "The notices here point to the commencement of the Babylonian conquest, before the enemy had left Judæa, about 588. We are thus brought to the conclusion that the prophet lived at the opening of the Captivity. It was not written by Isaiah, because the historical standpoint is in that Captivity. The diction is tolerably free from Aramæisms, because the prophet was so familiar with earlier writers, especially Isaiah, as to have imbibed much of their spirit. Yet there is a stiff and awkward air about it. He is inferior in vigour, majesty, beauty, conciseness and originality."

Ch. xxviii. "The prophecy belongs to Hezekiah's reign, and may be dated perhaps in 724. In ch. xxix., the siege by Sennacherib is the event referred to. The time is the same, about 715. So also chh. xxx.—xxxii. must be placed about 715. Ch. xxxiii. is perhaps somewhat later, in 714."

Chh. xxxiv., xxxv. "It is commonly admitted that this prophecy is not by Isaiah, but is of later date. Internal evidence shews this. The spirit of hatred to the heathen generally argues a later period. The extravagant declarations both of punishment and redemption are not in the manner of Isaiah and the older prophets. They are forced and unnatural. The hopes in xxxv. 6—8 are a specimen of the extravagant in promising. We rely on the spirit and tone throughout as proof of their later origin. They do not bear the stamp of Isaiah."

Chh. xxxvi.—xxxix. "These are an historical appendix to the discourses of Isaiah. They were not composed as they are by Isaiah himself."

Chh. xl.—lxvi. Isaiah "could not have had that enlightened image of the servant of God, the true Israel, which occupied the chief place in the inner vision of the Deutero-Isaiah and floated before his eye in life-like form

almost as a person. But a fundamental peculiarity in the mind and style of every gifted writer, underlying all his modes of thought, is still perceptible. Hence we disbelieve the Isaian authorship of xl.—lxvi. No unusual combination of qualities in one person can persuade us that the entire Book of Isaiah as it now exists proceeded from one and the same prophet." St John, it seems, had a view directly opposite, and links it with a saying of the prophet which has some deeper bearing on the question before us. "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him. That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake (Later Proph. ch. liii. 1), Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again (Earl. Proph. ch. vi.), He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him."

The denial of Isaiah's authorship, it is clear from the above extracts, is not at all confined to the Later Prophecies, xl.—lxvi. It includes further all these passages, ch. ii. 1—4, (xii. 1—6, Ewald), xiii., xiv. 1—23, xv., xvi., xxi. 1—10, 11—15, xxiii., xxiv.—xxvii., xxxiv., xxxv., xxxvi.—xxxix., that is, eighteen chapters or parts of chapters out of thirty-nine. Thus out of sixty-six chapters, there are only twenty-two, or just one-third, of which the entire authorship is conceded to Isaiah. Two-thirds are held to be spurious, and falsely ascribed to him. Out of 1304 verses, those of which the genuineness is allowed are only 524, or exactly two parts in five. The rest are assigned to four or five pseudo-Isaiahs, whose names, character, and residence are wholly unknown.

It is needless to waste words on the comparisons in these criticisms between the style of the true Isaiah, and the alleged defects of his various counterfeits. To those who are convinced, both on external and internal grounds, that all are his alike, they are wearisome and trifling. To those who believe that they are all messages of truth and wisdom from the living God to sinful men, it is hard to say whether the eulogies or the censures with which they alternate are the more repulsive and painful. But there is one remark forcibly suggested by the whole drift and character of that negative criticism, of which a brief view has just been given. Starting from the principle that real prophetic foresight is impossible, or has never been vouchsafed at all, unless shrewd guesses at what is likely to happen within a year or two is to be dignified with that name, the whole Book of Isaiah becomes a riddle, incapable of any key, and baffles all the efforts of mere learning, however great, to account for the phenomena. The parts have to be shifted up and down, to meet the exigencies of a false theory, till confusion becomes worse confounded, and every fresh critic, working on this unbelieving assumption, makes a fresh guess, and introduces some new complication. The conclusion finally reached is that the book is "an aggregate of unauthentic pieces accumulating by degrees to its present extent. That he spent the eve of his life in committing them to writing or arranging them after they were written, is highly improbable, else he would not have left them without any observable

plan. "No organic unity can be pointed out in them. No principle of arrangement appears." Surely we have here one illustration of the prophet's own words, in describing the unhappy state of those who have light, and will not use it. "We grope for the wall like the blind, and grope as if we had no eyes; we stumble at noon-day as in the night." The real structure is beautifully simple, and the harmony of method and outline complete. The chapters of history which separate the two portions, distinguish them, as the New Testament is distinguished from the Old, but only so as to reveal more plainly, to thoughtful minds, the deep unity of the whole message. As the Law prepares for the Gospel, the Burdens and Woes prepare the way for rich comfort and abundant promise. All the tones of threatening converge, in the first part, on the Assyrian desolation and defiance, chh. xxxvi., xxxvii., and all the messages of hope and promise diverge from ch. xxxix. and its warning of the Captivity in Babylon. The solemn voice at the opening, "Hear, O heaven, and give ear, O earth! I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me," finds its gracious reversal in the later voice of mercy "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God."

Thus the whole Book is a miniature Bible, where the Law is unfolded in the Earlier, and the Gospel largely and brightly anticipated in the Later Prophecies, while the grand crisis of Zion's travail and deliverance lies between them, and unites them into one complete message of mingled warning, hope, and Divine consolation.

## APPENDIX II.

### STRUCTURE OF THE LATER PROPHECTS.

The Later Prophecies, Is. xl.—lxvi., have no marks of internal separation so distinct as those which are found in the earlier part of the book, and approach more nearly to the character of a long, continuous discourse. Hence various opinions have been held as to their internal connexion, their proper division and subdivision, and the breaks where there is a partial recommencement—questions on which the true interpretation must partly depend.

The Masoretic division is into eleven sections :

- § 1. Ch. xl.—xli. 26.
- § 2. Ch. xli. 27—xliv. 5.
- § 3. Ch. xliv. 6—xlv. 16.
- § 4. Ch. xlv. 17—xlvi. 1.
- § 5. Ch. xlvi. 2—xlix.
- § 6. Ch. l.—lii. 6.

- § 7. Ch. lii. 7—lv. 12.
- § 8. Ch. lv. 13—lvii. 13.
- § 9. Ch. lvii. 14—lxi.
- § 10. Ch. lxii.—lxv. 8.
- § 11. Ch. lxv. 9 *ad fin.*

Vitringa divides the Earlier Prophecies into three main parts, ending with ch. xii. and ch. xxiii., and sixteen smaller sections. But the Later into two parts and nine subdivisions, as follows :

1, chh. xl., xli. ; 2, chh. xlii., xliii. ; 3, chh. xliv.—xlvii. ; 4, ch. xlviii. ; 5, ch. xlix. ; 6, chh. l., li. ; 7, chh. lii.—lx. ; 8, chh. lxi., lxii. ; 9, chh. lxiii.—lxvi.

This division, in which one section has nine chapters and two others one only, while a break is made at the close of chh. xliii., li., lxii., and none at the close of chh. xl., xlv., xlvi., lv., lxv., is a very slight improvement on the Masoretic, and has none of the signs of a natural and true division.

The arrangement of Rückert ("Translation of the Hebrew Prophets," 1831) has been accepted by many critics in the last forty years. It recognizes two main breaks at the end of chh. xlviii., lvii., where the same sentence of warning recurs, and subdivides each of the three portions into three times three sections, agreeing, except in chh. xlii., xliii., xliv., lii., lvi., lxiii., with the division of the chapters. The scheme is generally adopted by Hävernick, Hahn, Delitzsch and many others. The last observes that "it is only in the middle of the first part that the division is at all doubtful ; in the two others it is hardly possible to err. The three parts are marked off by the prophet himself, chh. xlviii. 22, lvii. 21, but are only variations of one common theme. It is equally certain that each part consists of three times three addresses."

The endings which he substitutes for those of the above chapters are xliii. 13, xliv. 5, xliv. 23, lii. 12, lvi. 8, and lxiii. 6. Hahn adopts in substance the same arrangement of three sections, chh. xl.—xlviii., xlix.—lvii., lviii.—lxvi., with nine sections in each. But he regards ch. xl. 1—11 as a common preface to the whole, and in the rest adheres to the division of the chapters as it stands, except that he transfers lvi. 10—12 to the next chapter.

The adoption of Rückert's scheme, however, has not been so general as Delitzsch assumes. Of English and American expositors, Henderson and Alexander are the most prominent. The former does not even allude to it. The latter calls it merely an aesthetic decoration and an aid to the memory, but of no exegetical importance, since he looks on the whole almost as a continuous discourse. Hendewerk, again, divides the whole into two parallel series, of which the first closes with ch. xlv. Ewald and Knobel agree, indeed, in making a threefold division, of which the first closes with ch. xlviii. But Knobel ends the second at ch. lxii., and Ewald, with better reason, at ch. lx., while at ch. lvii. he admits only a secondary pause.

Stier, in his elaborate commentary on these Later Prophecies, agrees with Vitringa and Hendewerk in dividing them into two main portions, and with the former in placing the chief break after ch. xlviii. But the later part he subdivides at chh. lv. lx., and not at ch. lvii., where he places only a lower subdivision. His scheme is as follows, ch. xl. being taken as a general preface.

I. Chh. xli.—xlviii. A. xli. 1.—xliv. 5. B. xliv. 6—45. C. xlv. —xlviii.

A. 1, Ch. xli. 1—20 ; 2, ch. xli. 21—42 ; 3, ch. xliii. 1—xlv. 5.

B. 1, Ch. xliv. 6—25 ; 2, ch. xliv. 26—45.

C. 1, Ch. xlv. ; 2, ch. xlvii. ; 3, ch. xlviii.



## II. Chh. xlix.—lxvi.

- A. Chh. xlix.—lv. 1, ch. xlix. ; 2 (1), ch. l. ; 2 (2), ch. li. ; 2 (3), ch. lii. 1—12 ; 3 (1), lii. 13—53 ; 3 (2), ch. liv. ; 3 (3), ch. lv.
- B. Chh. lvi.—lx. 1 (1), ch. lvi. ; 1 (2), ch. lvii. ; 2 (1), ch. lviii. ; 2 (2), ch. lix. ; 2 (3), ch. lx.
- C. Chh. lxi.—lxvi. 1 (1), ch. lxi. ; 1 (2), ch. lxii. ; 1 (3), ch. lxiii. 1—6 ; 2 (1), ch. lxiii. 7—19 ; 2 (2), ch. lxiv. ; 2 (3), ch. lxv. ; 3, ch. lxvi.

This rather complex scheme, by joining A and B together as one main integral portion of the prophecy, will agree with Ewald's threefold division. And that of Vitringa, so diverse in its details, agrees also in the main point of making the second main division, after ch. xviii., at ch. lx., where he ends his second and longest section. The way is now ready for a comparison and discussion of the various schemes.

1. That one main break in these visions is at the close of ch. xviii. is nearly self-evident, and in this almost all agree. The last portion, being of nearly twice the length, eighteen chapters instead of nine, seems to require distinction into two parts, making a threefold partition of the whole. Ought this to be after ch. lvii., with Rückert, Hävernick, Hahn and Delitzsch, or with Vitringa, Stier, and Ewald, to be placed three chapters later, at the close of ch. lx.?

The chief grounds for the earlier place are the equal number of chapters on each side, and the recurrence of the same words in ch. xviii. 22, and ch. lvii. 21. But this last is a very insufficient proof that the main division is there, for a plain reason. The text, ch. xxxv. 10, is the close of all the Earlier Prophecies, and its recurrence might have seemed, then, to form a landmark, by which to fix some main division. But it really recurs ch. li. 11, where no critic pretends to place a main division. It does not even mark the close of a chapter, or one of Rückert's nine sections, but comes in the midst of one continuous message. Hence the recurrence of ch. xviii. 22, which ends the first main cycle of the Later Visions, at ch. lvii. 21, can be no proof that this is the end of a second main cycle. In fact, the analogy would point to the opposite view. It comes plainly at the close of a section. But the analogy of ch. li. 11 would lead us rather to infer that this is not a final but a medial section, and that the words recur in the course of the second cycle, to bind it more closely to the one which it follows.

The context strongly confirms this view. After ch. lx. there are plain marks of a close and a recommencement. There are all the features of a sublime peroration. On the other hand, ch. lxi. is singled out by our Lord himself as the beginning of a distinct and complete prophecy, and was read in the synagogue of Nazareth, to mark the opening of His great commission.

At ch. lvii. these marks of contrast are wholly absent. One chapter before, and two that follow, have a striking unity of subject and style, and continue the same series of rebukes and admonitions to the Jewish people for their national sins. The words, "Cry aloud, spare not, &c."

intensify the previous rebuke, and are not at all like the opening of a wholly distinct series of visions. Thus chh. lvii., lviii. cohere very closely, while chh. lx., lxi. are plainly very different in their whole style.

### I. THE FIRST SERIES. CHH. XL.—XLVIII.

Here the first question is the exact relation of ch. xl. to the rest of the prophecy. Stier separates it from all that follows, as a common preface to the whole series. Hahn ascribes this character to vv. 1—11 alone, leaving the rest to form an opening section. The same is the view of Mr Relton, in an unpublished analysis of the Later Visions, which agrees in many important particulars with my own. But this partition of eleven verses from all the rest, in my opinion, is clearly wrong. The twelfth verse does not begin a fresh prophecy, to which vv. 1—11 are a preface, but continues the same message with no sensible pause. The contrast between the gentleness of the Lord God, the Shepherd of Israel, who gathers the lambs in His arm, and His Divine and unspeakable majesty, is simple and most sublime, and would only be obscured by this causeless separation, of which there is no internal sign whatever. On the contrary, the two last verses are linked most intimately with those words of comfort, which begin the chapter, and form the keynote of the whole.

The chapter, then, is one complete and continuous message. Nor is it natural to join it, as Vitringa has done, with ch. xli. in the same section. The words, "Keep silence before me, O islands," plainly begin a new and distinct address to all the isles of the heathen, and stand in distinct contrast to that voice of encouragement to the weary-hearted in Israel, which begins and closes the opening section, and forms its most characteristic feature.

This chapter, again, is an integral section of the first later series, chh. xl.—xlviii., rather than a common preface, as Stier makes it, to all the Later Prophecies, chh. xl.—lxvi. Its denunciation of idolatry, vv. 18—25, introduces all those repeated messages in condemnation of heathen idolatry, ch. xli. 4—7, 21—29, xlii. 17, xliv. 6—21, xlv. 16—20, xlvi. 5—10, xlviii. 5, which form one main distinction of this first series, and hardly appear, or much more sparingly, in the two others. Hence, though the chapter may be viewed as a preface to all that follows, and its first two verses seem to indicate the characteristics of the three divisions, it has relations of special intimacy to the first of the three, to which it directly and properly belongs.

The last three chapters, xlv., xlvii., xlviii., form a trilogy of threatening and stern rebuke, mingled with promises of grace. Their distinct objects are the heathen idols, the city of Babylon, and the sinful and rebellious people of Israel. Each chapter is clearly a distinct whole, and the natural division hardly admits of doubt.

The proper partition in chh. xli.—xlv. is less evident. Hahn makes it fivefold, in strict agreement with the chapters. Delitzsch also makes it fivefold, but the close of only two of the five agrees with the division of the chapters. His portions are (1) ch. xli., (2) ch. xlii. 1—xliii. 13, (3) ch. xliii. 14—xlv. 5, (4) ch. xlv. 6—23, (5) ch. xlv. 24—xlv. 25. Thus he attaches thirteen verses of

ch. xliii. to ch. xlii., five verses of ch. xliv. to ch. xliii., and the last five to ch. xlv. Stier makes a main division at ch. xliv. 5, and a fivefold subdivision, but transfers nine verses of ch. xli. to ch. xlii., and three only of ch. xliv. to ch. xlv.

The division at ch. xliv. 5, by Stier, Delitzsch and the Masora, is certainly more correct than that of Hahn at the close of ch. xliii. For the five verses, which begin ch. xliv., with their promise of the Spirit to revive Israel from spiritual barrenness, drought, and desolation, are the natural sequel to the stern rebukes of their unspiritual worship, uttered just before. And the sixth verse, in its very form, marks the opening of a new subject, and is a stronger denunciation than before of the utter folly of the heathen in their idol worship. Three other later sections, chh. l., lvi., lxvi., and the subsection, ch. xlv. 14, begin with the same heading,—“Thus saith the LORD.”

The other main division of these chapters here proposed, at ch. xlii. 16, 17, is not recognised at all by these writers; and this, I conceive, is a common defect in their three schemes. Mr Relton, in his analysis, gives its proper prominence to this division.

The previous message, to the isles of the Gentiles, goes back to the days of Abraham and the first generations of mankind, and then moves steadily onward, through the days of Cyrus, and the coming of Christ in great humility, to the last times of Messiah's judgment. In ch. xlii. 16 it reaches a full, impressive, and striking close, and a promise of effectual guidance and comfort to the people of God. But the part which follows is an address to Israel, as that which precedes is, almost in its whole course, to the Gentiles. The words of ch. xlii. 17 are a calm, solemn aphorism of eternal truth, and form a natural preface to a second message of rebuke and controversy to the Jews, as before to the Gentiles, on account of their spiritual blindness and perversity. This controversy finds its fitting close ch. xliv. 5, in a gracious promise of their renewal by the Spirit of God.

As the promise of Zion's glory in the latter days, ch. ii. 1—5, is a preface to the warnings of Isaiah's earliest visions, so the brief description of the grace and forbearance of Messiah, the promised Immanuel, ch. xlii. 18—21, prepares for the sad contrast in the sin, folly and spiritual blindness of the people of Israel.

Again, in the section ch. xli.—xlii. 16 there is a pause at xli. 20, where Stier closes his first section, but the break at v. 29, where Hahn and Delitzsch place it, at the close of the chapter, is more complete. We have first a review of the growth of heathen idolatry, from Abraham onward, vv. 1—7; next, a promise of blessing to despised Israel, vv. 8—20, and then, returning to the heathen, a prediction of Cyrus and his conquests, in order to prove the worthlessness of their idols, which can neither foresee coming events, nor protect their own worshippers. The attention is then turned to a higher subject, the character and work of Messiah. The description, under new titles, the Servant of Jehovah, the Elect or Chosen and Beloved, is plainly of the same who has been announced in the Earlier Visions as the Branch of the Lord, Immanuel, the Rod from the stem of Jesse; and the new events of

His days are set in contrast with all that comes before them. Hence the true break, in a fivefold division, is at ch. xlii. 1, and not ch. xli. 21; though even the former is only one marked pause and change in the same controversy of God with the heathen, which closes with the events announced, ch. xlii. 13—16, in the last days.

Again, in the middle section, ch. xlii. 17—xliv. 5, the pauses at xlii. 25 (Stier, Hahn), at xliii. 13 (Delitzsch), and at xliii. 28 (Hahn), are quite secondary in their character. The words "But now," xliii. 1, mark plainly the continuance of one and the same protest against the blindness of Israel, and cannot be the opening of a new section. At verse 14 the solemn opening, "Thus saith the LORD," seems to have a much stronger claim to be held a recommencement of the prophet's message. But the pronouns "your Redeemer" and "for your sake" refer directly to the previous verses, and continue their appeal, while the very same form recurs immediately, v. 16. In like manner, the words, "Yet hear now, O Jacob, my servant," mark and indicate a direct continuance of the previous message.

In the subdivision of the third section, ch. xliv. 6—xlv. 25, the fourth of the series, there is clearly no break where Stier places one, at xliv. 26, and it is slightly more natural at the direct address to Cyrus by name, where the parting of the chapters is made, than where Delitzsch places one, ch. xliv. 24, though the verses which follow seem like a bridge, connecting the two parts of the whole section, and binding it into one. The marks of distinction in the three other chapters, forming a second triplet or trilogy, are clear and plain.

On the whole, I conclude that a sevenfold is more natural than a ninefold division of these nine chapters. The distinction of the first and the three last is plain. But chh. xli.—xlv. admit more naturally of a threefold than a fivefold division. There is a double close after ch. xlii. 16 and ch. xliv. 5, of which the first sets before us the last judgments on the adversaries of God's people in the last days, and their safety in the protecting care of God at the end of all their long-lasting sorrows; while the other predicts the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the same great period, the times of restitution of all things. The diversity in the others will be seen by placing them under each other, as follows:

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Hahn	.....xli.	xlii.	xliii.	xliv.	xlv.
Stier	.....xli. 1—20.	xli. 21—29, xlii.	xliii., xliv. 1—5.	xliv. 6—25.	xliv. 26—xlv.
Delitzsch	...xli.	xlii., xliii. 1—13.	xliii. 14—xliv. 5.	xliv. 6—23.	xliv. 24—xlv.

On the other hand, both xlii. 16 and xliv. 5 shew, I think, clear marks of a pause and change of subject.

## II. SECOND SERIES. CHH. XLVIII.—LX.

This Second Series of the Later Prophecies, or Sixth of the whole book, begins in ch. xlix. with an address of Messiah to the Gentiles, which unfolds presently into a full and impressive promise to Zion. Its beginning and

close are distinctly marked, and hence most critics recognize in it a distinct section of the prophecy.

Jerome, however, Vitringa, and Rosenmuller would transfer to it three verses from the next chapter. But this arises simply from their failing to perceive the real connexion of these verses with those that follow, and the vision of which they form the opening. That connexion is very simple. The Divine Speaker, who is the Word of God, first repels the false notion that God would divorce His people without cause. He then describes His own future service of love, in which the parts are reversed, and He himself would be rejected without a cause by His own people.

The division in the next chapters is less plain. Yet ch. li. plainly continues the appeal to Israel in ch. l., with promises to the faithful Israelites, and those in ch. lii. are succeeded by a glowing promise to Zion of her full and joyful deliverance. This whole message finds its climax in the promise of ch. lii. 10, "And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of the Lord."

The verses lii. 11, 12 are usually joined to this section as if forming its close. But surely v. 10 fulfils that character in a still more impressive way, and it seems quoted in that character, as the winding up and sum of a prophetic message, in the opening of St Luke's Gospel.

Now vv. 11, 12 are referred most naturally to the restoration of the vessels of the temple by the Jewish exiles on their return from Babylon, of which we read in Ezra i. 7—11, ii. 69, viii. 24—31. This predicted revival of the temple-service out of its ruins was the needful preparation for the appearance of Messiah, when He should come suddenly to His temple, as announced by Malachi. Thus two chapters and ten verses of a third form one section with seven subsections, of which three are headed by the address "Hearken," and three by the repeated call, "Awake, awake!" These reach onward from the rejection of Messiah at His first coming to the engrafting of the broken olive branches, and the glory of restored Israel, when the desolation is ended, and the times of restitution have come.

The next Section, ch. lii. 11—lv., the third in this Second Series, has the days of Messiah, His work and person, for its more special object. It answers to the second clause in the opening words of the Later Visions, and announces comfort to Zion because her iniquity is pardoned. It resolves itself into three minor portions, of which the subjects are the sufferings of Christ, the glories that should follow, ch. liv. and the promises and invitations of the Gospel, ch. lv. It begins with a prediction of the restoration of the temple after the Captivity, and then passes on to a clear prophecy of the Birth, Life, and Death of the promised Immanuel, in whom the voice to Zion "that her iniquity is pardoned" should be gloriously and abundantly fulfilled.

In the five next chapters, lvi.—lx., there is a remarkable change of tone, and in the greater part a severe and mournful character of reproof and warning prevails once more. The commencement of a new message with ch. lvi., and a partial close after chh. lvii., lviii., lix., and one still more complete after ch. lx., are all plain. But those who part chh. xlix.—lvii. into nine sections, to carry out Rückert's main idea, vary in their division of chh. lvi.

lvii. Vitranga groups the nine chapters, lii.—lx., into one section. Hahn, Delitzsch, and Stier part ch. lvi. from ch. lvii. in three different ways, that is, at the eighth, ninth, or twelfth verses. But these two chapters seem really to form only one section. The command and promise, vv. 1—7, introduce a warning of outward enemies and inward corruptions, which continues without serious break, and almost without a pause, till the weighty sentence of ch. xlvi. 21, 22 is repeated once more. In lvi. 8 the promise begins to pass into warning. The close connexion of vv. 9, 10 is clear, and hardly less plain is the transition from v. 12 to lvii. 1, since abounding sensuality and profaneness are sure pledges of “evil to come.”

The Second Series, then, like the First, falls naturally into a sevenfold division, which is also threefold, being composed in each case of a separate section, and of two trilogies or triplets more closely related to each other. They are as below :

FIRST SERIES OR CYCLE. CHH. XL.—XLVIII.

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. Preface.        | 1. Comfort to Zion. Ch. xl.                       |
| 2. First Trilogy.  | 2. Controversy with Heathen. Ch. xli.—xlii. 16.   |
|                    | 3. Controversy with Israel. Ch. xlii. 17—xliv. 5. |
|                    | 4. Cyrus and Immanuel. Ch. xliv. 6—xlv.           |
| 3. Second Trilogy. | 5. Woe on Idols. Ch. xlvi.                        |
|                    | 6. Sentence on Babylon. Ch. xlvi.                 |
|                    | 7. Rebuke and warning to Israel. Ch. xlvi.        |

SECOND SERIES OR CYCLE. CHH. XLIX.—LX.

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. First Trilogy.  | 1. Messiah's Voice to the Heathen. Ch. xlix.  |
|                    | 2. Messiah's Voice to Israel. Ch. l.—lii. 10. |
|                    | 3. Messiah and the Gospel. Ch. lii. 11—lv.    |
| 2. Second Trilogy. | 4. Woe on Idolaters. Chh. lvi., lvii.         |
|                    | 5. Sentence on Formalism. Ch. lviii.          |
|                    | 6. Rebuke and Promise to Israel. Ch. lix.     |
| 3. Peroration.     | 7. Zion's Final Glory. Ch. lx.                |

III. THIRD SERIES OR CYCLE. CHH. LXI.—LXVI.

This latest portion of the book, according to Rückert, Hahn and Delitzsch, consists of only six sections, or two-thirds of their third division. But this arrangement greatly obscures and distorts the relations of the parts to each other. The union of chh. lviii., lix. with the previous message of rebuke and stern reproof is very plain on the one hand, and on the other the completeness of the close of ch. lx, in rhythm and subject, is very marked, and also in the sentence which completes and crowns the message, “I the Lord will hasten it in its time.” That ch. lxi. begins a complete and distinct message may be said to rest on the direct authority of our Lord himself, in whom it was fulfilled, and who took it for the preface of His great commission at Nazareth.

Again, there are signs of a pause and recommencement at lxiii. 6, so that Delitzsch transfers lxiii. 7—19 from the third to the fourth of the six divi-

sions. The latter thus becomes four times longer than the one before it, Hahn, on the contrary, adhering to the division of the chapters, avoids this disproportion, but overlooks and sets aside a break at that place which is very apparent.

This Series, like the two before it, is, I believe, both sevenfold and threefold, but being much shorter than the two others, the threefold division is the more conspicuous. It may be thus disposed :

#### THIRD CYCLE OR SERIES OF LATER VISIONS. CHH. LXI.—LXVI.

- I. Messiah's Work of Mercy and Judgment. Ch. lxi.—lxiii. 6.
  1. Messiah's Ministry on Earth. Ch. lxi.
  2. His Heavenly Intercession. Ch. lxii.
  3. His Work of Judgment and Redemption. Ch. lxiii. 1—6.
- II. The Last Controversy with Israel. Ch. lxiii. 7—lxv.
  1. Review of God's past Mercies. Ch. lxiii. 7—19.
  2. Israel's Confession and Prayer in the Last Days. Ch. lxiv.
  3. Messiah's answer of Reproof and Blessing. Ch. lxv.
- III. The Last Conflicts and Deliverance. Ch. lxvi.

The main part of this closing portion is an expansion of the promise, ch. ii. 1—5, with which Isaiah began his earliest message, and thus confirms and seals the unity of the whole series, from first to last, of the Visions of this glorious prophecy.

### APPENDIX III.

#### THE ASSYRIAN REIGNS IN ISAIAH.

1. The Prophecies of Isaiah are connected so closely with the progress of Assyrian power, from the first invasion of Pul to the death of Sennacherib, that a correct view of the order and length of the successive reigns must form one main help to a just view of the true reference of the earlier predictions. Recent discoveries within the last thirty years, and the progress of cuneiform interpretation, have thrown much unexpected light on the history of these Assyrian kings. But while there have been, from these new sources of knowledge, some remarkable confirmations of the sacred history, serious difficulties have also arisen. The view of the chronology, espoused by Sir H. and Prof. Rawlinson, Dr Hincks, and M. Oppert, and which many, from their high authority as Syrologists, are disposed to receive as scientifically established, is, in some of its main features, directly opposed to the concurrent testimony of Kings, Chronicles and the Book of Isaiah.

Till these recent discoveries, the mention of Sargon, Isa. xx. 1, stood quite alone. No light was thrown on the royal name in this solitary verse by any known writer or monument of classic antiquity. These Assyrian discoveries, however, have now restored him to the domain of history. Under the name Sargina or Sarkin, the inscriptions reveal him plainly as

the father of Sennacherib, the head of a line of five Assyrian kings, a great and prosperous monarch, who carried on about fifteen campaigns in Media, Babylon, Armenia, Syria, and Arabia, founded a city near Khorsabad, and built there a splendid palace, the ruins of which, after twenty-five centuries, have yielded a large supply of sculptures and monuments of his reign.

2. But this sudden recovery of Sargon from the mention of him in one solitary verse of Isaiah into historic life has created a difficulty on the other side. It was hard, before, to find any proof of his existence, at least under this name; but now the perplexity is how to find room for his recorded exploits without an entire sacrifice of the truth of Scripture. In the opening of his reign he claims to have captured Samaria. The Book of Kings places the fall of that city in the sixth of Hezekiah, after a three years' siege by Shalmanezar; while Sennacherib's invasion, both in Kings and Isaiah, is ascribed to Hezekiah's 14th year. The fifteen years of the cuneiform annals refuse, apparently, to be crushed into this narrow interval. Hence some have suggested that Sennacherib's campaign was in his father's lifetime. But the more usual view of Syrologists supposes an error in the numeral, and they propose to read the 27th instead of the 14th year of Hezekiah, for the true date of the monumental Assyrian campaign.

3. The former view saves the letter of the text by a still greater sacrifice of its drift and evident meaning. There is no sign that Sennacherib was only his father's deputy and heir when the invasion occurred, and twenty times he is affirmed to be "the great king." And besides, the year is the same which the scheme assigns to Sargon's own Philistian campaign. If the mere change of one numeral removed the difficulty, it would be a simpler solution. But this is not the case. Such a change by mere conjecture without one MS. in each of two distinct works, is indeed a strain on the laws of evidence. Unhappily, while the critical plunge is violent, the chief difficulty remains. For on the modern view the campaign of Sargon against Ashdod, in the ninth year of his annals, is in the 14th of Hezekiah, the year, in the present text, of a wholly different campaign of another king. The accession of Sennacherib is placed in the 23rd, a first campaign in the 27th, and the disastrous reverse in Hezekiah's 29th and last year. The pious king, on this view, had not a single year of "peace and truth" after his great trouble, but died at once; while Sennacherib reigned on prosperously and gloriously for 17 years. Now this reverses and turns upside down the chief moral feature, as well as the main political outlines, of the whole history, and would go far to convict the sacred writer of direct collusion. The account in 2 Chr. xxxii. 22, 23 is thus falsified, and made not only untrue but impossible. The sickness and recovery of Hezekiah, also, are related next after the overthrow, in Kings, Chronicles, and Isaiah; and a scheme which places them 15 years before it must be violent in the extreme.

Besides these serious and almost fatal objections, this view distorts and destroys a whole series of relations, which a close study of this book of Isaiah reveals, between the successive messages of the inspired prophet and the ever-threatening progress of the mighty Assyrian power, till the flood,



when it reached the neck, was rolled back suddenly by the mightier hand of the God of Israel.

I propose, then, in this Appendix, first, to give a brief sketch of the modern scheme of the Assyrian reigns, and the supposed proofs on which it rests; and next, to shew their insufficiency, and the historical objections to which it is exposed. The way will then be open for its comparison with another scheme, and an attempted restoration, from Scripture and the monuments, of Assyrian history throughout the days of Isaiah, from the inroads of Pul to the time of Esarhaddon.

## § I. THE MODERN SCHEME OF THE ASSYRIAN REIGNS.

4. Three Assyrian invaders are named in the Book of Kings, not in Isaiah—Pul, Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser; and three in Isaiah—Sargon, Sennacherib and Esarhaddon. Assuming the third and fourth to be distinct, this will give six Assyrian reigns to be harmonized with the sacred text. Four of these are easily identified by their monumental names: Tiglath-pileser, Tiklat-pul-isri or Tuklat-pul-assar; Sargina, Sarkin or Sar-kayan; Tsinkhi-irib, Sin-akhi-erba or Sin-akh-irib; and Asshur-akh-iddina or Assur-akh-idin. Three earlier Shalmanesars are found in the monuments or lists, but the names of Pul and Shalmaneser IV. have not been found. No absolute dates, again, are given on the monuments, referring to any fixed era, like the Olympiads, the years of Rome, or of Nabonassar. The dates assigned are not monumental, but inferences from a comparison with the Scripture history, and with the Canon of Ptolemy, imperfectly checked by a lately discovered Assyrian list of reigns, dating shortly before the fall of Nineveh, and by the contemporary Egyptian or Ethiopian reigns of So and Tirhakah.

5. The dates which result from Scripture, for the accession of the kings of Judah and Israel; those of the rulers of Babylon from the Canon of Ptolemy; and those of the Assyrian kings according to Sir H. Rawlinson, Dr Hincks, and M. Oppert, will be seen in the following lists:

(1) B.C. 810, Uzziah; 772—1, Menahem; 761, Pekahiah; 759, Pekah; 758, Jotham; 742, Ahaz; 739, Pekah slain; 729, Hoshea; 726, Hezekiah; 721, Samaria taken; 713, Hezekiah's 14th year; 697, Manasseh; 642, Amon; 640, Josiah; 609, Jehoiakin; 598, Jeconiah and Zedekiah; 588, Fall of the Temple.

(2) B.C. 747, Nabonassar; 733, Nadius; 731, Chinzirus and Porus; 726, Elulæus or Jugæus; 721, Mardocepulus; 709, Arceanus; 704, interregnum; 702, Belibus; 699, Apronadius or Assaronadius; 693, Rigebelus; 692, Mesessimordacus; 688, interregnum; 680, Asaradinus; 667, Saosduchinus; 647, Chyniladanus.

(3) B.C. 824, Shamas-iva; 810, Iva-lush IV.; 781, Shalmaneser III.; 770, Asshur-danin-il II.; 752, Asshur-lush; 744, Tiglath Pileser II.; 726, Shalmaneser IV.; 721, Sargina; 704, Sennacherib; 680, Esarhaddon; 667, Asshur-bani-pal = Sardanapalus; 647, Asshur-emid-din = Chyniladanus or Saracus.

6. The following are the chief grounds for the arrangement of the reigns in this third list :

(1) Sargon, in his annals, claims to have captured Samaria in the opening of his reign. Scripture states that Shalmaneser came up and besieged it for three years, and adds that "they took it," but does not name Shalmaneser in the capture. Hence Sargon's reign must date from that capture in the 6th of Hezekiah, or B.C. 721.

(2) The same annals state that in Sargon's first year Merodach-baladan had seized the kingdom of Babylon, and in his 12th year that Merodach had reigned twelve years. But the years of Mardocephalus in the Canon are B.C. 721—710, thus doubly in agreement with B.C. 721, as before, for the first of Sargon.

(3) Arceanus follows in the Canon for five years. The name differs little from Sarkin, and Dr Hincks supposes it to refer to him, while  $12 + 5 = 17$ , his years in the Assyrian Canon.

(4) Sennacherib, in his first campaign, says that he defeated Merodach, and set up one Belipni as Governor at Babylon. This is supposed to be the same with Belibus, whose first year in the Canon of Ptolemy is B.C. 702. This will agree with the third year of Sennacherib, his accession being placed B.C. 704.

(5) Sennacherib, in his fourth campaign on his cylinders, again defeats Merodach, displaces Belipni, and sets up his son Asshur-inadi-su, as governor. This is supposed to be his sixth year, B.C. 699, when Apro-nadius, corrected by an easy change to Assaronadius, assumed to be distinct from Esarhaddon, became ruler at Babylon by the Canon.

(6) Sennacherib, by the Assyrian Canon, reigned 24 years. This will place his death at B.C. 680. He was succeeded by his son Esarhaddon, and in the Canon of Ptolemy B.C. 680 is the date of Asaradinus.

(7) Esarhaddon's cylinders record ten campaigns. The Canon of Ptolemy gives Asaradinus 13 years, B.C. 680—668, and the Assyrian Canon gives the same number to Asshur-akh-idin.

The dates of the earlier reigns of Asshur-lush and Asshur-danin-il II. result at once from combining the above dates with the length of their reigns in the Assyrian Canon, where alone their names appear. The details of the Assyrian history, as restored by this scheme, in their connection with the accounts in Kings, Chronicles, and Isaiah, will be nearly as follows.

7. Pul=Asshur-lush, B.C. 752—744.

This king is named only in 2 Kings xv. 19, 1 Chr. v. 26, where he is said to have exacted tribute from Menahem early in his ten years' reign, and to have carried away part of the tribes east of Jordan. His name is not found in the monuments, nor one like it in the Assyrian Canon. Hence some take him for a general, others for Tiglath-pileser himself. Professor Rawlinson (*F. G. M.* Vol. II. 388) thinks he was a pretender to the throne, not owned at Nineveh, but established in the western provinces; or possibly a Babylonian monarch, who in those troublous times occupied the Euphratean valley, and thence invaded Palestine: but that at least his expedition fell

within the eight years of Asshur-lush, Tiglath's predecessor. It is true that this is directly opposed to the present text of Kings, which places Menahem's reign B.C. 771—762, ending 41 years before the fall of Samaria, or ten years before the accession of Asshur-lush. This discrepancy, it is said, is reduced nine years "by omitting the imaginary interregnum between Pekah and Hoshea, which is contradicted by 2 Kings xv. 30." For by this change the accession of Pul or Asshur-lush, it is thought, will be only one year after the death of Menahem. This is an entire mistake, but also leaves the historical contradiction just the same.

8. Tiglath-pileser II., B.C. 744—726.

This king, in Professor Rawlinson's Herodotus, is placed three years higher, and is lowered in deference to the supposed authority of the Assyrian Canon. The inscriptions imply that he was an usurper, and no regular heir, since he "omits all mention of his ancestry, and does not record even his father's name." Next his line was displaced by Sargon, Shalmaneser IV. being assumed to be his son. As the result of the hostility of the later kings, his annals "exist only in a very fragmentary state, having been engraven on slabs, afterwards defaced by Sargon or his descendants, and finally torn from their places, and used by Esarhaddon for buildings at Nimroud, the ancient Calah." The chief events recorded in them are an invasion of Babylon, assigned there to his first, and a Syrian campaign, in his eighth year (Rawlinson's Herodotus, p. 470). In this he defeated Rezin, king of Damascus, took and destroyed his city, and received tribute from a king of Samaria whom he calls Menahem, from Hiram king of Tyre, and Khabibi, a queen of the Arabians. The Scripture plainly fixes the opening of this campaign against Rezin to the 2nd or 3rd year of Ahaz, B.C. 741—740.

The scheme (*F. G. M.* II. 396, 397) affirms three Syrian wars of Tiglath-pileser, the first B.C. 741—737, from his 4th to his 8th year, to which the main record is referred, before the invitation of Ahaz; a second in his 12th year or B.C. 733, to which 2 Kings xv. 29, and the light affliction of Isaiah ix. 1, are said to belong; and a third "of greater importance than either of the others," probably from his 13th to his 17th year, B.C. 732—728, in reply to the invitation of Ahaz; on return from which northward he defeated a son of Rezin and destroyed Damascus.

9. Shalmaneser IV., B.C. 726—721.

The name of this king, supposed to be a son of Tiglath, and predecessor of Sargon, does not appear at all in the monuments or the Assyrian Canon. But assuming him distinct from Sargon, his five years' reign is thus filled up in the scheme. He succeeded his father B.C. 726, and soon after, in his first year, came up against Samaria, and received the submission of Hoshea. Next year or next but one, he came up against him once more, 2 Kings xvii. 4, bound him and put him in prison. Early in B.C. 723 he came up a third time, and laid siege to Samaria. In B.C. 721 it surrendered or was taken by storm, but his reign had first come to an end, either by natural death or violence. But he also marched into Phœnicia, and overran the country at the beginning of his reign. In his second year or later, the

Tyrians revolted. He returned and attacked them with a fleet, but was defeated. He then invested them for five years, but we are not told whether the attempt succeeded. The five years probably reach to the autumn of Sargon's second year.

10. Sargon, B.C. 721—704.

Sargon, Sargina or Sarkin, whose name according to M. Oppert's first view means "king *de facto*," implying usurpation, by the modern scheme usurped the throne in B.C. 721, perhaps while Shalmaneser was absent at Samaria. He immediately marched into Susiana, defeated the Elamite king, and received the submission of the Chaldeans, "who seem however to have rebelled that year, and placed themselves under Merodach-baladan." From the extreme south-east he marched to the extreme south-west, and completed the reduction of Samaria, which Shalmaneser had failed to accomplish, carried off 27,280 persons, and appointed an Assyrian governor. He was soon recalled by a revolt, in which Hamath, Arpad, Zimira, Damascus, and Samaria were confederate. He defeated them at Gargar, perhaps Aroer, and beheaded the king of Hamath. Next he attacked Gaza, then in league with Egypt. At Raphekh or Raphia, he defeated Hanun king of Gaza, and Shebek, Tar-dan of Egypt. Five or six years later, B.C. 715—4, he marched into Arabia, subdued tribes never tributary to Assyria, reduced the Thamudites, and settled Arabians in Samaria. The Pharaoh of Egypt, the king of the Sabeans, and a queen of the Arabians, made submission and brought presents.

Three years later, B.C. 712—11, he led a first expedition against Ashdod, which surrendered after a siege, and appointed a governor; and he boasts that "the king of Meroe, who dwelt in the desert, and had never sent ambassadors to any of his predecessors, in fear of his majesty bowed down before him." Soon after he warred on Illib in Susiana, and set Ipsabara on the throne. He next defeated the Babylonians, besieged Merodach in Bethyakin, burnt his city, but generously spared his life, and appointed a governor, perhaps Arceanus. While he held court at Babylon B.C. 708 or 7, he received a double embassy, from the prince of an island in the Persian Gulf, and from seven Cyprian princes. These brought tribute, and carried back an effigy of Sargon, since found on the site of Idalium, and now in the Berlin Museum. He made other expeditions to the north and north-east. In his 15th year or B.C. 707, he founded Dour-Sarkayan, or Khorsabad, and in August of his 17th year, B.C. 705, was assassinated and succeeded by his son Sennacherib.

11. Sennacherib, B.C. 704—680.

The name of this king, according to the Syrologists, is Sin-akhi-irib, "The Moon-god has multiplied brethren." He reigned, by the Assyrian Canon, 24 years; but the Taylor and Bellini cylinders, from which the Assyrian records of his reign are taken, contain only eight campaigns, and these are campaigns, not years, as in the Annals of Sargon. A clay tablet of his 22nd year is the highest monumental number of his reign.

The modern scheme is as follows. He succeeded his father Sargon,

Aug. B.C. 705, so that B.C. 704 is his first year. Two years passed without a campaign. His third year, and first campaign, was B.C. 702, when he warred against Merodach and Susub, and set up Belipni, that is Belibus, at Babylon. His fourth year and second campaign, B.C. 701, when he warred on the tribes in Zagros, forced Ipsabara to fly, whom Sargon had set up, and attached a district to Assyria. His third campaign, in his fifth year, the 27th of Hezekiah, was against Sidon and Palestine, and was wholly successful. He reduced Sidon and set up Tubal in the place of Suliya, king of Sidon, received tribute from kings of Arvad, Byblus, Ashdod, Beth-Ammon, Moab, Edom, and according to some, of Menahem king of Samaria. He marched south to Ascalon, and captured it, with Hazor, Joppa, and Beth-dagon. Ekron had rebelled, and its king, Padi, had been sent a prisoner to Hezekiah. The Egyptians and Ethiopians came to succour Ekron. The battle was at Eltekeh or Altaku, near Ekron, and they were defeated with great slaughter, and several sons of the king of Egypt were taken alive. Ekron then submitted. The king then marched against Judah, took forty-six fenced cities, and smaller towns without number, captured and carried off 200,000 persons, and shut up Hezekiah in Jerusalem as in a cage, raising banks against it, when he submitted to a tribute of 30 talents of gold and 300 of silver. Padi was surrendered, and part of Hezekiah's dominions attached to those of the kings of Edom and Gaza. The success of the Assyrian conqueror was complete.

Next year, the sixth of his reign, in a fourth campaign, B.C. 699, he invaded Babylonia, where Merodach and Susub were in arms, defeated them, displaced Belipni, and set up his eldest son, Asshur-inadi-su, Assaronadius of the Canon, the Asordanes of Polyhistor. Next year, the seventh of his reign, B.C. 698, the monuments being wholly silent, but the only year left within the reign of Hezekiah, is assumed to be the date of a second and disastrous campaign, to which the main part of the sacred history refers, 2 Kings xviii. 17—xix. 35; 2 Chron. xxxii. 9—21, Isaiah xxxvi. 2—xxxvii.; and that the sudden destruction took place near Pelusium, at the entrance of Egypt, whither he had advanced to meet Tirhakah.

No signal consequences, however, on the scheme of these writers, followed this reverse, of which there is no trace in the Assyrian annals. A fifth recorded campaign, in his eighth year, B.C. 697, was against Nipur, part of the Zagros range, and he boasts that he penetrated farther than any king before him. For three more years, B.C. 696—694, he fought with Babylon and Susa, embarked on the Tigris, in ships built by Phœnician workmen, destroyed thirty-four large towns of Susiana, overthrew Susub, who was in league with Elam, at Khaluli, captured a son of Merodach, and probably set up Rigebelus (B.C. 693, Canon) as his viceroy. Some time later in his reign, we may infer from other authors that he made an expedition to Cilicia, and built Tarsus. But the monuments throw no light on the last thirteen years of his reign.

12. Esarhaddon, B.C. 680—667, and Asshur-bani-pal, B.C. 667—647.

Sennacherib was assassinated by his sons, B.C. 680, after a glorious reign of 24 years. His eldest, who had been viceroy at Babylon, was probably dead

before. The two next, his murderers, expected to gain the crown; when Esarhaddon, a fourth, came forward, and was acknowledged without opposition as king, and restored also the viceroyalty of Babylon. He was succeeded by Asshur-bani-pal, or Sardanapalus, in B.C. 667, and thus held the crown only thirteen years. Ten of his campaigns are recorded on cylinders. We learn also from a tablet of his son, that Esarhaddon invaded Egypt, gained a battle over Tirhakah, and divided the country into twenty governments.

13. Such is the view of the chronology of these reigns, held in substance by Sir H. and Prof. Rawlinson, Dr Hincks, M. Oppert, and several other Syrologists. Its results, when compared with the text of Scripture and the Prophecies of Isaiah, would more than neutralize the partial confirmation of their truth from the historical details of Sargon's reign, and from the coincidence, in the two accounts, of the talents of gold paid to Sennacherib by Hezekiah. They are simply these, in order of time: First that Pul was a king, or conquered in the reign of a king, whose reign began 10 years after the Bible date of Menahem's death, or from the 5th to the 15th of Jotham. Next that Tiglath-pileser had made two campaigns against Palestine, and destroyed Rezin, before Ahaz asked his aid against Rezin and Pekah. Secondly, that the only date of a Syrian campaign in the monuments is in the sixth of Ahaz, two full years after Pekah's death. Thirdly, that Shalmaneser is unknown to the monuments and did not take Samaria. Fourthly, that having enforced tribute on Hoshea in his first year, he imprisoned him the year after, because he had ceased to bring the enforced tribute, as he had previously done "year by year." Fifthly, that Sargon was making conquests in and round Palestine, from the 6th to the 22nd of Hezekiah, or for eight years after his sickness and recovery; and still that the only mention of him, in Scripture, is one allusion to the sending of Tartan to Ashdod, of which no date is given. Sixthly, that Sennacherib made no expedition against Judea till the 27th of Hezekiah, or two years before his death. Seventhly, that he was completely successful, and returned in triumph with great booty to Nineveh. Eighthly, that the date in 2 Kings xviii. 13, Isaiah xxxvi. 1, twice given, applies only to four verses in one book, and to one in the other, and is wholly wrong. Ninthly, that the main history, the crisis of the whole narrative, 2 Kings xviii. 17—xix., Isaiah xxxvi. 2—xxxvii., is left wholly without a date. Tenthly, that the history of the sickness and recovery is misplaced in three different books, as well as the message that followed, and is given fifteen years after its proper date. (11) That no years of peace and truth were given to Hezekiah, such as were promised, but only growing calamity to his latest years. (12) That the promise, "I will deliver thee from the hand of the king of Assyria," was followed by a heavier scourge than even Ahaz had known. (13) That the instruction "the third year, sow and eat, &c." belonged not to the days of Hezekiah, but of the idolatrous Manasseh. (14) That the Assyrian host did not fall, as Isaiah had prophesied, on the mountains of Israel, but on the confines of Egypt. (15) That the monuments are wholly silent about the one campaign in which the disaster occurred, and betray no later signs of its previous occurrence.

(16) That Hezekiah died that same year, while Sennacherib reigned prosperously and gloriously for seventeen or eighteen years after his army was destroyed. (17) That either one main part of the Book of Isaiah is spurious, or else the prophet must have survived at least eighty years the date of his first commission in the last year of Uzziah.

These results, with everyone who has more faith in the word of God than in the boastful bulletins of idolatrous kings, or in barren lists of nameless and unknown writers, are enough to make us doubt the stability of the whole edifice to which they belong. When the notes on ch. xx. were written, out of deference to great names I accepted one main pillar of their system, as if proved by the monuments, which lend it no direct evidence whatever; and thought that the Scripture interval of eight years, from the 6th to the 14th of Hezekiah, might have been swelled, in some way, into fifteen half-yearly campaigns, mistaken for complete years. But a closer view of the whole evidence has convinced me that Dean Milman's suspicion, in his *History of the Jews*, is correct; and that, in contrast to Gesenius, Ewald, Winer, Hincks, and Sir H. Rawlinson, the earlier opinion of Vitringa, Offerhaus, Eichhorn, and Hupfeld, is confirmed, not disproved, by the monumental evidence, so that Shalmaneser and Sargon are two names of the same king.

The scheme just given, besides its collision with the teaching of Scripture in almost every point of contact, seems to me loaded, in every part, with serious internal difficulties, not to say contradictions, of its own.

## § 2. THE MODERN SCHEME OF THE REIGNS EXAMINED.

14. The questions raised by the scheme of Assyrian chronology, just expounded, are briefly these. Does the account in Kings, Chronicles, and Isaiah, of Sennacherib's invasion refer to two distinct campaigns, wholly opposite in their result, and two years apart, or to one only? Is the date in the text a mere error of copyists, or the true date of one single campaign, confirmed by the whole tenour of the sacred history? Is Shalmaneser a predecessor of Sargon, or proved, by every mention of him, to be the Sargon of the monuments under a different name? Did the reign of Sennacherib last 18 years after the death of Hezekiah, including 13 years of which no monumental records remain? Or does it reach only four or five years beyond Hezekiah, so that Isaiah may easily have survived to place it on record in the book of his prophecies? Was the murder of Sennacherib the occasion for the instant recovery of Babylon from revolt or independence, or rather for Esarhaddon to resign a viceroyalty at Babylon on mounting the throne of Nineveh? These are the main questions which need a distinct answer, though others of a secondary nature will arise.

### 15. THE CAMPAIGN OF SENNACHERIB IN JUDEA.

The view, which prolongs this campaign to two or three years, so as to include an Assyrian invasion and victory in Egypt, has been held by Usher

and many others, though justly rejected by Petavius, Vitringa, and many of the best critics, as opposed to the natural scope of the sacred text. But the theory now current among Syrologists, and received by Prof. Rawlinson in his *Five Great Monarchies*, of two campaigns two years apart, separated by a triumphant return to Nineveh, is still more unnatural, and seems disproved by almost every verse. (1) It makes the date twice given useless and deceptive. It confines it to one verse only in Isaiah, and four in Kings; while it plainly seems to belong, as a heading, to the two whole chapters that follow, which contain the main crisis of Jewish history in Isaiah's days. (2) It introduces a siege and investment of Jerusalem between vv. 13, 14 in 2 Kings xviii. and vv. 1, 2 in Isaiah xxxvi., one far more complete than the other afterwards named—where the text is wholly silent. (3) It assumes Sennacherib's observance of the condition of Hezekiah's tribute, in direct contradiction to Isaiah's repeated prophecies. (4) It introduces a return to Nineveh between vv. 16, 17, of which there is not the slightest trace or sign in the text. (5) It invents further a return from Nineveh between the same verses for a second campaign, on which not Scripture only, but all the monuments, are wholly silent. (6) It leaves the second more important campaign, not only without any word to mark its commencement, but also without any date, though, on their view, the main event in this part of the history. (7) It leaves wholly unexplained the entire absence of any allusion, by the boastful Rabshakeh, to this highly successful campaign, completed two years before. (8) It makes Sennacherib content himself with tribute and booty, when he had actually invested Jerusalem with a mighty army, and raised mounds on every side; and then expect its surrender, two years later, on sending a small force "insufficient for a siege" (*F. G. M.*, p. 441). (9) It makes it incredible that the people should be urged not to trust in Hezekiah, because he had taken away the high places, which by the hypothesis was almost thirty years before, and no use be made of a far simpler and plainer appeal, that his resistance had led to immense calamities just two years ago, to the loss of all the fenced cities, and the captivity of 200,000 souls. (10) The appeal to the conquest of Hamath, Arpad, and Samaria is inconceivable, with no allusion to the successes so lately gained in Judea itself. (11) Rabshakeh plainly implies, v. 25, that this was the first time his master had come for the destruction of the land. On the new hypothesis, its destruction by the Assyrians had, for two years, been almost complete. (12) Hezekiah calls this the hour of travail pangs; but by the theory this had already come without any deliverance. (13) Lachish, on this view, within two years must have required a second siege, after being so lately captured. (14) Sennacherib is mute, like Rabshakeh, about this former campaign, and sets about reducing Lachish and Libnah, just as if it had never been done before. (15) Hezekiah, in his prayer, alludes to Assyrian successes in other lands, but not in Judah. (16) He prays for deliverance, not as from a second invasion, when the first had nearly completed his ruin, but as in the long-expected hour of conflict and travail. (17) The answer given by Isaiah is robbed of nearly all its force, if the Assyrian had enjoyed two years of complete success in a triumphant campaign. (18) The passage, 2 Kings xix. 27, 28, Isaiah xxxvii. 28, 29, is most unnatural, if



this complete Assyrian triumph had gone before. (19) Rich and full promises are thus applied solely to a second campaign, when the city was not besieged, while no trace of Divine help is found in that earlier hour, when the city was really invested, and the calamity was extreme. (20) The first, second, and third years in the closing promise, are left without a date, and the hypothesis transfers them from Hezekiah to Manasseh's idolatrous reign. In short, this view of a double campaign, the first wholly prosperous, the second mainly the reverse, with a campaign in Babylonia between them, does utter violence to every feature of the text, and deprives it alike of historical clearness and consistency, and of its moral grandeur and sublimity. The proud king and the sacred annalist would then seem almost like well matched rivals in their concealment of humbling and unpalatable truths.

#### 16. THE DATE OF THE CAMPAIGN.

The evidence on this point also, in the sacred text, is full and clear. This crisis of invasion is twice assigned to Hezekiah's fourteenth year. Three times it is immediately followed by the account of Hezekiah's sickness and recovery, which the promise then made to him fixes to the close of that same year. Again, the message from Babylon, following that recovery, or in the 15th year, is joined with a promise that there should be "peace and truth in his days." That promise would be reversed and wholly falsified, if Judah's heaviest calamity from the Assyrian were thirteen years later, and reached to the very close of his reign. A delay, again, of 21 years instead of eight, after Samaria's fall, before the invasion of Judah and siege of Jerusalem, is at variance with the rapid succession of Assyrian conquests. Still further, the statement in 2 Chron. xxxii. 22, 23, if this hypothesis be received, is not only untrue but impossible. Other reasons, from the structure of Isaiah's prophecies, and the order and course of its predictions, redouble the force of these which are patent in the history, and which seem decisive of themselves.

#### 17. SHALMANESER AND SARGON.

The one main fact which stands out in the annals of Sargon, as recovered from the ruins of Khorsabad, is a distinct series of campaigns, or domestic acts of religion, through a reign of fifteen years. These cannot, without some violent supposition, hardly credible, be crushed into the interval of eight years, from the final capture of Samaria to the 14th of Hezekiah. If we assume that Sargon is a successor of Shalmaneser, and began to reign in that year of Samaria's fall, which the sacred text fixes by a fourfold synchronism, then Sennacherib's accession must be brought down at least to the 21st of Hezekiah, and his campaign in Judah be later still. But if the date in Isaiah be confirmed, not only by the clear, simple outline of the whole narrative in that historical episode, but also by its organic relation to the structure of the book, and the moral scope of the whole history, we are thrown upon the other alternative, the view deduced by Vitringa, Offerhaus, Eichhorn, and Hupfeld, from Scripture alone, that Sargon and Shalmaneser are really two names of one and the same king. The arrangement, which results from their identity, not only replaces direct opposition to

Scripture testimony in almost every part by entire agreement; but will be found, I believe, in more real accordance with natural inferences from the monuments and the Canon of Ptolemy, than the lowered dates which claim to rest on their combined authority.

18. First, what evidence is alleged from the monuments for the reign of this previous king? By the admission of the advocates of the lower dates, none whatever. "Of Shalmaneser very little is known, and his name has not yet been found on the monuments. The only facts belonging to his reign, which have come down to us, are his two expeditions against Samaria, recorded in Scripture" (Rawlinson, *Herod.* I. 471). "Very little is known of him, since Sargon his successor, of a different family, and most likely a rebel, seems to have destroyed his monuments" (Shalmaneser, *Smith's Dict.*). "A monarch whose name is absent from the canon (i.e. the Assyrian) and has not yet been supplied by any cuneiform record" (*F. G. M.* II. p. 400).

In fact, there are only four marks by which Shalmaneser can be identified, and all these, without exception, meet in the Sargon of the monuments. First, that he besieged, and in the natural construction of the text, took Samaria, and carried away its people. This conquest and captivity the Sargon of Khorsabad claims for himself alone, with no mention of any other king. Next, that he was on the throne, invading and conquering, from the seventeenth to the eighth year before one of the early campaigns of Sennacherib. This character, again, belongs to Sargon alone by the evidence of the monuments, which give him fifteen years at least. Thirdly, that, according to Menander, he made an expedition against Phœnicia and Cyprus. On this Prof. Rawlinson remarks, "The accounts of Menander are probably unhistorical. He has confused Shalmaneser with his successor Sargon, by whom expeditions against these places were really undertaken" (*Herod.* I. 471, note 8; *Smith*, III. 1225). And again: "The effigy of Sargon, found on the site of Idalium, is now in the Berlin Museum" (*F. G. M.* II. 421). Lastly, Enemessar in *Tobit* is clearly a varied and corrupt form of Shalmaneser. Now there he is called the father of Sennacherib, who succeeds at once upon his death. Thus every mark by which Shalmaneser is defined, either in or out of Scripture, belongs to the Sargon of the monuments, and two of them plainly to him alone.

19. The reasons for an opposite view seem to be two only: the statement in the *Annals* that he captured Samaria in his first year, and the difference of the names. Now, first, these royal annals, as they never recount defeats and reverses, are not likely to give prominence even to serious checks and delays in their course of conquest. The faults of modern bulletins, which have become a proverb, apply fully to these permanent bulletins of Egypt and Assyria, though engraven in stone. Shalmaneser subdued the kingdom of Samaria, and laid it under tribute, at the very opening of his reign. Since Tiglath-pileser had already carried away many Israelites captive, he would probably do the same, and even on a larger scale. After so long a siege, the proud ruler might easily group the whole result under the first triumph which led to it, and conceal the stubborn resistance; just as the sacred

writer reserves his whole moral for the latest step in the conquest, when Samaria was taken, and the kingdom fell.

20. The double name is no real difficulty. It seems allowed that Sargon was not the personal name of the monarch from his birth, but one assumed when he was on the throne. It means probably, not "king *de facto*," as M. Oppert once thought, a very tame and unlikely name for a proud king to assume, but rather "the established king." He succeeded, not as heir, but either by an election of Assyrian chiefs, or by violence; and would naturally assume at once a royal name, honourable in the Old Empire, and of these Shalmaneser is one. But when he was firmly seated on the throne, and had enlarged the empire beyond its former limits, he might well disdain to borrow a name from that older and extinct line, and prefer, in all his own royal monuments, to call himself by a still more boastful title, "The Established King."

21. The scheme, at its lower limit, assumes that Esarhaddon began to reign in the same year at Nineveh and at Babylon. But an opposite view, historically, is much more probable. Those years of Asaradinus, B.C. 680—667, are apparently the only time out of 122 years, B.C. 747—625, when the rule of Babylon was held personally by the reigning king of Assyria. At Nineveh Esarhaddon succeeded through the murder of Sennacherib, and the flight of his brothers; but his reign at Babylon, B.C. 680, follows an interregnum of eight years, implying that a season of revolt and anarchy then came to an end. Now that murder was far more likely to occasion a revolt than to be its sudden cure. It is commonly agreed that for Apronadius in the Canon should be read Assaronadius,  $\sigma\sigma$  being mistaken for  $\varpi$  in transcription. He is called Asordanius by Polyhistor, and the name is so like that of Esarhaddon, or Assaradinus, even in the monumental forms, as to need strong evidence to prove them distinct. For Apronadius, or Asshur-inadi-su of the monuments, is confessedly the eldest son of Sennacherib, made viceroy by his father, the natural heir of the throne, and we have no subsequent record of his death. If Esarhaddon were viceroy of Babylon when Sennacherib was murdered, this would help to explain both the fact itself and the flight of the murderers, and he would commit the viceroyalty to another, when called suddenly to the throne. But, on recovering Babylon after years of revolt, policy might lead him to the new plan of keeping it in his own hands, residing in turn at each city, as the monuments imply in his case alone. The highest monumental date of Sennacherib is a clay tablet of his 22nd year, implying 20 or 21 complete years. But from B.C. 714, the 13th of Hezekiah, to B.C. 693, when Rigebelus succeeds Assaronadius in the Canon, are just 21 years. The coincidence is as exact as in the opposite view. Also, by the admission of its advocates, their last thirteen years of Sennacherib, B.C. 693—680, have no proof at all of historical reality from his cylinders or the monuments, which do not require us to assign to them one single recorded campaign.

22. The coincidence between the first twelve years of Sargon and those of Merodach in the Canon, is the strongest reason for the lower set of

dates. But its force is greatly lessened by the evidence of the monuments themselves. In the Canon Merodach-baladan appears only B.C. 721—709. But the monuments shew him to have been in conflict with Tiglath in his first year, B.C. 744—7, either 23 or 26 years earlier, and again with Sennacherib in the first of Assaronadius, B.C. 699, or ten years later than his period in the Canon. Hence it is quite possible that the Assyrian annals, and the astronomical records of Babylon, might reckon his years in a different way. Also by the annals of Sargon the coincidence is not exact. Merodach was already in power, by Sargon's report, at the opening of his own first year, and twelve years of Merodach at least were complete, when his own twelfth year began. Also Sennacherib's first campaign, by his cylinders, was against Merodach and the king of Elam, when Merodach, though defeated, escaped once more, and contended afresh for the throne.

23. The next argument for the lower dates, from the Canon of Ptolemy, is drawn from the years of Belibus, or Elibus, in Polyhistor. But it fails in one main point. Sennacherib professes to have set up one Belipni as viceroy in his first, and to have displaced him, and set up Asshur-inadi-su in his fourth campaign. These are referred, in the lower scheme, to his third and sixth years. Polyhistor, however, gives no hint that Belibus was set up by the king of Assyria, but says that Merodach slew Acises, and reigned six months, and then was slain by one Elibus, who reigned in his stead. But in the annals Merodach survives the first campaign of Sennacherib, and, aided by one Susub, a Chaldean prince, maintains a conflict with Assyria in the fourth campaign (*F. G. M.* II. 438). An accession of Belibus or Elibus by internal feud, after slaying Merodach, cannot safely be assumed to be the same event as his forced accession by Assyrian help in Merodach's lifetime, at a date after which he recovers the kingdom. Such a coincidence is too weak a ground for setting aside a large body of Scripture testimony, which fixes that king's first campaign to the middle, not the close, of Hezekiah's reign. Or the difficulty is equally removed by supposing a displacement, in the cylinder record, of the one fatal campaign alone.

24. The Egyptian annals, though sometimes alleged as favouring the lower dates, are strictly neutral, and lend them no real aid. The accessions of Necho II., and Psammetichus, may be viewed as fixed to B.C. 610, and 664, or at least within a year of those dates. The Lists of Manetho place before Psammetichus three reigns in the same dynasty, amounting to 21 years, reaching thus to B.C. 685. In the Ethiopian dynasty, the recensions of Africanus and Eusebius give 8, 14, 18, or 12, 12, 20 for the reigns of Sabaco, So or Sevechus, and Tirhakah. But since the 26th of Tirhakah is found on the monuments, and Herodotus and the heading both assign fifty years to the Ethiopian, the correction was natural to 8, 14 and 28 for the three reigns, which would then begin B.C. 735, 727, 713; and the 1st of Tirhakah, falling thus in the 14th of Hezekiah, would seem to agree perfectly with the sacred text. But the later evidence of an Apis stele, and the annals of Asshur-bani-pal, son of Esarhaddon, seem to prove that Tirhakah was the immediate predecessor of Psammetichus, and that his reign was reckoned to

begin in Egypt only twenty-six years earlier, though the reading of the Apis stele is open to some doubt. On this view, now usual, the accession of Tirhakah would be B.C. 690, or seven years after Hezekiah's death.

This change is very fatal to the authority of the Lists of Manetho, since three reigns of his twenty-sixth dynasty are thus blotted out of the chronological series of kings. But it lends no weight to the lower Assyrian dates as compared with the higher, and involves no contradiction of the sacred text. If the first of Tirhakah in Egypt were also his first in Ethiopia, the new date would be equally adverse to the 29th as to the 14th of Hezekiah, and would require us to place Sennacherib's campaign not earlier than the eighth of Manasseh. Nor could this evil be cured by the plan some propose, either of shortening Manasseh's long reign, or lowering the Captivity, and assuming Darius the Mede to be Darius Hystaspes. For this, bringing down the date of Samaria's fall, would involve a further lowering of the Assyrian reigns also, and the main difficulty be just the same as before. But Dr Hincks justly observes that, in Kings and Isaiah, Tirhakah is called king of Ethiopia, not of Egypt, though Pharaoh king of Egypt has been named shortly before, Isaiah xxxvi. 6, xxxvii. 9, and So or Sevechus has been called king of Egypt. But if Tirhakah might have reigned in Ethiopia eight years, or B.C. 698—690, before his accession in Egypt, he might equally have reigned there twenty-three years. This would bring his total reign to forty-nine years, or fifty current, and account for the story in Herodotus, who places one Ethiopian reign of fifty years at this very period, only assigning it to Sabaco. This is simpler than the more violent solution, that three reigns were confused into one. The abdication of Tirhakah on the second expedition of Asshur-bani-pal in Egypt, about B.C. 665, is affirmed in the Assyrian inscriptions, while Herodotus ascribes such an abdication to Sabaco, also after a reign of fifty years. The solution is simple, that Tirhakah's reign in Egypt was only twenty-six years, but that his reign in Ethiopia and influence over Egypt began twenty-three or twenty-four years earlier, B.C. 714 or 713. The statement in Scripture, where he appears as king of Ethiopia, not of Egypt, will thus remain in full agreement with the most recent Egyptian evidence.

### § 3. COMPARISON OF THE HIGHER AND LOWER DATES.

25. The dates of the Assyrian reigns now current among Syrologists, and received by Sir H. Rawlinson, M. Oppert, and Prof. Rawlinson in Smith's Dictionary and the *Five Great Monarchies*, are as follows:

B.C. 752, Pul=Asshur-lush; 744, Tiglath-pileser; 726, Shalmaneser IV.; 721, Sargon; 704, Sennacherib; 680, Esarhaddon=Asaradinus, or Asshur-akh-idin; 667, Asshur-bani-pal; 647, Asshur-emid-idil, or Saracus.

The higher series, which results from the last section, will be as follows:

B.C. 773, Pul=Asshur-danin-il II.; 747, Tiglath-pileser; 729, Shalmaneser IV.=Sargon; 714, Sennacherib; 693, Esarhaddon at Nineveh; 680, he recovers Babylon; 667, Asshur-bani-pal; 647, Saracus.

To begin with Pul, the first Assyrian reign in Scripture. The lower scheme either makes him the same with Asshur-lush, or else a Chaldean king or rebel satrap in that reign. But the sacred text calls him distinctly king of Assyria, not of Babylon. It ascribes to him an invasion of Israel at the opening of the reign of Menahem, who, by that text, came to the throne late in the Jewish year 772—1, his years reckoning from the later date; that is, in the first three months of B.C. 771. The accession of Asshur-lush, by the scheme, was nine years after Menahem's death, a direct contradiction to the history. And this is not removed by the expedient of setting aside the nine years' interregnum between Pekah's murder and Hoshea's accession (*F. G. M.* II. 389). But this, if it lowers the reigns in Israel, would still place the accession of the false Pul in the very year of Menahem's death. And besides, it cannot lower those reigns without falsifying eight distinct synchronisms, and even transferring half of them to the reigns of other kings.

On the other view, though the place of this king, Asshur-danin-il, is inferred only from the Assyrian Canon, and not found in the monuments, the harmony is complete. The first campaign of these Assyrian kings is usually eastward or southward, and the second or third westward. But if the accession were towards the close of B.C. 773, then B.C. 771, the first year of Menahem, would be the year of Pul's second, or first westward, campaign. Again, it is historically far more natural to refer a campaign of conquest to the last king but one of the dynasty, answering to Jeroboam II. in Israel, or Asshur-bani-pal in the Lower Empire, than to a Chaldean king, when Babylon has not appeared on the scene; or to an Assyrian Augustulus, in whose short reign the kingdom was broken, and the dynasty come to an end.

#### 26. TIGLATH-PILESER, B.C. 747—729.

This king is named, 2 Kings xv. 29, xvi. 7, 9, 10; 1 Chron. v. 26; 2 Chron. xxviii. 20. In the reign of Pekah he took "Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria." Ahaz sent messengers to him, when he "went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried it away captive to Kir, and slew Rezin." Ahaz then went and met him at Damascus. The third passage says that Pul and Tiglath-pileser carried away Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh. The last states simply that he came to Ahaz, "and distressed him, but strengthened him not."

His name in the monuments is variously rendered, Tigulti-pal-tsira, Tiklat-pal-isri, or Tuklat-pal-asar. They imply that he was an usurper, and no regular heir, since "he does not record even his father's name." The chief events in his remains are an invasion of Syria, assigned to his first, and a Syrian campaign of his eighth year. In this he claims to have defeated Rezin king of Damascus, taken and destroyed his city, and received tribute from a king of Samaria, whom he calls Menahem, from Hiram king of Tyre, and Khabibi, a queen of the Arabians.

With the higher dates there are three distinct harmonies with Scripture or general history. First, his accession as an usurper, the old line being

ended by decay or violence in Asshur-lush, is in the Era of Nabonassar, in full agreement with the general consent of historians, that this was the time of a revolt of Babylon, and of transition from an Upper to a Lower Assyrian Empire. The other view places him three years later, too short for an interposed reign, and too long for a probable interregnum, or for the survival of the last feeble monarch, when the crisis of the empire had come.

Next, the monuments place his Syrian campaign in his eighth year. On the higher scheme this is B.C. 740, or the third of Ahaz, the very year to which it is assigned by Scripture, since the urgent invitation of Ahaz was caused by a second invasion of Rezin and Pekah, in his own second year. The murder of Pekah, early in the next year, the 4th of Ahaz and 20th of Jotham, might be a natural result of those disasters to Israel, when the land of Naphtali and Gilead was carried away.

Thirdly, in the last year of Ahaz, B.C. 727, Philistia is warned not to rejoice because the rod that smote them was now broken. The serpent who had lately stung them would have successors still more deadly. Now the monuments of Tiglath record that he received tribute from kings of Ascalon and Gaza, and the Philistines were one people against whom he was invited by Ahaz. The higher dates agree, since his death would thus be about a year and a half before the time of Isaiah's warning.

27. The lower date, B.C. 744—726, replaces these agreements by as many improbabilities or contradictions. First, it divorces his accession from the Era of Nabonassar, to which the change of dynasty and the fall of the old line, after lasting 520 years, is so naturally referred. Next, it ascribes to him three Syrian campaigns, in B.C. 741, 733, 732, in his 4th, 12th and 13th years, but none in his 8th, the only date of such a campaign in the monuments. The date these give to the expedition, in which Damascus and Rezin were overcome, answers in this scheme to B.C. 737, the sixth of Ahaz, or three years after the Bible date of Pekah's death. The invitation of Ahaz is referred to his own 11th or 12th year, which requires us to read thirty years for twenty in 2 Kings xv. 27, and thirtieth for twentieth in v. 30, in the second case a very improbable change. And a more serious contradiction remains, even with this unproved extension of Pekah's reign. For two prosperous expeditions of Tiglath against Rezin and Pekah, one of them four years in length, are thus placed before that message of Ahaz, which is clearly described in Kings, Chronicles, and Isaiah, as the guilty cause of the first recommencement of Assyrian conquests in Palestine. Also two conquests of Damascus are made directly to precede the prosperous campaigns of Rezin and Pekah against Judah, and Ephraim's boasts of recovered power, Isaiah ix. 8—12. The slabs of Tiglath-pileser are not more broken, defaced, and displaced by Esarhaddon, than the predictions of Isaiah and the history of Ahaz by this proposed scheme of Tiglath-pileser's Syrian campaigns.

28. Three reasons are given for holding three distinct expeditions, of which neither Scripture nor the monuments offer any trace. First, that the localities in 1 Chron. v. 26 and 2 Kings xv. 29 are quite different. But this

is a clear mistake, since the text in Chronicles is in the genealogies, and could only refer to the tribes east of Jordan, while Gilead is expressly included in the Book of Kings. Next, that the second and third are the lighter and heavier afflictions of Isaiah ix. 1. But these, by the text, were both of them past in the second of Ahaz, and answer precisely to the much earlier ravages of Benhadad, 1 Kings xv. 20, and of Hazael, 2 Kings x. 32, 33. And the main scope of the prophet's warning is to contrast these with the whole series of heavier Assyrian troubles, which the unbelief of Ahaz and Judah was now ready to bring upon the land. Thirdly, that Menahem is named in the annals of the eighth year. But this is not accounted for in the least, either by the lower system of Assyrian dates, or by getting rid of what is called "an imaginary interregnum" between Hoshea's accession and Pekah's death. For this last can be done only in one of three ways. First, by lowering all the higher reigns in Israel. This leaves the entry unexplained, since Menahem's death, B.C. 751, would still be seven years before Tiglath's accession, and it also falsifies no less than eight or ten synchronisms in the text: secondly, by raising Hoshea's accession, and changing four synchronisms: or thirdly, by lengthening Pekah's reign, and changing two texts, as above. Both of these changes leave the death of Menahem 17 years before Tiglath's accession in this lower scheme.

But, in fact, the interregnum yields an easy solution to this one difficulty in the Assyrian record, which remains wholly unsolved by setting that interval aside against the evidence of the text. The year when Ahaz sent his message was the 19th of Pekah. The attack on Rezin, the siege and capture of Damascus, and the first steps of Israel's deportation, would follow next year; and Pekah was slain early in the following year, the 20th of Jotham, or 4th of Ahaz. Since Pekah had reigned by the murder of Pekahiah, son of Menahem, to avenge this murder might be Hoshea's plea for his own act. Whether, then, he was too weak to seize the throne at once, or declined it from policy in an hour of disaster, he might naturally seek to govern in the name of some heir of Menahem; and few things are more usual than for the grandson to have the grandfather's name. The second campaign of Tiglath, to complete the first, would plainly be after Pekah's death, under his nominal successor, who might thus be a Menahem II., grandson of the first. Or the Assyrian king himself might set up such a puppet king, who is refused any notice as a king in the sacred history.

29. SHALMANESER = SARGON, B.C. 729—714.

The divergence of the two schemes, slight in amount in the last reign, though important in its results, is here radical and complete. For Tiglath being placed three years lower, and separate reigns of five and seventeen years assigned to Shalmaneser and Sargon, the reign of Sennacherib is brought down to Hezekiah's twenty-third year; and then, by the two years' inaction, and the double campaign, the decisive expedition is delayed to the twenty-ninth and last year, thus reversing the main features of the sacred history, and of Isaiah's prophecy. It has been shewn already that only four marks exist by which the Shalmaneser in Kings can be identified, and that all of



these belong to the Sargon of the monuments. It remains now to justify this conclusion by Scripture, the monuments of Sargon, and the Canon of Ptolemy, in the details of this reign.

First, the sacred text is adverse, in its natural meaning, to the insertion of another reign between Shalmaneser and Sennacherib. For in 2 Kings xvi., after mention of "Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria," v. 7, in the two next verses he is called simply "the king of Assyria," the person being the same. In 2 Kings xvii., after mention of "Shalmaneser king of Assyria," v. 3, in the three next verses "the king of Assyria" is mentioned simply five times, and in four of these the person is admitted to be the same. It is very unnatural to suppose a different king to be meant, without naming him, in the fifth case alone. In 2 Kings xviii. 9, Shalmaneser king of Assyria is named once more, then the king of Assyria once only in v. 11, then Sennacherib king of Assyria, in v. 13, and again the king of Assyria simply, twelve times in succession, the person remaining the same. Here it is still more unnatural to suppose a different king meant in the one occurrence of the title between two different names, when the title is plainly used four times in one case, and twelve times in the other, in reference to the last-named king. The utmost that can be inferred, with reason, from the plural form "they took it," is that the capture was by Shalmaneser's generals, and not by the king in person.

Again, the mention of Sargon, Isaiah xx. 1, in a mere parenthesis, is quite natural, if this were known to be one name of a king, mentioned already, and that prominently, in the chronicles of Israel, as the author of Ephraim's captivity. But if the king is named here only, while his reign filled the greater half of that of Hezekiah, such a parenthesis is not at all natural or easy to explain.

30. The supposed reign, again, of Shalmaneser for five years only, as laid down in the other scheme, is historically impossible. There is no space for the three expeditions assigned him, without contradicting the text. If B.C. 726, the first of Hezekiah, were his first year, the siege B.C. 723, and an expedition lay between them (*F. G. M.* II. 404, and note 13), it must have occurred the next year, or next but one, after the first imposition of tribute. But the siege is expressly referred to Hoshea's having discontinued tribute, which he had brought "year by year." This is quite consistent with the higher date, which places the accession of Shalmaneser-Sargon B.C. 729, six years before the final siege in the Book of Kings, but not with the lower date, even without the middle expedition, which on that view is a direct historical contradiction.

The scheme further assumes that, in the same five years, Shalmaneser made a first and second campaign against Tyre, and then blockaded it five years longer. It is historically most improbable that two such sieges of Tyre and Samaria would be carried on side by side for three years, the second beginning while the first was in progress. Also the close of that blockade, by the extract in Menander, and the hypothesis, would be in the third of Sargon, and his annals of that year allude to no such event. It is most unlikely that his reign should begin with two sieges still unfinished,

both begun by his predecessor, while no allusion to one of them, nor to the predecessor himself, has been found.

31. The facts, in M. Oppert's version of the annals, which bear on the sacred history, are briefly these. (1) In the beginning of his reign.....the Samaritan.....(3 lines deficient).....With the aid of the Sun, he besieged and seized on the city of Samaria, led captive 27,280 persons, and brought them into Assyria, and placed instead of them men he had conquered, set over them his lieutenants as governors, and imposed on them tribute as Assyrians. (2) In his first year he vanquished the king of Elam. Merodach-baladan, against the will of the gods, having arrogated the government of Babylonia, he carried off thence.....men, and transplanted them to Assyria. (3) In the second year Ilu-bid of Hamath fixed himself in Gargar and stirred up Arpad, Zimira, Damascus and Samaria to revolt.....(40 lines wanting).....Another inscription says: "I uprooted the land of Hamath, tortured and burnt Ilu-bid, tanned his skin, and stretched it out like wool. I blew on Carchemish, when my hand had reached Pisiri, for he had conspired to revolt." He attacked Gaza, whose king Hanun had leagued with Shebek, Tar-dan of Egypt, and defeated them at Raphekh or Raphia. "Shebek had confidence in his allies, and met me in battle. I defied him, remembering the great god Asshur, my god. Shebek fled and escaped alone. Hanun was taken, and I carried all his possessions to my city in Assyria. I destroyed his cities and burnt them with fire, and carried off 9053 men and their goods." (4) The third year he marched against Van, and Mititti the Zikirtian. In the fourth, "Kiakkou of Sinoukta hardened his heart not to send tribute. I lifted my hands to the gods, and lighted on him like a cloud, led captive him and his soldiers, his wife, sons, daughters, the servants of his palace, and much booty, and gave Sinoukta his capital to Matti of Atuna." (5) In the fifth year Carchemish rebelled, their chief was put in chains, many of them were removed to Assyria, and Assyrians placed in Carchemish. (6) The sixth and seventh years had campaigns against Ursaha the Armenian, Belsharusur of Kisasi, Ursaha and Ullusou of Van, and the king of Nairi. It continues: "I occupied the country of Beth-Hamma, and carried away 2830 inhabitants. I seized on the towns of Harua and Usnani in the land of Kuë, which Mita, king of the Moschians (Moab?), had usurped. I marched against the tribes of the Tasidi, Ibadadi, Marsimani.....of the land (of Arabia), the far off dwellers in the land Bari, which the learned and wise had not known, and of which none of the kings my fathers had heard the name. I made them obey Asshur, and those who remained I took from their homes and placed them in the city of Samaria. Pharaoh, king of Egypt, Samsia queen of Arabia, It-hamar the Sabean, are kings of the farthest sea. I took tribute from them, incense, metals, dogs of all kinds, horses and camels. I succoured Meta king of the Moschians?...in the district of his kingdom. The strong places of Haroua and Usnani that had belonged to the men of his country from time immemorial, I restored to him." (7) The eighth year had a campaign against Van and Media, Mittiti of Zikirta, Ursaha the Armenian, the Näiri, &c. (8) In the tenth year "the vast country of Khamman had not submitted to Asshur," and was the scene of a conquest, and a viceroy set up.

Mention is made, in a fragment, of "the retreats of the mountains of Syria," and of tributes in metal from several places, and "the land of Ammon," all which were laid up in his city Dur-Sarkin. (9) In the eleventh year "Azuri, king of Ashdod, would not obey Asshur, nor give his tributes, and sent to neighbour kings messages hostile to Assyria. I meditated vengeance and raised in his stead his brother Akhimit to the throne. But the people of Syria, greedy of revolt, tired of his rule, and set up Yaman. In the wrath of my heart, I did not divide my army, nor break its ranks, but marched against Ashdod with my warriors, who did not stray from the traces of my sandals. I besieged and took Ashdod, carried off its gods, gold, silver, treasures of the palace, and placed there men whom I had conquered, placed over them my lieutenant, treated them as Assyrians, and they practised obedience."

The twelfth and thirteenth years have a long account of war with Merodach-baladan, Elam, and Babylon. "He refused tribute, had leagued with Umbanigas king of Elam, and raised against me all the tribes of Mesopotamia. Against the will of the gods of Babylon, the city of Bel who judges the gods, he had sent embassies twelve years. But Merodach, the great god, did not protect the hostile deeds of the Chaldean, by whose help he lost the sceptre and throne of his kingdom."... "The rest of the Aramæans, a perverse race, had placed their hopes on Merodach-baladan and Sutruk-nakhunti (king of Elam)... I established my power amidst the palace of Merodach-baladan, and received tribute from the lands of Aram. I committed Birtu to my lieutenant the governor of Babylon." The conflict continued through the thirteenth year. Meanwhile his lieutenant, westward, had fought with and defeated Meta the Moschian. "Seven princes of Yatnan (Cyprus), whose home is seven days off in the midst of the sea, and of whom the kings my fathers had not known the names, on hearing the humiliation of the king of Babylon, brought presents to me at Babylon, gold, silver, ebony, sandal wood, and kissed my feet." The fourteenth year had a campaign in Com-magene, and in the fifteenth Ispabara was set up by his seven captains in Illib.

32. The Book of Kings tells us that, in the beginning of the reign of Hoshea, Shalmaneser came up against him, and he became his servant and gave him tribute; that on finding him to have conspired with So or Shebek, king of Egypt, he imprisoned him, came up against all the land, besieged Samaria in the seventh, and took it in the ninth of Hoshea, or in the fourth and sixth of Hezekiah. The broken fragment of the annals agrees with this account as well with the higher as the lower dates. On the latter view Sargon wholly conceals the fact that the conquest and siege were begun by his predecessor, and nearly finished when his reign began. With the higher date two explanations are possible. Either a summary of the repeated campaigns against Samaria is made to introduce the annals of separate years, and their whole result is given at once; or else the words, from their order, refer to months after the accession, before the first complete year began. Now if he succeeded in the summer of B.C. 729, the first of Hoshea, there was time for a campaign before the spring of his first year began. Since Tiglath had already carried captive the half tribe of Manassch, Gad, and

Naphtali, a further captivity would be almost certain to accompany this new inroad, with fresh imposition of tribute on Hoshea, constituting him an Assyrian vassal and viceroy. A capture of Samaria, taken unprepared, might accompany the same event, as it had been taken by Tiglath before; and the inscription, being fifteen years later, might prefer to take no notice of the protracted defence in a second siege, which would be less glorious to the arms of Assyria than the first rapid conquest. Accordingly, the message of Hezekiah in his first year, B.C. 726, or two and a half years later, seems to imply that a large deportation of Israel to Assyria had taken place very shortly before, 2 Chr. xxx. 6. The annals, also, state that Samaria was invited by the king of Hamath, in Sargon's first year, to share in revolt with Hamath, Arpad, and Damascus. This agrees perfectly with the view that the date was B.C. 727, Hoshea's third year, when the annual tribute had to be paid a second time; but is hardly conceivable in the very next year after the three years' siege, when its strength was utterly broken by famine, sword, and captivity; when a native Assyrian deputy ruled the feeble remnant, that were not yet carried away, or those who had replaced them.

33. The chief argument for the lower dates is drawn from the notices of Merodach-baladan in Sargon's first and twelfth years, compared with the Canon of Ptolemy. But while that canon has deservedly much weight, from its use of a fixed era, and its agreement, in the lowest and best known portions, with other historical testimonies; in itself it is a bare list of names and numbers, perhaps derived from Babylonian registers, and the exact mode in which the successions were fixed in its earliest portion is quite unknown. We know, from the annals of Tiglath and Sennacherib, that Merodach was a native leader in Babylonia, and able to contend with the kings of Assyria, more than twenty years before the beginning of his place in the canon, and also ten years after its close. We learn further, from Polyhistor, that he reigned again, six months, before Elibus or Belibus. But neither the annals nor other histories give us any knowledge of Chinzirus and Porus, and Elulæus or Jugæus, the names which come before him, nor of Arceanus, who comes after him. The interregnum that follows is a further sign of civil strife, involving uncertainty in the mode of reckoning the succession. The years, again, of Sargon do not seem, in his own annals, to answer strictly to those of his rival, but to be one lower; since Merodach is already in power in Sargon's first year, and had completed twelve years, apparently, in Sargon's reckoning, when the twelfth campaign began. The accession was reckoned, probably, by the priesthood of Bel, since Dr Hincks has shewn strong reasons (*J. S. L.*, 1859) for holding the name of rule in Babylon to be priestly; and though a rival might be displaced, the civil governor might not displace a friendly name from the temple register. Let us assume, then, that for three years of Chinzirus and Porus, or of Porus after two of Chinzirus, of whom history tells us nothing, and through five of Elulæus or Jugæus, perhaps Yagin, father of Merodach, the latter held actual power at Babylon, assuming the priestly honour only on his father's death; and that he recovered power, and held it eight years, with the double title, after Sennacherib's reverse had encouraged Babylon to assert its independence once more. The dates would then be—731 Chinzirus;

729 Merodach, civil ruler, Porus, priest of Bel; 726 Merodach in rule, Jugæus or Yagin, priest; 721 Merodach king, and priest of Bel; 717 Arceanus, Assyrian governor under Sargon, and priest; 712 Merodach in power once more; 704 interregnum, Merodach recovering power at its close; 702 Belibus; 699 Assaronadius. His absolute date in the priestly register, combined with the fact, proved by tablets and inscriptions, of a twelve years' continuous rule, would thus lead naturally to the transposition of the five years of Arceanus, and of his own last eight in the priestly register. And since his political life and struggles, from the annals, extend over 45 or 48 years, it is more likely that his actual rule, as king of Babylon, amounted to 20 than only to 12 years. For we find him struggling manfully, from first to last, against the Assyrian domination.

34. In all other respects the annals, with the higher dates, agree with the natural meaning of the Books of Kings and Isaiah. The successive conquests of Hamath, Arpad, Damascus, and Samaria, are set before us in Isaiah x. as the actual order of Assyrian progress. Sargon, after ravaging Babylonia in his first year, but claiming no conquest, in his second defeats the rebellious king of Hamath, slays him, and reduces the city, when leagued with Arpad and Damascus, at the opening of the campaign. That Samaria was invited to share the revolt seems to fix the event in Hoshea's reign, before its utter fall. That year, B.C. 727, was the last of Ahaz, when Isaiah warned the Philistines, who were rejoicing in Tiglath's recent death, that still greater evils were impending from his successor, and that successor's son. The same year, on this view, Sargon attacked Gaza, defeated the Philistines and Egyptians at Raphia, led Hanun and 9033 persons captive, and burned the cities of Philistia with fire. This year is also, reckoning upward from the Ethiopian date of Tirhakah, B.C. 713, the first of the fourteen years of Shebek, who appears as a new ally of the Philistines. The coming triumphs of Sargon over Hamath, Damascus, and Arpad, at Kharkhar or Aroer, and over Philistia and Egypt at Raphia, both of them in his second year, would thus be a fitting occasion for the burdens on Philistia, Moab, Damascus, and Egypt, in Isaiah's prophecies. If the burden on Moab were two years after that on Philistia, then "three years," ch. xvi. 14, will reach to the seventh of Sargon, the middle year of the last siege of Samaria, when he made an expedition against Arabia and the wandering tribes of the desert, which seems to have included Aroer, Ammon, and the Moabites, and thus to have been by the eastern side of Jordan. To this the burdens of ch. xxi. seem to refer. The Thamudites were then subdued, and he penetrated "to the remote Arabia, which had never before given tribute to Assyria, of which none of the kings my fathers had heard the name." Some of these were settled in Samaria. Its final capture, by the scheme, would be next year, and probably not by Sargon himself, but Tartan his general, thus answering to the order in Isaiah, where that calamity is next described in "the burden of the valley of vision." The year of its fall was probably the same when Tartan was sent to Ashdod, to set up Akhimit in place of Azuri his brother. The three years' sign in ch. xx. would thus belong to that date, and be fulfilled in Sargon's eleventh year, when he marched against Ashdod in person, and "there

was no straggler in his armies," Isaiah xiv. 31 (R.V.) ; or, in his own words, his warriors "did not separate themselves from the trace of his sandals;" when also the Egyptian and Ethiopian allies of Yaman were put to open shame, and the king of Meroe was led by fear of his majesty to bow down before him. In short, the reign of Sargon, who on this view is the basilisk of Isaiah xiv. 29, beginning with the first of Hoshea, three years before Hezekiah, was that of an eastern Napoleon, leading the Assyrian empire, by one unbroken series of campaigns and victories, to the height of power, and sealing it by the building of his new city ; so as to make the sudden disaster more conspicuous, when the flood reached the neck in Sennacherib's campaign.

35. SENNACHERIB, B.C. 714—693.

In the annals of Sennacherib, as drawn from the Taylor and Bellino cylinders, two things are very suggestive of concealment and partial falsehood. First, that "he does not speak of years, but of campaigns" (*F. G. M.* II. 144). And next, that his recorded campaigns are only eight in number, while a tablet has been found with his twenty-second year. Yet the Taylor cylinder seems to have been engraven in his twenty-first year. After Sargon's career of unbroken conquest, it follows that, for some reason or other, about thirteen of his son's years, though equally daring and boastful with his father, were without any campaign.

The historical outline of his reign, with the lower dates, is incredible, unless we reject the clear and sublime narrative of the word of God as a mere fable. Succeeding to Sargon, who had raised the empire to its height of power by successes almost without a pause, we are called to believe that Sennacherib began by a total inaction of two years ; and that, next, he did a second time what Sargon professes to have done about five years before, expelled Merodach, and set up an Assyrian governor. His Syrian expedition, in his fifth year, is an unmingled success. His reverse was in a second campaign, which the Bible narrative excludes, and of which the Assyrian records say not a single word. But its effect was so trifling, that in the same or the next year he was conquering just as his father had done, and went on conquering through four or five prosperous campaigns. Then the love of rest and ease must have seized on him for thirteen years ; which are without a campaign, though Babylon, close at his side, was in revolt or independence for eight years ; till his murder by his own sons enabled Esarhaddon, at the same moment, to displace the murderers at Nineveh, and also to recover Babylon from revolt to dependence and submission. Such a course of events, unless all the known laws of history were suspended and reversed, is quite incredible.

36. Let us now compare the result of the higher dates. Sargon, in his fifteenth year, as he reckons in his annals, but the sixteenth, including the year of his accession, B.C. 729, is assassinated, B.C. 714, perhaps in the month of August (Oppert, p. 29). He is succeeded by his equally proud and warlike son. The father's recent successes in Babylonia, and the temporary fall of Merodach, left no call for his activity in that direction ; so that, when firmly seated on the throne, he bent his efforts at once to com-

plete the Assyrian victories, already great, in Phœnicia, Judæa, and Egypt. His campaign began B.C. 713, early in the year, with forces that seemed irresistible. His first successes were great. He expelled Luliya or Elulais, king of Sidon, established Tubal in his place, received tributes from Arvad, Byblus, Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab; captured Ascalon, and transported its king to Assyria; marched on Ekron, and met the Philistines, Egyptians, and Ethiopians at Altaku or Eltekeh, defeated them with great slaughter, took alive several sons of Pharaoh, slew the rebels, and sold others as slaves. He then made war on Judah, the only power north of Egypt not yet reduced. He claims in his annals to have shut up Hezekiah in Jerusalem as a bird in a cage, raising mounds against it on every side, taken 46 strong fenced cities, and smaller towns a countless number, to have received thirty talents of gold and 800 of silver in tribute, and carried off as spoil 200,150 people with horses and mares, asses and camels, oxen and sheep, a countless multitude. So ends his own history of the campaign, agreeing exactly with Scripture except on two or three points, on which his bulletin for Assyrian readers was sure to be false. He conceals his own breach of faith, who first received Hezekiah's tribute, and then renewed the siege, to compel their abject submission, and carry off the people as Assyrian slaves; and also the sudden destruction of the beleaguering host, in one night, on the mountain heights where they were encamped around Jerusalem, Isaiah xiv. 25, xxv. 4, 5, xxix. 4—8.

37. The Scripture narrative then continues: "So he departed, and went and returned, even Sennacherib king of Assyria, and he dwelt at Nineveh." The words plainly do not imply his sudden and speedy death, as stated in the book of Tobit, which the annals fully disprove; but they do seem to imply, what was natural and almost inevitable, a cessation of foreign campaigns for some years. His father's city, Dour-Sarkin, was probably still incomplete, the reign having been full of wars and conquests; and, besides completing those monuments, he might seek to immortalize himself by magnificent structures of his own. But the blow must have shaken the empire to its basis, and dissolved for a time the charm of invincible strength. The year, on this view, would be the fifth and last of Sargon's viceroy at Babylon, B.C. 717—713. Early next year "Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan," had profited by the heavy blow on Assyria to recover his throne, which he held eight years longer, and sent, as was natural, an embassy to Hezekiah. At the end of that time native feuds had arisen, the empire was recovering from the shock, an Assyrian party prevailed for a moment, and a brother of Sennacherib was received as viceroy. Merodach, still unsubdued, recovers it for a few months, when Sennacherib takes the field for the first time after his reverse, and sets up Belipni or Belibus at Babylon. A campaign in Zagros follows, then a pause of a year, and a third campaign, when Assaronadius his son is made viceroy, and holds the post for six years. Four campaigns in succession now follow, the king and the empire being no longer spell-bound by their great reverse, first in Zagros and Cilicia, and then on the side of Babylon and Susiana. Probably in B.C. 694 he made an expedition to the sea-coast of Cilicia, and founded Tarsus.

But, when thus entered anew on a course of conquest, he was quickly arrested by the stroke of death. His own sons were his murderers, and Esar-haddon, committing the rule of Babylon to Rigebelus, ascended the throne.

38. ESAR-HADDON or ASARADINUS, B.C. 693—667.

The reign of this king, with the lower dates, is only 13 years, both at Nineveh and Babylon. With the higher it is 26 years, half at Nineveh alone, and the other half with the Babylonian viceroyalty held in his own person, besides six years when he held it alone in his father's lifetime. The events themselves seem to favour the higher estimate for the length of his reign. His cylinders record ten distinct campaigns; against Phœnicia, including a naval expedition to Cyprus, and the reduction of Sidon and a neighbouring king; against Armenia and Cilicia, with wars in the north-west and north-east; against Chaldea, to displace one son of Merodach, and set up another; against Edom; and next, against a remote district, perhaps the land of Buz in Arabia, where no Assyrian army had reached before; against Armenian tribes, and a very remote part of Media. But besides these, there was the expedition in which Manasseh was made captive, the transfer of Cuthites to Samaria, the founding of a new city near to Sidon, and also an invasion and conquest of Egypt, to which the annals of his son allude. When we add that he claims to have built three palaces and thirty temples, and that one of those palaces was planned on the largest scale, it seems hardly possible that all should be compressed within the short space of thirteen years. To these we may add a civil war with Adrammelech, which Abydenus ascribes to the opening of his reign. A slight presumption for the higher dates may be further gained from the genealogy. If Asshurbanipal was ten years younger than Sargon at his accession, we should still have only B.C. 761—697, or 64 years, for three generations; but 8 years more, or 72 years, with the earlier date.

39. The result of this inquiry may be summed up in a few words. With the dates now adopted by Syrologists in opposition to the earlier chronologers, we adhere to the Canon of Ptolemy in some of its details, to other details of a nameless Assyrian canon, and to the entire truthfulness of Sennacherib in what he records; but we sacrifice the text of Scripture, the drift and main features of the most central part of the sacred history, the common silence of the monuments and the Assyrian Canon on any reign between Tiglath-pileser and Sargon, and the direct proof from Menander that Shalmaneser and Sargon are the same. Instead of a series of harmonies between the monuments and the annals of the Book of Isaiah, we produce a series of discords and contradictions; while the course of events seems wholly opposed to all the lessons of historical common-sense.

On the other view we assume a wilful concealment, by Sennacherib, of the reverse which ended his Judæan campaign, of his own guilty breach of faith which led to the calamity, and also of the true order of that event among the years of his reign; since this would have betrayed the long inaction in which he dwelt at Nineveh, and carried on its stately build-



ings without venturing on foreign war for a season. We assume, further, that the priestly register of Babylon was not always identical with the civil rule. But we gain thereby a result historically consistent and natural; and a series of agreements, some patent on the surface, others revealing themselves on closer search, between the facts in the annals of Assyria, the whole range of Isaiah's prophecies, and the Books of Chronicles and Kings.

## APPENDIX IV.

### THE PROPHECY OF IMMANUEL.

The Christian interpretation of this most important prophecy, which sees its proper fulfilment in our Lord and Him alone, is confirmed by these reasons: (1) The character of the offered sign, "in the height above, or in the depth beneath," which implies that the event thus promised was some unusual wonder. (2) The natural force of the word "virgin," when compared further with the first promise of the Seed of the woman. (3) The mention of Immanuel, ch. viii. 8, as the Owner of the land of Israel. (4) The further and fuller description, ix. 6, of this Child that was to be born, as the Mighty God, answering to the name "God with us;" and as the appointed heir of the throne of David, whose kingdom would have no end. (5) The plain repetition of the same promise, ch. xi., in the promise of the Rod from the stem of Jesse, given as the sequel of the Assyrian overthrow. (6) The fact that another child with another name, a son of the prophet, and not in the royal line, is immediately given, to fulfil the more limited purpose of predicting the time when Rezin and Pekah would be overthrown.

Two main objections lie against this view, and need to be removed. How could the birth of Christ, after seven centuries, be a sign to Ahaz of speedy deliverance? How can the words of ch. vii. 16 be explained on this view? Is it not a strange promise, that before the boyhood of Christ, seven centuries later, the dreaded invasion would have passed away? The difficulty has been felt and known by most orthodox expositors, and various attempts have been made to remove it. Some interpret "the child" v. 16 indefinitely, for any new-born child, others refer it to Shear-jashub. Vittinga supposes a comparison between this first stage of Messiah's lifetime when born, and the interval till Rezin's overthrow. Hengstenberg adds the further view of a prophetic extasy, in which the prophet saw the stages of that infancy as if present, and compared them with the actual and immediate future. Others refer the verse to the actual passing away of the sceptre from Judah after the birth of Christ.

It is clearly strained and violent to assume a sudden transition, in v. 16, to a second child. Shear-jashub was probably a youth at the time, and to him it could not apply. A reference to the unborn son of the prophet is more reasonable. But Maher-shalal-hashbaz was not the Owner of the land, nor the heir of David's throne, nor was the birth such a sign as had been offered, in the height or in the depth. He was indeed a sign, like Shear-jashub, viii. 18; but still a contrast to that greater and nobler Child, ix. 6,

whose name would be "the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

A key to this difficulty is found, when we observe the close connection of ch. vii. vv. 15, 22, in both of which "curds and honey" are named. The main object of this sign of unusual dignity was, in the hour of alarm and terror, to renew the confidence of the faithful in God's double covenant to Abraham and to David, of One who should possess the gate of his enemies, and of that Son of David, who should rise up to sit on his throne, of whose kingdom there should be no end. The purpose of the hostile league was wholly to displace the sacred line, and to set up the son of Tabeal, a stranger or a renegade, on David's throne. The promise, then, to the house of David, of the greater Son of David, whose birth would be a miracle of Divine power, the Owner of the land, and the Redeemer of His people from their enemies, is confirmed with greater fulness and clearness than before. But a special warning, due to the present sin of Ahaz and his people, is here joined with the promise. Not only the present invasion, which would very soon be at an end, but heavier troubles and desolations from the Assyrian spoiler, whom they were blindly inviting to relieve them from a momentary danger, were coming upon the whole land, on Judah as well as Ephraim; and it would thus be reduced to a waste and desolate condition, before this promised Child should enter on His work of deliverance.

The whole prediction, then, vv. 17—25, is included in v. 16, as if it formed part of one and the same sentence, and expounds the force of the warning notice in the previous verse. The special food of Messiah, while yet an infant, is made the subject of prediction, to indicate that the troubles and changes presently described must all be fulfilled, before He would enter on His great work as the destined heir of David's throne, and the Redeemer of Israel.

The promise of Immanuel, then, has a primary and a secondary purpose. The first and chief was to strengthen the hope of the faithful in Judah, in this hour of fear and danger, that they might stay their souls anew on the covenant to Abraham and to David, and also gain some further insight into the mysterious nature and dignity of the Messiah who was to come. He was to be "Immanuel," God with us, the Son of the Virgin, pure and sinless from His birth, knowing to choose good and refuse evil. A foundation is thus laid for all Isaiah's later messages, centering on the same glorious Child; the Rod from the Stem of Jesse, the Root of Jesse, the precious Corner-stone, laid by God himself in Zion, the King to reign in righteousness, the Divine Shepherd of Israel, the Chosen and Beloved Servant of God, the Man of sorrows, the great Intercessor for transgressors, the Anointed Preacher of comfort to the mourners in Zion, the Salvation of His people, the King who speaks in righteousness, mighty to save. But a secondary object, connected with the time when this great promise is renewed, was to teach them that this Deliverer would not arise, and redeem His people, till sore calamities from the Assyrian spoilers had first lighted on the whole land of promise, and its fruitful Carmels, its vineyards and olive-yards, had been changed into open pasture-fields and comparative desolation.

Since, however, the form of the main promise, given to fulfil this double object, might easily have led to the mistaken conclusion that the birth of Immanuel was close at hand, a second message is at once given; and the birth of a second child is promised, a son of the prophet, with a different name, and in a different line of descent, to be a direct and proper limit of the time appointed for the speedy overthrow of "these two tails of smoking fire-brands," Rezin, and the son of Remaliah. The main promise, being thus set free from that faulty and narrow view of its purpose, which might else have arisen, is at once renewed, ch. viii. 8, in all the fulness of its true meaning; that it may be like a star of bright hope before the eyes of the faithful throughout the long series of Assyrian and Chaldean desolations, which were coming shortly upon the land and people of Israel.

The words that follow, ch. viii. 18, confirm this view. The two sons of Isaiah are there described as "signs and wonders from the LORD of hosts, who dwelleth in Zion." Shear-jashub was probably born and named soon after the promise in Isaiah's first commission,—“There shall be in it a tenth, that shall return.” He was now, probably, a boy seventeen years old, and his name was a pledge and a sign of mercy in the midst of sorest trial. Maher-shalal-hash-baz was, by his name, the sign and seal of those judgments which were coming on the land through the Assyrian spoiler. These two signs are both combined in the prediction that next follows, which opens with a mention of the Divine commission to the Assyrian himself, “to take a spoil, and to take the prey, and tread them down as the mire of the streets;” and then issues in the contrasted promise, “Shear-jashub,” “A remnant shall return, the remnant of Jacob, unto the Mighty God,” x. 6, 21. But, in contrast to these two sons of the prophet, these secondary and lower signs of judgment mingled with mercy, the promise of Immanuel, the son of the Virgin, stands out in sublime and unapproachable grandeur throughout the long series of Isaiah's prophecies. It marks the close of this fifth section of the first series, in the well-known and glorious passage, ix. 6, 7. It is referred to in the next section, for “the Mighty God” is one title of this Child, and it is to the same “Mighty God” that the remnant of Jacob are to return. It forms the substance of the seventh and last section, in the prophecy of the Rod from the stem of Jesse, on whom the fulness of the Spirit is to rest. In the third series of Woes, the coming of the same Divine Person is thrice foretold, as the precious Corner-stone, the righteous King, and the Lord the Healer of his people. In each of the three later series He appears, at least in three different characters, with evergrowing clearness in the revelation. He is the Shepherd of Israel, the Chosen Servant of God, the Word sent by the Lord GOD and his Spirit to be the Redeemer of Israel. He is the true Israel, the Comforter of the weary, the Man of sorrows, the Witness, Leader, and Commander of the people. He is the Anointed Preacher of grace, the heavenly Intercessor, the righteous Judge and King. He is the Alpha and Omega in this book of divine prophecy, just as in the whole compass and extent of the word of God.

The passage, ix. 1, has been variously explained. But when we compare the two events of earlier history, 1 Kings xv. 20, 2 Kings x. 32, 33, its meaning becomes clear and plain. The light affliction is that by Benhadad,

when Dan, Chinneroth, and Naphtali were first ravaged by Syria. The heavier affliction is that in the days of Hazael, when they were smitten "from the Jordan eastward...even Gilead and Bashan." But now, when Ahaz had invited the Assyrian spoiler, a time of more complete wasting was to set in, attended with still deeper sorrows. All these calamities, however, would be a dark background, to bring out in brighter relief the blessing to follow. The Child to be born would be "a light to lighten the Gentiles," and of Him and His forerunner it would be true, that there would be "joy and gladness, and many should rejoice at his birth." The same region, also, where the captivity had begun, Galilee of the Gentiles, was to be marked by the first bright dawn of this heavenly light that was to arise. The ministry of our Lord was purposely so ordered, that despised Galilee, as it was the first to undergo those troubles from the heathen, might be the first to catch the full dawn of the long-promised deliverance that Messiah would bring to His people.

In ch. ix. 3, where the received text is both obscure and slightly uncertain, having three varieties, the conjecture of Professor Selwyn (גִּילְדָה) gladness, for *nation*, followed by לֵלֵל or לֵלָה) has been adopted from the strong internal evidence. The parallelism is thus rendered simple and complete. "Thou hast multiplied the gladness, thou hast increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest; and as men are glad (גִּילְדָה) when they divide the spoil." So the fulfilment is recounted in those words of the angel to Zacharias, "Thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth." And again to the shepherds, "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people." A change by conjecture in the sacred text, without direct MS. evidence, ought certainly to be confined within the narrowest limits. But this is one of the very few cases where the variations of the Keri, Chethib, and versions, the obscurity of the sense as the text now stands, and the harmony of sense and structure by the omission of one single letter, seem to me strong evidence that the change only restores the true text as it proceeded from Isaiah. One similar change, Isaiah xxix. 13 (וְתִהְיֶה לְהִתְהַלָּל), of a single letter seems doubly confirmed by the clearer and fuller emphasis it gives to the passage, and by the quotation in the first two Gospels, where the emphasis of our Lord's discourse seems to rest mainly on this very word, denouncing the vanity of their formal worship.

## APPENDIX V.

### THE HISTORICAL GROUNDWORK OF THE BURDENS.

The review of Assyrian history in the times of Isaiah, in App. III., drawn from a comparison of the annals with other evidence, may throw further light on the connection of the parts in the second and third divisions of the prophecy, chh. xiii.—xxxv. Some of the statements in the notes will thus be slightly modified, while the intimate relation between these prophecies and the actual course of events will assume a still more definite form.

The date of Isaiah's commission, in the year of Uzziah's death, or B.C.

759, lies just midway between the three main classic Eras, the Olympiads B.C. 776, the Varronian date of Rome B.C. 753, and the Era of Nabonassar B.C. 747. The earliest of his visions, chh. ii.—vi., seem all to belong to that year of transition from Uzziah's prosperous reign to the less prosperous one of Jotham, and to the disasters under Ahaz. In the second of Ahaz, B.C. 741, eighteen years after the first, a second series of messages, closely related to them, and continuing the same burden, were given. The first had announced the destruction from Ephraim and Syria, which took place in the first year of Ahaz, and then warned, in general terms, of the Assyrian invasion then to follow, ch. v. 25. In ch. vii. this first judgment has been fulfilled, and the calamities from Assyria occupy the whole foreground. Damascus and Samaria are soon to be punished, but Judah's desolations are only just begun. This later message, chh. i., vii.—xii., seems to have been completed in the second and third of Ahaz, and combined with the first; so as to form one entire prophetic series, committed to the keeping of the faithful, viii. 16, 17, until the course of events should put a further seal on the message.

The Burdens begin a new series of prophetic warnings. The date, xiv. 28, seems to imply that the first was given before the year of the death of Ahaz. Now B.C. 729, the 14th of Ahaz, was also the first of Hoshea in the reckoning of his years in Kings. If the view already unfolded be just, it was also the year of Tiglath's death, in which his successor, Shalmaneser or Sargon, came to the throne, and also when Merodach became actual ruler at Babylon. It would thus be a very suitable date, at the opening of the last inglorious reign in Israel, and the most prosperous one in the annals of Assyria, when Assyria's rival, Babylon, also came into new political life and activity, for a series of Burdens on the Gentile powers, to be followed by Woes on Ephraim and Judah.

1. The first Burden is on Babylon, the power by which the captivity of Judah, after escaping from Assyria, was at length to be fulfilled. As the first series began with the final glory of Zion, and then predicted the trials that were first to come; so this Burden on Babylon takes precedence of the judgments on the other Gentile powers, which Nineveh first, and then Babylon, were to overrun and subdue. And here it is plain that Assyria and Babylon are viewed as two successive stages of one and the same power. Hence the description, xiv. 4—8, of the king of Babylon, applies actually to Tiglath, Sargon, and Sennacherib, whose annals are filled mainly with their exactions of tribute from conquered tribes and nations. Also the mention, xiv. 24—27, of the Assyrian overthrow, at the close of this burden, proves that the two powers were viewed as essentially one and the same. But if the year of the prophecy were marked by the rise to power, at Babylon, of the one king who struggled with success against Assyria in the time of its supremacy, and whose later embassy was the first connection between Babylon and Judah, and also by the accession of the most prosperous of Assyrian conquerors, no relation could be more exact and complete between the nature of the message and the occasion when it was revealed.

2. The Burden on Philistia next follows, "in the year that king Ahaz died," or B.C. 727. This note of time, like those in xvi. 13, 14, xx. 1, and perhaps in xxi. 16, 17, may be viewed as not applying to the whole sequel

of the visions, but to this passage alone, as slightly later than those on either side. That year, on the view above, is the second year of Sargon; in which, after subduing Hamath and its allies, he marched southward, defeated Shebek at Raphia, carried Hanun king of Gaza captive into Assyria, with 9033 persons, and burned the neighbouring cities with fire. How reasonable would be the prophet's warning, when the year began, that, although Tiglath the first invader was dead, broken perhaps by violence, Philistia had no cause to rejoice! The fierce basilisk, his successor, was ready to equal and exceed those former ravages, and there would be "no straggler in his armies." The phrase of Sargon is nearly the same in his later campaign, that his soldiers "did not separate themselves from the traces of his sandals." (Inscript. Oppert, p. 34.)

3. The Burden of Moab follows. Assigning this, like the first Burden, to the opening of Hoshea's reign, the annals of Sargon, however imperfectly deciphered with regard to the geographical names, imply clearly that one or two invasions of Moab occurred within the eight or nine years that followed. Qarqar, the scene of the first battle with Hamath and its confederates, may perhaps have been the northern Aroer, and a rapid invasion of Ammon and Moab may have then followed. In the seventh year, the mention of Beth-hamma (Ammon), of Haroua (Aroer?) and of Mita king of the Moschians (Mesha king of Moab?), plainly in connection with a southward or Arabian expedition, suggests strongly the idea of a Moabite invasion, such as the prophecy describes. Such an invasion, whether or not the names can be identified from the slabs of Khorsabad, must have attended, almost certainly, the siege and fall of Samaria. The seventh of Sargon, on the view above, would be B.C. 722, the one complete year of the siege. While the tedious work was committed to a lieutenant, possibly Tartan, the king might prefer the more enterprising and brilliant task of a campaign against the Arabian tribes, taking Moab on the east of Jordan in his course. If the main prophecy were given in the first year, as the era of reviving prophecy, the last two verses might then be added four years later, to define the near approach of the threatened judgment.

4. The Burden of Damascus may be referred to the same date, the first of Hoshea, and 14th of Ahaz. The next year would be that of the battle of Qarqar (Aroer?), when the confederate forces of Hamath, Zimira, Arpad, and Damascus, were overthrown. A fresh capture of Damascus would be sure to follow; and the cities of Aroer, once the district of the north-eastern tribes of Israel, but mainly owned by Syria ever since the days of Hazael, would be exposed to a further desolation. The following verses would be fulfilled in the seven next ensuing years, and eight years still later would be the great judgment on Assyria, predicted at the close. The invitation, in the next chapter, to the Egypto-Ethiopian power, is most appropriate in the reign of Sevechus, the second of the three Ethiopian kings of Egypt.

5. The Burden of Egypt, on this view, would also be given the year before the battle of Raphia, the first formal conflict of Assyria and Egypt, which was soon to be followed by two later Egyptian reverses, in the eleventh of Sargon, B.C. 718, and in the opening of Sennacherib's Judæan campaign. The warnings of the prophecy may include, further, the double invasion

of Egypt by Esarhaddon and his son Assurbanipal, when these haughty Assyrian conquerors parcelled it out into separate nomes or provinces. These campaigns may form the nearer foreground of the prophetic picture; while its fuller reference is to the Persian conquest, and the Era of Alexander and the Ptolemies, leading on to the times of the Gospel.

6. In ch. xx. we have the sole mention of Sargon by name, and a three years' sign appointed to the prophet, of the common shame of Ethiopia and Egypt. In the 11th of Sargon was his expedition against Ashdod, to put down Yaman, who had usurped the rule, and refused tribute. Akhimit had been set up in place of Azuri by the Assyrians some time before. These imperfect hints will agree with each other and the prophecy, if Tartan marched against Ashdod, and took it, setting up Akhimit as its king, in the summer of B. C. 721, when Samaria had fallen. Within three years from that date would be the later campaign, when its Ethiopian and Egyptian succours could not save it from falling a second time, but were exposed themselves to shame and disgrace from the haughty conqueror.

7. The Burdens of ch. xxi. belong to the Desert of the Sea, that is, the Red Sea, and to the southern Arabian tribes. So, in Sargon's seventh year, "he subdued the uncultivated plains of remote Arabia, which had never before given tribute to Assyria," and of which he says, "the kings my fathers did not even know the names." The Burden of the Valley of Vision immediately follows. Accordingly, on the view above, the Arabian expedition would be B. C. 722, while one of the Assyrian generals continued the tedious blockade of Samaria; and the next year would be that of the fall of the luxurious city, so vividly portrayed in Isaiah's warning vision. Referring the prediction to the same date as before, it will furnish another instance of a three years' warning, since the deposition of Shebna may be probably referred to the first opening of Hezekiah's reign.

8. The Burden of Tyre is last in order. If we accept the outline, in Menander, of a five years' investment of that city under Shalmaneser, whom his conquest of Cyprus, there named, identifies with Sargon, whose effigy has been recovered from Idalium, then the embassy of Cyprian princes to Sargon at Babylon, in his 13th year, will carry back the investment to the 7th or 8th year, and fix this event, probably, to this latest part of his reign. If the siege and capture of Ashdod by Tartan followed on the fall of Samaria, and the next event was the investment of Tyre, the order will be just the same as in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, and the place of this Burden will agree strictly with the succession of Assyrian conquests.

9. The Burdens, on this view, would form, in respect of date, a third series of Isaiah's messages. The first, chh. ii.—vi., belong to the last year of Uzziah's long reign, or B. C. 759, a year of transition and downward progress, a farewell to the political glories of David, Solomon, and Uzziah. The second, chh. i., vii.—xii., will bear date in the second of Ahaz, B. C. 741, when the first trouble from Syria was past, and the first stage of Assyrian invasion was close at hand. The third, chh. xiii.—xxvii., though including three portions slightly later, the Burden of Philistia, the sequel to that of Moab, and the longer sequel to that of Egypt, ch. xx., may be referred, as a whole, with probable evidence, to B. C. 729, the first year of Hoshea, just thirty years after the

prophet's course began, and still more than thirty years before his death. If the previous reasonings are sound, this was also the year of the accession of Shalmaneser or Sargon at Nineveh, and of Merodach-baladan's actual rule at Babylon, while his priestly rule in the registers may have been eight years later, after the death of Yagin or Jugæus. The Woes that follow may have been two years later, in the last year of Ahaz, the year of Shebek's probable accession, to whom Israel and Judah sent their embassies to entreat his alliance. This would form a natural date for prophecies, in which one main feature is stern rebuke of their dependence on a heathen power which could not save, and of their refusal to trust in the Lord God of Israel. The altered tone, more hopeful and encouraging, though still mingled with severity, may thus be explained, not by the actual accession of Hezekiah but by the near prospect of that happy change. These same messages, when applied by the Spirit to the conscience of the youthful king, and of the more faithful rulers of Judah, may have been one main cause of the zealous reformation, which marked the very opening of Hezekiah's reign.

## APPENDIX VI.

## THE ASSYRIAN OVERTHROW.

The Scripture, in three different books, reports a campaign of Sennacherib in Judæa, which began in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, and ended in the sudden overthrow of his army, and his hasty return to Nineveh; also in the same year, before that sickness and recovery, when fifteen years, by Divine promise, were added to his life and reign. Those years, it is further stated, were to be years of peace and truth, and safety from Assyrian violence. The annals of Sennacherib in the Taylor and Bellino cylinders also report one campaign in Judæa, and one only, and agree fully with the Scripture statement as to its earlier successes, but conceal wholly the great reverse at its close. Instead of two campaigns being "clearly proved" by them, as some able writers strangely affirm (Hezekiah, Smith's Dictionary), the sacred text and the cylinder record agree perfectly in affirming one campaign of this king against Hezekiah, and one only. A review of their testimony will render this fact still plainer, and throw further light on this memorable deliverance.

The annals, it must first be noticed, do not mention years of the reign, as in the case of Sargon, but campaigns only. The number of these is only eight, though they reach nearly or quite to the end of his reign, which a clay tablet shows to have lasted twenty-two current years. Thus twelve, thirteen, or fourteen years, must have been passed with no campaign; while Sargon had one every year, and a second in seven or eight years, of his active and warlike reign. These years of inaction are nearly equal in



number to the years of peace assured to Hezekiah by Divine promise after the Assyrian overthrow. The annals naturally conceal the reverse itself, and also the suspended warfare that it occasioned, numbering the campaigns, and not the years to which they belong. It is quite credible, then, that there may also be some departure from the true order in these undated cylinder bulletins of this haughty king, still further to conceal so great a calamity.

Again, the successive conquests by Sargon of Hamath, Arpad, Zimira, Damascus, Samaria, Ashdod, and Gaza, and the triumphs in Babylonia at the close of his reign, would lead us to expect, on the first accession of his proud and warlike son, a campaign against Judæa and Egypt. Two years entire inaction at the opening of such a reign is most improbable. But on the other hand, if a campaign, which ended in a great reverse, stood alone, it would be a slight departure from truth, compared with others of which these kings are certainly guilty, to place this first campaign third in order, so as to fill up a vacant year in a series of later and more prosperous expeditions.

The cylinder record begins with the defeat of Luliya, king of Sidon, and the setting up of one Tubal in his place as a tributary king. So, among the burdens which belong to the days of Sargon as their starting-point, the last is that of Tyre. Sennacherib then receives tribute from the kings of Arvad and Byblus, Mitinti king of Ashdod, Puduel king of Beth Ammon, and kings of Moab and of Edom. Next he marched to Ashkelon, captured the king, his wife, children, brothers, and all his family, and transported them to Assyria. Hazor, Joppa, Beth-barak, Beth-dagon, are reduced. Ekron had revolted, sent its king Padi a prisoner to Hezekiah, and allied itself with Ethiopia and Egypt. A battle follows at Altaku or El-tekeh near Ekron, where the allies are defeated with great slaughter. Tamna (Timnath) and Ekron are then taken, great numbers of rebels are impaled, and others sold as slaves. Padi is restored, and a small tribute imposed. But Hezekiah, having received him, was viewed as a sharer in the revolt, and became the object of Sennacherib's vengeance, who next invaded Judæa.

These statements agree fully with the account in Scripture of the first steps of this great campaign. For this implies that the power of the Great King, to all human appearance, was irresistible, a flood reaching to the neck, which threatened to drown the whole kingdom. The recent reverse of the Egyptians at Altaku explains Rabshakeh's pithy description of Pharaoh as "a broken reed" in his insulting speech at Jerusalem. Thirdly, we are told that Hezekiah, at the opening of his reign, had "rebelled against the king of Assyria" and ceased to pay the tribute, which Ahaz had paid before, 2 Kings xviii. 7. He had also gained successes over the Philistines, and brought them partly into subjection, 2 Kings xviii. 8. Lastly, the Prophecy, Isaiah xiv. 32, implies that messengers from Philistia would come to Jerusalem in the hour of their common terror from the Assyrian, and be assured, in answer, that a safe refuge would be found in Zion. The Assyrian report probably disguises the fact that Ekron had submitted to Hezekiah as a conqueror, and that his rival claim, lately asserted, of suzerainty over the Philistian

cities was his real offence in the eyes of the Assyrian king. The account then proceeds :—

“ Because Hezekiah king of Judah would not submit to my yoke, I came up against him, and by the force of arms and the might of my power (Isai. x. 13) I took forty-six of his strong fenced cities, and of smaller towns scattered about I took a countless number. From these places I captured and carried off 200,150 people, old and young, male and female, with horses and mules, asses and camels, oxen and sheep, a countless multitude. And Hezekiah I shut up in Jerusalem, his capital city, like a bird in a cage, building towers round the city to hem him in, and raising banks of earth, to prevent escape. Then on this Hezekiah fell the fear of the power of my arms, and he sent out to me the chiefs and elders of Jerusalem, with thirty talents of gold, and eight hundred talents of silver, and divers treasures, a rich and immense booty. All these things were brought to me at Nineveh, the seat of my government, Hezekiah having sent them by way of tribute, and in token of submission to my power.”

Here there is a close agreement with Scripture, except in two main points, and one detail. The Scripture account says that Sennacherib took all the fenced cities of Judah. This clearly implies the unresisted occupation of all the open villages, and also, by the constant usage of the Assyrians, the carrying off of a great number of Jewish captives. This flood, Isaiah had foretold, would reach to the neck, and Jerusalem alone escape the inundation. We are told, further, that Hezekiah sent to Lachish, and promised 30 talents of gold and 300 talents of silver, to buy off the threatened siege ; and that he sent them off without delay, supposing that his request, “ Return from me,” would then be fulfilled. It seems also likely, from the sacred text, that the first steps had already been taken for investing the city. The agreement in the talents of gold is exact. The difference in those of silver may be due to an exaggeration in the cylinder record, or else tributes from other captured cities may have been included, to swell the amount.

The differences are two only. The annals, as might have been certainly foreseen, are wholly silent on that terrible reverse which brought the campaign to a close ; and they also conceal the treachery of the Great King, which was the immediate cause of this heavy judgment. He consented, as we see from Scripture, to receive a very costly tribute on condition of raising the siege and ceasing hostilities ; and then, when possessed of Hezekiah's treasure, renewed them with greater fierceness than before. The messages of Isaiah contain repeated predictions of this very crime, Isai. xvi. 4, xxi. 2, xxiv. 16, xxxiii. 1, 8. In all other respects the two accounts agree. The strict investment of the city, and the raising of mounds against it, are implied in the history, and clearly foretold by Isaiah xxix. 1—8. They are predicted, not as to be followed by Assyrian success, but by complete and sudden discomfiture, thus fixing both events to one and the same campaign. The words of Isai. xxxvii. 33, rightly understood, agree perfectly with this view. The siege never reached the latest stage, when it would be endeavoured to take the city by storm ; when Sennacherib, having completed the capture of weaker fortresses, intended, after the usage of Eastern kings, to be present in person, and claim the whole conquest for his own. But the history in Kings

shows that Tartan invested it with "a mighty host," and the prophecy, that he raised mounds against it on every side, making it to whisper out of the dust with fear and alarm. That host is never said to have been withdrawn. The prediction is clear, that God would break the Assyrian in His land, and tread him under foot on the mountains of Israel, xiv. 25. We are further taught, xviii. 3, that this mighty judgment would be like a trumpet voice, and an uplifted ensign on those hills of Jerusalem, to the Gentile nations, calling them to bring tributes of willing homage to the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel.

A second campaign, referred to the seventh of Sennacherib and the last year of Hezekiah, by a kind of despairing effort to reconcile with Scripture a theory opposed to the whole drift of its statements, has no grain of real evidence either in Scripture or the Assyrian remains. These last are wholly silent concerning it. The sacred text not only is silent, but excludes it; since it would contradict and reverse the Divine promise to Hezekiah, after his recovery and the message from Babylon, that he should have peace and safety from the Assyrian for the rest of his days. The supposed outline, woven out of a distorted Egyptian tradition in Herodotus, and parts of the sacred narrative torn away from their date and their context, not only contradicts Scripture, but also the plainest laws of historical probability.

The view assumes, first, that Hezekiah, in his 28th year, was tributary to Sennacherib. This is directly opposed to Scripture, which states that in those last years he was receiving honour and large presents from foreign powers because of the signal deliverance he had gained. Next, that he entered anew into negotiations with Egypt. This contradicts the Scripture, making this pious king, even to the end of his reign, act in bold defiance of Isaiah's repeated warnings. And it contradicts historical consistency, because the previous year is supposed to be that of Egypt's utter defeat, when it became evidently "a broken reed." Still further, the history and Isaiah's prophecy, ch. xviii., both imply that, instead of Hezekiah courting Egyptian help in his last years, Egypt was sending him tokens of honour on account of the Assyrian overthrow. Next, it is assumed that the king, instead of stopping to chastise Jerusalem, pressed on to Libnah and Lachish on his way to Egypt. Another historical contradiction, that he should need to besiege these places again; having taken them two years before, by the hypothesis, in a triumphant campaign, in which he annexed them to the tributary powers of Ekron and Gaza. How could a work need at once to be repeated, which had just been so completely done? Next, he is supposed first to have marched his whole army to Lachish, and then to have sent a small body northward back to Jerusalem, to summon it to surrender. But the text calls those who came against Jerusalem "a great host." The words in Chronicles, "and all his power with him," refer evidently to the invasion generally, and are no contrast between the forces at Lachish and Jerusalem. It is unlikely that he would first march his whole army to the south, and then countermarch a part northward, without cause. It is even incredible that, having compassed Jerusalem with all his forces, only two years before, simply to obtain tribute, he should now send a small detachment, with the hope of obtaining a complete surrender without any siege; and then

employ his whole army to capture a second time one out of forty-six cities, which had all been taken rapidly two years before.

The next supposition is that the king made a second attempt to frighten Jerusalem into surrender by a letter without a siege; and that Hezekiah, of whom no prayer is recorded in the actual siege two years earlier, in this hour of far less apparent danger cried in deep distress for help to God. Sennacherib, it is then supposed, leaving in his rear Jerusalem unsubdued and rebellious, marched on to Egypt, to crush the native Egyptian army, before it was joined by their Ethiopian allies. But the text leaves no time for this supposed march to Egypt. The message was sent from Libnah, only 30 miles from Jerusalem in a direct line, and its nature implies that there would be no delay. The prayer of Hezekiah was offered as soon as it came, and the answer of the prophet was given at once, in fulfilment of the promise, xxx. 19. The same night, we are told, the destruction followed. But from Libnah to the brook of Egypt is at least 70 miles in a straight line, and it is 80 miles further to Pelusium, while a vast army must be slower in its movements than a royal post.

It is next supposed that Sennacherib encamped at Pelusium, and the Egyptians under Sethos just opposite, when the disaster lighted on the troops around the king. But first, it is historically most unlikely that Sethos would hasten to the encounter, instead of retiring to form a junction with the Ethiopians. This would be exactly to play the game of his adversary. Next, the history in Isaiah and Kings leaves no time for this arrival in Egypt. Thirdly, the escape of the king, the most guilty party, when his troops all perished around him, is thus wholly unexplained. Fourthly, the express warnings of the prophet are falsified, that this great overthrow would be in the land and on the mountains of Israel. Fifthly, its great moral is wholly obscured, if not reversed; since bystanders would more naturally refer the judgment, as the Egyptian legend strives to do, to Vulcan, the idol god of Sethos, than to Jehovah the God of Israel. Sixthly and lastly, the whole drift and current, both of the prophecies of Isaiah and of the attendant history, is set aside and reversed; which describe a series of Assyrian conquests, reaching their height in the siege of Jerusalem, and then arrested, in answer to the faith of the king and the prophet; so as to assure to the former fifteen added years of peace and truth, secure from renewed aggressions: and to the latter, a fitting season for those brighter and nobler prophecies, which crown and complete his earlier message.

The scene of this great judgment, in the Book of Isaiah, is twelve times indirectly or directly referred to the land of Israel, and to the mountains around Jerusalem. The flood was to cover the land of Immanuel, reaching to the neck, so that Zion, the head, would alone escape and be rescued from its violence, viii. 8, and there the confederacy of foes would be broken in pieces, viii. 9. The destruction would be as "in the day of Midian," when that mighty host fell suddenly amidst the land of Israel. It is while the Assyrian shakes his hand against "the mount of the daughter of Zion" that the forest of his stately cedars is to "fall mightily," x. 32-34. The same scene of judgment is implied xiv. 32, xvi. 4, 5. But in xiv. 24, 25 it is

announced in plain words, and confirmed by a solemn oath of God, which the modern theory would convict of failure and falsehood. This sudden destruction, in xviii. 3, is God's own ensign on the mountains of Israel, calling the nations to acts of reverence towards "the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion," xviii. 7.

The deliverance, again, was to be no mere threat from an absent army, but in the height of a pressing danger, and "when the blast of the terrible was as a storm against the wall," xxv. 4. It was to be like the judgments in Perazim and Mount Gibeon, both of them in close proximity to Jerusalem. It was to be a sudden frustration of confident hopes of victory and triumph, while the foe was encamped round about Ariel, the city of God; and when the force was such, and the siege so complete, as to leave no human hope of deliverance, xxix. 7, 8. It seems implied that there would be an extensive burial or burning of the carcases of the slain in the valley of Tophet, close to Jerusalem, ch. xxx. 33. The nature of the judgment would be such, as to appear like a fire going forth from Jerusalem, the Ariel or hearth of God, to consume its surrounding enemies. These would be like shepherds, gathered round a lion, which defies and devours them; so the LORD would come down to fight over Mount Zion and the hill thereof. He would have a fire in Zion and a furnace in Jerusalem, xxxi. 4, 9. It was while ravaging the holy land itself, and counting the towers that seemed ready to fall, that the people should be "as thorns cut up, that are burned in the fire," xxxiii. 12, 18. All these warnings, twelve times repeated, predict a sudden overthrow, not on the borders of Egypt, but around mount Zion itself; and are in full agreement with the record, that Tartan's mighty host came against Jerusalem, and invested it for many days, but never were withdrawn, and never returned. This explains, further, the promise that the king should never come against the city, and that he escaped when this mighty destruction fell on the main portion of his army. When the rumour of this blast from heaven reached him at Libnah, he would naturally decamp in haste, with the troops and princes that still remained, and hasten to Assyria.

The form of this destruction has been often supposed to be a simoom, or dry wind of the desert. But the words of Scripture lend no countenance to this view. The conclusion often drawn from Isa. xxxvii. 36, that it took place in dead silence, seems to be without real warrant. The words from their context refer to the men of Judah, not to those in the Assyrian camp. They went to rest, full of alarm and fear. They arose in the morning, and found that the mighty host of their enemies lay smitten by the hand of God. But the words of the prophet, in three or four places, imply that a thunder-storm, of terrific grandeur and intensity, accompanied the solemn work and strange task of the angelic messenger of God. The lightning of heaven, which often destroys individuals in a moment, might be used in this solemn hour, by one of God's heavenly ministers, whose own nature is like a flame of celestial fire, to fulfil the commission he had received. On this view, which results from repeated warnings of the prophet, the judgment would be the more appalling and sublime; and would leave the deeper impression, not on the Jews alone, but on the Assyrian survivors when the tidings came to their ears, and on all the surrounding heathen.

The modern theory, as it is wholly destitute of direct evidence in the annals for this supposed second campaign, and opposed to the testimony of Scripture in most of its details, seems, in its outline of later events, to contradict the plainest laws of real history. It is thought conceivable that "Assyria was not so injured by the loss of a single great army, as to make it necessary for her to stop, even for a single year, in the course of her aggressive warfare." Accordingly, four cylinder campaigns having gone before, including one in Judæa, claimed as a triumphant success, and this second being placed in Hezekiah's last year, as a fifth campaign wholly omitted, the four that remain are assigned to the four following years, B.C. 697—4, so as to close with the accession of Rigebelus, the new Babylonian viceroy. Thus the grand crisis of the sacred history, midway between Moses and Christ, on which the messages of the foremost of the prophets all converge, forty years before it came, in solemn warning, and from which they diverge, for fifteen or twenty years after it has come to pass, in loftiest strains of comfort, hope, and peace, is degraded into a mere trivial episode in the steady course of Assyrian conquest, a hardly perceptible ripple on the surface, historically of less consequence than the supposed indolence of the proud conqueror in the later years of his reign. But the laws of human nature, as well as the express statements of Scripture, protest against such a view. The sudden calamity, with all its attendant circumstances, besides the greatness of the loss in itself, as including the pride and flower of all the military forces of the empire, would be felt the more deeply in a superstitious age. No doubt the empire survived the shock, and Sennacherib might wage successful campaigns in the east before the close of his reign; while under Esarhaddon, twenty years later, Assyria might enter, eastward, westward, and southward, on a full career of victory once more. But reason and common sense must lead us to infer, after such a mighty catastrophe, a pause in aggressive conquest for ten, twelve, or fifteen years. This conclusion, so natural in itself, is confirmed by the cylinders, which record no campaign during twelve or fourteen years of this reign, while twenty at least are on record in the fifteen years of Sargon; by the significant sequel in Scripture, that he dwelt at Nineveh; by the greatness and splendour of his architectural works, agreeing with a period of unwilling abstinence from foreign conquest; and most of all, by the promise of God to Hezekiah, at the time when fifteen years were added to his life, and the declining shadow was reversed on the dial of Ahaz, that these would be years of peace and truth, and safety from the Assyrian, a gracious and merciful reprieve in the downward course of the kingdom of Judah. After his death, under the idolatrous Manasseh, the clouds were to return, and the shadows of evening to close once more around the faithless people.

## APPENDIX VII.

## THE CONTROVERSY WITH GENTILE IDOLATRY.

The true meaning of ch. xli. 1—4, in which the controversy with Israel, at the opening of the Earlier Prophecies, is replaced by a like controversy with the idolatrous Gentiles, has been the subject of much dispute. The Rabbis and early Jewish authorities apply the words to Abraham, and several of the Christian Fathers to Christ; but Aben Ezra, Pagninus, Estius, and others of early times, expound them of Cyrus and his conquests. This view is strongly espoused by Vitringa, who thinks that difference of judgment will almost cease when his reasons have been weighed; and the great majority of later critics, whether orthodox or rationalist, have concurred in the same application. The seeming consent, however, conceals a vital contrast and divergence; for while one class hold it to be a genuine prophecy, the others make this reference the basis of their theory, that the Later Prophecies are not from Isziah, but from some unknown writer near the close of the Exile.

A clear prediction of the coming of Cyrus, of his conquest of Babylon, and of the rebuilding of the temple by his decree, if made by Isaiah, as God's prophet, soon after his warning message to Hezekiah on occasion of the Babylonian embassy, must form a most suitable, grand, and convincing proof of the Divine foreknowledge, worthy to rank side by side with the proof of His Almighty Power in the first creation of the world. Such is the claim of the Most High, repeatedly made by the prophet in the First Series of these Later Visions; and which the sceptical theory of a Deutero-Isaiah boldly replaces by the cunning craftiness of some unprincipled forger, speaking lies in the name of Jehovah, and lying in wait to deceive. But if such be the main object of the message, the sudden introduction of the victories of Cyrus, as if already past, without any previous mention of his name, or of the time and manner of his future appearing, is by no means a method likely to be used, in order to fulfil the object of the prophecy. For the constant law of such messages is to begin with real time, and direct prediction; and then to introduce gradually the prophetic past, or ideal time, to give greater vividness to their picture of changes that are still to come. Thus in ch. i. we have a description, in the past tense, of desolations that in the reign of Ahaz had already come. In ch. ii. 1—5 we have next a description, in the future tense, of the glory of Zion in the latter days. The chapters that follow mention the day of calamity to Israel as still future, and only in iii. 8 the prophetic past, in a single verse, begins to be used. In ch. v. the same form of direct prediction again prevails; and only in v. 25 the prophetic past is used, in reference to the slaughter by Pekah and Rezin, to contrast it with the still later Assyrian troubles.

The appeal, then, in ch. xli. 1—4, if it referred to Cyrus, would form a direct presumption against the Isaian authorship, and in favour of the sceptical theory, that these chapters were written toward the close of the Exile. At that time an appeal to the Gentiles on the power of God, as shown in the rapid victories of Cyrus accomplished before their eyes, would be natural. Only the appeal would then be simply to the power of Jehovah, as shown in the overthrow of idolatrous nations, and not to His foreknowledge as having announced the event long before. Yet this last, and not the first, is the appeal really made at the close of the chapter, vv. 22, 26, 27—29, and again in xlii. 9, 23, xliii. 9, and onward to the end of this series, xlvi. 14, 16. This forms a powerful reason against Vitringa's reference of the first verses to Cyrus; and confirms the earlier interpretation of the Jewish writers, and of Calvin, Piscator, Grotius, Lowth, and Bengel, among Christian critics since the Reformation.

The first three Gospels have their historical starting-point in the conception and birth of our Lord, or of John His forerunner. The Fourth Gospel mounts higher, and sets before us the Word, who was in the beginning with God. So the Earlier Prophecies of Isaiah have their basis, ch. ii., in the prosperous luxury in the reign of Uzziah, and in present calamities, ch. i., in the reign of Ahaz. But the Later Visions, as their building is to be higher and loftier, with fuller hopes and more distant promises, also lay their foundation deeper. Hence they go back to the days of Abraham, to weighty lessons of the abiding laws of Providence, from the Call of the patriarch, and his early victory, in the first act of warfare on record, over the confederate kings. Babylon, in the person of Amraphel king of Shinar, and the chosen seed, the people of Israel, in the person of their great forefather, then came first into conflict. On one side were idolatrous kings and conquerors, on the other God's chosen and solitary witness against the idols of Chaldea and Canaan, and the result of that conflict was a Divine prophecy, in act, and not in word alone, of all the later stages of the same conflict, and their certain issue. The whole chapter is thus a challenge to the idols and their votaries, the nature of which is summed up at its close, "Let them shew the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them." That victory of Abraham is here expounded as the first link in a long series of later conflicts between Israel and the idols of the heathen, in which the moral connexion was firm, and the final issue foreseen from the beginning. The raising up of Cyrus from the east, to subdue Babylon, and set free the captives of Israel, was only one main step, foreseen and foreordained from the beginning, in this mighty work of the God of Abraham for the triumph of His name, and of His true servants, over all the banded might of the heathen world.

Again, the sudden mention of the victories of Cyrus as past, while still remotely future, would not only be harsh and forced in itself, but doubly so with the proposed rendering of the second verse, which replaces the name of the conqueror, or a simple title, by the obscure and somewhat vague description, "Who hath raised up from the east one whom righteousness meets at his steps?" On the other hand, the application of the word, "righteousness," the abstract for the concrete, to Abraham the father of the faithful, the pat-



tern and heir of the righteousness which is by faith, is emphatic, striking and even sublime. Out of the depths of unrighteousness and idolatry in Chaldea he was raised up, by Divine power, to keep alive a seed of righteousness on the earth; and that righteous LORD, who loveth righteousness, would not fail to watch over this grain of mustard-seed to the end of time, till it should become a spreading tree, and overshadow all the nations of the earth.

Vitringa objects, first, that victory in war was not the characteristic feature of Abraham, as it was of Cyrus. But this only adds to the force of the appeal. So, in vv. 14, 15 it is not the characteristic of a worm to thresh the mountains, and make the hills like chaff. The more remote this victory from the peaceful pursuits of Abraham, and his quiet pastoral life, so much clearer was the proof it afforded of the mighty hand of God, protecting and prospering His own servant. That a mighty warrior should make conquests is nothing strange. But that a peaceful shepherd, with a few household servants, armed at a moment's notice, should gain a complete triumph over four kings and their army, when flushed with a long course of conquests, or that the worm Jacob, feeble and despised, should thresh in pieces the mountains, was indeed a pledge of utter overthrow of all idols by the God of Abraham, "the Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth."

It is urged, next, that the appeal on this view has no real force. The Gentiles might deny that they saw anything surprising, or any proof of the dominion of the true God, and of the vanity of idols, in this exploit of Abraham, of which they might themselves have no record. But the force of the appeal lies in this double fact, that those idolatrous nations had either wholly forgotten the event itself, or else had failed to see the true lesson they should have learned thereby. It is the earliest campaign and war of which a distinct record remains. Confederate powers, Elam and Babylon, all idolatrous, therein ravaged many countries, gained repeated victories, and were returning home triumphant, laden with the spoil of their captive enemies. Then the one righteous man, whom the God of glory had called from Chaldean idolatry to bear witness for His great name, a man of peaceful habits, a pilgrim shepherd, in a moment, with the help of his own household, pursues, overtakes, assails them, scatters their host as dust and as driven stubble, and on returning does public homage to the God of heaven and earth, who had given him this marvellous victory. What plainer, louder appeal could there be to the Canaanites, the Egyptians, the Chaldeans and Elamites of those early days, to cease from their idol-worship, and return to the God whom they had forsaken, and who is so mighty to help His servants, and destroy His enemies? If the mists of heathen darkness closed afterward around them, blotting out the memory of this act of judgment, as man's unbelief strives ever to do with all similar tokens of God's presence, this only adds force and emphasis to the prophet's message; when it reminds them of a great fact they had forgotten, and of a certain inference from that fact, which they were too blind to draw for themselves, but which was soon to be confirmed anew, to the utter shame of Babylon and her idols, by greater victories of Cyrus still future, but near at hand. The idols and their worshippers

had forgotten the former things, or else could not discern their true nature, their deep moral lesson, and the solemn prophecy they conveyed. What they could not or would not do, the Living God was now doing by His prophet, and therein asserted His own exclusive and rightful claim to the obedience and reverence of all mankind.

The words that follow, vv. 5—7, agree perfectly with this application of the words, and their emphasis is thus increased. The nations ought, by such a signal lesson of God's power early in their own history, to have been reclaimed from their downward course of idolatrous abasement. Instead of this, it seemed as if they had conspired with one consent, by the wide and universal growth of idol-worship, to blot out from their own minds every trace of the power and dominion of Jehovah the God of Abraham. They strove to hide out His unwelcome presence by their assiduous zeal in false religions, ever framing to themselves fresh idols and new divinities, the magnified reflections of their own pride, passion, cruelty, and lust. Therefore Israel, though like a worm to the eye of sense, when compared with these heathen powers, should be strengthened to prevail over every foe, and to break them in pieces. Nay, a mighty prince was prepared among the heathen themselves, to execute God's work of judgment once more, and would shortly be raised up from the lands of the east. The controversy does not end, when the latter end of the former things has thus been foreshown. Beyond this nearer vision, the Allwise would now show to His people and to the Gentiles "things to come," or the later wonders of the person and work of that Chosen Servant of God, the Immanuel already promised, who should open the eyes of the Gentiles, bring the prisoners of sin and death out of their dark prison-house, and accomplish, by His sufferings, resurrection, and judgment, the long-promised redemption of our fallen world.

## APPENDIX VIII.

## INTERNAL MARKS IN ISAIAH, CHAPTERS XL.—LXVI., OF AN ORIGIN NOT LATER THAN THE EXILE.

The following is an approximate classification of the chapters of the earlier and later Prophecies as to the Historic Present.

## EARLIER PROPHECIES.

Explicit mention of Isaiah, eight chapters. Chh. i. ii. vi. vii. viii. xiii. xiv. xx.

Historical chapters interposed of Isaiah's time, four chapters. Chh. xxxvii. xxxviii. xxxix.

- A. Prophetic Present Messianic or more remote, fifteen chapters. Chh. iv. ix. xi. xvi. xxiii. xxiv. xxv. xxvi. xxvii. xxix. xxx. xxxi. xxxii. xxxiii. xxxv.
- B. Prophetic Present in Isaiah's time ranging in order from the fourth year of Ahaz to the fourteenth of Hezekiah, nine chapters. Chh. iii. v. x. xii. xv. xvii. xxii. xxviii. xxxiv.
- C. Prophetic Present partially at least in the time of Cyrus, three chapters. Chh. xviii. xix. xxi.

## LATER PROPHECIES.

- A. Prophetic Present Messianic or more remote, sixteen chapters. Chh. xl. xlii. xliii. xlix. l. li. lii. liii. liv. lv. lx. lxi. lxii. lxiii. lxv. lxvi.
- B. Prophetic Present in Isaiah's time, reign of Manasseh, five chapters. Chh. lvi. lvii. lviii. lix. lxiv.
- C. Prophetic Present in the time of Cyrus, six chapters. Chh. xli. xliv. xlv. xlvi. xlvii. xlviii.

The sceptical hypothesis which divorces what the Spirit of God has inseparably united—the earlier and the later prophecies of Isaiah, ascribing the latter to some wholly unknown author in the days of Cyrus, is disproved by an overwhelming combination of external evidence; it contradicts the words of the incarnate Son of God, the Apostle St John, the Baptist, St Luke and St Paul, and the consenting voice of Jesus the Son of Sirach and the constant tradition of the Jewish Church and nation for more than 2000 years. Of external evidence in its favour there is not a single grain. The internal evidence of the unity of the whole Book is also full, various and decisive. The one alleged presumption in favour of the hypothesis from internal evidence has now to be considered. The prophetic present in all the earlier prophecies is said to be the time of Isaiah himself, and in all the rest, two centuries later, about the time of Cyrus and Ezra. This sole basis of the hypothesis of dual authorship will be found on examination to be wholly untrue, and will be almost reversed on a close and inductive enquiry. The prophetic present of prophecies which range over from seven to twenty-five centuries of future time is not, in the nature of things, always easy to define: there is no conceivable reason why the Spirit of God in disclosing to any of His servants so wide and vast a landscape of the future should confine him to view every part from his own actual place, and not rather transport him more or less into the grand and magnificent future he is permitted to reveal.

In this Book there are eight chapters in the earlier prophecies and four of interposed history, which expressly assign themselves to Isaiah and his times; there remain 27 chapters of the earlier, and 27 of the later prophecies where there is no such express and formal indication of the date of authorship. In each of these, ten or eleven chapters only furnish any apparent ground for the application of this alleged test of diverse authorship: in the rest, the Prophet is either transported into the times of Messiah, or other times still later, or the prophetic present can scarcely be defined, and may travel from one point of time to another. The sceptical argument must rest on the concurrence of these three assumptions. 1st, That a difference in the point of sight of two centuries, in prophecies ranging over seven or twenty-five centuries, every part of which must more or less be contemplated as present by the inspired seer rapt out of the littleness of his own human life by the Spirit of God, would of itself prove two different seers. 2nd, That in all the chapters of the earlier prophecies which supply a test, the prophetic present is that of Isaiah himself. 3rd, That in all the ten chapters of the later prophecies, it is not the time of Isaiah himself, but two or three centuries later. Each of these three assumptions is demonstrably

untrue, so that the sole basis of the dual hypothesis, on examination, crumbles into the dust, and leaves the whole accumulated force of the external testimony and internal evidence to weigh in the same scale. First; of the nine or ten chapters of the earlier prophecies which alone have a definite prophetic present not later than the return from Babylon, there are three where that present is not the time of Isaiah, but that of Cyrus, about two centuries later. Out of the ten chapters of the later prophecies which by the hypothesis should not have a prophetic present in the time of Isaiah, but two or three centuries later, there are at least one half in which it is plainly the time of Isaiah, or more definitely still, the reign of Manasseh. Thus the alleged contrast on which alone the immense superstructure of the sceptical hypothesis has been reared, wholly disappears on close examination.

Of the twenty-seven chapters in each division, fifteen in the earlier and sixteen in the later prophecies have a messianic present, or from A.D. 30—100, eight centuries later than Isaiah, and six centuries later than the Pseudo-Esaia. This is plainly a presumption in favour of the common authorship of both portions. Secondly, there are eight chapters in the earlier prophecies, of which the present is in the time of Isaiah, ranging from Pehak's invasion of Judah to the campaign of Sennacherib, ch. v. 25—xxxiv. 1. These are a proof of the genuineness of the earlier prophecies, but no proof of the later origin of the others. There are five chapters in the later prophecies of which the present is in the time of Isaiah, in the reign of Manasseh, chh. lvi., lviii., lix., lxiv. The proof passages are "The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him. All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest. His watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs; they cannot bark; lying down, loving to slumber: 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." Ch. lvi. 8—11. These verses answer fully to the political and moral features of the reign of Manasseh. "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. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness. 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 cliffs of the rocks? 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? Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice. 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 lovedst their bed where thou sawest it. And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far

off, and didst debase thyself even unto hell." Ch. lvii. 1—9. Here the first verse seems plainly to refer to the death of Hezekiah, the righteous king on whose life the promise of continued suspense of judgment was made to depend, and the insensibility of the nation to the consequent approach of evil; the later verses apply as plainly to the reviving idolatry of Manasseh's reign, and the worldly leaguings with, and embassies to the Assyrian king.

Chapters lviii. and lix. have a general correspondence with the growing formality and immorality under Manasseh; but ch. lxv. 1—5 and lxvi. 17 have a more express relation to the forms of idolatry and will worship that prevailed in the reign of Manasseh. These prove then that the later prophecies, equally with the earlier, date in the time of Isaiah.

Thirdly, in the later prophecies there are six chapters, of which the prophetic present is in the time of Cyrus, chh. xli., xlv., xlv., xlv., xlvii., xlviii. The proof passages are, "I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name. Ch. xli. 25. The Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel... 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, and I will dry up thy rivers: 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. Ch. xlv. 23—28. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, 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; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things. Ch. xlv. 1—7. Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy loaden; they are a burden to the weary beast. They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity. Harken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb... Calling a ravenous bird from the east, 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. Ch. xlv. 1—3, 11. As for our redeemer,

the Lord of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel. Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans : for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms. 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." Ch. xlvii. 4—6. In the earlier prophecies there are also three chapters, of which the present is partially at least in the time of Cyrus, chh. xviii, xix., xxi. The fall of Sennacherib, xviii. 3, 5, 6, "All ye inhabitants of the world and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains, hear ye...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. They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth : and the fowls shall summer upon them and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them." Ch. xix. 2, 4, 17—19. Time of Psammeticus, Cambyses, and Ochus. "A grievous vision is declared unto me ; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam : besiege, O Media ; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease. Therefore are my loins filled with pain : pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth : I was bowed down at the hearing of it ; I was dismayed at the seeing of it. My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me : the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me." Ch. xxi. 2—4. Time of the fall of Babylon. Thus there is just the same reason for referring the earlier as the later prophecies to some later prophet than Isaiah. The whole argument then is nugatory, and the sameness of the proportions of the three classes in the two divisions is a fresh, indirect, and collateral proof of their common authorship. Thus both in the earlier and later prophecies, there are four or five chapters where the prophetic present seems to be in the time of Isaiah himself, but more expressly so in the later than in the earlier ; in each there are four or five chapters when the prophet seems rather translated from his own actual place two or three centuries into the times of Cyrus, though more explicitly and clearly in the later than in the earlier prophecies. Thus the last pretext for the dual hypothesis on close examination disappears and yields a fresh argument in proof of its falsehood ; those are thus left, I think, without the least excuse who venture to contradict the testimony of our Lord Himself in the very opening of His grand commission of mercy, and the consenting testimony of nearly all the inspired writers of the New Testament. The pertinacity with which some cling to this novel hypothesis in the teeth of such overwhelming evidence, and on the faith of an alleged contrast which disappears when closely examined, is a striking illustration of that credulity which has been well said to be the nemesis of scepticism.

## APPENDIX IX.

## ISAIAH LXV. 17—LXVI.

THE PREDICTED MERCIES AND JUDGMENTS OF THE  
LAST DAYS.

In this glorious conclusion of the whole Prophecy of the great evangelical prophet, three main events are set before us. First, The Millennial kingdom, the New Heavens and the New Earth in which righteousness shall dwell for ever: "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. 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 child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an 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; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord." Ch. lxv. 17—25. Several main features of that time of future blessedness are distinctly revealed: first, The oblivion of former troubles through the greatness and fulness of the blessings to be now revealed. "The former troubles are forgotten, and they are hid from mine eyes; behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind." Secondly, The joy and glory of Jerusalem, the city of the great king, recovered from long sorrow and degradation, and become a joy and a rejoicing for ever. "The voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." Thirdly, The restriction of the power of Death, and the extension of human life once more to a patriarchal measure. "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." Fourthly, a renewal of the Paradaisical state in the restraint of the destructive instincts both of man and the lower animals. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent's meat; they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord." Fifthly, The

condition described is that of a life on earth exalted and ennobled, but in which curse and death have not completely passed away. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days, for a child shall die an hundred years old, and the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed; 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...they shall not labour in vain nor bring forth for trouble, for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them."

The whole description answers to the words of St Peter on the day of Pentecost, "whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

The second event is the description of the Jewish people in the Last Days, and of their restoration to the covenant of God, to blessing, and especial honour. "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? for all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not. Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompence to his enemies. Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. 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. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God. 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: that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. 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 dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the Lord shall be known towards his servants, and his indignation towards his enemies." First, by comparing



with Ezek. xx. 32—40, we have three distinct parties described into which the people of Israel will be divided in the last days, as in those of Christ and the Apostles. (1) In Ezekiel there is set before us the Sadducean party, who seek to free themselves from the yoke of God's covenant, and all faith in Moses and the Prophets and supernatural revelation, and to mingle themselves without distinction with the Gentile nations amongst whom they are scattered. God declares that He will completely disappoint these counsels of the Sadducean Israelites of the last days. "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. 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: and I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. 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. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant."

Isaiah sets before us the state and actings of a Pharisaic portion of the same people, aiming to restore their long-ruined temple, and to revive the Mosaic covenant and its ordinances, while still refusing to receive and acknowledge the true Messiah. The event predicted cannot be the building of the second Temple under Ezra and Nehemiah, which was an act of obedience to the revealed will of God, nor yet the building of the temple in Ezekiel by repentant Israel, restored to the favour of God, and under the shelter of the promise, "The name of the city shall be from that day, The Lord is there." It is an attempt to antedate the blessing still delayed through their own unbelief. "They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations; and I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them, because when I called none did answer, when I spake they did not hear, but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not." Thus the attempt of the Sadducean Jews to lose themselves in the mass of the Gentile nations by casting aside the faith of their fathers, and the attempt of the Pharisaic Jews to build themselves up once more into a nation with a restored temple and a glorious ceremonial worship, while still rejecting the true Messiah, are alike doomed by the just sentence of God to utter and signal disappointment. A third class remains, of believing Israelites, "poor and of a contrite spirit, who tremble at the word" of God, and turn in penitence to God their Saviour. These will first endure persecution from their unbelieving countrymen as in the days of old, and then experience a sudden and mighty deliverance from the hand of God. That deliverance is the glorious birthday of Israel as a nation. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." The immediate sequel of this act of Divine grace will be the abundant and abiding blessedness of Zion and of the Jewish people. "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;...The hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies. For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire." This is plainly the time of the fulfilment of Christ's promise to Jerusalem, "I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

The third event—(vv. 15—24)—is the signal judgment of God upon a vast confederacy of unbelieving and rebellious Gentiles in the last days. This answers to the separate predictions of the same season of the great confederacy of Gog, predicted in Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix. It answers further to the description in Rev. xvi. 14—19, where the three unclean spirits "go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty: and they gathered them together into the place called in the Hebrew tongue 'Armageddon'." It answers further to the prophecy in Rev. xix. 17—21, where the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies are gathered together, and war against Him that sat on the horse and His armies. It answers further in many respects to the description in Rev. xx. 7—9, which is expressly connected with the ending of the Millennial kingdom: "When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go forth to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them." Thus, as the gathering is said to be by the working of three unclean spirits, so it seems to result in three great confederacies of evil, of which the leaders are Gog and Magog of Rev. xx., from the four quarters of the earth, and the beast and the false prophet of Rev. xiii., the Latin or Roman form of Antichrist in the last days, and thirdly Gog of Ezekiel, the chief of Rosh, Mesech and Tubal, with a vast confederate multitude from the lands of the north, the same with the king of the north in Dan. xi. 40, who is to come against the land of Israel "like a whirlwind with chariots and with horsemen and many ships, who shall enter into the countries, and overflow and pass over," in the great predicted season of trouble in the last days. In each prophecy this great confederacy is placed in close connection with the coming of the Lord to execute judgment and the resurrection of the faithful dead. The judgment here in Isaiah is thus described: "Behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger in fury and his rebuke with flames of fire; and by fire and by sword will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many." So it is denounced against Gog in Ezekiel: "In my jealousy and the fire of my wrath have I spoken; and I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God." So in the judgment on the beast and the false prophet: "These both were cast alive into a lake of fire, and the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse." And in the third description of Gog and Magog, the judgment comes while they "compassed the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down

from God out of heaven and devoured them." Thus all these passages concur in setting before us a vast confederacy gathered together in Palestine and around Jerusalem, and an overthrow greater than that of Sennacherib of old wrought by the mighty power of God. The last verses describe one solemn result of this judgment, a vast multitude of unburied slain "in the valley of the son of Hinnom" near to Jerusalem, from which the name "Gehenna" is derived, made a long-enduring spectacle of shame and abhorring and most solemn warning to all survivors both of Israel and of the Gentile nations. It is further predicted that those who are spared and escape in this solemn judgment shall be sent as messengers to all the distant parts of the earth, to those who have not witnessed this wonderful work of God, to proclaim it amongst them, and invite them to repentance and submission to the mighty hand of the God of Israel. The appointed sign of their submission is then set before us. "They shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel unto the house of the Lord." Then will commence the long-promised reign of righteousness and peace after the remnant of Israel have been gloriously restored to their own land by the willing co-operation of all the spared remnant of the Gentile nations; thenceforward Israel, the chosen race, shall abide as a distinct people, "and all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed." "I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord; and 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; 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." So closes this wonderful, far-reaching and comprehensive prophecy of the seer whose lips had been touched with fire from the heavenly altar, and who was further honoured by the Son of God Himself when He selected one part of his prophecy as the public preface to His own glorious message of redeeming love.

## APPENDIX X.

### ON CH. LXVI. 22—24, AND THE DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL JUDGMENT.

The importance of the doctrine of Eternal Judgment may be inferred from the prominent place it holds in the messages of God from first to last. It is involved in the first promise and warning in Paradise; it marks the close of Isaiah's message of glorious hope and gospel promise. It forms the close of the Book of Ecclesiastes, and of the prophecies of Daniel, Hosea and Micah, of Zechariah and Haggai. It gives their tone to the closing sentences of the Sermon on the Mount, and forms the main topic of two of the chief discourses of Christ in the Gospels, and of the Second Epistle of St Peter and that of

St Jude, and it is revealed with especial prominence from first to last in the Visions of the Apocalypse. Next to the glorious revelation of God Himself and the great work of Redemption, it forms the third main feature in the whole scheme of Revelation. Its immense practical importance seems to place it under the same solemn safeguard with the latest message of God itself, of which it is written, "If any man shall add to these things, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Our enquiries into this solemn subject ought thus to be with modesty and reverence, and godly fear lest by taking away from what God has really revealed, or by unwarranted and false additions of our own, we should fall on the right hand or on the left under the edge of this solemn warning of the Spirit of God. There are six truths which are the main features of the doctrine as really revealed in the Word of God: there are three additions which man has often made to it, which have no warrant in the Word of God, and which have tended to blot out or wholly to reverse its moral features, and to make it a stumbling-block to unbelievers, and oppressive, burdensome and repulsive to the hearts and consciences of Christians themselves.

Our Lord opened His message at Nazareth with quoting the words of this prophet, Ch. lxi. 2, as then fulfilled in Himself. Again He takes four words from this final warning, and repeating them three times, Mark ix. 41—50, transfers them to His own final act of judgment on the unbelieving. The two passages clearly do not refer to the same event. The judgment in Isaiah has for its subject great multitudes of unburied corpses exposed for a spectacle of shame near to Jerusalem, and therefore must precede the resurrection of all the unfaithful dead. The judgment in St Mark refers plainly to the solemn results and sequel of that resurrection.

The first main truth in the Scriptural doctrine is the converse of Universalism, the revealed separation of all mankind into two great classes, the sheep who are placed by the Judge on His right hand, and the goats on His left, over whom He pronounces an opposite sentence of condemnation and gracious acceptance and blessing, and of whom it is said, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life everlasting." The same contrast is taught in the first promise, under symbols borrowed from the fact of the fall, "the seed of the serpent," including the multitude of arrogant, presumptuous and impenitent sinners, and "the seed of the woman," all penitent sinners who are of a broken and contrite heart: the same contrast reappears still more plainly in the last page of the whole Bible, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city; for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." In Saint Matthew alone there are about a hundred passages where this great contrast is either expressly affirmed or plainly implied, so that there

are probably nearly four times as many in the whole of the New Testament.

Next, the result of the judgment to both classes of men is said to be eternal, and its very name "eternal judgment." Yet under the names of "conditional immortality" or the "annihilation" of the unbelieving, and of "life in Christ only," the converse of this second part of revealed truth has been extensively held and maintained of late years. There seem to be five main arguments by which this negation may be disproved. First, the word *αἰώνιος*, by which our Lord Himself defines the duration of the punishment He denounces on the ungodly, is not only the same by which He defines the blessing on the righteous, but is one seventy times used in the New Testament, and always—except in three cases, where it refers not to future but past time—plainly in the sense of that which is unending; this then is its only natural meaning in this solemn sentence of the supreme Judge. Secondly, our Lord in quoting these verses of Isaiah, repeats the words emphatically three times with reference to His own solemn sentence of future judgment: "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched,"—then the words are thrice repeated, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." How could words more strongly affirm the unending character of the sentence than to be proclaimed? Thirdly, the immortality of man and all God's rational creatures seems to differ from the absolute immortality of the Creator by three contrasts, two of them involved in the actual constitution of human nature, and the third reserved in the sovereign will and pleasure of the Creator. 1. Human life, as *conscious* and responsible being, is made dependent on a constant alternation of a sleeping and waking state. The weak and limited being of the creature needs to be continually repaired by intervals of suspended activity. Sleep, it has been said by one of our poets, is "a sister of death." It is used in Scripture itself to describe the death of the righteous. "A perpetual sleep" as denounced against Babylon, seems the nearest approach in Scripture to the idea of annihilation. A *second* contrast is that which depends on the dual constitution of man's nature, by which the continued conscious actings of the spiritual nature are made dependent on the health and continuance of the bodily organization; the breaking up of that union by violence or decay puts a stop, so far as our experience extends, to the conscious and responsible activities of the soul, though not to its real existence: thus the death or dissolution of the body, if not reversed by Divine power, would involve, though not the extinction or non-existence of the soul, yet that which in many respects would be equivalent, the suspense of its capacity for incurring further guilt or earning further reward, or for conscious enjoyment or suffering. This explains why the Gospel in revealing the Resurrection of the dead is said to have "brought life and immortality to light." The *third* contrast is that the derived and dependent life both of men and angels seems to need repairing by continual communication with the fountain of uncreated life from which it is derived. There was a symbol of this truth in the tree of life in Paradise, by eating of which so long as man had access to it, he was exempt from the power of death. This is further expressed in a striking passage in the book of Job, xxxiv. 14, 15: "If he set

his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again into dust." So, again, it was said to Belshazzar by the prophet, "The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified." Thus, not only is man's conscious being alternately suspended by sleep, and liable to be permanently suspended by the stroke of death, but it is further dependent on the sovereign will and pleasure of God, who framed him out of dust and "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." Should He be pleased to resume the breath which He gave at the first, and so dissever what His creating act united, all flesh should turn to the dust again; but of such an act of God causing an actual termination of man's thinking and creative being, we have no hint in Scripture; nay it seems expressly precluded by that sentence of the apostle, that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." The power is still God's, as a lesson to proud man of his entire dependence on the blessed Creator, but there is no hint in a single passage that it will ever be exercised. Fourthly, The nearest approach then to the idea of extinction or annihilation of being in Scripture is that which is connected with temporal death or the suspense thereby of the intellectual and moral activities of the soul. Now, at the time of the final judgment, both in Matthew xxv. and the Apocalypse, the Resurrection is past, nay death itself is abolished and cast into the lake of fire. There is thus no revealed pathway left open by which there shall be any future extinction of Moral Being. The Resurrection brings back all the dead who are raised, from the borders of nothingness and from the land where all things are forgotten, to a recovered perfection of physical being; and the Judgment completes this work by bringing back from forgetfulness and oblivion all the acts of those who are raised to be weighed in the Judgment. Thus, a future extinction of being, by which the results of the Judgment should be terminated and brought to an eternal end, seems to be entirely precluded. It would not only reverse the original work of creation, but reverse, with regard to the ungodly, that more recent act of new creation by which they have been raised from the dead before they stand in judgment. Fifthly, The annihilation and utter extinction of the ungodly cannot reverse their past actings, and that reign of disobedience, rebellion and blasphemy through long ages on which the sentence of judgment is based; but abolishing the persons themselves by whom those actions have been wrought, and on whom, so long as they exist, the guilt of them rests, it would leave the greater part of the past history of the world, the actions of the vast majority of the human race, as accidents without any subject, an immense irreversible blot in the vast scheme of Providence in which God the Creator could be glorified neither by judgment nor by mercy; it would so far reverse and blot out all results and traces of God's judgment and His original workmanship from the view of the survivors. The doctrine then not only is devoid of direct Scriptural evidence, but contradicts great fundamental truths with regard to the wisdom of God in all His works, and the whole scheme of Providence, and involves moral anomalies of a grave and intolerable kind.

The third main feature of the revealed doctrine of judgment to come is that the present mortal life is the accepted season of grace and day of redemption:

and that this is closed and followed by a Day of Judgment when the invitations to repentance and the acceptance of offered grace are followed by the sentence of the great Judge on the then state and character and works of all men both good and bad. The doctrine which would mitigate the solemnity of the Divine warnings of judgment to come by teaching an indefinite extension of the time of grace and probation through all the ages of the coming eternity, is "another gospel, which is not another," and directly opposed to many repeated messages of the word of God. "It will be too late to knock when the door shall be shut, and too late to cry for mercy, when it is the time of justice; when once the Master of the house hath risen and shut to the door." "When the bridegroom came, they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut." Hence the emphatic message, "Behold, *now* is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." On this truth is based the urgency of the appeal to turn unto God at once and without delay, and the danger of present neglect of the great salvation proclaimed in the Gospel. To replace this truth, without any express warrant in Scripture, by the doctrine of an endlessly renewed probation, removes one of the grand landmarks laid down in Scripture, on which the power of its appeal to the heart and conscience of careless and impenitent sinners very mainly depends. The teaching of Scripture on the interval between the hour of death and the return of the Lord from heaven to execute His long-delayed judgment and bring in the eternal reign of righteousness, is less clear. It is plainly taught that the interval is not one of moral stagnation. The judgment will not find men in all respects such as each was at the moment of death. "He who hath begun a good work" in the righteous "will perform it until the Day of Christ." Both the righteous and the unrighteous come within the range of the message. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still; and my reward is with me, to give every man as his work shall be." There is here taught immense moral development between the hour of death and the advent of the Judge, but no hint of a fresh space for repentance by which there is a transfer from one class to the other. This is as little taught in the statement of the preaching of the Gospel to the dead by the Lord Himself in the interval between His death and His resurrection, 1 Pet. iii. 18—22, and iv. 6. This is rather a message to those who had died penitent, under a more elementary manifestation of God's mercy as taught in the promise in Paradise, or the goodness of God which continually leads to repentance, in all the works of nature, and in continued mercy and forbearance to a world of sinners, whose own conscience convicts them continually of guilt, though involved in visible judgments, to announce to them the completed work of redemption; so Peter was sent to Cornelius, "a just man and one that feared God and wrought righteousness," "to speak to him words whereby he and all his house should be saved." The judgment to each will be according to the degrees and measures of light which they have received under that Divine law. "To whom much is given, of him shall much be required." Besides the silence of Scripture, the parable of Dives and Lazarus yields a clear presumption against any passage after death across that chasm which separates the believ-

ing and penitent from the unbelieving. The words which Christ ascribes to Abraham in reply to the request of the rich man—"They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them. Nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead they will repent. And he said unto them, If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead,"—may raise a doubt whether the revelations of the life to come would avail to produce true repentance on those who have all their lifetime persevered in slighting God's revealed message of grace in the Law and the Gospel.

A fourth element of the Scriptural doctrine is the statement of our Lord, Matt. vii. 13, 14. It has been sought to mitigate this solemn revelation in Scripture concerning judgment to come, by a classification of mankind into a small number eminently and conspicuously righteous, and a small number irremediably, helplessly, and monstrosly evil, and a vast majority whom death finds in a comparatively neutral state, and who, it is thought, by later and renewed probation may be freed from guilt, and included at last among the number of the saved. This view would involve the consequence that all mankind from Adam till the Judgment, except a few hardened criminals, are to share in the unspeakable honour of constituting the mystic bride of Christ presented to Him at last "without spot or blemish." This would contradict the plain words of the Lord Himself, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat; because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it;" and His further words of gracious promise, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The whole tenor of Scripture teaching as to the present age concurs with the sentence drawn from experience of the Greek wise man, *οἱ πλείονες κακοί*. But while it is plainly taught that the church of true believers is only a minority compared with the number of the unbelieving world, two further truths mitigate in some measure the oppressive solemnity of this great doctrine: they teach us that the number of the church itself is very great, "a multitude that no man can number;" and they teach further that in the world to come, besides the church of the firstborn, there will be immense multitudes of righteous generations, the inhabitants of the new heavens and new earth wherein righteousness dwells for ever, and in whom the promise is fulfilled made to Abraham, that the covenant and the oath to him would be "even to a thousand generations," and in whom the promise made by Ezekiel to repentant Israel and the heathen shall be fulfilled: "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, and my tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

A fifth element of the revealed doctrine of Future Judgment which it has been sought to set aside in consequence of the repulsive development it has received in mediæval writers, and the sensational pictures of those who have added to the Divine warnings, aiming to render them more deterrent and terrible, at the risk of exposing themselves to the warning that God may



“add to them the plagues written in His book,” is the fact that the coming judgment is to be by fire from the righteous anger of God. “The fire that shall not be quenched” is plainly and in many passages proclaimed to be the penal judgment of God on those who are placed at the left hand by the Judge. It is not taught, however, that it is only penal and has nothing of the remedial or corrective character; on the contrary, it is plainly taught that this fire of the great judgment will also have the character of an anti-septic, an antidote to the corrupting tendencies of moral evil in the creature when not restrained by the hand of the righteous Judge, for this fire is salt as well as fire. “Every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.” This fire of divine holiness is that through which both the righteous and the unrighteous must pass in the great day of account. It is a fire which discriminates and will bring to light and perfect whatever is the work of the new-creating Spirit of God, and will bring to light and consume, whether in the righteous or the ungodly, whatever is evil, corrupt, and impure. “Every man’s work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, for the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is; and if any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward; if any man’s work shall be burned, he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.”

The revealed message of Scripture on judgment to come includes a sixth main feature, that from the days of Paradise to the return of Christ, the whole human race has been placed under an economy of redeeming love. “That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself;” that every child of man is called upon to repent and turn to God, invited and earnestly entreated to accept the offered gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus; that there is no fatal secret decree of reprobation by which any are positively shut out from a share in the blessing; that the invitations of God are sincere, earnest and real, and not in pretence only, as unbelieving hearts are prone to suspect,—is assured by a threefold pledge of Divine love. First, the oath and promise of God the Father, “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked should turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways.” Again, by the tears and lamentation of the Incarnate Son over guilty Jerusalem, “when he came near and beheld the city and wept over it, O that thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes!” And thirdly and lastly, by the parting message and invitation of the Holy and Eternal Spirit. “The Spirit and the Bride say Come; and let him that heareth say Come; and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.” This invitation of Divine love, most clearly revealed in the Gospel, is also given, though more dimly, in that goodness of God shewn in all His works, by which He “leadeth men to repentance;” and the apostle assures us that even while He suffered the nations to walk in their own ways, “he left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness;” and His judgment on all we are further assured will

be according to the light they have received, so that "unto whom much is given, of them much will be required."

The worst corruption of the revealed warnings of judgment to come is that which infers from the revealed issues of judgment in connection with a human misconception of the Divine attribute of omnipotence, that the way of life has never really been opened to any but those who finally accept the Gospel and are placed at the right hand of the Judge. It is that which ascribes their destruction to some secret decree of absolute reprobation, and not to their own wilful and persevering rejection of the Divine gift freely offered to them. It thus turns the earnest invitations of the Gospel to the great majority of mankind into a mockery without real meaning, and virtually imputes perjury to the most Holy and the most Merciful in that most solemn message, "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked."

There are three other main errors which have been engrafted on the solemn truth, so as to have been mistaken in the minds of many Christians for one integral part of it. The result has been to present in its stead a compound morally offensive in the eyes of multitudes of men of deep religious instincts, and burdensome and oppressive to the hearts and consciences of the most spiritual Christians.

First is the doctrine which has grown out of the neglect of the great scriptural hope of the return of the Lord in glory from heaven to execute judgment, and which drops out of sight altogether the intermediate state between death and the future resurrection. Hence the message of coming judgment is made to imply the doctrine that each individual at the hour of death at once is cast into hell and undergoes a sentence of eternal condemnation, or is taken up to heaven and enters into a state of perfected bliss and glory. In the case of all except a few aggravated and atrocious criminals, it has become the habit of many, under the phrase "the consolations of religion," to expect from the ministers of religion words expressing more than simple hope, something like an assurance that the departed has gone to heaven, and has entered into glory. This form of Christian hope, though widely current in our own and other Protestant lands, as the only alternative to the terrors and abuses of the Romish doctrine of Purgatory, really combines two great evils, disobedience to a clearly revealed command, and contradiction to some of the most express statements of Scripture. It disobeys the command, "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then the praise to every man shall be from God." There are some indeed whose "good works are manifest beforehand," and in whose case we may therefore have the full confidence of their future acceptance by the gracious Judge. There are some whose evil works are manifest beforehand, yet scarce any for whom the Christian may not retain some faint hope of their repentance in a dying hour, and shrink from an absolute assertion of their future condemnation. But with the great majority of men, their moral state at the hour of death is certainly open to the Searcher of hearts alone; to hope for the best is the duty and instinct of Christian charity, but to change that hope into distinct and confident asser-

tions that the Judge has already pronounced over them a sentence of gracious acceptance, and that they have entered into heavenly glory, is to transgress the express charge of the Great Apostle; and when we consider how dim and feeble are the signs of grace, hearty repentance, and real holiness, in the great majority of deathbeds, even in Christian lands, it must go far towards replacing the warnings of Scripture by a practical doctrine of universalism. The confident manner in which many earnest religionists pronounce on and reckon up individual cases of alleged conversion, and the free and easy way in which they pronounce dogmatically of others that they are unconverted and under present sentence of condemnation, are two opposite forms of disobedience to the wise and solemn caution which Christ has given us by His Apostle. No Scripture warrants the statement in the Scotch Catechism that "the souls of the righteous, when they die, do immediately pass into glory." The doctrine in the early ages was rather reckoned a mark of Gnostic heresy than a part of the Catholic faith. Not death, but the coming of the Lord, is many times declared in Scripture to be the time when the righteous enter into glory. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Till the sentence of death is reversed in the resurrection, the holiness of God forbids any being to be "presented in the presence of His glory," and reserves that gift for the day of full "adoption, which is the redemption of the body." It is thus an error opposed to the express teaching of Scripture, that the "souls of the righteous after death do immediately pass into glory." The state of the dead while unclothed is one of secrecy and humiliation, and the converse or opposite of full and perfect glory.

A second main error which has been adopted by many as one part of the revealed message of wrath to come, is the doctrine of an eternal reign of Satan, the great Adversary of God and Christ, over all those who are condemned by the great Judge to exclusion from eternal bliss. One recent advocate of the doctrine of eternal punishment has said that this addition to it is so universal, that the general consent of Christians makes it needless to allege any Scriptural proof of its truth; so easily in this most solemn subject may men make their own additions to the revealed warnings of God, and then fight for them as if a part of the Divine message, reckless of the danger they incur lest God should add to them the plagues written in His book. The revealed purpose of Christ's manifestation is "to destroy the works of Satan," and to put an end to his kingdom. In the judgment of the arch Deceiver will be fulfilled the great maxim of Divine righteousness, that "whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased." The state of Satan after the Judgment is revealed not only as one of perpetual imprisonment, but of the most profound humiliation, in which all power both to tempt and to accuse shall have ceased for ever. His revealed position is not that of a throned king, but of a footstool under the feet of the great Redeemer.

A third great error which has been contended for as part of the revealed doctrine is the entire absence of mercy from the judgment on the wicked in the great day of account. There is only one verse which even seems to yield a warrant for this doctrine, where St James says, "There shall be judgment without mercy to him who has not shewn mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against

judgment." The Spirit here declares that on the unmerciful there will be judgment in a certain sense without mercy. It will be without mercy in this sense, that no act of mercy will either prevent its execution or bring it to a close; but the words themselves prove that it will not be without mercy in every sense, for this would be to ascribe to the righteous Judge Himself that very character on which He here pronounces the most severe condemnation. It is further revealed that righteous judgment itself is a result of the Divine mercy. "Unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, for Thou renderest to every man according to his works."

Three characters will meet and be combined in all those who are placed at the left hand of the Judge, and must all be revealed in the character of the judgment which they undergo. The first is that of creatures who by rebellion and persevering sin have forfeited that full redemption which was once within their reach, and in whose being there will remain evermore an unsolved discord, and the lack of free and willing co-operation with the perfect Will of the Creator—"the worm that dieth not," bitter remorse of conscience for the scorn of blessings that have passed away for ever, and "the fire that is not quenched," a will not freely and spontaneously, but through punishment and humiliation alone, brought into subjection to the supreme and perfect goodness. A second character is that of Brotherhood. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, because he is the Son of man." "Christ is the head of every man," though pre-eminently the Brother of the righteous who "do the will" of God, yet He is the Brother of the prodigals also who have forsaken their Father's house. He has given a pledge in His law that even in inflicting stripes on the wicked for their wickedness, the Judge, who is the Son of man, will not forget or overlook the unannulled relation of brotherhood. "If the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, the judge shall cause him to lie down and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault, by a certain number, and he may not exceed and beat him above these with many stripes, lest thy brother should seem vile unto thee." Those who receive either few or many stripes from the Son of Man when He sits on the throne of judgment, are still by the voice of the supreme Lawgiver included in the vast fraternity of the human race, and within the range of the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." A third character that will belong for ever to the saved and the unsaved alike is that of creatures made originally after the image of God; and this Divine sonship by creation, though not a closer and higher sonship by re-creation and regeneration, must be theirs for ever, and is one of the latest messages of God under the Law by the prophet Malachi. "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?" The lamentation of God over them is, "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me."

The doctrine that judgment without any mercy is to be revealed in the sentence of God on the unrighteous, and mercy without righteousness in the blessing on the righteous, would introduce an eternal schism and severance between two Divine perfections, which must everywhere and in all the works of God remain inseparably united. There is no antinomian or capricious blessedness

promised to the righteous, but it is pronounced over and over again that "they will be judged every one according to his works." There is no judgment devoid of every form of mercy announced to the ungodly, but a judgment in which their guilt and folly in the previous rejection or abuse of Divine mercy will be signally seen for ever, but in which they will also be recognized by the Supreme Judge as brothers and included in the vast fraternity of the sons of Adam, and treated by the Almighty Father, the faithful Creator, as those who were created at first after His own image, and in whom this character of sons of God by creation must abide for evermore; and they must still be included within the Divine command to God's people, "Honour all men." In their doom the contrast between the creature and God the only good must remain signally manifested for evermore: yet so that along with this manifestation by which alone the ransomed universe may be sustained for ever in assured blessedness and abiding union with the all-perfect fountain of Life and Blessedness, yet in judgment which is God's strange work, as in all His works, it will be seen that "He is the Lord who exerciseth lovingkindness, righteousness, and judgment in the earth. For in these things I delight, saith the Lord." The neglect or denial of these further features in the judgment to come tends to awaken in the unbelieving world countless blasphemies against the Bible and the God of the Bible, and to encourage in Christians themselves a spirit of Pharisaic selfishness most opposite to the true spirit of the Gospel. The same view which introduces a fatal schism or dualism into the Divine attributes, introduces a like schism of irreconcilable contradiction between two great Christian duties; it is a revealed law of Christian duty and hope to "look for and haste unto the coming of the Day of God," to long and pray for the promised return of Christ to execute judgment: it is also a revealed duty, the second great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" it is plainly impossible to long for and earnestly desire the coming of an hour which shall be to millions of our fellow-creatures, whom we are bound to love equally with ourselves, the commencement of a state of intense and eternal anguish unrelieved by any glimpse of hope and attended with no kind or degree of mitigation, or any concurrent exercise of the redeeming grace and mercy of God. The human corruptions of the revealed doctrine of coming judgment have practically destroyed in the Church the desire for the coming of Christ. They have strengthened and turned into secret hope the language of the unfaithful servant, "My Lord delayeth his coming:" and only when these mischievous additions are cast aside, and the truth itself in all its solemn majesty still retained and seen to be in harmony with all the rest of the glorious works of God, can the Church re-adopt into its inmost heart that closing voice of the Holy Spirit, "Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus."