

# THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

# THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY THE REV.

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## P R E F A C E

THE Book of Jeremiah, more than the writings of the other prophets, is dependent for its interpretation on the history of the time.

During Jeremiah's ministry, the Jewish State passed through many changes. When he entered upon the work of a prophet, his country was under the shadow of Assyria; some time afterwards, it became subject to Egypt; and a few years later, it came under the power of Babylon. His ministry lasted through the reigns of five kings. Of these, one was slain in battle, one was taken prisoner to Egypt, two were carried to Babylon, and, along with the kings, deportations were made of the best of the people; and in the end the city was destroyed. Under the first king an earnest endeavour was made to clear away every sign of idol-worship, and establish the State anew on a right foundation according to the laws of God; under the others, the laws of God were not held in honour, and idolatry spread over the land. Jeremiah himself was frequently in danger of his life: he was put in the stocks and suffered stripes, for

about two years he was kept in prison, and after the destruction of the city some of the lowest of the people who were left carried him forcibly to Egypt, where he finally passes from our sight.

These changes could not fail to reflect themselves in the ministrations of the prophet. But it was not the changeful condition of the country alone that showed itself in his utterances. Jeremiah himself also was constantly moving forward in his spiritual education. After the first captivity, in particular, he saw more clearly than he had done before that the Kingdom of God is not subject to earthly conditions, and his later prophecies show that in the end he did not occupy the same standpoint as at the beginning.

It is the aim of the present volume to assist in elucidating the history, and assign each utterance to its own period. The prophecies are not arranged in chronological order, and the most of them have no date. But as the speeches of a modern statesman can after his death be easily arranged from internal evidence by one who is familiar with the events of the time, so, for the most part, can the prophecies of Jeremiah. And when once the dates are fixed, the history will be found to supply the best interpretation.

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## HISTORY

### THE REIGN OF JOSIAH, 639-609 B.C.

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A MINUTE study of the reign of Josiah is not needed for the proper understanding of the Book of Jeremiah, as, with the exception of the Call, which is mentioned in the preface, the book begins at the reign of Jehoiakim, and probably

\* In Jewish reckoning, the first and last years of a period are usually both included. Thus the time from 646 to 639 is counted as eight years, and from 639 to 609 as thirty-one years.

† Jehoiakim's twenty-five years (2 Kings xxiii. 36) count back from 608 ; the twenty-three of Jehoahaz from 609. See Table of Synchronisms, pp. 50, 51.

contains not so much as a chapter of an earlier time.\* The outstanding events of the reign are soon told. Josiah succeeded to the throne at seven years of age, or, to speak according to Jewish reckoning, at eight. The character of the government at first would depend upon the men by whom he was surrounded, and, so far as we know them, the leading men of the time were in sympathy with the true religion. At the age of fourteen (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3), when he had been seven years on the throne, the king began to seek after the God of David his father. At eighteen (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3), he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the 'high places,' and from the symbols of idolatry, and even extended his reformation to the old northern Kingdom of Israel. A year after the reforming work began, Jeremiah, a young man of a priestly family at Anathoth, a village three miles or so to the north-east of Jerusalem, was called to the prophetic office, materially increasing the forces which made for righteousness. And when the reformation had proceeded six years, it received an important impetus from the discovery of a Book of the Law found during repairs in the Temple. In compliance with its requirements, an observance of the Passover on the greatest scale was immediately instituted by the king.

The new prophet must have looked on the movements of the time with the deepest interest, but whether he worked with Josiah and the men who were at the head of affairs, we do not know. His book is not occupied with that reign. But it is instructive to observe that although he had

\* This will be fully discussed later. See p. 55 ff.



been called to the prophetic office five years before the Book of the Law was found, yet when the king wanted a spiritual adviser regarding it, it was not Jeremiah that was consulted, but Huldah, a prophetess. We do not know whether Jeremiah was at that time generally recognised as a prophet. His name does not appear once in the history of Josiah's reign. It is only said, after the king died, that 'Jeremiah lamented for Josiah, and all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations unto this day, and they made them an ordinance in Israel; and, behold, they are written in the lamentations.' But a comparison of the ideas, and even the language, of the Book of Jeremiah with those of Deuteronomy, shows how profoundly the Book of the Law, which was found in this reign, influenced the whole life of the prophet.

From a misapplication to the days of Josiah of prophecies belonging to Jehoiakim's reign, in which rampant and unchecked idolatry is referred to, it has been supposed by many that Josiah latterly abated his reforming zeal, and allowed the nation to relapse into its old state. There is no ground for the supposition. Several years must have been occupied with the reformation described in the history, leaving only a brief time for the supposed falling away. And not only have we the statement in the general review of the king's life, that 'he walked in the ways of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left,' but there is the fact that he died fighting against the Egyptians; the Egyptian party in the Kingdom of Judah being always the party of idolatry. Jeremiah, too, in afterwards

reproving the wickedness of Jehoiakim, contrasts it with the conduct of his father, without a hint that in the end his father changed for the worse.

When Josiah succeeded to the throne, Judah, like other western states—including Egypt—was subject to Assyria. But the overlordship did not interfere with the local king's freedom of action. He instituted his reforms, and carried his rule into Israelitish territory without regard to a foreign power. It is possible, indeed, that before the end of the reign the suzerainty had ceased. Assurbanipal, the great king of Assyria, died about the time Jeremiah was called, and after his death the Assyrian empire rapidly declined. Instead of exercising foreign sway, it had difficulty in maintaining its own existence. While other nations threatened it more seriously, and nearer home, Egypt proclaimed itself independent, and in the course of time sent an army into Asia to seize its great western outpost—Carchemish, on the Euphrates. And, as so often happened in those days, Judah suffered from its intermediate position between the two contending powers. When the Egyptians in the course of their journey entered Israelitish territory, they were challenged by Josiah, and a battle ensued, by which he lost his life.

THE REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ, 609-608 B.C. (*Three months.*)

Jehoiakim, the eldest son of Josiah, should naturally have succeeded to the throne, but 'the people of the land' took Jehoahaz, a son by a different mother, and anointed him to be king. They would seem to have gone through the form

of anointing, to give validity to the appointment. Godly men would still be about the throne when Josiah died, and it is probable that they fixed on Jehoahaz as being more likely than the elder brother to continue the policy of his father. When he had been only three months upon the throne, however, Pharaoh Necho, who was at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, on his way home from the capture of Carchemish, put him in chains and carried him off to Egypt, where he died. He is characterised in the Book of Kings as having done that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, but a brief reference to him in the Book of Jeremiah (xxii. 10) shows that there were those who lamented his deportation.

### THE REIGN OF JEHOIAKIM, 608-598 B.C.

	B.C.
Jehoiakim set upon the throne by Pharaoh Necho	608
Jeremiah summoned by two visions to resume prophetic work . . . . . (?)	607 or 606
Nineveh destroyed . . . . . (?)	606
Carchemish taken from the Egyptians by Nebuchadnezzar . . . . .	605
Jerusalem taken, and Jehoiakim put in chains by Nebuchadnezzar, but afterwards released . . . . .	605
Daniel and other Jewish youths, with vessels of the Temple, taken to Babylon . . . . .	605
Date from which the seventy years' Captivity is reckoned . . . . .	605
Nebuchadnezzar succeeds to the throne of Babylon; his first year according to Jewish reckoning . . . . .	605
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Roll of past prophecies written by Baruch to Jeremiah's dictation . . . . .	605
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	B.C.
Roll read by Baruch in the Temple, and destroyed by Jehoiakim . . . . .	604
Roll rewritten, and 'many like words' added . . . . .	604
Nebuchadnezzar's yoke cast off by Jehoiakim . . . . .	602
Judah overrun by bands of Chaldeans, Syrians, etc., about . . . . .	602-598
Death of Jehoiakim . . . . .	598

### *The Almond Tree and the Boiling Pot.*

When Pharaoh removed Jehoahaz, he laid a heavy fine upon the land, and appointed Jehoiakim to be king.

We come now to a period when a detailed knowledge of events is necessary. Not only do the most of the prophecies contained in the Book of Jeremiah belong to the time of Jehoiakim, but the book itself took its inception from his reign. All things changed when Jehoiakim came to the throne. The idolatrous tendencies of the people, which Josiah had kept in check, but had never been able to destroy, were let loose. Stocks and stones were erected in every city. Priests worshipped again at the 'high places.' The morals of the country declined. The Book of the Law, to which the nation solemnly pledged itself in the days of Josiah became a dead letter. At last Jeremiah was summoned anew to active duty. He had two visions from God: one, a rod of an almond tree [Heb. *wake-tree*], the tree which first *wakes* from the sleep of winter, to intimate that God, whose judgment might seem to be slumbering, was about to take action; the other, a boiling pot with its face from the north, to tell that the seething which then existed among the northern nations would overflow upon the land of Judah.

Along with these visions, he was, as at his original call in the days of Josiah, solemnly charged to speak the word of God without fear; and his book, which properly begins at this stage, contains a record of long and weary efforts to save his country from ruin, and of encounters waged, often to the hazard of his life, both with the official classes and with the common people.

Whether he had been long in retirement before resuming work, we cannot tell. But it can hardly have been at the very commencement of the reign that he stepped anew upon the scene. He must have been stirred by the course which events were taking, before the Spirit of God called him to action. To use his own words of a later time, there must have been already as it were a burning fire shut up in his bones, making him weary with forbearing and unable to contain. Another consideration suggests that the reign had been going on for some time. It was not long after the beginning of the Jewish year that Jehoiakim was placed upon the throne. This we know from the fact that the three months' reign of Jehoahaz lay partly in one year and partly in another (see Table of Synchronisms, pp. 50, 51). Now, if it was a real almond tree which brought the spiritual vision before him, it must have been near the end of the Jewish year, about January, for it is then that the tree comes into bloom. Nine months or thereby of the reign would thus have elapsed, and, for aught we know, the blossom of even a second year may have appeared upon the tree.

When he resumed his work as a prophet, he had many forces to contend with. It was a serious matter that Jehoiakim was king. We do not read

that Jehoiakim opposed the worship of Jehovah, or actively promoted the practice of idolatry. He was simply a man of the world, selfish, vain, and resolute. When his people were grinding under a heavy Egyptian tax, he, with a heartlessness which we never see relieved, occupied himself with enlarging his palace and adorning it with cedar and vermilion. And he made his subjects furnish the labour without wages. Although he was raised to the throne by a foreign prince, and occupied it at his will, he sought to surround himself with all the circumstance of independent monarchy. Impatient of any who taught that a guilty nation must come to ruin, he sent his officers in pursuit of a preacher of righteousness who had fled to Egypt, and had him brought back to be put to death (xxvi. 20). It was dangerous to be a prophet in Jehoiakim's days, but the danger made it all the more necessary that God's word should be spoken.

Nor was the king the only one whom Jeremiah had to fear. Like king, like princes. Many who occupied positions of eminence were of Jehoiakim's spirit; and yet, as we shall find, there were among the princes men of noble character, who stood well by the prophet in time of need.

In the Church, too, as in the State, there were men to be reckoned with. Jeremiah came daily into contact with the priests. He was himself a priest; he lived in a city of the priests; he had often to denounce the priests for their encouragement of idolatry and their personal wickedness, and he experienced that a man's foes are worst when they are of his own household. But the most formidable of all his opponents were the prophets. It might be wrong to suppose that the prophets as a class

consciously deceived, or that when they preached 'Thus saith the Lord,' they practised hypocrisy. It is more likely that they regarded themselves as sensible men, who guided the people wisely and soberly, and that they looked on Jeremiah as a fanatic. They prophesied smooth things, because they had neither noble ambitions nor high spiritual conceptions; faith had died out with them, and religion had lost its power. The zeal of a heaven-inspired prophet must always be intolerable to men who are merely prophets by profession. At the time of his call, Jeremiah was charged not to fear, and he was assured that God would defend him against the kings, the princes, the priests, and the people of the land. The prophets were not mentioned at first among those from whom he should be protected (i. 18). They were not armed with authority like the others, and he may not in the early days have looked upon them with dread. But he had not been long at his new work when he found them to be at once the most powerful in thwarting his efforts, and his own most malicious foes.

With these evil tendencies in the people, and in the face of these opposing powers, Jeremiah had to gird himself to the task of turning the nation back to God. Like Moses when called to go and plead with Pharaoh for the deliverance of the Israelites, like most prophets when called to the great work of their life, he shrunk back. When he received his first call, he pleaded that he could not speak, for he was a child. And now when he was summoned anew, he realised the hardness of his task. He lived in Anathoth; he had to leave the quiet of the village and take to 'the streets of Jerusalem'; he had to itinerate among 'the cities of Judah' (ii. 2 ;

xi. 6) with a message from God. We possess a graphic digest of the speeches he delivered. The second chapter and the parallel eleventh, which partly repeat and partly supplement each other, give a synopsis of his teaching at the opening period. Exhibiting the principles he then enunciated, these chapters bear a relation to the rest of the book, not unlike that which the Sermon on the Mount bears to the general teaching of Our Lord.

The Book of the Law, which was found some fourteen or fifteen years before, had vividly set forth the way by which God led the fathers, and the covenant into which He and they entered. Working from that book as a text, the prophet reminded his countrymen of the love which originally existed on both sides, and declared his astonishment at their making a change. Worse than the outlandish people of Kittim, who had not given up their false worship, the favoured children of Israel had left the true God, the fountain of all good. They now suffered for their folly: their enemies had carried off their king, who was languishing as a prisoner in Egypt. How different from the noble position they occupied at the first! Ceasing to depend upon God, they looked now for protection to whatever country offered the fairest promise. Formerly they had regard to Assyria, and now, since its ancient fortress of Carchemish was held by Pharaoh, and its own existence was threatened by other powers in the east, they were turning to Egypt. He declared that they would yet be as ashamed of Egypt as they had been of Assyria.

His hearers would not acknowledge that they had turned from the God of their fathers. Nay, many sheltered themselves behind the reforms of



Josiah's reign, which they still to a certain extent observed, and held that they could count upon the favour of God. It would be wrong to think of their plunging into idolatry and utterly abandoning the worship of Jehovah as soon as the restraining hand of Josiah was withdrawn. People whose faith has grown loose, but with whom superstition is strong, do not so change their religion. They look for help both from Jehovah and Baal. The men of Judah were at first ashamed to be caught at false worship (ii. 26), then the shame wore off (vi. 5), and in the end they stood to their idolatry with brazen face (xliv. 15). At first they wavered (iv. 1): not only had they compunction when convicted by the prophet, but in their better moments they thought of returning wholly to God. Remembering the reformation in Josiah's reign, they often held even yet that they were returning, and the prophet's work lay in convincing them of their sin. They must go to the root of the matter (iv. 1-4). Sacrifices, it was true, were offered on Mount Moriah, and the children were named after Jehovah. But what, he asked, meant the stocks and stones they were setting up in every city? What meant the Baalim by whom even their prophets were prophesying? Why were they looking to foreign countries for help? Insisting upon the fact that there was an abandonment of God, and refusing to take a denial, he expostulated with them on their heartlessness and folly. In the course of time, when his entreaties had no avail, he foresaw the judgments they would inevitably bring upon the country, and his addresses took the form of warnings. He saw in imagination the conqueror

coming from the north to execute the Divine sentence. He says: 'A lion is gone up from his thicket, and a destroyer of nations: he is on his way, he is gone forth from his place, to make thy land desolate, that thy cities be laid waste, without inhabitant' (iv. 7). And yet, as intimating that the Divine vengeance might be stayed if they would only repent, he pleaded, 'O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved' (iv. 14). But when they settled into disregard of his words, the picture darkened. 'Run ye to and fro,' said he, 'through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that doeth justly, that seeketh truth; and I will pardon her' (v. 1).

One who preached in the capital, and itinerated among the towns with such messages, could not fail to provoke opposition, and in his native Anathoth, inhabited as it was by priests, with whom much of the responsibility lay, it was proposed to put him to death. He says: 'I was like a gentle lamb that is led to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living that his name may be no more remembered' (xi. 19).

His discovery of the proposal was a terrible shock, and led to one of those outpourings of grief before God, which often appear in his writings, and explain why he was so frequently charged to speak out God's truth without fear. While he was a man of the utmost tenacity of purpose, and one that could not be swayed from

the faithfulness of his course, he was not of strong nerve, and he felt keenly the hostility of his opponents. He could never have fired a forlorn hope with enthusiasm, and would at any time have retired gladly if another had come forward to do the needed work. But withal, the fact stands written broadly across the history of the time, that although those whom he rebuked were incensed against him, and possessed the power of life and death, this man of shrinking disposition never abated or proved false to his Divine message.

After the discovery of the conspiracy at Anathoth, he was sharply roused from dejection by being told of more serious enmity that would have to be met. 'If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and though in a land of peace thou art secure, yet how wilt thou do in the pride of Jordan?' (xii. 5). He received at the same time an intimation of a darker future that was in store for his country.

### *The Cast-off Girdle.*

The intimation was conveyed to him by means of one of those symbols, which he now adopted for the first time, so far as we know, but which he afterwards employed frequently to illustrate and confirm his lessons; and by which, while he was teaching others, his own education was greatly advanced. He was told to buy a linen girdle, and wear it upon his loins (xiii. 1). When he had worn it for some time, he had to go and hide it in a hole by the Euphrates. 'After many days' he was required to go back to the Euphrates and dig it out, when he found it to be marred beyond

use. Two great purposes were served by the symbol. First, there was, alike for himself and for the people, a deep imprintment of the lesson that the nation which had been treated by God with special honour, as if it gave ornament to Him like a girdle, was to be put away as a cast-off garment, and consigned to some place by the way of the Euphrates. It would be too much to say that Jeremiah never preached the captivity before, but after this it was never long absent from his mind, and he did his utmost to keep it before the minds of his hearers. 'The Lord's flock,' he says, 'is taken captive'; 'Judah is carried away captive, all of it; it is wholly carried away captive' (xiii. 17, 19). The other end served by the symbol was the education of the prophet during his repeated lonely journeys. Like Moses serving his time in the wilderness before going to Pharaoh, like Elijah going to meet with God at Horeb after the great day upon Mount Carmel, like Paul going into Arabia to prepare for his life-work, like the Master Himself having His forty days in the wilderness, Jeremiah was twice sent away upon a journey to the Euphrates. He had run with the footmen, and they had wearied him: he needed to be braced, to contend with horses. In his lonely journeys, and at a distance of four or five hundred miles, he had ample opportunity to ruminate upon the momentous destinies which were being settled in his native land.

The prophet naturally sorrowed over the dark days which were coming, and he was grieved to see that the men of influence in the State, instead of humbling themselves, cultivated pompous display. Jehoiakim and his mother appear especially to

have been linked together in schemes of pride. Our knowledge of the queen-mother is derived from slender information. Josiah had two wives, living at the same time, one being the mother of Jehoiakim, the other of Jehoahaz and Zedekiah. The former would chafe when the people of the land put the younger brother, Jehoahaz, the son of her rival, upon the throne, in preference to Jehoiakim. She had afterwards the satisfaction of seeing the favourite taken captive to Egypt, and her own son advanced to the kingdom. She would appear to have joined with Jehoiakim in his project of enlarging and adorning the palace, and when, after the prophet's second return from the Euphrates, he took to preaching captivity, mother and son came alike under his denunciation: 'Say thou to the king and the queen-mother, Humble yourselves, sit down, for your head-tires are come down, even the crown of your glory' (xiii. 18).

During the general disregard of God, severe droughts fell upon the country, which Jeremiah interpreted to be the voice of God speaking directly to the people (xiv. 1). 'The nobles,' he said, 'send their little ones to the waters: they come to the pits and find no water; they return with their vessels empty; they are ashamed and confounded, and cover their heads. . . . The wild asses stand on the bare heights, they pant for air like jackals; their eyes fail, because there is no herbage.' Regarding this as a sign of God's anger, he preached judgment and captivity more clearly than before. 'Cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth. . . . Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the

famine; and such as are for captivity, to captivity. . . . I will cause them to be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth' (xv. 1-4).

At such times the burden was more than the prophet could bear, and he often broke down. It was not easy to witness almost all the leaders of society casting off the restraints of principle, and disregarding his most solemn warnings, and to feel that, as a preacher of evil, he was himself shut out from a brother's place in his own country. He says: 'Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have not lent on usury, neither have men lent on usury to me; yet every one of them doth curse me' (xv. 10).

'By reason of the present distress,' he was not to enter into any of the engagements of home or social life. His 'brethren and the house of his father' had already taken a part against him, and now he was told that he was not to marry (xvi. 1). He was to go neither to the house of mourning nor to the house of feasting. God had taken away His peace from the people; all were to be visited with judgment; and the time was coming when the bondage of Egypt would be forgotten, so great would be the miseries of the new exile.

Among the warnings to be delivered was one that had to be uttered at the gate of the palace and at the other gates of the city, against carrying burdens in or out on the Sabbath day (xvii. 19). The warning shows that the Sabbath was still recognised, and apparently it implies that the people had not wholly disowned the authority of the Divine teaching as it was then possessed. The

words take the form of an address to the kings and other inhabitants, but it is doubtful whether a warning to Jehoiakim could be given in the royal hearing. In Josiah's days an audience would be given to Jeremiah as a prophet of God; and, later, in the days of Zedekiah, he was summoned to the presence as well as consulted by messengers from the court, and sometimes he was waited upon by the king himself. But it is not likely that the proud spirit of Jehoiakim would brook reproof. It must have been about this time that he sent to Egypt for the prophet Uriah (xxvi. 20), and had him slain for teaching similar to that of Jeremiah. And not long afterwards, Jeremiah himself and Baruch had to hide from the king's wrath. It is probable, therefore, that both this warning about Sabbath-breaking, and the prophecies relating to Jehoiakim, which are gathered together in ch. xxii., and which seem to belong to the first four years of the reign, while in form addressed to the king, were really spoken only in the hearing of the prophet's fellow-subjects. In other instances, when he administered reproof for sins in which kings were implicated, he spoke as if they were of his audience, although we know that they could not have been present (xix. 3; xxxvi. 29).

*The Prophet tried for his Life.*

The greatest danger Jeremiah met with up to this time, so far as we know, occurred in connection with a public address in the Temple (vii. 1; xxvi. 1). It would appear to have been on a special occasion, for his words were to 'all the cities of Judah which come to worship in the Lord's house.' The House of God was still sacred in

the estimation of the people, although His laws were ill observed; and in their growing superstition it was regarded as giving security to the city and the country. Jeremiah, on the other hand, preached that so long as they disobeyed the Divine commands, the Temple was nothing. Nay, if they persisted in disobedience, the building itself should be destroyed. Let them look at the tabernacle at Shiloh, which God's providence did not spare. His hearers—people, prophets, and priests alike—were horrified to hear such language, and they seized him to put him to death. A tumult gathered, and the princes who came up from the palace sat in the entry of the gate, to try the case. To them Jeremiah had the same message as to the common people, and he warned them that if they killed him, they would bring innocent blood upon themselves. The princes appear to have been divided; but it was pointed out that the prophet Micah had in his day spoken similarly, and that instead of putting him to death Hezekiah and his people averted God's anger by repentance. Ahikam in particular, the son of that Shaphan who had been scribe in Josiah's time, took Jeremiah's part, and succeeded in saving his life.

The prospect for the country grew steadily darker. It became so threatening, that the most sceptical must have feared Jeremiah's words were to come true, and the prophet's own convictions must have deepened. Assyria, which had so long ruled over the surrounding nations, and to which Judah among the rest owed subjection, had of late years been losing its possessions; and, as a monument recently discovered shows, it had itself



fallen at last before the power of the Umman Manda. Its imperial city, Nineveh, had been taken and demolished. That was probably in 606 B.C.—three years after the Egyptians captured Carchemish. Babylon was now free to extend its conquests, and Nebuchadnezzar, the son of the Babylonian king, marched westward with a powerful army. At Carchemish, he encountered the Egyptians, and put them to rout out of their stronghold. All the western countries were then at his mercy, and all took alarm: even the Rechabites, whose principles forbade their living within walls, fled to Jerusalem for refuge (xxxv. 1). This must have been only a very short time after the prophet's narrow escape from death. Jeremiah took advantage of the presence of the wanderers to impress his lessons on the people. He gathered them into one of the Temple chambers, and offered them wine, which they refused to touch, on the ground that it had been forbidden by their ancestor. They had entered the town, they said, for fear of the enemy, but there was nothing to make them give up the statute of abstinence. Turning to his fellow-citizens, who had also come in from town and country, he contrasted their disregard of God's law with the Rechabites' loyalty to Jonathan; and while he repeated his warning to his own people, he rewarded the strangers by assuring them that they should not want a man to stand before God for ever.

From this time the lessons of the Divine judgments advanced rapidly. One day the prophet went down to the house of a potter (xviii. 1), and seeing him take the clay of a vessel which was marred in the making, and change it into another,

he taught that God would similarly change the House of Israel. Another day he bought a potter's earthen bottle (xix. 1), and took a company of elders from among the people and the priests to a gate overlooking the valley of the Son of Hinnom, where symbols of the worst idolatry were in view, particularly the altars on which children were sacrificed; and, breaking the bottle, he declared that God would so destroy the Jewish State.

Such prophecies struck deep, especially with the Babylonian army approaching; and Pashhur, the chief governor of the Temple, who could endure them no longer, scourged him and put him overnight in the stocks. When he was released in the morning, he not only repeated all that he had said regarding the city and the state, but announced to Pashhur that he would die a captive in Babylon.

This was a sore time for the prophet. The constant ministry of evil and the cruel persecution it provoked, told heavily upon his spirit, and the burden was more than he could bear. Several of the most passionate expressions of grief which are scattered through his book belong to this period. He says: 'If I say, I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name, then there is in mine heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, and I cannot contain' (xx. 9). And again, 'Cursed be the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed. . . . Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?' (xx. 14, 18).

The latest utterance, so far as we know, before

the arrival of the Babylonians, was one in which he announced with great precision the cause of their coming, the Divine Ruler who called them into the land, the period to which their supremacy would last, and the countries over which it would extend (xxv. 1). He said that from the thirteenth year of Josiah—for three-and-twenty years—he had been speaking as God commanded; that as they would not hear, God was bringing Nebuchadnezzar, His servant, to punish them and the surrounding nations, and that they would be in subjection for seventy years, after which the Chaldeans would in their turn be punished. He enumerated a long list of nations which were to suffer; not only the smaller ones near at hand, but such powers as Egypt, Elam, and Media. The Lord was to ‘plead with all flesh.’

*First Arrival of Nebuchadnezzar.*

After that we hear nothing more until the Babylonian conqueror has swept with his scourge over the city. We learn from other sources that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, that Jehoiakim was at first put in fetters to be led away to Babylon, and that he was afterwards left to rule as a Chaldean vassal. We are told that a band of youths, of the seed royal and of the nobles, including Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were taken away to serve in the king’s palace at Babylon, and with them a number of the Temple vessels, which were to be placed in the treasure-house of the conqueror’s god. This was in the fourth year of Jehoiakim.\*

In the presence of such a judgment, the voice of Jeremiah was stilled. God Himself was speaking.

\* The date, which is of great consequence to the history and the prophecies, is discussed in the Appendix, p. 89.

His servant kept silence. No more upbraiding, not even the expression of his own grief was heard. The next time he raised his voice, it was to address words of fatherly counsel to the lads who were torn away to serve in a land of strangers (x. 1), where, with opportunities for advancement by falling in with the idolatrous practices of a heathen court, they would be tempted to forget their fathers' God. Not that Jeremiah's voice extended to the lads themselves, for he could only speak to them in imagination. He saw in them the whole 'house of Israel,' of whom they were the first-fruits, and he regarded his seventy years of captivity as having now begun. 'Hear ye the word,' says he, 'which the Lord speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the nations, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the nations are dismayed at them. For the customs of the peoples are vanity; for one cutteth a tree out of the forest . . . they deck it with silver and with gold. . . . Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither is it in them to do good. There is none like unto Thee, O Lord . . . Who would not fear thee, O King of the nations?'

*The Roll.*

When quiet was restored after the Babylonians were gone, Jeremiah had a command from God to write in a book all the oracles he had received (xxxvi. 1). The people had hitherto been deaf to his warnings, but the subduing influence of recent events might now make them willing to hear. They must all have seen that his words were being fulfilled. He called Baruch, therefore, to write to his dictation a digest of his past utterances. He regarded his teaching as being one from the begin-

ning, and the form of the command was that he was to write all the 'words' [prophecies] from the days of Josiah; but the 'words' he had spoken from his new beginning in the days of Jehoiakim had a special appropriateness, and, with the exception of a passage in ch. iii., it was the prophecies of Jehoiakim's reign alone that were put down. Baruch was to read the roll in the Temple on a fast-day, when the people should assemble from town and country, Jeremiah not being at liberty to do so himself. It is not stated how he was restrained, but the king must have ill brooked the indignity to which he had been subjected by the invader, all the more that it was the fulfilment of Jeremiah's hateful words; and we gather from the whole circumstances that the prophet was not safe in his presence, and went into hiding.

By-and-by a suitable opportunity presented itself for turning the manuscript to account. In the ninth month of the fifth year of Jehoiakim—probably the anniversary of the capture of Jerusalem—a fast was proclaimed to be held to the Lord at the Temple. We would judge that the king had no part in fixing this observance, not only because it is said that the people proclaimed it, but also because the king was not in a penitent spirit. When the company assembled, Baruch went to the Temple and read the roll; and when the princes heard of it, they sent for him to go over it to them. They were profoundly impressed, and insisted that the king should be made acquainted with its contents. But knowing the king's temper, they asked Baruch himself to hide as well as Jeremiah; and it was well that they took the precaution, for when Jehoiakim heard three or four columns, he cut the roll in pieces, threw it into

the fire, and ordered author and writer to be brought before him; 'but the Lord hid them.' Jeremiah was then divinely commanded to have the roll written anew, and again assured that the king of Babylon would come and destroy the country. He was further told that Jehoiakim would be brought to an unhonoured grave. The roll was rewritten accordingly, and there were added 'many like words.'

The king remained upon the throne for other six years. The course of events during that time was such that his rage against Jeremiah must have continually increased, and as the people were also impatient of the prophet's word, it would seem that there was no further opportunity for his voice to be heard, and we never meet with him again within that reign. Two years after the reading of the roll (2 Kings xxiv. 1), Jehoiakim, who had always leaned to Egypt, threw off the Babylonian yoke, being possibly moved by the fact that Nebuchadnezzar was fully occupied with wars against powerful nations on the other side of Babylon. But while the great ruler was not himself at liberty to come to Judah, bands of Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites (2 Kings xxiv. 2), doubtless with his sanction, if not at his instigation, overran the country, and it is probable that they continued to distress it during the rest of Jehoiakim's life. We know nothing of the later events of the reign. We are not even told whether the king died or was killed. But the hatred in which he was in the end regarded, in consequence of his tyrannical rule, and perhaps also the disturbed condition of the government, are indicated by two prophecies of Jeremiah's which were left on record after the king's death: one announcing that 'his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat,

and in the night to the frost' (xxxvi. 30); the other saying, 'They shall not lament for him, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem' (xxii. 18).

THE REIGN OF JEHOIACHIN, 598-597 B.C. (*Three months and ten days.*)

Jehoiakim was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin, who reigned three months and ten days. The Chaldeans, free from their wars in the far east, returned for a second capture of Jerusalem. It is probable that when they set out they expected to find Jehoiakim on the throne, but before they reached the rebellious city, the reins had passed into the hands of his son. While the siege proceeded, Nebuchadnezzar himself arrived, and the young king surrendered at discretion. His humble submission may have turned away any wrath conceived by the invader on account of the revolt of his father, but he did not show the same leniency as at the first capture of the city. Instead of leaving Jehoiachin upon the throne, he carried him to Babylon along with his mother and his wives, his princes and officers, and eight or ten thousand of the leading citizens. He took also the treasures of the Temple and of the royal palace.

To rule over the remnant in Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar set upon the throne Zedekiah, the half-brother of Jehoiakim, the full brother of Jehoahaz. Jeremiah was among those who were left. As in the case of the previous capture, Jeremiah gives no account of this, which was really more important.

There are two incidental allusions to it in connection with a vision which the prophet had (xxiv. 1), and a letter which he afterwards addressed to the captives in Babylon (xxix. 1), but no substantive account of the capture itself. It necessarily changed to a large extent the position and work of the prophet, as well as the condition of the remaining inhabitants.

### THE REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH, 597-587 B.C.

	B.C.
Zedekiah set on the throne by Nebuchadnezzar . . . . .	597
Prophecy of Habakkuk . . . . .	Between 597 and 594
Vision of Baskets of Figs . . . . .	Between 597 and 594
Embassy from Zedekiah to Bab <sup>a</sup> . . . . .	Between 597 and 594
Letter to the captives at Babylon . . . . .	Between 597 and 594
Ambassadors from Edom, Moab, etc., at Jerusalem, discussing revolt . . . . .	594
Hananiah breaks yoke on Jeremiah's neck . . . . .	594
Zedekiah goes to Babylon . . . . .	594
Jeremiah's prophecies against Babylon thrown into the Euphrates . . . . .	594
Ezekiel begins to prophesy . . . . .	593
*Nebuchadnezzar's last siege of Jerusalem begun . . . . .	589
Hebrew slaves at Jerusalem emancipated . . . . .	589 or 588
Egyptian army sets out for relief of Jerusalem . . . . .	588
Siege raised temporarily . . . . .	588
Zedekiah sends to consult Jeremiah concerning issue of siege . . . . .	588
Emancipated people re-enslaved . . . . .	588
Jeremiah imprisoned in house of Jonathan . . . . .	588
Siege renewed . . . . .	588
Zedekiah sends for Jeremiah for consultation . . . . .	588
Jeremiah's imprisonment changed to court of guard . . . . .	588
Jeremiah buys his cousin's field . . . . .	588 or 587
Book of Consolation and Hope written . . . . .	587

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\* See introd. note on ch. xxxvii.



	B.C.
Jeremiah let down into dungeon . . . . .	587
Jeremiah taken out of dungeon by Ebed-melech .	587
Jeremiah consulted by Zedekiah in entry of Temple . . . . .	587
Babylonians effect breach in the walls . . . .	587
Zedekiah flees, and is captured . . . . .	587
City demolished . . . . .	587
King and people taken captive, and Jeremiah set free . . . . .	587

### 1. *The First Four Years of the Reign (597-594).*

Zedekiah was a man of gentler disposition than Jehoiakim, and Jeremiah had no occasion to fear persecution at his hands, but he was swayed by the princes, and his action depended upon them. The princes of this reign are not the men to whom we were accustomed in the days of Jehoiakim: none of the names are the same. Such leaders of the earlier reign as survived were probably all carried to Babylon, and inferior men were advanced to their places. We have seen that on a day of peril in Jehoiakim's reign, when the people, stirred by the priests and prophets, would have put Jeremiah to death, he was protected by the princes (xxvi. 10); and that on another critical occasion, when the king would have taken his life, they advised him and Baruch to hide (xxxvi. 19). Now the positions are reversed. Zedekiah would often have thrown his shield over the prophet: danger came from the princes. The newcomers did not understand the prophet's purpose, nor would they tolerate his interference in the affairs of the realm. Yet, as we shall find, there were a few among them who sympathised with Jeremiah, including some who were descended from Shaphan, the scribe of Josiah's days.

*The Baskets of Figs.*

It would be some time before order developed anew in the remnant community. The men at the head of affairs had neither the training nor the natural fitness requisite for governing a state, and as, besides, they were of wicked character, the nation under their guidance sunk lower than ever. Jeremiah must have felt even lonelier than before. After his long silence he had once more to be summoned to action, and, as at his call in the early days of Jehoiakim, he was guided by a vision. He saw two baskets of figs: one of very good figs, like those which are first ripe; the other, of very bad figs, not fit to be eaten (xxiv. 1). He was taught that the first represented the people who—first gathered—were taken away to Babylon; and the second, those who were left in Jerusalem, or had fled to Egypt.

This vision had a profound effect upon all his future ministry. He learned from it that the captives were the real nation, and that the succession to the promises vested in them. But there was a deeper and more important lesson, and one that more seriously affected his relation to the rulers and people of Jerusalem. He had often before had glimpses of the spiritual nature of the Kingdom of God. But after the Captivity and the vision, his education took a long step forward, and it continued to advance. With new distinctness, he saw that the Kingdom of God did not depend upon local habitation, or Temple, or earthly king, or priests, or anything outward. It could grow and flourish by the rivers of Babylon as well as on Mount Zion. And as things then stood, it was of advantage that the people should be removed—that they should be dis-

lodged from all things external on which their faith rested. They would then look to God Himself. He would be their God, and they His people, as they had never been to each other before. Submission to the rule of Babylon, if not even the dissolution of the Jewish State, would be helpful to that end. As those great truths formed in his mind, he and the unbelieving people of Jerusalem could not fail to come into antagonism : they met every day, but they lived in opposite camps. What to them was patriotic conduct, was in his eyes opposed to the mind of God, and injurious to the best interests of the country. On that account, he not merely lamented their insane prolongation of a contest which could only have one end, and which would draw upon them the more dire vengeance of the conqueror; but he laboured to bring about the complete acknowledgment of Babylonian rule, and perhaps it would not be too much to say that in the end he longed for the breaking up of the kingdom.

The vision is stated to have occurred after the captives were taken away. But it cannot have been immediately after. The captives were removed just as the year was about to close (2 Chron. xxxvi. 10), say in February or March. If therefore those were actual figs from which the lesson was given, there would be an interval of four or six months between the deportation of the people and the presentation of the figs, which become ripe in June or August. Other considerations suggest a yet longer interval. The character of the people left in Jerusalem, and the policy of those in authority are condemned in the vision; and it must have taken some time for the character to prove itself, and the policy to develop. In the first use Jeremiah made

of the vision—in his letter to the captives (xxix. 1),—he refers to false prophets and diviners among them: these also must have had time to show themselves. There is interesting evidence, too, in the work of a contemporary prophet. Habakkuk prophesied after the deportation of Jehoiachin, as his references to the ravages of the Chaldeans show. But he knew nothing of the hope which was contained in Jeremiah's vision. To him everything was dark; he could only fall back, as he did with splendid faith, on the general principle that God was on the throne, and that under His government 'the just would live in his faithfulness'; and he recalled (Hab. iii.) how in the darkest days God had interposed on behalf of His people. He caught up, therefore, the gloomiest predictions of Jeremiah, although they were now being fulfilled, and flung out with bold defiance the declaration that should the \* produce of tree and field, of fold and stall, be swept away, as Jeremiah foretold, by those ruthless invaders, he would not only look on with calmness, but even 'rejoice in the Lord.' Had he possessed the light of this vision of his brother prophet, his reasoning would have taken a different turn. There is yet further evidence to show that the vision was later than Habakkuk's writing. That prophet presents the Chaldeans in an odious character, as indeed Jeremiah himself did at the first; but after the vision it became the policy of Jeremiah to persuade the Jews to take kindly to them and submit to their rule. This was undoubtedly the right policy, and Jeremiah laboured in it with all his might. But had Habakkuk at that period thrown this prophecy upon

\* Compare Jer. v. 17 with Hab. iii. 17, and see note on Jer. v. 17.

society in Jerusalem, the one prophet would have hindered the work of the other. We infer, therefore, that while Habakkuk wrote after Zedekiah came to the throne, he wrote before the Vision of the Figs. The conclusion from all this seems to be, that while the vision, as we know, was not later than Zedekiah's fourth year, it is more likely to have occurred in the third year than in the first.

After the vision was given, Jeremiah found an opportunity to turn it to practical account. Zedekiah was sending an embassy to Nebuchadnezzar at Babylon (xxix. 1). The only two men whose names appear in the deputation are a son of Shaphan and a son of Hilkiah, both in sympathy with the prophet. We do not know the object of the mission ; it was a mission to the king ; possibly they were sent with the tribute of the conquered province. But Jeremiah took advantage of their going, to send a letter of comfort and guidance to the exiles, in which he announced the great hope he had received. He applied the vision. They were to build houses and plant gardens, to marry and give in marriage, to seek the peace of their new city, and wait calmly for a return at the end of the seventy years. They were to pay no heed to the false prophets, who were themselves leading wicked lives ; and as for Zedekiah and those in Jerusalem who would not submit and wait, they would be overtaken by terrible judgments. He mentioned two false prophets in particular, who were misleading the captives, and denounced upon them a punishment at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, which shows that the furnace of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego was a means of execution not unknown at Babylon.

The letter of Jeremiah provoked a reply.

Shemaiah, the Nehelamite, wrote to Zephaniah, the priest at Jerusalem, telling him of Jeremiah's message, and calling upon him to do towards him the duty of a priest. He reminded him of the vigorous action of Jehoiada in the olden days, and suggested that Jeremiah should now be put in the stocks. Zephaniah read this reply to Jeremiah, who rejoined by sending another message in Jehovah's name to the captives, in which he announced that neither Shemaiah nor any descendant of his should see the good that God would do to the people.

Both at Babylon and Jerusalem the unbelievers continued active, and in the fourth year of Zedekiah we find ambassadors at Jerusalem from Edom, Moab, and Ammon on the one side, and from Tyre and Zidon on the other (xxvii. 1). A conspiracy appears to have been hatching among those nations to throw off the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, and they would seem to have made Jerusalem their headquarters. To oppose it, Jeremiah made bars and yokes, to be both worn upon his own neck and given to the ambassadors for their royal masters, 'for,' said he, 'the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel,' had decreed that all their lands should obey the king of Babylon. In their countries there were false prophets, with the usual accompaniment of diviners, dreamers, soothsayers, and sorcerers, giving opposite guidance, and Jeremiah assured the ambassadors that only those who submitted would be suffered to remain.

To Zedekiah he went direct, asking why he and his people would persist in taking a course which must end in destruction. He assured him, in spite of all the preaching of the false prophets, that instead of the Temple vessels being brought back

from Babylon as they said, those which remained would also be taken thither until God's time of deliverance should come.

A not less striking incident occurred in the Temple (xxviii. 1). Hananiah, a false prophet, took it upon him, in the presence of a number of priests and people, to announce in God's name that within two full years God would restore the vessels, and bring Jehoiachin and the rest of the captives back. The matter was argued between him and Jeremiah, and Hananiah ended by breaking the yoke from Jeremiah's neck, with the words, as from God, 'So within two full years will I break Nebuchadnezzar's yoke from off all the nations.' As on a famous occasion some years later (xlii. 4), Jeremiah had nothing to reply. But by-and-by he went to Hananiah with a message, that for the bars of wood he had broken, he would have to make bars of iron; and that for his leading the people astray, he would die. His death occurred two months afterwards. Some eleven years before, when Nebuchadnezzar had not yet arrived at Jerusalem, Jeremiah announced that he was being brought as a servant to do God's will (xxv. 9), and now he taught that disloyalty to the conqueror was rebellion against God.

During the same year, and probably after the events just mentioned, Zedekiah went to Babylon. He may have decided to go personally to pay tribute, for the purpose of removing suspicion of disloyalty. In his train went Seraiah, the brother of Baruch; and Jeremiah committed to his care a roll of prophecies he had uttered against Babylon, charging him on reaching the imperial city, to read the roll, and fling it, weighted with a stone, into the Euphrates, saying, 'Thus shall Babylon sink and

not rise again' (li. 59). From the beginning, he had declared that the time would come for God's visitation upon the apparently all-powerful empire, and while he was now counselling submission, it was essential that the faithful both in Jerusalem and Babylon should have their hope confirmed: the greatest earthly empires were but short-lived in comparison with the everlasting Kingdom of God.

*2. The Last Three Years of Zedekiah (589-587).*

After this, Jeremiah again disappears. There is a blank, alike in the prophecies and in the history, and we do not meet with him again for five years, till in the ninth year of Zedekiah the Chaldeans are once more at the gates of Jerusalem (xxxix. 1). The forces of corruption may have become too violent to allow the voice of a prophet of Jehovah to be heard. Or he may have felt that his work in Jerusalem was done. Ever since the Vision of the Figs, his hopes lay with the captives in Babylon: he tried to restrain the people in Jerusalem for their good, but they would not listen. The conspiracy against which he contended in Zedekiah's fourth year (xxvii. 1) soon ripened into revolt, and he may have felt that he had nothing more to say. All the information we possess for some years afterwards comes from Babylon. Among the thousands of unknown Jews who went into exile with Jehoiachin, was a young man who four years afterwards began to receive visions from God, and to be charged with messages to his fellow-captives. The voice of Jeremiah, therefore, had hardly ceased in Jerusalem when that of Ezekiel was heard at Babylon. And his utterances not only let us into



the knowledge of Jewish society in Chaldea, but throw light upon Jerusalem itself. The rebellion of Zedekiah, which the Book of Jeremiah might have led us to expect, is in the pages of Ezekiel plainly stated. In a prophecy belonging to the sixth or seventh year of Zedekiah, that king is referred to as having, at least by that time—how much sooner we cannot tell—broken his oath to Nebuchadnezzar, and sent ambassadors to Egypt for horses and people (Ezek. xvii. 11). But it would seem that the Chaldean king, who had many wars and immense building operations on hand, could not then spare an army to be marched against Jerusalem, and for some years the Jews indulged their dreams of security, and sank into deeper wilfulness and sin.

*The Last Siege of Jerusalem.*

When at last in the ninth year of Zedekiah the Chaldeans appeared, and settled down to the siege, the inhabitants showed the irresoluteness which so often characterises unprincipled men. They had wavered between the worship of Jehovah and idolatry, and in the day of their calamity they fell back upon the observance of God's laws. One of the old ordinances of the nation required that if a Hebrew or a Hebrewess became a slave, he should be set free at the end of six years, and as there were many bondmen in Jerusalem, the king and their other masters, including the nobles and the priests, made a solemn covenant by which they were enfranchised (xxxiv. 8). Soon afterwards, an Egyptian army approached for the relief of the city, and the Chaldeans went off to meet them. Jeremiah was then consulted. Zedekiah sent

deputies to inquire regarding the issue. The answer was simple. Jeremiah had long preached that God brought Nebuchadnezzar as His servant to subdue all the peoples of that region, and carry captive, or kill, or scatter among the nations, such as refused to submit. The issue, therefore, was not a matter of temporary success or defeat. The Chaldeans would return; and even if their whole army were smitten, and only wounded men remained, they would rise up every man in his tent and burn the city (xxxvii. 10). The unwelcome words were disregarded. The emancipated slaves were brought again into bondage, and the prophet, proclaiming liberty to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine, announced that the Chaldeans would return, and the city would be consumed. Soon after, while the enemy was away, Jeremiah took advantage of an open gate to go out and 'receive his portion' at Anathoth; but as he passed out he was arrested by a captain of the guard as a deserter, and after consultation among the princes, he was beaten and thrown into prison (xxxvii. 11). From that time he was never again a free man while the Jewish State remained. Instead, however, of having his work stopped, he received in the prison the most sublime revelations, and, like Bunyan in Bedford gaol, he gave forth from his place of confinement the noblest of his teaching. At first he was immured in a dungeon belonging to the house of Jonathan the scribe, but afterwards he was put in the court of the guard in the king's house, where his friends had free access to him (see note on xl. 1).

The Babylonians who were not detained long by Pharaoh's army, returned to the siege. In his re-

newed straits, Zedekiah secretly sent for Jeremiah again while he was still in the dungeon in Jonathan's house, to consult him in the palace regarding the outcome (xxxvii. 17). The prophet answered that the king would be delivered into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar ; and he asked, Where were now the prophets who announced that the king of Babylon would not come against Jerusalem ? Before being dismissed, he entreated that he should not be sent back to die in the house of Jonathan ; and Zedekiah committed him to the court of the guard, giving orders that a loaf of bread should be supplied to him daily. There he remained, with the exception of a brief interval, until the city was taken.

In the court of the guard he had comparative freedom. He was not allowed to go out, but others could come in. Among those who used that liberty was his cousin Hanamel, who proposed that he should exercise his right of redemption as next-of-kin by buying Hanamel's field at Anathoth (xxxii. 6). To those who considered the capture of the city probable, the purchase must have seemed absurd, because in that event all the land would cease to be of value to the present owners ; but with the same confidence with which Jeremiah foretold the coming of the Babylonians, he had announced the return of the Jews after the seventy years were fulfilled (xxv. 11 ; xxvii. 7, 22 ; xxix. 10, etc.), and therefore, with much publicity and every detail of formality, he called witnesses and weighed the money, signing, sealing, and delivering the deed of conveyance to be placed in an earthen vessel for permanent preservation.

After this striking transaction, the prophet retired into the secrecy of his own soul in the prison, and

held communion with God. From a review of the Divine faithfulness in the long history of his people, he received great comfort, and obtained reassurance with regard to the ultimate return. To this period belongs the Roll of Consolation (xxx. 1), which shines out so conspicuously in his writings as the great light that lightened those dark times. Few then listened to his words. Yet even in Jerusalem there were some to whom such teaching was precious. Others would need help during the yet darker days of the exile, and when the children returned to live and worship in the country of their ancestors, guidance and comfort would still be required. He was commanded, therefore, to gather up the revelations of coming goodness, and put them in a book for the use of all. The book, which consists of chs. xxx. and xxxi., contains the highest of all his utterances, and doubtless it is to it in large measure that we must attribute the peculiar affection in which Jeremiah has always since been held by the Jewish race (Matt. xvi. 14).

As the common people gathered freely around him in the prison-court, he gave the same counsel to them that he had given to the king. The Babylonians would certainly prevail, and the safety of his countrymen would depend upon their ceasing to prosecute the useless strife. Such counsel was bound to irritate the princes, and with impatience they demanded the prophet's death (xxxviii. 1). But when they got him within their power, they dared not kill him outright, and they let him down by cords into a dungeon to die of hunger. Nature would rid them of his preaching. Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian eunuch, was more humane than the Jews, and amid the contending counsels of the time he

went boldly to the king as he sat in the gate of Benjamin, the very gate at which the princes first made Jeremiah a prisoner, and implored permission to release him. The request was granted—for, with all his faults, Zedekiah had a liking for the prophet—and Ebed-melech, losing no time, took a guard of thirty men, and threw down old cast clouts and rotten rags for the prophet to put under his arm-holes, and so he pulled him out. Jeremiah was then restored to the court of the guard, where his life was tolerable and his food secure.

Once more Zedekiah sent for him that he might consult him secretly in an entry of the Temple (xxxviii. 14). As before, Jeremiah advised surrender. Zedekiah pleaded that he would be mocked by his own subjects who had deserted to the Chaldeans; but the prophet assured him in God's name that it would be well with him, while if he refused he would both bring ruin upon himself and entail destruction upon the city. As they parted, Zedekiah charged him to keep the conversation secret, and say to the princes if they made inquiry, that he had presented his supplication to the king not to be committed again to Jonathan's house lest he should die. This is the only instance of the want of candour on the part of Jeremiah that we find in the book. The princes came with their inquiry, he told them as ordered, and they were blinded to the real subject of the conference. It is true that the prevarication, if such it may be called, was made in the interests of Zedekiah, and that the men who sought to entrap both himself and the king had no right to information; but we should all have liked to read that the prophet had not yielded to the king's request.

While the unprincipled conduct of king and nobles went on within the city, the enemy were busily raising their earthworks to a level with the walls, employing their battering-rams and otherwise pushing forward the siege; and a year and a half after it began, a breach was effected, by which the Chaldeans entered (xxxix. 4; lii. 4, 7). Zedekiah and a number of his people made their escape by night, but the enemy overtook them in the plains of Jericho. Nebuchadnezzar, who had other military operations on hand, was at Riblah, to the north of the valley between the Lebanons, and Zedekiah and the princes of Judah were carried thither. Then ensued a scene of cruelty such as the Babylonian and Assyrian slabs show to have been common in those wars. The sons of the captured king were put to death before his eyes; his nobles were killed; and after he had been compelled to look on the massacre, his own eyes were put out, and he was taken in chains to Babylon to be imprisoned for life. A month after the city was taken, Nebuzar-adan was despatched to Jerusalem for the work of demolition. Everything in the Temple worth taking was removed. The Temple itself, the king's palace, and the houses of all the chief men were burned, and the walls of the city destroyed. Many of the leading men were taken to Riblah to be slain. The rest of the inhabitants, all but the poorest, were carried to Babylon. Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the prince who befriended Jeremiah and saved his life in the reign of Jehoiakim, was appointed governor over the few that were left (xl. 5).

When Nebuzar-adan was sent from Riblah for the winding up of affairs, he received instructions

from his royal master to show every consideration to Jeremiah, and allow him his choice of going to Babylon, where he would be treated with kindness, or remaining in Judah. The Chaldeans had doubtless heard from deserters about the counsel he had given before and during the siege. When the city was taken, the prophet was still a prisoner in the court of the guard, and he remained a prisoner under the Chaldeans until the arrival of Nebuzaradan, when,<sup>1</sup> like the rest of the inhabitants, he was sent in chains to Ramah, a few miles to the north of Jerusalem—the place from which the dreary march to Babylon was to begin. The demolition had now been completed, and at Ramah the choice mentioned was put before him. He elected to remain, and was dismissed with a present. He went, with Baruch for his companion, to the neighbouring town of Mizpah, where the new governor had fixed his court. So ended the ancient Kingdom of Judah, according to Jeremiah's words.

*The Remnant in Egypt (587, etc., B.C.).*

The Jewish State was wound up when Jerusalem was destroyed and the people were carried captive, and with that the history might have been expected to close; but the book contains a miserable appendix. When it was learned that the Chaldeans had gone, leaving only a small company with Gedaliah at Mizpah, a number of adventurers, who had lived in the fields, each with his band of men, made their way to the new court. Along with them, and bringing his following, like the rest, came Ishmael, a scapegrace of Jewish royal descent, who resided at the court of Baalis, the king of the neighbouring Ammonites. Other Jews swarmed

in from Moab, Ammon, Edom, and elsewhere. They were a base crew. While Gedaliah, in that noble spirit which characterised his house, received them one and all with kindness, and invited them to gather for themselves the wine and summer fruits of the fields, they conspired to assassinate him. So true were they honest enough to give him warning of the plot, and even proposed to put Ishmael, the chief conspirator, out of the way; but he would not hear of it. His generosity was misplaced. While Ishmael and his men were partaking of his hospitality, they fell upon him and his retinue, and did their work of massacre so completely, that no one was left, either Chaldean or Jew, to carry the tale outside. The following day, some fourscore worshippers, who wore tokens of deep lamentation, came from northern towns to present offerings at the ruined Temple, and were met by Ishmael, weeping like themselves, and invited to come and visit Gedaliah. Outside the town, they were murdered also, with the exception of ten, who tempted him with the promise that they had stores hidden in the field. Ishmael then carried off such of the people as were left at Mizpah, the king's daughters among the number, intending to take them across to the country of Ammon.

When Johanan and the other bandits learned what had taken place, they went in pursuit and rescued the captives, while Ishmael and his men escaped. But now Johanan and his friends were in alarm, lest the Chaldeans should inflict vengeance for the massacre at Mizpah, and they fled to Egypt, carrying the captives with them. Remembering, however, that they had Jeremiah in the company, they prayed him to seek guidance from God,



solemnly promised to follow the counsel he brought, whatever it should be. In ten days the word came. If they remained where they were, they would be safe: if they went to Egypt, the Chaldeans would follow them. But panic prevailed, and they continued their flight, Jeremiah and Baruch being forced to go with them. The place to which they came was Tahpanhes, where the Pharaohs of the period maintained an army of Greek mercenaries. Under their protection the fugitives appear to have thought themselves in good keeping; but Jeremiah, following his old pictorial manner, took great stones and laid them in mortar on the pavement in the front of the very fortress, declaring that Nebuchadnezzar would yet erect his tent over them when he came to subdue the whole land.

In a further prophecy, addressed to the Jews who resided in various parts of the Nile valley, he announced that as God had destroyed Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, so would He bring ruin upon them. Those by whom he was immediately surrounded traced their troubles to a different cause. The ungoverned multitude, the women taking a prominent part in the discussion, maintained that all their present evils had befallen them since they gave up offering incense to the Queen of Heaven, and they protested that to her worship they would return. Jeremiah answered that even in Egypt they would not escape the judgment of God, and that Pharaoh Hophra, like Zedekiah, would come into the hands of the Babylonian conqueror. With this the historical narrative closes; but we must guard against assuming that the work of the prophet was done, or that he died soon after the flight into Egypt. Except that in the main portion of the

book there is no mention of the invasion of Palestine in Nebuchadnezzar's twenty-third year (lii. 30\*), which would seem to indicate that he had died before that time, there is nothing to show how long he lived an exile. But he was not a very old man when he entered Egypt. If he was twenty or twenty-five when he was called to the prophetic office, he was only sixty or sixty-five at the destruction of Jerusalem. He may well have lived in Egypt for several years, and reasoned with the Jews there as occasion required. In his latter days his mind ran much upon Babylon, and he received many new revelations which are put together in chs. i. and li. His point of view was changed. In the early days, before Nebuchadnezzar's arrival, he had always thought and spoken of Babylon with horror. In Zedekiah's reign, on the other hand, when the foolish preaching of the Jewish prophets by the Euphrates and the evil policy of the leaders at home tended to stir up revolt, it would have been unwise to refer to the cruelty of the conquerors, or expand the prophecies on Babylon's future doom. But now the position was altered again. There was now no question of independence. The danger lay all in the contrary direction. In presence of the overwhelming might of the Chaldeans, the Jews, who were now all in exile, were tempted to lose faith in God, and allow themselves to be merged among the nations. In the dark days which had settled upon his country, Jeremiah nourished his own confidence by recalling his old prophecies, and he received many new 'words' from God to tell himself and his people that Babylon must fall and the captives return. It does not appear that he sent his new prophecies to the

\* This belongs to an appendix of late date.

captives. They may have been left for Baruch or some other to take to them. There was no need of haste in their transmission. Like the Roll of Consolation, which was written in prison, these revelations were for the days that were to come. It was still far from the end of the seventy years. But when the time drew near, the writing must have had a powerful influence in preparing the people for return. So passed away the great prophet. He was doomed all his life to preach to an unbelieving people ; he was hated as the evil genius of his country, and in his own person he was treated shamefully. But when the hopes against which he inveighed proved false, and the judgment which he foretold fell, his last words proclaimed that God reigned, and that the nation would rise again.

## CHRONOLOGY OF THE PERIOD

IN fixing the history of the period, we receive very important assistance from dates which appear in the writings of various authors, supplementing and checking each other. The authors not only wrote independently of one another, but even used different systems of reckoning, which caused some of them to set down dates which have the appearance of being inconsistent with the times given by the rest. The apparent discrepancy, combined with real agreement, is of great value for purposes of confirmation. The documents may be grouped as follows :—

A. The Books of Jeremiah, Kings, and Chronicles. These were written by Palestinian Jews; the first two before the Captivity, the third long after. It does not affect our present consideration, whether the Book of Jeremiah was composed by Jeremiah himself, by Baruch, or by some other, nor whether it was put together in Palestine before or after the flight to Egypt, or in Egypt itself. It is enough to observe that it is of Jewish authorship, and written according to Palestinian methods. In Palestine, the first year of a king's reign was counted from the day of his accession to the end of the calendar year, and the second year from the first New Year's Day thereafter. In Jeremiah the dates are reckoned in this way. The same system of counting is used

in the Books of Kings. Chronicles was written long after the Return, but it likewise follows this method. The years in these books consequently agree with each other.

*B.* The latter part of the last chapter of Jeremiah, the latter part of the last chapter of Kings, and the beginning of Daniel. The endings of Jeremiah and Kings were later additions written in Babylon. They carry us forward to the beginning of the reign of Evil-Merodach, which was twenty-five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and they even mention an indefinite later time, saying of Jehoiachin, that the favour into which he was raised by Evil-Merodach was continued to him 'all the days of his life.' The annotator or historian who wrote the appendix in each case must, of course, have written still later than the facts which he chronicles, how much later we cannot tell. He may have been born in captivity; but whether or no, he had been long enough at Babylon to catch the manner of counting which obtained there. The Babylonians, as we now learn from the monuments, did not reckon kings' reigns as was done in Palestine. The period from a king's accession to the end of the calendar year was called by them 'the year of his reign,' or his 'accession year'; and his 'first year' counted from the first New Year's Day thereafter. The dates of a Babylonian writer thus appear to be a year behind those of a Palestinian. The eighth year, *e.g.*, in the Palestinian record (2 Kings xxiv. 12) becomes the seventh in the Babylonian (Jer. lii. 28), and the nineteenth in the Palestinian (2 Kings xxv. 8; Jer. lii. 12) becomes the eighteenth in the Babylonian (Jer. lii. 29).

The beginning of Daniel also deals with dates

after the Babylonian method. It extends from ch. i. 1 to ch. ii. 4<sup>a</sup>, and is written in Hebrew; the second part, which reaches to the end of the seventh chapter, being in Aramaic. We do not here touch the question of the date of the book at large, nor that of the unity of the book. It is the first part alone which concerns our purpose, and with it alone we deal; and even in dealing with it we do not need to consider the time when the history was composed in its present form; we have to do only with the *materials* set forth in the history. We are dealing with the dates; and we find that they are calculated according to the Babylonian system. It is said that the king appointed Daniel and other youths to be nourished three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before him. Then, after some details about their training, it is added that at the end of the appointed time they were brought in; and a few verses further on it is said that the king dreamed a dream in the second year of his reign, and Daniel was brought in to interpret it. According to Palestinian methods of counting, those numbers will not tally. The dream should not have taken place till the king's third year. But by the Babylonian method they agree perfectly. Nebuchadnezzar, as we know, came home to succeed to the throne. Daniel's first fragment of a year—or, as Orientals would put it, his first year—coincided, not with the 'first year of the reign' of Nebuchadnezzar, but with his 'accession year'; Daniel's second year coincided with the 'first year of the reign,' and his third year with the 'second year of the reign.' When Daniel, according to Oriental counting, had had three years of training (*i.e.* from his first to his

third year), and was presented to the king, he was still in what the Babylonians called the 'second year of the reign.' We thus find it to be the Babylonian method that is here used in counting. And applying that method to the opening verses of the book, we learn that the capture of Jerusalem took place in what the Babylonians called the 'third year of Jehoiakim,' and the Jews called the 'fourth' (Jer. xlvi. 2; xxv. 1).

C. Another set of dates is supplied in the tables given by Ptolemy, showing the years in which kings reigned, see *Table Chronologique des Regnes de C. Ptolémée*, par M. l'Abbé Halma (Paris, 1819), Dissertation I., pp. 3, 4. It has always been held unsafe to differ from Ptolemy, and in some instances he has been confirmed by the monuments.

D. 'The first of Thoth [New Year's Day] of the Egyptian year of Nabonassar coincided with the 26th of February 747 Julian before the Christian Era.' (Halma, as above.)

The accompanying table (pages 50 and 51) is arranged according to these different styles of reckoning.

*Results of the Synchronisms shown in the Table.*

1. 31 Josiah and 1 Jehoiakim are not the same year, because 1 Jeremiah = 13 Josiah, and 23 Jer. = 4 Jehoiakim. It is probable that the three months of Jehoahaz which intervened were partly in the last year of Josiah and partly in the first of Jehoiakim.

2. 11 Jehoiakim and 1 Zedekiah are not the same year, because 4 Jehoiakim = 1 Nebuchadnezzar, 10 Zed. = 18 Neb., and 11 Zed. = 19 Neb.

## TABLE OF SYNCHRONISMS

A. Jewish Reckoning.			B. Babylonian Reckoning.†				C. Ptolemy's Reckoning.
Jeremiah's Ministry.	Jewish Kings.	Babylonian Kings.	Jewish Kings.	Babylonian Kings.	Daniel's Captivity.	Jehoiachin's Captivity.	Era of Nabonassar.
							I =
I =	= 13 <sup>a</sup>						...
2	14						121
3	15						122
...	...			1 <sup>e</sup> =			= 123
19	31			17			...
							139
* { 20	1 <sup>b</sup>		A	18			140
21	2		1	19			141
...	...		...	...			...
23	= 4 =	= 1 <sup>d</sup>	3	21[A]	1		143
24	5	2	4	1 =	2		= 144
25	6	3	5	2 =	= 3		145
...	...	...	...	...	...		...
30	11	8	10	7 =	8		150
* { 31	1 <sup>c</sup>	9		8	etc.	= 1	151
...	...	...		...		2	...
34	4	12		11		5	154
...	...	...		...		...	...
* { 39	9	17		16		10	159
40	10 =	= 18		17		11	160
41	11 =	= 19		18		12	161
...	...	...		...		...	...
* { ?	...	24		23		17	166
...	...	44		43[Λ] =		= 37	= 186
				1 =			= 187

<sup>a</sup> Josiah.<sup>b</sup> Jehoiakim.<sup>c</sup> Zedekiah.

\* Periods of Active Ministry

† In the columns of Babyl. Reckoning, [A] denotes the Accession



## FIXING THE CHRONOLOGY.

D. Anno Domini.	
	Authorities and References.
B.C.	
= 747	Halma's <i>Ptolemy</i> , Dissert. I., pp. 3, 4.
627	Josiah's thirteenth year (Jer. i. 2; xxv. 3).
626	
625	Nabopolassar's first year; reigned 21 years (Ptolemy).
609	Death of Josiah; Accession of Jehoahaz (2 Kings xxii. 1;
	2 Chron. xxxiv. 1).
608	Jehoiakim's first year.
607	
605	Neb.'s Accession Year (Jer. xxv. 1-3; xlvi. 2; Berosus
	[Jos., Ap. I. 19]; Dan. i. 1-6).
604	Neb.'s first year (Ptolemy) (Jer. xxxvi. 9).
603	Dan. ii. 1 (comp. i. 5, 18).
598	2 Kings xxiv. 12; 2 Kings xxv. 27; Jer. lii. 28.
597	Zedekiah's first year.
594	Jer. xxviii. 1, 17; xxvii. 1 (comp. xxviii. 1); li. 59.
589	2 Kings xxv. 1; Jer. xxxvii. 1-3; xxxix. 1; lii. 4.
588	Jer. xxxii. 1.
587	2 Kings xxv. 8 (comp. xxiv. 18; xxv. ii.; 2 Chron. xxxvi.
	11); Jer. lii. 12 (comp. i. 3; xxxix. 2; lii. 1, 5); lii. 29.
582	Jer. lii. 30.
562	Evil-Merodach's Accession Year (Ptolemy); 2 Kings xxv.
	27; Jer. lii. 31; Berosus (Jos., <i>Ant.</i> x. 11, 1; Ap. I. 20).
561	Evil-Merodach's first year (Ptolemy).

<sup>a</sup> Nebuchadnezzar.

<sup>\*</sup> Nabopolassar.

included in Book of Jeremiah.

of a King, being the same as the last year of his predecessor.

3. Jehoiachin's three months and ten days were wholly in Jehoiakim's eleventh year, because he was taken in 8 Nebuchadnezzar. His captivity would therefore be reckoned by the Palestinian writer of 2 Kings xxiv. 12 from 11 Jehoiakim. His captivity was also reckoned by the Babylonian writer of 2 Kings xxv. 27 and Jer. lii. 28 from that year, because according to him it was in 7 Nebuchadnezzar (Babylonian style), and because 37 Captivity = Accession Year of Evil-Merodach, which must have been the same as the last (forty-third) of Nebuchadnezzar. The Palestinian writer who was left behind in Palestine, and Nebuchadnezzar, who was also in Palestine when he sent off the captives, would reckon from the time of their leaving. The time was "the turn of the year"—an expression whose meaning is plain enough when we remember, as above, that Jehoiachin's reign closed in Jehoiakim's eleventh year, and Zedekiah's began the year after.

4. The numerous coincidences in the table confirm the accuracy of the dates—all the more, because while there are many apparent discrepancies, there is real agreement in every case. The invariable agreement also reflects back upon the principle of different styles of reckoning, and proves its correctness. The key and the lock fit.

*The Chronology as fixed by the preceding Table.*

	B.C.
Babylonian era of Nabonassar begins . . . . .	747
Josiah's reign begins (he being in eighth year of age, <i>i.e.</i> , seven years old) . . . . .	639
Josiah begins to seek after the God of David his father in eighth year of reign ( <i>i.e.</i> , when fourteen years old) . . . . .	632

	B.C.
Josiah begins to purge Judah and Jerusalem in the twelfth year of reign ( <i>i.e.</i> , when eighteen years old) . . . . .	628
Jeremiah called to prophesy in thirteenth year of Josiah . . . . .	627
Reformation—Book of the Law found—Huldah consulted—Great Passover . . . . .	622
Battle of Megiddo—Death of Josiah—Accession of Jehoahaz . . . . .	609
Jehoahaz taken captive to Egypt—Accession of Jehoiakim . . . . .	608
Battle of Carchemish—Siege of Jerusalem—Capture and release of Jehoiakim by Nebuchadnezzar—Captivity of Daniel—Accession of Nebuchadnezzar (being his first year, as reckoned by Palestinian writers) . . . . .	605
First year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, as reckoned by Babylonian writers . . . . .	604
Jeremiah's Roll read in Temple . . . . .	604
Daniel in third year of captivity interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream—second year of reign (Babylonian style) . . . . .	603
Death of Jehoiakim—'Buried with burial of an ass'—Accession of Jehoiachin . . . . .	598
Siege of Jerusalem ; Arrival of Nebuchadnezzar—Captivity of Jehoiachin, Ezekiel, and others . . . . .	598
Zedekiah set upon the throne . . . . .	597
Rebellion talked of at Jerusalem—Zedekiah and retinue go to Babylon in fourth year . . . . .	594
Ezekiel begins to prophesy . . . . .	593
Jerusalem besieged by Nebuchadnezzar . . . . .	589
Jerusalem destroyed—Zedekiah and people led captive . . . . .	587
Further deportation from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in his twenty-third year (Babylonian style) . . . . .	582
Death of Nebuchadnezzar—Accession of Evil-Merodach—Jehoiachin released from prison . . . . .	562
First year of Evil-Merodach (Babylonian style) . . . . .	561

## THE PROPHECIES

JEREMIAH, as we have seen, was called to the prophetic office in the thirteenth year of Josiah, and he continued till after the destruction of Jerusalem. His work, therefore, stretched over forty years. But his book, far from taking so wide a range, confines itself to short and definite periods. It is not drawn up in chronological order, and the most of the prophecies are without date ; but the time was full of great events, which mark off the road like milestones, and when these are kept well in view, the subject-matter of the prophecies enables one to arrange the most of them without difficulty. With a few exceptions, they fall into groups under four short periods, viz. :—

	B.C.
The first four years of Jehoiakim . . .	608-605
The first four years of Zedekiah . . .	597-594
The last three years of Zedekiah . . .	589-587
And a period of unknown duration following the destruction of Jerusalem . . .	587, etc.

### *First Prophetic Period.*

(The First Four Years of Jehoiakim—608-605 B.C.  
*The Period of Warning.*)

We should perhaps restrict the period within even narrower limits than the first four years of Jehoiakim. Putting out of view the appendices contained in chs. x., xxxvi., and xlv., it closed with the

arrival of Nebuchadnezzar in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, but how soon it began we cannot tell. As stated in the History, p. 7, it may have been towards the end of the first, or even of the second year, before the prophet was moved to resume his active work. At whatever time it began, the period went on till the fourth year, and was from beginning to end a time of warning—of increasing warning, hardly relieved by a word of encouragement or comfort. The prophet's one text was, 'Repent, or destruction is at hand.'

With the exception of the first ten verses of the first chapter and a portion of the third chapter, the whole of the first twenty chapters belong to this period. It is not usual to read them so. On the contrary, according to the general, if not the universal assumption, that the book contains a record of Jeremiah's prophecies from the beginning of his career to the end, the visions of the almond-tree and the seething caldron are set down to the first summons under Josiah; and it is generally held that all the early chapters belong to Josiah's reign.\*

The following seem to be the chief grounds on which the current belief rests:—(1) A prophecy in ch. iii. is expressly assigned to 'the days of Josiah' (verse 6), and the context is assumed to be of the same time. But it is surely more reasonable to suppose that, since that passage alone among all the prophecies of chs. ii.-xx. is ear-marked with a date, the author must have wanted to distinguish it as belonging to a different period from the context. (2) In the preceding passage (iii. 1-5), there is mention of a superficial repentance, and that, it is thought,

\* See, *e.g.*, Nägelsbach, Keil, Payne Smith, A. B. Davidson, Cheyne, Orelli, Streane, Driver, Kirkpatrick.

indicates that we are in the time of Josiah's reformation, especially as the 'days of Josiah' are expressly named in the verses that follow. But, apart from the fact that the context of chs. ii. and iv. is full of marks which are characteristic of Jehoiakim's period, it would appear from the passage itself that—unlike the great reformation—the present was induced by a drought (iii. 3, 4), such as we know took place in the early reign of Jehoiakim; and, if the movement occurred in his reign, what more natural than that it should remind the prophet of the commotion of former days, which made so much show and had so little effect, and that he should recall what he said in those days about 'treacherous Judah'? And, once dealing with the subject, he was bound—for he had not yet given up hope—to close with an earnest appeal (iv. 1-4) for a thorough change of heart. The mention of reforming movements, therefore, is no evidence that we are still in Josiah's days. Those were days which, with their superficial reforms, Jeremiah could never forget (vi. 14; viii. 11). (3) Some have thought that the covenant which Jeremiah preaches in ch. xi. is also a sign that the Book of the Law has just been found. But what comes out in the passage is that the people are 'turned back' (verse 10)—that a new movement has set in, such as occurred when Jehoiakim came to the throne. (4) Jeremiah was divinely commanded (xxxvi. 1), after Nebuchadnezzar's invasion, to write in a book 'all the words' God had spoken to him 'from the days of Josiah even unto this day.' But the command could not be intended to be taken literally, for it was not possible that in one day he could read publicly 'all the words' of twenty-two years; and all that would seem to be implied is that from the prophecies,

in all of which from the beginning of his ministry he had been teaching the same principles, he should gather such as would best suit his purpose. That passage in ch. iii., however, was actually taken from 'the days of Josiah.' (5) It is assumed as probable that a book called by Jeremiah's name gives a summary of all his prophecies; and (6) the preface is referred to. But why make that assumption? No preacher preserves for permanent use all his utterances; and in the case of Jeremiah there were special reasons for recording those from Jehoiakim's reign onwards. Does the preface sustain the assumption? Let us look at the opening verses. Verse 1 announces the prophet: 'The words of Jeremiah.' Verse 2 states when he was called to the prophetic office: 'To whom the word of the Lord was in the days of Josiah . . . in the thirteenth year of his reign.' Verse 3 *announces the period covered by the book*: 'And it was in the days of Jehoiakim . . . unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah . . . unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive.' In opposition to this reading, the common view assumes that it is verse 2 that announces the beginning of the period covered by the book; but is it not significant that almost all who take that view are driven to the conclusion that the preface does not hang well together, and must have been altered and enlarged by later editors? (7) Ch. vii. opens with a prophecy which was delivered 'in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim,' as is shown in ch. xxvi., which is practically an historical appendix to it, and it is generally inferred that the chapters preceding the seventh are earlier than that reign. But, as is explained elsewhere (p. 133), the reign of Jehoiakim was broken so completely into two by Nebuchadnezzar's invasion in the fourth year, that

Jeremiah came to speak of anything which took place before the invasion as occurring 'in the beginning of the reign'; and therefore that prophecy may have been spoken in the third or fourth year, leaving the previous chapters to belong to an earlier period of the reign.

When we examine more fully the contents of the book, the evidence in other respects all points in one direction. It shows Josiah's reign to be past. (1) What is omitted:—There is no mention of the finding of the Book of the Law, the great Passover, the suppression of idolatry, the general reforming activity of Josiah, the battle of Megiddo, with the death of the good king and the transference of the suzerainty from Nineveh\* to Egypt, all of which, occurring as they did during Jeremiah's ministry, must have deeply affected both his ministry and himself. The more these are considered, the more impossible does it appear that they could have been omitted, had the book covered the prophet's work in the last eighteen years of Josiah's reign. (2) What is included:—Idolatry on the part of many is rampant and unrestrained: 'According to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah' (ii. 28). Kings as well as priests are to be opposed (i. 18; ii. 8, 26; iv. 9). The Egyptians have 'fed on the crown of the head of Judah' (ii. 16),—whether we refer that to the death of Josiah, or the captivity

\* The second chapter, when read in connection with the reign of Jehoiakim, throws interesting and important light on the date of the fall of Nineveh. We learn from it that, after Jehoiakim came to the throne, which was in 608 B.C., Assyria was still a standing empire; and we know that it ceased to exist before Nebuchadnezzar marched west in 605. A recently discovered inscription of Nabonidus shows that the city probably fell in 606.



of Jehoahaz, or the tribute laid by Pharaoh upon the land. The people are blamed for trusting in Egypt (ii. 18, 36), whereas Josiah lost his life by fighting against Egypt. Invasion is imminent (iv. 19; vi. 1, 22, etc.). Jeremiah is in danger of his life (xi. 18; xii. 6). The king and the queen-mother (xiii. 18) are rebuked for their pride, and threatened with signal punishment: this prophecy could not refer to Josiah, and yet we shall find that it belongs to an early period of the book. These prophecies—and the first twenty chapters are full of such—while they have no known suitability to the days of Josiah, exactly fit the time of Jehoiakim.

We conclude, then, that while the narrative of the original summons (i. 4-10) and the passage in the third chapter belong to Josiah's reign, the main body of the book takes its rise after the accession of Jehoiakim.\* This is the *terminus a quo*.

But there is also a *terminus ad quem*. With a few exceptions, which may be said to form an appendix, the prophecies of the period do not go beyond the fourth year of Jehoiakim. If we except ch. x., which was written shortly after the deportation of Daniel and his companions, and chs. xxxvi. and xlv., which relate to the roll, those oracles contain no sign that Nebuchadnezzar had yet been in the land. The prophet was stopped in his work. He durst not appear in public. By warning against the newly licensed idolatry and wickedness, by denunciations against the prophets (xxiii. 9-40) and the king (xiii. 18; xvii. 19; xxi. 11; xxii. 1)—which, although they

\* Ch. i. 1-3 is the title or heading; i. 4-10 is the original summons in the time of Josiah; i. 11-19 is the new summons under Jehoiakim. Then ch. ii. begins with the prophecies under Jehoiakim, to which i. 11-19 is an introduction.

may not have been uttered in the hearing of Jehoiakim, were probably reported to him—he had brought upon himself the hatred of all classes, including the king. His townsmen at Anathoth proposed to put him to death (xi. 21); ‘his brethren and the house of his father . . . dealt treacherously with him’ (xii. 6); the king brought back and killed another prophet, who, after preaching similar judgments, had fled to Egypt (xxvi. 20); the priests, the prophets, and the people sought Jeremiah’s life (xxvi. 8); the chief officer in the Temple beat him and put him in the stocks (xx. 2); the king’s ill-humour must have been greatly increased by the capture of Jerusalem, and by his own humiliating treatment at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar; and it would seem that Jeremiah no longer thought it safe to let his whereabouts be known. He was ‘shut up’ (xxxvi. 5); when the time came to read the roll, instead of appearing in person, he sent Baruch to read it in his name, and, after it was read, such was the king’s fury, that both he and Baruch had to hide (xxxvi. 26). From that time we never hear of Jeremiah again till the death of the king, and, with the exceptions already mentioned, there is a complete blank in the book from the fourth to the eleventh year of Jehoiakim. Like a Greater than he, he did not show himself until the king who sought his life was dead. If further proof were wanted that his public ministry was in abeyance during those seven years, it would be found in the fact that throughout the book there is no reference to a Babylonian invasion in the fourth year of Jehoiakim as an accomplished fact, to the transference of the suzerainty from Egypt to Babylon either in that or in any other year, to the revolt from Babylon after three years’ submission (2 Kings xxiv. 1),

or to the consequent harrying which was carried on by petty nations until Nebuchadnezzar had leisure to come himself (2 Kings xxiv. 2). The fact is, that all these things were making it more unsafe for Jeremiah to leave his seclusion; and when he next appeared, there were more serious matters to speak of. The Babylonians were once more at Jerusalem; Jehoiakim was dead, and had been buried ignominiously, and his son and successor, with thousands of the Jewish people, were on their way to Babylon as captives.

We have thus a broad line both before and behind, marking off the First Prophetic Period of the book, and shutting it into narrow compass, *i.e.*, between the first or second and the fourth year of Jehoiakim. And its character is as distinct as its limits are definite. It is a *period of warning*. Its signs are the outbreak of idolatry and wickedness, the ascendancy of the idolatrous party consequent upon the elevation of Jehoiakim to the throne, and the threatening of an invader, who is described at first as simply 'from the north,' and latterly as 'the king of Babylon,' but of whom the people have had no experience.

### *The Roll of Jehoiakim.*

The first twenty chapters, which belong to this first period, call for special consideration. They differ manifestly from the rest of the book, and form a group by themselves. The chapters which follow contain a mixture of prophecy and history: the first twenty, except at the beginning and the end, are prophecy pure and simple.

It is generally assumed that the early chapters—their number being taken variously by different writers—are connected with the roll which was burnt

by Jehoiakim (xxxvi.), and afterwards rewritten and enlarged. I venture to go a step further, and show reason for thinking that the first ten chapters (*i.e.*, excluding the introduction in ch. i.) are the roll as it was rewritten; that the second ten are the 'many like words' (xxxvi. 32) which were added on the occasion of its renewal; and that the tenth, which is rejected by many as an interpolation, is both genuine and rightly placed, being suggested by the recent deportation of Daniel and his companions.

When we recall the history, certain probabilities at once suggest themselves. The roll is unlikely to have been preserved, or it would not have been rewritten and enlarged. And it is likely to have been placed at the beginning of the book, not only on account of its importance, but because there were no earlier prophecies to put before it; it already contained 'all the words . . . from the days of Josiah, even unto this day' (xxxvi. 2). And, further, the fact that so large a group of prophetic chapters stands by itself, unmixed with history, suggests that there was a special occasion for its being compiled, an occasion such as that of the making of the roll. This suggestion becomes all the more likely when we find *narratives* in the historical portions of the book related to some of these prophecies, and yet kept apart from them (compare xxvi. with vii.). All these are probabilities. We shall find that they receive interesting confirmation from a careful examination of the book.

1. With the exception, as we have seen, of a few verses (i. 1-10) containing the preface and an account of Jeremiah's original call, and a passage (iii. 6 ff) which is exceptionally and specifically referred to Josiah's time, *the first twenty chapters all belong to*

*that portion of Jehoiakim's reign which preceded the writing of the roll.*

2. *The first ten chapters differ in nature from the second ten—the first set forming a continuous discourse suited to the purpose of the roll, while the second, unsuitable for that object, consists of miscellaneous gleanings, such as would be gathered up in the ‘many like words.’*

We see at a glance that there is a difference between the first group and the second. The first is general, the second consists of particular cases: the first contains the essence of what might have been addressed to all the people during any year of the period, the second is to a large extent a series of utterances for particular times and special hearers: in the first the prophet never alludes to his own interests, while from the second we learn that he was not to marry (xvi. 1), that conspiracies were formed against his life (xi. 19; xii. 6; xviii. 18), that he was put in the stocks after being beaten by the chief officer of the Temple (xx. 1), and that he lamented again and again that ever he was born (xx. 14). When we examine the chapters further, we see the appropriateness of the first ten to the object of the roll. Their purpose was to turn the people, if that were yet possible, from the sin and idolatry into which they had fallen under Jehoiakim. They were to be read to the assembled nation at the fast (xxxvi.), and the persons addressed are ‘the house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel,’ ‘the men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem,’ ‘this people.’ They are reminded of the graciousness of the old days when God brought them out of Egypt, and are reasoned with on the infatuation of turning to idols (ii.). As the discourse proceeds, the prophet warns them in solemn tones, of the misery which must ensue. He summons up a vision of an invading

army, with its spreading desolation (iv. ff). In their superstition they think they have the Temple of Jehovah as well as the altars of Baal for protection; he declares in impassioned words that the Temple will avail them nothing, and points to the destruction which befell the tabernacle at Shiloh (vii.). All this was appropriate for public discourse. The second ten chapters are completely different. Not only were they unsuitable for reading at the fast, on account of their personal references to the prophet, and their secret complainings to God, but they are not one piece. They are miscellaneous gleanings. Take them chapter by chapter, and you will find a record of the conspiracy by the men of Anathoth (xi. 18), opposition from brethren (xii. 6), the linen girdle (xiii. 1), the droughts (xiv. 1), lamentation over the prophet's lot (xv. 10), prohibition against his marrying (xvi. 1), address to kings regarding the Sabbath (xvii. 19), the potter's house (xviii. 1), the earthen bottle (xix. 1), and the stocks (xx. 1).

3. *The ten chapters which follow the tenth reduplicate upon those which precede it, going again over the same ground, and in the same order.* Each division is written in chronological order; but the second division, instead of beginning where the first left off, returns to the old beginning and goes on to the former end. To see that the first group progresses chronologically (always excepting the parenthesis of iii. 6 ff, which is expressly introduced from the days of Josiah), let us go back to ch. ii. We saw that there we were already in Jehoiakim's reign, but not yet at Nebuchadnezzar's invasion, which took place in the fourth year. The chapter has every appearance of being an opening address, or a digest of early addresses. It apparently introduces the new

prophetic work to which Jeremiah was summoned afresh, when the evil influence of Jehoiakim began to tell on the nation. The prophet carries his hearers back to first principles, reminding them of God's relation to them on their coming out of Egypt. Then, in the following chapters, the subject of punishment is introduced. Still, in the early chapters of the group, no name is given to the threatened invader; he is simply 'from the north,' being probably unknown to the prophet himself. When, however, we reach ch. vii., he is announced, as the parallel passages show, as 'the King of Babylon.' The chronological progress of the writing is further shown by an advance from the hypothetical to the certain. The burden of the early chapters is, 'Unless you repent, you will be destroyed'; in the later, the message hardens into the inevitable, 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved' (viii. 20). Yet more certain is the doom when we get to the close of ch. ix., especially if the concluding verses, as is probable, belong to the period of ch. xxv.; for in ch. xxv. the overthrow is so fixed that Jeremiah proclaims in it a seventy years' captivity, and sets down the date with the utmost formality. So far, the first half of these chapters. When we examine the second division (xi.-xx.), we find ourselves taken back to the old beginning, to be led again over the same ground, and in the former order. In ch. xi., as in ch. ii. (which both speak of taking up public work at Jerusalem), we are at first principles, and the deliverance from Egypt; there is the old allusion to vain crying to the gods, and even the words are repeated, 'According to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah.' As we proceed, the miseries of invasion, followed by death or captivity, are brought into view

as before, and again there is in the end no alternative, captivity having become inevitable. Even the parallelisms of the two sets of chapters keep step as they travel over the ground together, showing the march of ideas in the prophet's mind to be one and the same. It will not be expected that all parallel passages shall occupy corresponding places in the two groups, but the places of the following are instructive:—

Chapter	ii. 2, 4, 6	=	Chapter	xi. 2, 4, 6, 7
"	ii. 27-29	=	"	xi. 12-14
"	iii. 1	=	"	xi. 15
"	iii. 3	=	"	xii. 4
"	iv. 2	=	"	xii. 16
"	iv. 3	=	"	xii. 13
"	iv. 14	=	"	xiii. 27
"	v. 12, 13	=	"	xiv. 13-15
"	vi. 20	=	"	xiv. 12
"	vii. 31	=	"	xix. 6
"	vii. 34	=	"	xvi. 9
"	viii. 2	=	"	xvi. 4

(See also introd. note to ch. xi.)

It may be added that, outside the bounds of the twenty chapters, there are prophecies of the period, of which one can hardly say that they were not suitable, by their nature, for the roll, or at least for the 'many like words'; and perhaps they were in one or other of these at first. They may have been transferred to their present places in the Roll of the Kings and Prophets (xxi.-xxiii.) and the Roll of the Nations (xli.-li.), when the prophecies on those subjects became numerous enough to form rolls by themselves (see Process of Compilation, pp. 79 ff).

A word now on ch. x. Its first part has always been a bugbear to commentators, on account alike



of its matter, its style, and its position. Before discussing the internal evidence, it may be well to observe that manuscript authority is entirely in its favour. The Septuagint gives it the same place as the Massoretic text. The usual objections derived from internal evidence are well stated in Driver's *Introduction* (p. 239, 1st edit.), in which it is argued that the 'section is misplaced, even if Jeremiah be the author.' And truly, if with many recent writers one were to deny an invasion in Jehoiakim's fourth year, and if one were to give any of the commonly accepted dates to the surrounding chapters, it is difficult to see how that conclusion could be avoided. But once allow the views which have just been stated, and the matter, style, and place of the passage will appear to be alike appropriate; while the passage in its turn will reflect no little confirmation on those views. What is the position? In the end of ch. ix. Jeremiah had put into his roll the last of the prophecies which were drawn from the period preceding the advent of Nebuchadnezzar. At that advent his voice was hushed. Further warning or censure he had none. The Chaldeans had drawn a line around the city, the king had fallen into their hands, they had even seized the vessels of the Temple. Jeremiah could only look on with dismay to see his words fulfilled. But when Jehoiakim was left upon the throne as a Babylonian vassal, when the conquerors were gone, and the noble youths of Israel were taken in their train—above all, when the prophet under Divine inspiration saw the whole people of God, of whom these were the first-fruits, transported to a heathen land—his meditations again found utterance. He had often

addressed his countrymen as if they had all gone over to idolatry; but none knew better than he, from the men who stood steadfastly by himself in times of peril, and from others who in their different walks were equally contending for the faith, that there were yet many who had not bowed the knee to Baal, and that among all the nations to which he had been ordained a prophet, the hope for the world yet lay in Israel. In it alone were the worshippers of Jehovah. But what trials lay before them! Soon they would all be gazing upon the mighty monuments of Babylon. Their religion would be scorned, and the gods of their conquerors would be exalted. As he saw those captive lads, with characters unformed, and thought on the whole house of Israel, in their turn, going to Chaldea, where they might not even have a prophet of God to chide them, he counselled sadly and tenderly as a parent would his children: 'Hear ye the word which the Lord speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the nations, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven,' etc. (x. 1 ff).

We do not here enter upon a detailed examination of this probably unspoken prophecy. We only observe that if the sacred writer had not, in the unprecedented circumstances, used tones and a manner such as he had never employed before, that writer could not have been Jeremiah. But, on the other hand, when the roll had to be read, and when it transpired that under wicked leaders the nation, instead of being humbled by the Divine stroke, was going to use the fast to form new conspiracies, was it strange that the roll should be reopened, and that the subdued, sympathetic

counsel with which it closed should be followed by a sterner message than ever? 'Gather up thy wares out of the land, O thou that abidest in the siege. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will sling out the inhabitants of the land at this time, and will distress them, that they may feel it' (x. 17 ff).

The prophecies of the period are, with slight exceptions,\* chs. i.-xx.; xxi. 11-xxiii. 40; xxv.; xxvi.; xxxv.; probably the greater part of xlv. 1-xlix. 33; and, as appendices belonging to the following year, xxxvi. and xlv. But see note on xxii. 20-30.

### *Second Prophetic Period.*

(The First Four Years of Zedekiah—597-594 B.C.)

#### *The Period of Comfort to the Exiles.)*

The prophetic work of Jeremiah during this period is described at length in the History. It had two aspects—one to the captives in Babylon, the other to the people left in Judah. The captives were the 'good figs' of the vision: they were the heirs of the promises, and in them lay the hope of Israel. To them, therefore, the prophet's thoughts turned spontaneously, and what he had to say of his own accord was addressed to them. But he was surrounded by the others, whom he encountered every day. In these circumstances, while his words relating to the captives do not occupy more space in the book than those spoken to the people in Judah, they are more important: they form the

\* *E.g.*, i. 1-10; iii. 6 ff (it is difficult to say where this quotation from the days of Josiah ends, but we are certainly into Jehoiakim's reign again at iv. 6): xxi. 11-xxiii. 40, while chiefly of this period, was *completed* later; so also xlv. 1-xlix. 33.

essence of his teaching at the time, while the others are in a sense accidental; they form the main substance, while the others are the fringe. The one thing of consequence to him at that time was that the captives should, during their chastisement in Babylon, seek after a higher and truer life; not falling into the ways of the heathen, but cultivating a closer union with Jehovah, and cherishing the great hope of the nation. His words to the captives were full of encouragement. In Jehoiakim's reign, his prophecies were charged with lamentation and woe, those of the present period were bright with hope. His work then was to 'root out and pull down' the false, now it was to 'plant and build up' the true. But to the people left in Judah, his ministry continued to be what it had been to the whole nation in the former days.

In accordance with the greater importance of the prophecies to the captives, it will be observed that they are picked out and set forth separately as prophetic teaching, while those addressed to the unbelieving people at home are left as a part of the narrative. As, in the former period, the prophetic teaching of ch. vii., *e.g.*, was placed apart from the history to which it belongs in ch. xxvi., so the various teachings addressed to the captives are gathered by themselves in ch. xxix., while those of chs. xxvii. and xxviii. are merely left as parts of the history. In a similar way, in the next period, we shall find chs. xxx. and xxxi. gathered up as distinct prophecy for the use of the captives and later readers, while the words spoken at the same time to the people in Jerusalem are left as a mere piece of information in the story of ch. xxxiv.

The following passages are expressly assigned to this period, viz., chs. xxiv., xxvii.-xxviii., xxix., xlix. 34-39, and li. 59-64. We should, perhaps, also assign to it some other passages in the Roll of the Nations (xlvi.-li.).

*Third Prophetic Period.*

(The Last Three Years of Zedekiah—589-587 B.C.  
*Vision of a Restored Kingdom.*)

For a description of the prophet's work during this period also, the reader is referred to the History.

We saw that from the fifth year of Jehoiakim—or the fourth, if it be preferred to put it so—till the end of the reign, Jeremiah was silent. We find again an interval of silence between the fourth and the ninth year of Zedekiah. When Jeremiah resumed his place as a prophet, he continued to occupy the old relation to the captives on the one hand and the people of Jerusalem on the other. His hope was still with the exiles, and his mind when left to itself turned to them; but, mingling daily with the people of Jerusalem, he was drawn perforce into their affairs. When, *e.g.*, the king consulted him again and again, either personally or by deputy, regarding the issue of the siege—for the siege was already in progress when the prophet appeared anew upon the scene—he advised him to yield; and he gave the same counsel to the people. When the masters, in violation of their solemn vow, brought their enfranchised servants again into bondage, he warned them of the judgment they were bringing upon their own heads. But his real work was with those who hung their

harps upon the willows in a foreign land. In relation to them, his position was not that which he occupied when we saw him last. He had made a wonderful advance. He was now living on a higher plane. His ideas, it is true, are but a higher development of what we found in the former part of the reign; nay, the germs of them may be seen scattered through the whole of his earlier prophecies; but they now take such an elevation, and they maintain it so uniformly, as to give the period a character of its own. The record of it needs no date to mark it off from the rest of the book. In the earlier part, when he corresponded with the sufferers, whose deportation was recent, it was natural for him to occupy himself with words of consolation: now that they have become used to their lot, he thinks not so much of them as of the far-off generations who are to spring from them. When he came to be shut up in the court of the prison, he had much opportunity to withdraw into the secrecy of his own mind; and when he felt that the end of the kingdom was near, he mused wistfully on the future, the Spirit of God granting him rich visions of the coming days. The City of God which formed in his mind was not wholly spiritual—for there were still to be Levites offering sacrifices without ceasing, and Jerusalem, defended by God, was to be inviolate in perpetuity—but the picture was a projection of the Christian dispensation such as had not been given to the world before. In the latter days, the laws of God were to be written on the hearts of the people, and their sins were to be remembered no more. The rich and abundant conceptions with which he was favoured, he had to gather into a roll for the confirmation and guidance

of the absent ones, and for the use of the faithful of all subsequent times. These will be found in chs. xxx. and xxxi.; and close by them in the next three chapters there is placed as usual a narrative of the incidents out of which they sprung, a narrative which embodies further revelations to the same effect.

During almost the whole of this period of his ministry, Jeremiah was a prisoner, and it was from his place in the court of the guard that he inspired the faithful with a Divine hope, and gave his *Vision of a Restored Kingdom*.

The passages which belong to the period are chs. xxi. 1-10; xxx.-xxxiv.; xxxvii.-xxxix.

#### *Fourth Prophetic Period.*

(Deportation to Egypt, and work there—587, etc., B.C.)

The prophecies of this, as of the two preceding periods, are of two distinct classes; some concerned with the people in Judah and Egypt, others with the captives at Babylon. The people in Judah who, in spite of Jeremiah's earnest remonstrance, fled to Egypt, carrying him forcibly with them, were assured that they would find no safety there, for that country would yet be absorbed in the conquests of the Babylonian: 'He would array himself with the land of Egypt as a shepherd putteth on his garment.' The unbelieving party in Jerusalem had always leaned to Egypt, and the warnings now uttered against their action necessarily included denunciations against Egypt itself. That the prophecies in their case were, so to speak, of accidental origin, being occasioned by circumstances, and had neither a spontaneous growth like the others, nor were

regarded as essential and of independent worth, appears from the fact that they were not afterwards gathered into a collection of prophecies, but left once more as a mere portion of the historical statement. This, however, does not apply to the word regarding Egypt, which is separated from the narrative and assigned a place in the Roll of the Nations (*i.e.* if xlvi. 13-28 belongs to this period).

In addition to his unbelieving countrymen who had hastened to Egypt, carrying him in their train, there were Jews who had probably for the most part fled to escape the Babylonians during Zedekiah's reign, and were already residing in various parts of the Nile valley. They boldly asserted their determination to hold by idolatrous worship, and the prophecies of the period include denunciations against them.

As the character of the unbelieving, whether in the reign of Jehoiakim, or in either part of the reign of Zedekiah, or after the disruption of the State, was essentially the same, a remarkable resemblance will be observed in the prophecies addressed to all, except that the speaker shows deeper hopelessness regarding those who were left after the deportation in the days of Jehoiachin than regarding those of an earlier time, and consequently makes less strenuous effort in their case. But, on the other hand, in the prophecies to the captives we see a marked difference, according as we take them in the early part of Zedekiah's reign, in the latter part, or after the disruption. In the early part of the reign, the Vision of the Figs brought light to the prophet in his darkness, and his teaching breathes comfort and peace; in the latter part, he was filled with a yet more glorious vision regarding the future, and he



spoke of a more joyful hope; after the disruption, there was no further trouble to pass through, and he could look straight to the end. It was now the deliverance from Babylon with which he had to do. As in the former periods, the words relating to the captives are separated from the history, and preserved in a series by themselves. Sometimes he addresses himself to Babylon, announcing that while it has been the great hammer of the earth, it is now itself to be broken; sometimes to the captives, calling upon them to make haste and return. The messages of the time have necessarily a distinct purpose and character. In the early days of Jehoiakim the Babylonians were spoken of with dread, and the people were warned against them. But after the Vision of the Figs, the prophet had to be silent about the cruelty of Babylon, and of the judgment that would fall upon it. Had he continued to refer to these, he would have defeated his purpose, which was to win his hearers into acquiescence with the sway of the conqueror. Only once, so far as we know, did he venture to still express himself on these subjects: when a trusted friend was going to Babylon, he gave him a doom-book to throw into the river, saying, Thus shall Babylon sink (li. 59). He could not give such teaching in the hearing of the multitude without provoking a spirit of disquietude. Now, however, after the disruption, there was no danger of that kind. There was no Jewish power left to rebel. He foresaw that the danger would by-and-by run, as events proved, in the direction of losing heart and abandoning the hope of return, which might end in the people allowing themselves to be merged among the nations. He therefore gathered together the words which the

Lord had spoken to him regarding Babylon, some of which had probably been in the collection which was thrown into the river, but which he had never had an opportunity to give forth to the public. We are not told whether the roll when it was completed was sent to the exiles immediately, or left to be transmitted as more useful at a subsequent time; but it is naturally placed at the end of the Roll of Nations, being of latest origin and latest application.

The passages which belong to this period are chs. xl.-xliv.; l.-li. 58; and perhaps xlv. 13-28.

## COMPILATION OF THE BOOK

### *I. General Principles of Compilation.*

1. TWO principles have been followed in the arrangement of the Book of Jeremiah: the prophecies are grouped partly according to the period to which they belong, and partly according to the subject of which they treat. We have seen that in the time covered by the book—*i.e.* the time after the accession of Jehoiakim—the prophet was not continuously at work, but only at certain well-defined periods, viz., during the first four (or five) years of Jehoiakim, the first four of Zedekiah, the last three of Zedekiah, and the period subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem. As these periods differed greatly in circumstances, and as the prophet was constantly advancing in his own spiritual perception, the prophecies were set down in groups accordingly. There was also the arrangement according to subject. All prophecies relating to kings were put by themselves, to whatever period they belonged, likewise those relating to prophets, and those relating to foreign nations. Then, there were lengthened narratives, partly historical, partly prophetic, belonging to particular periods—narratives of the early reign of Zedekiah, the late reign of Zedekiah, and the time of the siege, especially with its bearing on Jeremiah, and the mixed narrative of the period

subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem, which was also devoted largely to the treatment of the prophet. Further, as we have already seen, the prophecies belonging to the first four years of Jehoiakim are separated into two groups, according as they belong to the roll which was burnt and rewritten, or to the 'many like words' (xxxvi. 32) which were added to it upon its second writing.

2. The book thus consists of the following *prophetical parts*, viz., the Roll of Jehoiakim (chs. ii.-x.), the Roll of the 'Many Like Words' (xi.-xx.), the Roll of the Kings (xxi.-xxiii. 8) and Prophets (xxiii. 9-40), the Roll of the Baskets of Figs (xxiv.), the Roll of Hope (xxx.-xxxi.), and the Roll of Nations (xli.-li.). The *narratives*, partly historical and partly prophetical, are the Roll of the Early Reign of Zedekiah (xxvii.-xxix.), the Roll of the Late Reign of Zedekiah (xxxii.-xxxiv.), the Roll of the Siege (xxxvii.-xxxix.), and the Roll of the Last Days (xl.-xliv.). This leaves only seven chapters to be accounted for.

3. After the classification had begun to be made, new material was added from time to time to some of the groups, but the prophecies which had already been entered were not recoloured from a late point of view. Each remained as originally written. *E.g.*, in the early chapters an evil was to break forth 'out of the north.' It was not stated who the invader was to be. By-and-by, when it was known that it was to be the Babylonians, and, more definitely, Nebuchadnezzar, the proper name appeared in the subsequent prophecies, but the early ones were left as at first. Jehoiakim's unlamented death was foretold, but no clause was afterwards thrown in to show that the prophecy

had been fulfilled. Contrast xxviii. 17, where the whole passage was written after the events took place.

## II. *Process of Compilation.*

4. What follows is necessarily a matter of conjecture. The foundation of the book in its present form was laid when the Roll of Jehoiakim (ii.-x.) was written in the fourth and rewritten in the fifth year of that king. The 'Many Like Words' (xi.-xx.) were added at the time of its rewriting, to give the book greater completeness, now that the prophecies were to be permanently preserved. It is probable that the Roll of the Kings and Prophets (xxi.-xxiii.), so far as the prophecies of which it consists had then been given, was put together, and added to the whole at the same time. The Roll of the Nations (xlvi.-li.) may also have taken shape then, but as other rolls were added, it would be pushed on to the end of the book, being itself meanwhile largely increased.

5. The groups just mentioned consist, with slight exception, of prophecies pure and simple, and it might have been expected that the Rolls of the Baskets of Figs (xxiv.) and of Hope (xxx. and xxxi.) would have come next in the book, but it will be observed that between these there is a break containing considerable narratives of more than one period. From this it would appear that when the Roll of the Figs was annexed, the prophecies which form the Roll of Hope had not yet come into existence. Ch. xxiv. would therefore seem to have been appended alone, the book being completed up to the measure to which prophecies existed.

6. Ch. xxv. was then added as a historical appendix, containing prophetic matter. Its composition

would thus be of a period subsequent to the Vision of the Figs, which occurred in the early years of Zedekiah, and this would account for the designation of Nebuchadnezzar as 'King of Babylon,' a designation which was inappropriate when the prophecy was spoken, and also for the clause in verse 18, 'as it is this day,' the fulfilment having taken place when Jehoiachin and the chief people were carried away and the Temple was plundered. Ch. xxvi., which is really an appendix to ch. vii., may well have been added at the same time, although composed earlier. While the date given so formally in xxv. 1-3 related to a memorable year, the events of ch. xxvi. are put generally as 'in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim,' which suggests that we are far away from the time referred to, and that the exact date has ceased to be material. At the same time, that the chapter was written before the prophet was carried to Egypt, is shown by his writing of 'this city' and 'this land' (verse 20).

7. After these historical appendices relating to Jehoiakim's reign, we have historical matter concerning a later time, viz., the Roll of the Early Reign of Zedekiah (xxvii.-xxix.). The word 'Jehoiakim' in xxvii. 1, is probably not a *lapsus* of the original writer, repeated from xxvi. 1, but of a copyist. The author or compiler probably wrote, 'the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah,' both in xxvii. 1 and xxviii. 1, looking back upon the period from the distance of some years, when the conspiracy of the neighbouring nations (xxvii. 3) and the doing of homage (li. 59) marked a break in the reign, and made every year up to that time appear as belonging to 'the beginning' of the reign. That the chapters were not written immediately after the

events to which they refer, is evident from xxviii. 17, which shows that at least two months had passed over. It is not unlikely that the narratives were added, like those of chs. xxv. and xxvi., when the prophet's mind was stirred again by the coming of Nebuchadnezzar—on this occasion in the ninth year of Zedekiah. Such a distance of time would make the phrase, 'beginning of the reign,' easy. Chs. xxvii. and xxviii., on the one hand, and xxix. on the other, make a combined appendix illustrating the bad and the good figs. of ch. xxiv. One would expect xxix., as being more important if not also earlier, to precede xxvii. and xxviii.; but perhaps the fact that xxix. consists of a letter instead of spoken prophecy, accounts for its later place.

8. The book was reopened to admit the valuable Roll of Hope (xxx.-xxxi.). The story of the buying of the field shows a deep impression to have been made on the prophet's mind. The event made a great advance in his education, and the 'words' (prophecies) which came to him then regarded the future, and belonged to a higher order than all that had preceded. In his prison he received an instruction to write them in a book for the future. The future filled his mind, and about this period we find him frequently saying, 'Behold the days come.' When the prophecies were inserted, they were naturally followed by—

9. The Roll of the Late Reign of Zedekiah (xxxii.-xxxiv.), which constitutes a historical appendix to chs. xxx.-xxxi., as the Roll of the Early Reign (xxvii.-xxix.) to ch. xxiv. Ch. xxxii. explains the rise of the new thoughts. Ch. xxxiii. looks like a continuance of the roll itself; and as these chapters relate to the good figs, ch. xxxiv. relates

to the bad. The whole (xxx.-xxxiv.) may have been written in the prison. There appears, however, to have been an interval between the writing of xxxii. and xxxiv. See introd. note to ch. xxxiv.

10. As the Roll of Nations (xvi.-li.) was pushed back and back, to give precedence to 'words' relating to the chosen people, so ch. xxxv. may have been kept back on account of its dealing with outlanders, although it related essentially to the prophet's countrymen. This may explain its late place in the compilation of the book; but it is not unlikely that, with the exception of the heading, which bears marks of a late date, probably in the latter part of Zedekiah's reign, it existed in writing from the days of chs. vii. and xxvi., to both of which it bears resemblance in phraseology.

11. Ch. xxxvi. may well have come in as the conclusion of the book as it existed at the time of the composition of the chapter. It shows how the book to which it was attached had begun to be formed.

12. The Roll of the Siege (xxxvii.-xxxix.) is largely occupied with the treatment of the prophet. It is evidently one piece. Its introduction shows the reign of Zedekiah to be past, and as there is a manifest break between chs. xxxix. and xl.—for xl. begins anew—one would judge that chs. xxxvii.-xxxix. must have been written in Palestine, between the deportation to Babylon and the murder of Gedaliah, *i.e.* between the fifth and seventh month of Zedekiah's eleventh year. And if the whole was then completed from the beginning, the *terminus ad quem* ('unto the carrying away') of ch. i. 3 would be fully accounted for.

13. The book was opened once more to receive



the Roll of the Last Days (xl.-xliv.), which is also occupied to a large extent with the treatment of the prophet. This completes the history of the work of Jeremiah, and at the end of all Baruch felt himself at liberty to insert the 'word' which had long before been addressed to himself as the prophet's friend and helper (ch. xlv.).

14. The Roll of the Nations (xlvi.-li.), of which the basis was laid early, was probably added to from time to time. A number of its prophecies date from the early years of Jehoiakim, and Nebuchadnezzar's name does not appear in them. They seem to have been put together at an early time, such as in the fifth year, when Jehoiakim's Roll was rewritten; for 'The Word' (*sing.*) used in xlvi. 1 to designate what is said 'concerning the nations,' as well as the simple 'Of Egypt,' 'Of Moab,' 'Of the children of Ammon,' etc., indicates unity. But it is clear that if the basis was laid then, the roll was subsequently opened to receive many additions. It may be impossible now to distinguish the various stages in the Babylonian part. Some prophecies belonging to it may be of Jehoiakim's day, for ch. xxv. shows that something was said of Babylon then; some may be of the early reign of Zedekiah (li. 59); but the greater part belongs to the prophet's residence in Egypt. This is shown, not only by the prophet's freedom then to speak out all his mind (l. 2), but still more by the change of attitude towards Babylon. Not being longer hampered by his policy of reconciling the Jews to their lot as the subjects of Nebuchadnezzar, he is thrown loose, to think and speak of them as did Habakkuk (ch. ii.) before he learned Jeremiah's Vision of the Baskets of Figs. In Egypt, and especi-

ally in face of the false trust of the Jews who had fled thither, he had also something more to say regarding that country (xlvi. 13), in which his language resembles what he was then saying about Babylon. The 'word' about Elam (xlix. 34), as is expressly stated, belongs to the 'beginning of the reign of Zedekiah,' when Nebuchadnezzar was probably entangled with that great power in the far east, which may have led to the foolish conspiracy of the western nations in Zedekiah's fourth year (xxvii. 3).

15. The whole book, even if its compilation was due in any measure to the independent action of Baruch, would appear to have been completed before Jeremiah's death, because it contains no reference to that; and, for a similar reason, before Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Egypt (xliii. 10), and before the final deportation of the Jews in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar—*i.e.*, the twenty-fourth year as Jeremiah would have reckoned—(lii. 30).

16. The appendix (lii. 28-34) was the work of a later hand, perhaps of more than one.

## THE SEPTUAGINT VERSION

THE Septuagint version of the Book of Jeremiah differs more widely from the Hebrew than that of any other part of the Old Testament.

The difference arises in part from the translator's using a different Hebrew version from that which we now possess, in part from his breaking contiguous words at wrong places, in part from his mistaking letters for others similar in form, in part from his putting a wrong meaning on his Hebrew text.

But the chief difference lies in the greater brevity of the Greek. It is calculated that the Septuagint, notwithstanding slight additions which it contains here and there, is an eighth part shorter than the Massoretic text. The following passages are omitted in the Greek :—vii. 1-2 (partly) ; viii. 11-12 ; x. 6-8, 10 ; xi. 7-8 (partly) ; xvii. 1-4 ; xxv. 14 ; xxvii. 1, 7, 13, 15, 17, 21 ; xxix. 16-20 ; xxx. 10, 11, 22 ; xxxiii. 14-26 ; xxxix. 4-13 ; xlv. 26 ; xlviii. 45-47 ; xlix. 6 ; li. 45-48 ; lii. 2-3, 15, 28-30 ; not to mention numerous portions of verses, the most of which do not affect the sense. In the Hebrew, *e.g.*, we often have lengthened forms, such as 'the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel,' 'Jeremiah the prophet,' 'Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, king of Judah,' 'Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon,' where the Greek simply reads 'the Lord,' 'Jeremiah,' 'Zedekiah,' 'Nebuchadnezzar,' and sometimes the name is dropped altogether. Redun-

dant expressions are omitted, and generally there is a disposition on the part of the translator to contract, and thereby give force to the meaning. 'Saith the Lord' is very frequently left out.

The tendency to abbreviation shows itself much more in the narrative sections than in the prophetic; and that, not merely because the prophetic contain fewer names to abbreviate — *e.g.*, from chs. ii.-xx., Jeremiah is named only nine times, and Nebuchadnezzar and the kings of Judah (except iii. 6) are not named at all—but still more, because the narratives, being written in an easy, copious manner, afford greater opportunities for shortening. This appears most conspicuously in ch. xxvii., which is cut down by almost one-half, with little loss to the sense.

Another important difference between the two versions, lies in the place and the arrangement of the prophecies against the nations. In the Hebrew they come at the end of the book, and are arranged thus:—Egypt, Philistines, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar, Elam, Babylon. In the Greek they are inserted after xxv. 13, and arranged thus:—Elam, Egypt, Babylon, Philistines, Edom, Ammon, Kedar, Damascus, Moab.

That the Hebrew is the older and more correct version, may be seen in many ways. Take the following as a sample:—

Ch. i. 1.—Hebrew, 'The words of Jeremiah': Greek, 'The word of God which came to Jeremiah.' The Greek translator, like many modern writers, has not observed that the expression 'words' means 'prophecies,' *i.e.*, a collection of prophecies (cf. xxx. 1, 2), which is the correct description of the book.

Ch. xiii. 11.—Hebrew, 'the whole house of Israel and

the whole house of Judah': Greek, 'the house of Israel and the whole house of Judah.' The translator has omitted 'whole' from Israel while retaining it for Judah, probably because the chief part of Israel had been taken captive by Assyria, whereas Jeremiah's habit is to link the two together and treat them as one. 'Israel' is his frequent title for both, but in any case he generally refuses to recognise a break between them.

Ch. xxv. 18.—Hebrew, 'as it is this day,' omitted in Greek. The translator, writing after the Return, left out the words as being no longer appropriate: they were appropriate in the time of the original writer.

Ch. xxvii. 7.—In the early days of Nebuchadnezzar this was a natural way to express three generations: the verse is omitted in the Septuagint. It did not appear to the translator to be natural or correct: he knew that Nebuchadnezzar was not succeeded on the throne by a 'son and son's son.' For the same reason, if the verse had not been in the original, it would have been unnatural for an interpolator at a late date to express himself in this way. The whole of this chapter has been supposed by many (see specially Robertson Smith's *O. T. J. C.*, p. 113) to be more correct in the Greek, because the Greek conciseness makes it more forcible. But would not that dissociate it from Jeremiah's style? Is it not more likely that a Greek translator would abridge and strengthen, than that a late Hebrew editor would expand and weaken?

Ch. lii. 9, 10, etc.—Hebrew, 'Riblah': Greek, 'Deblatha.' The Hebrew was correct from the first: the translator has misread ר for ד.

Chs. xlv. li.—After the manner of other parts of the book, we should expect the prophecies against the

nations, as they grew, to be gathered into a roll by themselves and added to from time to time, as in the Hebrew, and not mixed up with a narrative, as in the Greek. If the prophecy against Elam, as is likely, belonged to Zedekiah's day, as stated in the Hebrew, it has its natural place in the Hebrew version, whereas in the Greek it is entirely out of place. The prophecies against Babylon have also their natural place in the Hebrew, being the latest 'words' of Jeremiah. It is, moreover, impossible that the whole of the prophecies against the nations can have come at the time of ch. xxv.

On the whole, the Septuagint has not yet been discovered to be of great value. But so far as its worth goes, it is interesting to observe that it confirms the most important passages whose genuineness has been disputed. The following are found in Hebrew and Greek alike:—Chs. x. (except verses 6-8, and 10, which are wanting in Greek), xxx. and xxxi., and l. and li.

## APPENDIX

THE view expressed in the text (p. 21), that the capture of Jerusalem took place in 605, *i.e.*, in Jehoiakim's fourth year, is rejected or not accepted by many of the best known writers, such as Wellhausen, Nägelsbach, Davidson, Cheyne, Driver, Tiele, Giesebrecht, Curtis, G. A. Smith, and Hommel. Except in Dan. i. 1 (see below, para. 6), there is nowhere in the Bible or out of it an historical statement to the effect that the city was taken at that time. And it is held by some that the army of Nebuchadnezzar did not appear in Palestine until the days of Jehoiachin, while others make it come more or less late in the reign of Jehoiakim. It is generally allowed that the vassalage of Jehoiakim was transferred at some time from Egypt to Babylon, but some of the writers referred to hold that the transference took place in Jehoiakim's fourth year, in consequence of the battle of Carchemish, and without Nebuchadnezzar's coming into Judah; others are of opinion that Judah never became subject to Babylon until the Chaldeans came and made Jehoiachin their captive. The subject demands the most careful investigation. Not only does the whole history of the reign turn upon the invasion, but it forms the key to the greater part of the Book

of Jeremiah. The grounds on which we adopt the view presented in the text are these:—

(1) *In the fourth year of Jehoiakim*, Nebuchadnezzar routed the Egyptians at Carchemish (Jer. xlv. 2).

(2) *The fourth year of Jehoiakim* was a remarkable year for Judah. It is frequently specified in the Book of Jeremiah (xxv. 1; xxxvi. 1; xlv. 1; xlv. 2). No other year in the reign is ever specified except the fifth, which is mentioned only once (xxxvi. 9), and then, as we think, because it was connected with the fourth, having a fast on what was probably the anniversary of the great crisis of the fourth.

(3) *In or about the fourth year of Jehoiakim*, a crisis must have occurred, breaking the reign so completely in two, that the whole of the preceding part was in later times called 'the beginning of the reign' without distinction of first, second, third, or fourth year. The prophecy of ch. vii., which is assigned in xxvi. 1 to 'the beginning of the reign,' was spoken in the fourth year. (It may be observed that in the same way, and for a similar reason, the fourth of Zedekiah is called 'the beginning of the reign'—comp. xxvii. 1 with xxviii. 1; see introd. note on ch. vii.)

(4) *In the fourth year of Jehoiakim*, Jeremiah threatened an invasion of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar as just about to take place. Not only was the date of the prophecy (xxv. 1) afterwards set down as the fourth year of Jehoiakim and first of Nebuchadnezzar, but in the prophecy itself the time was named as the twenty-third year from the thirteenth of Josiah. Special attention was thus doubly called to the time.

(5) *In or about the fourth year of Jehoiakim*, the Rechabites gathered into Jerusalem, 'when Nebuchadnezzar . . . came up into the land' (xxxv. 11). Their



story appears to belong to the same time as chs. vii. and xxvi. (see ch. vii., introd. note).

(6) *In the third year of Jehoiakim*, Babylonian style—which is the fourth year, Jewish style—Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem, according to Dan. i. 1. See Chronol., p. 50. (Whatever view we take of the Book of Daniel, the dates show the first part (i. 1-ii. 4<sup>a</sup>) to be of Babylonian origin—see pp. 47 ff).

(7) *In the fourth year of Jehoiakim*, Nebuchadnezzar had captives taken from the Jews. Berosus, a Chaldean writer, as quoted by Josephus (Ap. I. 19), when referring to the first western conquest of Nebuchadnezzar, from which he says he had to hasten home on account of his father's death, adds that he "committed to some of his friends the captives he had taken from the Jews, Phœnicians and Syrians, and of the nations belonging to Egypt." This is the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, which in all the Jewish calculations corresponds to the fourth of Jehoiakim.

(8) *In the fourth year of Jehoiakim*, Nebuchadnezzar in his first western campaign must have reached a point much further south than Carchemish. In the passage just quoted from, Berosus says that in hastening home to Babylon he went over the desert. Had he been only at Carchemish, or north or west of it, or even a little way south, he would have gone more quickly by taking the ordinary route. His going by the desert implies that he was a long way south.

(9) *In the fourth year of Jehoiakim*, Jeremiah was commanded by God (xxxvi. 1) to make up a roll of his past prophecies, and these were afterwards read at the fast in the following year. After being

read, they were destroyed by the king. Jeremiah had then to write them again, which he did, adding 'many like words.' We may assume that they are preserved: else, why should they have been written again? Chs. ii.-ix. correspond to what we should look for in that roll; no other part of the book does so; and chs. xi.-xx. suit for the 'many like words' (see *The Prophecies*, pp. 61 ff). This, with the historical appendices in the book, and the special sections on Kings, Prophets, and Nations, uses up all the prophecies available for that reign. After the fifth year there are none left which can be assigned to Jehoiakim's time. The prophet not only ceased thereafter to predict Nebuchadnezzar's coming, but his mouth, so far as the book shows, was closed after the fourth and fifth years, a fact which can only be accounted for by the supposition that on the one hand Nebuchadnezzar had already come, and that on the other the rage of the king had risen to such a height, in consequence of the invasion, that Jeremiah durst no longer appear in public.

(10) Following chs. ii.-ix., which we take to make up the roll *of the fourth year of Jehoiakim*, the first part of ch. x. contains just such tender and fatherly counsel as Jeremiah might be expected to address, either in reality or in imagination, to Daniel and the other young captives (who in his eye would represent the captive 'House of Israel'), if they were taken away to a heathen city. The chapter may have been added to the roll either before the public reading or at its rewriting. In either case it implies a deportation, and at that time. This fully accounts for the changed tone of the chapter, and for its place in the book. It is, on

the other hand, very suggestive, that those who take a different view of the invasion dispute both the genuineness of the chapter and its appropriateness to its present place in the book.

(11) 'In his [Jehoiakim's] days Nebuchadnezzar . . . came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him' (2 Kings xxiv. 1). This coming up would appear to have been *in the fourth year of Jehoiakim*. At least, we must find *some* time for it and for the marauding bands of Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Children of Ammon. (We take it that Jehoiakim paid tribute in the fourth, fifth, and sixth years, and cast off allegiance in the seventh, and that Nebuchadnezzar, being engaged in more important military operations elsewhere, encouraged those bands to harass the country meanwhile, and himself came off with an army in the eleventh year of Jehoiakim, not reaching Jerusalem till the reign of Jehoiachin.)

(12) According to 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, 7, Nebuchadnezzar came up at some time against Jehoiakim, and bound him in fetters to carry him to Babylon, and he did carry vessels of the Temple thither; distinction being made between Jehoiakim, who was put in fetters *to be* carried, and the vessels which *were actually* carried. According to the chronicler, there were two invasions, one in Jehoiakim's reign and another in the three months' reign of Jehoiachin—the first being, we think, the invasion of *the fourth year of Jehoiakim*.

(13) Jeremiah prophesied that the exile would last seventy years (xxv. 11, 12; xxix. 10). *The fourth year of Jehoiakim* was 605 B.C., and the year of the return to Jerusalem was probably 537 B.C.

This makes sixty-nine years according to Jewish counting, or, say, in round numbers seventy years. The importance which was attached to the date from which the exile counted is shown in xxv. 1, 2, 3, 11, 12. In the prophet's eyes, the captivity had already begun when Daniel and his companions were taken away: they were the first-fruits, all the rest would follow.

Objection to the fourth year of Jehoiakim as the time of the first invasion is chiefly based upon the following grounds:—(1) The occurrences of the fourth year did not fulfil the predictions of the evils which were to accompany the invasion. Certainly they did not exhaust them. It may even be that Jeremiah himself looked for more direful results, and was to learn anew that God is slow to anger. We do not know, indeed, all that happened. But it was not a small matter that the iron hand of the Babylonian was laid upon the little kingdom of Judah; that the king, although soon to be liberated and set again upon the throne, was for even a short time placed in fetters; that the Lord's sanctuary was rifled, and the sacred vessels were taken away to grace the temples of Chaldean idols; and that the choicest youths of the best families in the land were carried captive to be brought up and to serve in a heathen court. Still, the prophecies would have led us to expect worse things than these. And whatever may have been Jeremiah's own expectation, we see that he soon regarded this as only the beginning. When he tenderly counselled the youths as they went away, whether he did so actually or in imagination, he addressed himself, not to their small band, but to the 'House of Israel.' The whole House would have to follow in its time. Ch. x., which consists of several

parts, is placed immediately after the predictions, and it would appear to have been written soon after the invasion. In the last part, in which the prophet feels that the mind of the nation is not changed by its chastisement, he intimates that the cup will have to be drunk to the dregs: 'Gather up thy bundle from the ground, . . . I will sling out the inhabitants . . . and will distress them, that they may feel it.' While it is true that the dark predictions did not receive their complete fulfilment in the fourth year, we must not forget that neither were they exhausted when the young Jehoiachin was led captive with the best of the nation: the full harvest was not reaped till Zedekiah and the remaining inhabitants were carried away and the city was demolished; and even then a gleaning was left, to be gathered some years later (lii. 30). (2) Except in Dan. i. 1, there is no direct historical statement of an invasion or of a capture of Jerusalem at that time. This objection, of course, cannot be taken by those who hold that the invasion was at a later period in the same reign, because there is no record of that either, but only by those who hold that Nebuchadnezzar first came in the time of Jehoiachin. But, after all, should it be thought strange that there is no such historical statement? None of those books—Kings, Chronicles, Jeremiah—mentions that Nineveh had ceased to be; Jeremiah never refers to the finding of the Book of the Law, the observance of the great Passover, the battle of Megiddo, the death of Josiah—all of which were of the utmost consequence to him; he never mentions the death of this very Jehoiakim as a fact; he only prophesies it, as he does the coming of Nebuchadnezzar. The Book of Kings never mentions that there was such a man as Jeremiah. The fact is, that

Jeremiah could not refer to Nebuchadnezzar's visit as an accomplished fact: he was 'shut up,' and before he came forth from his hiding, there were more serious things to speak about: Nebuchadnezzar's army was at Jerusalem again. (3) In the record of deportations of Jer. iii. 28, there is no mention of a captivity in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. That record, however, is not of Jeremiah's writing, and no historian, Jew or Gentile, would, when that was written, think of the taking of a few lads as being a national deportation. Jeremiah, on the other hand, viewed it as a prophet, and saw in it the pledge and first-fruits of all that he had prophesied.

Notwithstanding these objections, then, we feel constrained, for the reasons which have been given, to accept the conclusion stated in the text. It will be observed that an important feature in the testimonies is, that they come from so many different writers, who are independent of each other, and that even those of them which come from Jeremiah are so distinct from each other as to make them also mutually independent. In the case of Daniel—whatever view we take of the book—the concurrence is all the more remarkable, because the evidence *appears* to be discrepant, and only in our own time has the Babylonian mode of counting come to be known, by which the testimony of that book is seen to agree with that of the rest.

## EXPOSITION

CH. I. (1) The words of Jeremiah the son of <sup>Title of Book.</sup> Hilkiah, of the priests that *were* in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin: (2) to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.

CH. I. 1-3.—*Title of the Book, announcing the Prophet, the Time when his ministry began, and the Period covered.*

### I. *The Prophet.*

1. *The words*], i.e., *the sayings, or prophecies.* Comp. xxxvi. 1, 2; also i. 4, 9; ii. 1, 4, etc. The expression does not refer to the *wording* of Jeremiah's sayings, but to their substance. So the Book of Deuteronomy calls the Decalogue the 'Ten Words' (Heb.).

*Hilkiah*] Not the high priest of that name, or it would probably have been stated, and Jeremiah would have been treated with greater respect. Hilkiash the high priest was of the line of Eleazar (1 Chron. vi. 4, 13), whereas Anathoth belonged to that of Ithamar (1 Kings ii. 26; 1 Chron. xxiv. 3, 6).

*of the priests*] Referring to Jeremiah: 'the son of H.,' or 'Ben-Hilkiah,' being a surname.

*Anathoth*] A village of the priests, about 3 miles N.E. of Jerusalem.

### II. *The Time when his ministry began.*

2. *came*] Heb. *was.*

*thirteenth year*] A year after Josiah began his reformation (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3). We know next to nothing of the work of Jeremiah during the reign of Josiah. The only passages belonging to that reign which are included in this book seem to

**Title of Book.** (3) It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.

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(4) Then the word of the LORD came unto me, be chs. i. 4-10; and iii. 6 ff (see *Introd.*, p. 55 ff). And the only reference to Jeremiah's name in the history of Josiah's reign is the announcement that at the death of the king, 'Jeremiah lamented for Josiah' (2 Chron. xxxv. 25). Josiah began to reign in 639 B.C. His thirteenth year, therefore, was 627 B.C.

### III. *The Period covered by the Book.*

#### 3. *It came also*] Heb. *And it was.*

*in the days of Jehoiakim...unto the carrying away*] This book, then, does not contain the prophecies of Josiah's reign. It begins with those of the reign of Jehoiakim, and goes on to the carrying away. These are its limits. Matters both before and after these dates, it is true, are found in the book. *Earlier* matters exist: it is here said that Jeremiah was called in the thirteenth year of Josiah (verse 2); the call is described (verses 6-10); and one or more prophecies are quoted from Josiah's reign (iii. 6-25). But substantially the work begins, as stated, with the reign of Jehoiakim. The renewed call (i. 11-19), which led to the resuming of prophetic activity, and which forms the real introduction to the book, took place after that reign began. See *Introd.*, p. 55 ff. In like manner, there are matters *later* than the 'carrying away.' The chapters describing the flight into Egypt and the stay there, with the attendant prophecies, may have been regarded as the winding up of the Jewish State, which was virtually completed by the deportation, and which sealed and closed Jeremiah's life-work. Or, more likely, the chapters may have been added after the book was finished and after this heading was put upon it. Ch. lii. 28-34 is the work of a later hand. See *Compilation*, sect. 12.

4-10.—*The Original Call of Jeremiah in the days of Josiah.*

#### 4. *Then*] Heb. *And or Now.*

*word*] Singular, because one prophecy (verse 1), intimating the future coming of a *number* of 'words' or teachings (verse 9).



saying, (5) Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. (6) Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak; for I *am* a child. (7) But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I *am* a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. (8) Be not afraid of their faces: for I *am* with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. (9) Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD

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5. His fore-ordination and appointment by God would assure his own mind and consecrate his mission in his own eyes, as well as secure for it the respect of God-fearing people.

*nations*] Also verse 10. Jehovah rules over all the world alike. If, therefore, His prophet receives a message for a nation beyond the Jewish bounds, it is not for a place beyond his proper sphere. No place is foreign to the messenger of Him who builds up or casts down among all nations alike. Many prophecies of this book relate to other nations. See especially chs. xlvii.-li. In those days it was essential to teach that God rules over all nations.

6. *child*] Might be about same age as the king, who was nineteen years old. Josiah began to reign in his eighth year, *i.e.*, when seven years old; and he was now in the thirteenth year of his reign, *i.e.*, he had been twelve years on the throne. King and prophet would doubtless be helpful to each other; but as we have hardly any account of Jeremiah's work during the reign of Josiah, we cannot tell whether they were ever associated. The young prophet's plea that he was a child, is characteristic of the self-distrustful and retiring disposition which he showed through life. Comp. Ex. iv. 10.

8. His consciousness that he had a commission from God, enabled him to continue at his post with noble persistence in spite of opposition and danger.

#### 11-19.—*The Renewed Call of Jeremiah in the Days of Jehoiakim.*

We now get to the beginning of the book proper as announced at verse 3, viz., 'from the days of Jehoiakim.' These two visions

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said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. (10) See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

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(11) Moreover, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree. (12) Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it. (13) And the word of the LORD

have generally been connected with Jeremiah's original call, but they would have been singularly inappropriate when Josiah had already begun his work of reformation, and had for some years been seeking the God of David his father, whereas they are specially appropriate after Jehoiakim has come to the throne.

On the two occasions on which Jeremiah had to make a new departure, he was guided by a vision. This was the first. After the reign of Josiah, in which king and prophet, whether working in concert or no, acted in the same interest, the people under Jehoiakim's rule were being carried back to idolatry. Jeremiah was therefore summoned to a new era in his ministry—a period of warning, to king and nation alike—a period in which instead of working with the ruling powers, he would have them against him (i. 18). For the other occasion, see ch. xxiv.

11. *Moreover*] Heb. *And*. Not a continuation of the same subject. The original call has been stated. The writer now goes on to the period of which the book treats, viz., from the reign of Jehoiakim (i. 3).

11, 12. *will hasten*] *wake over*, or *watch over*.

*an almond tree...hasten*] Heb. *shaked* (a wake-tree)...*shokei* (I wake). The tree which shoots first in spring, proclaiming that the winter is past, is used to symbolise the fact that God who may have appeared to be slumbering, was now waking to action. See Hist., p. 6.

13. *toward*] Heb. *from*. There was great unrest in the north. Not to speak of the Scythians, who had been for year sweeping down upon many of the nations of Western Asia, the great powers of Media and Babylon were at death-grips with

came unto me the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, I see a seething pot; and the face thereof *is* toward the north. (14) Then the LORD said unto me, Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land. (15) For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah. (16) And I will utter my judgments against them touching all

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Assyria, and Egypt had gone north and taken Assyria's frontier citadel of Carchemish. This seething would overflow upon Judah. Babylon appears on the map as lying to the east of Judah rather than the north, but both Assyria and it were northern to a Jew: the enemies from those countries came round the desert, and entered the Holy Land from the far north.

*the north*] One of many things which point to the fact that we are no longer in Josiah's days. Josiah was loyal to 'the north.' He died fighting against Egypt, when it was on the way to attack an Assyrian possession. In Jehoiakim's reign, on the other hand, Judah not only paid tribute to Egypt, but looked to it for protection. It regarded Egypt as the great power. Jeremiah now announces that the real power to be considered under God is in 'the north.'

14. *an evil*] Heb. *the evil*,—the evil which he has to announce as a judgment from God.

*the land*] Comp. *land* in verses 14 and 18 with *nations* in verses 5 and 10. In the original call the general appointment was to the nations, in the present case it is to Judah, which is going to ruin under Jehoiakim.

15. *all*] A word used frequently by Jeremiah, without denoting absolute universality: a company generally (verses 14-17; comp. xxxvi. 2-4, where strict universality is impossible). He has not been told as yet which people in the north are to come. He learned afterwards that they were the Chaldeans.

16. *burned incense... worshipped*] They are now, under Jehoiakim, giving themselves to idolatry (ch. ii.).

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their wickedness, who have forsaken me, and have burnt incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands. (17) Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. (18) For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. (19) And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I *am* with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.

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CH. II. (I) Moreover the word of the LORD

18. *kings*] How different from the time of Josiah!

*princes*] There were still several influential princes on the side of Jeremiah, but the majority followed the king.

*priests*] For instances of the opposition of king, see ch. xxxvii.; of princes, chs. xxxvii. and xxxviii.; of priests, chs. xx. and xxvi.

#### THE ROLL WHICH WAS REWRITTEN AFTER BEING BURNED BY JEHOIAKIM.

CH. II.—*Introductory Chapter—digest of addresses at beginning of new stage of Ministry after receiving renewed call in the Reign of Jehoiakim.*

The chapter is introductory and general. It makes no mention as yet of coming judgment: it expostulates with the people on their forsaking God. It goes back to the deliverance from Egypt, and deals with first principles. The Israelites were brought out to be the peculiar people of Jehovah. They entered into solemn covenant with Him, following Him in the wilderness; but they fell away, and worshipped strange gods. Their infatuated disregard of God had all through their history brought misery upon them. As an instance of the evil results, they had recently seen King Jehoahaz, 'the crown of their head' (ii. 16) taken away to be the prey of the Egyptians.

came to me, saying, (2) Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilder-

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They were alternately plundered by Assyria and Egypt, and yet after having looked to the former country for help they were now turning to the latter, but they would be ashamed of the one as they had been of the other. God, whose favour they wished to retain, worshipping Him along with other gods, would not own them. With the whole chapter compare ch. xi., which belongs to the same period.

Ch. ii. is the first chapter of the roll which was rewritten after being burned (ch. xxxvi.), and ch. xi. is the first of the 'many like words' (xxxvi. 32) added afterwards. The roll is written in chronological order; the supplementary gleanings (chs. xi.-xx.), which begin again from the same starting-point, are added in the same order. The charge in this and the following chapters is the *forsaking of Jehovah and taking to idols*; it is not until we reach ch. v., that we find the prophet dealing with *general wickedness*.

As we learn from the parallel ch. xi. (xi. 6), Jeremiah went with his early messages of the reign of Jehoiakim to the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem, and ch. ii. has the appearance of having been preached frequently until it became digested. It probably contains the condensation of many speeches. See *Introd.*, pp. 6 and 55.

1. *Moreover*] *And*.

2. *Go...Jerusalem*] While he continued to the end to retain his connection with Anathoth (xi. 21; xxxii. 7; xxxvii. 12.), his ministry from this time was chiefly in Jerusalem. We are not informed where it was exercised before this.

*thee*] *for thee*.

*kindness...love...espousals*] At the time of bringing them out of Egypt, their Maker became their husband. The marriage relation is frequently adverted to in these early chapters (iii. 1). Even in the wilderness they were often unfaithful, but in the presence of evil there is a disposition to look back upon the good of the past. Many good points shone out from the wickedness of the early days. See, *e.g.*, the first and last chapters of Joshua.

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ness, in a land *that was* not sown. (3) Israel *was* holiness unto the LORD, *and* the first-fruits of his increase: all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the LORD. (4) Hear ye the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel: (5) Thus saith the LORD, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain? (6) Neither said they, Where *is* the LORD that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt? (7) And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. (8) The priests said not, Where *is* the LORD? and they that handle the law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after *things that* do not profit. (9) Wherefore I

3. *offend*] *be held guilty*. Comp. Lev. xxiii. 20. and xxii. 16.

4. *Israel*] Jeremiah regards the remaining Kingdom of Judah as representing the whole house of Israel.

5. *fathers*] Not in recent times only, but through all their history, they have forsaken God (verse 7).

*vanity*] Frequently used by Jeremiah to describe idolatry. He felt the hollowness of idol worship (x. 3-10; xvi. 19, 20).

8. *pastors*] i.e., *shepherds*. Frequently used by Jeremiah to designate kings, but also including any who are over the people, and lead them (xvii. 16). See xxiii. 1-8, especially as following ch. xxii. He often groups kings, priests, and prophets as his own opponents and the corrupters of the people. The influence of those in power had generally been used for evil, and now it was specially.

will yet plead with you, saith the LORD, and with your children's children will I plead. (10) For pass over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing. (11) Hath a nation changed *their* gods, which *are* yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for *that which* doth not profit. (12) Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. (13) For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. (14) *Is* Israel a servant? *is* he a homeborn slave? why is he spoiled? (15) The young lions roared upon him, and yelled, and they made his land waste: his cities are burnt without inhabitant. (16) Also the children of Noph and

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10. *Chittim*] Cyprus, and perhaps other coastlands across the sea; *Kedar*, in Arabia; two names used to represent outlandish and barbarian countries to the west and east.

13. *fountain...cisterns*] The fountain (from a verb signifying to dig) is a well into which living water runs perpetually; the cistern is stagnant; the fountain, while not a spring (out of which the water might trickle too slowly for use), practically produces of itself, the cistern has nothing but what is put into it, or what it receives from rain; the fountain is inexhaustible, the cistern is limited, and in this case it is leaky, and disappoints those who go to it for supplies. The Heb. word here used for cistern is in a slightly different form used to designate the pit or well possessing only mire, into which Jeremiah was put (xxxviii. 6).

14. *servant...homeborn slave*] The people were treated, first by the Assyrians, and afterwards by the Egyptians, as not possessing independence.

16. *Noph*] Memphis, the capital of Lower Egypt, not far south from the present Cairo.

*Takapanes*] The Greek *Daphnæ*, a town on the Pelusiatic mouth of the Nile, in which Ionian mercenaries were maintained

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Tahapanes have broken the crown of thy head. (17) Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, when he led thee by the way? (18) And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river? (19) Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that *it is* an evil *thing* and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear *is* not in thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts. (20) For of old time I have broken thy yoke, *and* burst thy by the king of Egypt. The *people* of Egypt disliked it, and it only existed about a hundred years. The children of Noph would therefore be the native Egyptian soldiers, and those of Tahpanhes the mercenaries.

*have broken*] Rather, *shall feed upon*. The native Egyptians and Greek mercenaries, as young lions, make prey of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim's predecessor on the throne, who was lately taken as a prisoner to Egypt, and would never return (xxii. 10).

18. *Sihor*] the Nile.

*the river*] Euphrates. They had been looking to Assyria for protection, and were now leaning upon Egypt. They should look to God alone. Assyria was still the great empire to the East, but it ceased with the destruction of Nineveh very soon after this prophecy was uttered.

20. *I have*] The Hebrew reading is doubtful. If *I have*, the reference is to deliverance from the bondage of Egypt; if *thou hast*, to breaking away from submission to God.

*transgress*] *serve*.

*high hill...green tree*] The high places and the green trees at which impure idolatrous worship was observed. Josiah had destroyed and polluted these, not only to compel the people to come to the Temple for their worship, but because the worship at the high places, even when they were nominally devoted to Jehovah, too frequently partook of the debasing character of the services practised by the heathen at their high places. In Jehoiakim's time the worship at the high places was revived.



bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot. (21) Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me? (22) For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, *yet* thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD. (23) How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim? See thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done: *thou art* a swift

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In many cases, they were evidently given up to the worship of false gods.

23. *How canst thou say*] This and the following verses show that they had not openly abandoned the worship of Jehovah, or avowed themselves to be worshippers of Baalim. They were still ashamed to be caught at idolatry (verse 26). These earlier chapters show that the descent into idolatry was gradual. The good work of Josiah could not be undone at once. Nor must we forget that to the end the people served Jehovah and the Baalim. When sunk further (vii. 4), they drew confidence from the thought that Jehovah's temple was among them. It was an officer in the house of Jehovah (xx. 1) that put Jeremiah in the stocks. Fasts were held before Jehovah (xxxvi. 9). The false prophets prophesied in the name of Jehovah. It was in obedience to the law of Jehovah that the masters in the last siege released the slaves (xxxiv. 13). There was from this time to the end, a growing corruption, and a more open idolatry; but it was only in the boldest or most despairing outbursts of superstition that they professed or defended to Jeremiah's face (xliv. 15) the worship of other gods in preference to that of Jehovah.

*Baalim*] Used here for false gods generally, including Moloch, to whom altars were erected in *the valley* of the Son of Hinnom, on the south side of Jerusalem, for the sacrifices of their sons and daughters by burning (vii. 31; xix. 5). Moloch is in the latter passage called Baal.

*traversing her ways*] Running hither and thither in the heat of its passion.

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dromedary traversing her ways; (24) a wild ass used to the wilderness, *that* snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure; in her occasion who can turn her away? all they that seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her. (25) Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but thou saidst, There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go. (26) As the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed; they, their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets, (27) saying to a stock, Thou *art* my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth: for they have turned *their* back unto me, and not *their* face: but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us. (28) But where *are* thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of thy trouble: for *according to* the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah. (29) Wherefore will ye plead with me? ye all have transgressed against me, saith the LORD. (30) In

24. *at her pleasure*] in her desire.

25. *Withhold, etc.*] See that this mad running after strange gods, like the ass's running about till its shoes are worn off, does not bring trouble upon you.

*no hope: no; for I have loved, etc.*] Not that the people openly profess this, for they are ashamed when charged with going after strange gods, but they show it in their life.

26. *As the thief*] Again showing that the nation was not yet wholly sunk in idolatry. The descent was gradual.

*kings*] Another evidence that we are in Jehoiakim's, not Josiah's, reign.

27. *saying*] Again, as in verse 25, in belief and practice, not in profession or in so many words.

28. *according to the number, etc.*] This is repeated in ch. xi., which begins again at the same period as ch. ii.

29. They still claim to be the people of God.

vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction: your own sword hath devoured your prophets, like a destroying lion. (31) O generation, see ye the word of the LORD. Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness? Wherefore say my people, We are lords; we will come no more unto thee? (32) Can a maid forget her ornaments, *or* a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number. (33) Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways. (34) Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents: I have not found it

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30. *prophets*] Many prophets had been killed. There were those in Israel whom Jezebel slew (1 Kings xviii. 13), Israel and Judah being regarded by Jeremiah as one; and Zechariah, who was stoned (2 Chron. xxiv. 21). Perhaps another case, that of Urijah (Jer. xxvi. 23), had occurred by this time, and if so, it would account for the mention of the sword. His murder took place before the attack on Jeremiah mentioned in ch. xxvi., and that attack was made before the Chaldean invasion, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim.

31. *say*] Again, as in verses 25 and 27, say by their conduct, not in their words. They still *professed* to obey Jehovah.

*lords*] *broken loose*, i.e., move about at our own will.

32. *attire*] Distinguishing a married woman, and corresponding in our case to the marriage ring, in which a bride prides herself.

33. *seek love*] with false gods (verse 23).

*wicked ones*] *wicked women*. Instead of being depraved by them, thou hast, such is thy character, lowered them. The Jewish nation, as the bride of Jehovah, should have set an example to the surrounding nations; but becoming unfaithful itself, it is leading them into greater wickedness.

34. *secret search*] *breaking in*. Allusion to Ex. xxii. 2, where it is said that if one catches a thief in the act of breaking into a house, he may lawfully put him to death. But Israel has killed the blameless poor, and therefore he will be held guilty. The language as we have it seems to be confused, the blood being apparently viewed in the first clause as upon the slayer,

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by secret search, but upon all these. (35) Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned. (36) Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria. (37) Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and thine hands upon thine head: for the LORD hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them.

CH. III. (1) They say, If a man put away his

and in the second upon the slain. *In thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the blameless poor, not at the in-breaking is it found, for it is upon all these* (blameless poor). The shedding of innocent blood, and not of the prophets alone, often took place in those days (xxii. 17).

35. The verse shows again that the nation does not yet own to idolatry.

*shall turn] hath turned.*

36. Another evidence that Jehoiakim is on the throne. The Egyptian policy was in favour from the time of his accession till the destruction of Jerusalem, and Jeremiah constantly opposed it. He held it wrong to look either to Egypt or to Assyria for support: God alone could uphold. Josiah died fighting against Egypt.

37. *Yea...from him] from this also.*

*hands upon thy head]* Comp. 2 Sam. xiii. 19.

CH. III. 1-5.—*Judah an unfaithful Spouse, who cannot be lightly taken back.*

1. *They say]* Heb. *saying*, or *according to the saying*. It is very doubtful whether the text is correct. But the lesson drawn from the 'Book of the Law' is plain. See Deut. xxiv. 1-4. The Lord had taken Israel to be His spouse, but it had all through its history gone after many lovers. In recent times it had sought the favour of Assyria and Egypt, and in worship served other gods; and now, forsooth, it proposed to return to God as if it had never forfeited its claim upon Him!

*yet return] and returnest.*

wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD. (2) Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness. (3) Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed. (4) Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou *art* the guide of my youth? (5) Will he reserve *his anger* for ever? will he keep *it* to the end? Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest.

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2. *high places*] *bare heights*. Comp. Hos. iv. 13.

*Arabian in wilderness*] Stealthily waiting for plunder, as he does to this day.

3. Jeremiah regards this as God's judgment on the wickedness of the nation. See this worked out fully in ch. xiv., which refers to the same period. Let it always be remembered that chs. ii.-ix. cover the same ground as chs. xi.-xx., viz., the early part of Jehoia-kim's reign up to his fourth year.

4. *Wilt thou not...cry?*] *Hast thou not cried?* An instance of the shamelessness just referred to. The nation pleads God's graciousness to it in its youth (ii. 2) to argue that He cannot now continue His present anger.

*guide*] *familiar or intimate*.

*from this time*] Probably referring to the drought, when the nation felt the anger of God, and pleaded with Him, but did not fully repent of its wickedness.

5. *as thou couldest*] Heb. *and hast been able*. In its shamelessness, the nation can talk thus, and at the same time go on doing the evil. Such a pretence of returning God cannot away with.

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(6) The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen *that* which backsliding Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and

6-25.—*The prophet's conception of a genuine reformation  
(A prophecy inserted from the days of Josiah.)*

That this, which is a cognate prophecy, has been taken from a former period to be let into the group of the present period, appears from several considerations. 1. It is expressly said to be from Josiah's days. We have seen that the other prophecies we have just dealt with belong to the days of Jehoiakim. 2. Why, if this did not belong to a different time, should it, unlike the rest, be expressly stated to be from Josiah's reign? If the context had been of the same period as this, no differentiating statement would have been needed. This weighs all the more, when we observe that through the whole roll, with its 'many like words' (chs. ii. to xx.), no other prophecy has a date assigned to it. 3. The date is unlike the dates put upon prophecies of the rest of the book. They have a year or other specific portion of a reign named, as xxv. 1; xxvi. 1; xxvii. 1; xxviii. 1; xxxii. 1. The general announcement, simply stating Josiah's days, shows that the writer is done with that period, and refers to it as in the distance. (See *Introd.*, p. 55.)

After stating in the previous part of the chapter that Judah's return to God is unreal and will not be allowed, the prophet recalls an old prophecy of Josiah's time, regarding the northern kingdom, in which he pictured Israel as a great sinner, first sent into exile on account of its wickedness, afterwards brought to repentance, and ultimately returning with a truly contrite heart to be abundantly accepted. In contrast, he presented Judah in that old prophecy as making a superficial reformation, 'not turning with the whole heart, but feignedly.' The lesson of Josiah's time applies equally to the present: saying, 'Lord, Lord,' and not doing what the Master says; crying, 'My Father, Thou art the intimate of my youth,' and at the same time 'doing evil,' will never gain acceptance.

6. *days of Josiah*] See above.

*Israel*] Here used of the northern kingdom. Jeremiah generally applies the name to the whole nation.

*mountain...tree*] See ii. 20, and Hos. 4. 13.

there hath played the harlot. (7) And I said after she had done all these *things*, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw *it*. (8) And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also. (9) And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks. (10) And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD. (11) And the LORD said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah. (12) Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; *and* I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I *am* merciful, saith the LORD, *and* I will not keep *anger* for ever. (13) Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD. (14) Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and

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10. The reformation under Josiah did not change the heart.

12. *the north*] Assyria, where Israel was in captivity. The way to Assyria and Babylon was by the north.

13-14. *acknowledge...turn*] This, in contrast to Judah's present condition, is the ground on which Israel was to be received.

14. *married*] When there is acknowledgment of sin, with true repentance, there is no mention on God's part of the dissolution of the marriage bond, as in the later prophecies of iii. 1.

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I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: (15) and I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. (16) And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD; neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit *it*, neither shall *that* be done any more.

*one of a city, and two of a family*] A 'family' may include many cities. So resolved will God be to bring them back, that even if they are so lost among the Assyrians as to be only one in a city and two in a tribe, He will gather them. Or, if even so few as one or two repent, the return of their small number is sure.

15. *pastors*] i.e., *shepherds*. Usually in this book meaning kings, but perhaps here in a more general sense, kings, priests, prophets, all who are guides of the people. The whole of this passage is the prophet's first vision, so far as we know, of the bright future in store for the people of God. He often obtains glimpses of such a future. Its fullest light is at ch. xxxi. 31.

16. The vision of a golden future came latterly to dominate the teaching of Jeremiah. But he had had glimpses of it as here, from very early times and all through his ministry.

*ye be*] i.e., ye of the northern kingdom of Israel.

*multiplied and increased*] Material prosperity always formed part of the picture. Comp. xxxi. 38-40; xxxiii. 13.

*they shall say*] i.e., the descendants.

*The ark*] Israel refused to recognise the Temple worship, and did not repair to Jerusalem for worship. It boasted of having had the ark at Shiloh within its own borders (vii. 12). As Israel made much of having had the ark, so Judah of the Temple (vii. 4, 12.)

*visit*] or, *look after*, or *inquire about*, or *miss*.

*that be done*] or, *it be made*. Some, not observing that the contrast here is between Israel and Judah, take this to be a forecasting of the spiritual nature of worship in future days, as if saying that the ark and all things ceremonial would then be



(17) At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart. (18) In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers. (19) But I said How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My

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disregarded. There is no reference to that here. Shiloh was much in Jeremiah's mind (vii. 12-15; xxvi. 6-9).

17. *call Jerusalem the throne*] The chief feature connected with the tabernacle worship was the ark; the leading thought connected with the Temple was that it was God's dwelling-place (Jer. viii. 19; xii. 7; Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14). Hence the mention here of the ark on the one hand, and the throne on the other. As the refusal to come to Jerusalem was a chief sign of Israel's apostasy, so the return to it will be a conspicuous mark of the new homage. Comp. xxxi. 6. Jeremiah does not teach that Jerusalem has sacredness in itself. Comp. vii. 4. Did the contention about 'this mountain' and 'Jerusalem' (John iv. 20) spring out of this passage?

*all the nations*] The vision of God's kingdom of the future includes Gentiles. Comp. i. 5, 10. The Jehovah-worship would spread over the whole earth.

*imagination*] *stubbornness*.

18. *with*] Read *to* or *on*. Judah's future captivity has not yet come into view. The house of Judah is to go *from Judah* to Assyria to bring the house of Israel to worship the Lord with it at Jerusalem. This represents at once that the Israelites willingly return to the true worship at Jerusalem, and that Judah and Israel reunite (l. 4, 5).

19. Whether we read, *How shall I put?* or *How I shall put!* the sense of the verse as a whole is the same. Israel, which has disowned God and been disinherited, is to be placed again among the children and restored to its inheritance; it is to call

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father ; and shalt not turn away from me. (20) Surely *as* a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD. (21) A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping *and* supplications of the children of Israel: for they have perverted their way, *and* they have forgotten the LORD their God. (22) Return, ye backsliding children, *and* I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou *art* the LORD our God. (23) Truly in vain *is salvation hoped for* from the hills, *and from* the multitude of mountains: truly in the LORD our God *is* the salvation of Israel. (24) For shame hath devoured the labour of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters. (25) We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us: for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.

Jehovah 'Father,' and not again depart from Him. Its profession, coming from a spirit of true penitence, is in contrast to the impenitent profession of Judah (verse 4).

20-22. *have dealt*] *did deal*. The unfaithful Israelites (northern kingdom) in the prophet's mind truly repent, return to God, and are graciously received and healed. The order is, (1) their unworthy behaviour; (2) their grief; (3) God's offered mercy; (4) their acceptance.

*high places*] *bare heights*, not 'high places' connected with worship.

23-25. *multitude*] *tumult* or *noisy throng*. Possibly referring to the 'uproarious orgies of idolatry.' Their acknowledgment that all their troubles have sprung from forsaking God and following Baalim, and that their safety lies in Jehovah alone.

*shame*] Often used in this book to designate false gods.

*We lie...covereth*] *Let us lie...cover*.

CH. IV. (1) If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, return unto me; and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove. (2) And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory. (3) For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not

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CH. IV. 1-4.—*Condition on which Judah may return.*

In iii. 1-5 the prophet taught that the nation could not in a light and easy way return to God by simply saying, 'My Father.' In iii. 6-25 he quoted from his prophecies of Josiah's time to show the heartiness of the repentance which was needed. And now he returns to the point at which he broke off at iii. 5, to show that if Judah, like Israel, will sincerely return, it will be received. The section shows that many had their better moments, in which they thought to return.

1. *Israel*] Not now meaning the northern kingdom. When addressing Judah and Jerusalem, Jeremiah likes to use the name *Israel*. He refuses to recognise a disruption. He addresses his hearers as representing the children of Israel at large.

*If, etc.*] If thou art really wanting to return, show it by consistent conduct, and thou shalt yet be received. Comp. iii. 1-5.

*then shalt thou not remove*] Read, *and stray not* (from God), or *waver not* (between Jehovah and false gods) (ii. 22-26; iii. 2). *Exile* in the case of Judah has never yet been suggested.

2. *The Lord liveth*] See Deut. x. 20; Jer. xii. 16.

3. Their return to God had no depth; in their heart they continued ungodly. That they made a show of returning is seen in iii. 1, and iv. 1. The show of returning has been thought to imply that these early chapters belong to the time of Josiah. But that appears to be inconsistent with the signs of Jehoia-  
kim's reign, which are scattered so abundantly over the chapters. Even in Jehoia-  
kim's reign, and especially at the beginning of it, many of the people would still have frequent thoughts of turning to God. Hence such exhortations as in the present verses, 1-4. But those thoughts were neither deep nor long, and, as the reign proceeded, they almost ceased.

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among thorns. (4) Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.

(5) Declare ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem; and say, Blow ye the trumpet in the land: cry, gather together, and say, Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced cities. (6) Set up the standard toward Zion: retire, stay not; for I will

Meanwhile the prophet often found the people in moods to which the teaching given in Josiah's time (iii. 10) still applied.

4. *Circumcise*] The use of this figurative language would indicate that at their worst times the law continued in some respects to be observed among them.

#### 5-18.—*Punishment threatened and imminent.*

We might suppose from verse 7 that Nebuchadnezzar had already begun his march, but (1) the prophet does not know yet who the enemy is: he is merely 'from the north' (verse 6), not expressly from Babylon. (2) About this period the prophet can spare time to make two journeys to the Euphrates (xiii. 1), which he durst not do if the Chaldeans were on the march. (3) The passages which follow this show that Nebuchadnezzar has not yet set out.

The prophet has just shown (iii. 1-5, and iv. 1-4), that a conversion which is not from the heart will not find acceptance with God, but will on the contrary be followed by judgment. He begins now to threaten, and having once begun, he continues to do so until Nebuchadnezzar arrives.

5. *Declare...publish...say*] Comp. xvi. 14; i. 2.

*Judah*] The kingdom, including Benjamin. Comp. vi. 1, where Benjamin alone is referred to.

The blowing of trumpets for rallying in time of war is familiar in early Jewish history. See Judg. vi. 34.

6. *the north*] Jeremiah did not know in the early days of Jehoiakim what country was to furnish the invader. The Medes and Babylonians were fighting against the Assyrians,

bring evil from the north, and a great destruction. (7) The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate; *and* thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant. (8) For this gird you with sackcloth, lament and howl: for the fierce anger of the LORD is not turned back from us. (9) And it shall come to pass at that day, saith the LORD, *that* the heart of the king shall perish, and the heart of the princes; and the priests shall be astonished, and the prophets shall wonder. (10) Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! surely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall have peace; whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul. (11) At that time shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem, A dry wind of the high places in the wilderness toward the daughter of my

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and it may not yet have been clear what was to be the issue. All these would be called northern by a Jew, as any of them would have to come round the desert and invade Judah from the north. In the prophecies of the first twenty chapters, all of which except those of ch. x. were before the invasion, the north is spoken of, and Babylon is not mentioned till ch. xx. Nebuchadnezzar appeared at Jerusalem in Jehoiakim's fourth year.

*standard*] To indicate the nearest way to the place of safety.

*Zion*] The most secure stronghold to which the people of Judah could flee.

9. *king, princes, priests, prophets*] All different from what they were in Josiah's day. All guilty of disregarding God, and therefore incurring His judgment.

10. *deceived...ye shall have peace*] During the late reign of Josiah, the prophet, like other good men, may have expected peace to follow upon the reformation which was then taking place, but now that the reformation is departed from, the hope of peace is gone.

11. *high places*] *bare heights*.

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people, not to fan, nor to cleanse, (12) *even* a full wind from those *places* shall come unto me: now also will I give sentence against them. (13) Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and his chariots *shall be* as a whirlwind: his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for we are spoiled. (14) O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved: how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? (15) For a voice declareth from Dan, and publisheth affliction from mount Ephraim. (16) Make ye mention to the nations; behold, publish against Jerusalem, *that* watchers come from a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah. (17) As keepers of a field, are they against her round about; because she hath been rebellious against me, saith the LORD. (18) Thy way and thy doings have procured these *things* unto thee: *this is* thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thine heart.

(19) My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. (20) Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are my tents spoiled, *and*

12. *unto me*] To serve My purpose.

13. Probably suggesting the language of Hab. i. 8. See v. 6, and v. 17, the latter certainly suggesting Hab. iii. 17.

14. In these earlier chapters there is still place for repentance.

15. *Dan...Ephraim*] The enemy would enter by the far north (Dan), and work his way southward (Ephraim).

#### 19-31.—*The coming destruction.*

The prophet conjures up a scene of utter desolation.

20. *tents*] A large portion of the rural population lived in tents. (2 Sam. xviii. 17; 1 Kings viii. 66.)

my curtains in a moment. (21) How long shall I see the standard, *and* hear the sound of the trumpet? (22) For my people *is* foolish, they have not known me; they *are* sottish children, and they have none understanding: they *are* wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. (23) I beheld the earth, and, lo, *it was* without form and void, and the heavens, and they *had* no light. (24) I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. (25) I beheld, and, lo, *there was* no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. (26) I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place *was* a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, *and* by his fierce anger. (27) For thus hath the LORD said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end. (28) For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black: because I have spoken *it*, I have purposed *it*, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it. (29) The whole city shall flee for the noise of the horsemen and bowmen; they shall go into thickets, and climb up upon the rocks: every

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23. *beheld...earth...without form and void...heavens...no light*] Comp. Gen. i. 1-3. The ideas as well as the language of the one passage are apparently suggested by those of the other. Jeremiah thinks of a return to the desolation which existed before *cosmos*.

27. *not...full end*] Comp. Lev. xxvi. 44 and ch. v. 10, 18. Up to this point in the prophecies, there is no mention of captivity. When captivity afterwards overtook them, Jeremiah, instead of merely saying that there would not be a full end, taught that there would be a return (xxix. 10 ff, chs. xxxi.-xxxiii., etc.). Even other nations would return from captivity (xlviii. 47; xlix. 6, 39, etc.).

29. *horsemen...bowmen*] These are represented with great prominence on the slabs.

*thickets...rocks*] Comp. 1 Sam. xiii. 6.

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city *shall be* forsaken, and not a man dwell therein. (30) And *when* thou art spoiled, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with crimson, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou rentest thy face with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; *thy* lovers will despise thee, they will seek thy life. (31) For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, *and* the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion, *that* bewaileth herself, *that* spreadeth her hands, *saying*, Woe *is* me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers.

CH. V. (1) Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be *any* that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it. (2) And though they say, The

30. *lovers*] Instead of depending upon God, Judah had been looking to the neighbouring nations for help (ii. 17, 18, 36; iii. 1).

CH. V. 1-9.—*The Wickedness of all classes bringing down God's judgment.*

In chs. ii. and iii. the people are blamed for forsaking God to worship idols and for depending upon surrounding nations, and ch. iv. is occupied with the punishment that would ensue. The charge in this passage passes from ungodliness to wickedness; the people are dishonest, unreliable, adulterous; and not the poor alone, but all classes.

1. The whole passage is another evidence that we have left the days of Josiah and are in the reign of Jehoiakim.

*broad places*] market-places or openings at the gates; places of concourse.

*truth*] faithfulness.

*I will pardon*] Comp. Gen. xviii. 24-32.



LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely. (3) O LORD, *are* not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, *but* they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return. (4) Therefore I said, Surely these *are* poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the LORD, *nor* the judgment of their God. (5) I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them; for they have known the way of the LORD, *and* the judgment of their God: but these have altogether broken the yoke, *and* burst the bonds. (6) Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, *and* a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, *and* their backslidings are increased. (7) How shall I pardon thee for this? thy

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2. *The Lord liveth*] Comp. iv. 2; v. 7. They sought to keep the favour both of Jehovah and Baalim.

6. *wolf...leopard*] This passage appears to have been in the mind of Habakkuk. Comp., on the one hand, Jer. iv. 13; v. 6, *horses swifter than eagles...wolf of the evenings...leopard*, and on the other, Hab. i. 8, *horses swifter than leopards...wolves of the evening...horsemen...fly as the eagle*. When Jeremiah prophesied here, he did not know to what nation his own prophecy referred; it was simply as yet 'from the north.' Habakkuk, who spoke after the captivity of Jehoiachin, named the 'Chaldeans.' As Habakkuk used the figures of Jeremiah, so Jeremiah those of Zephaniah. Comp. Jer. iv. 7; v. 6, *lion...wolf of the evenings*, with Zeph. iii. 3, *roaring lions...wolves of the evening*. Although Zephaniah applies the terms to the princes of Jerusalem, yet he has just been speaking of Nineveh, the enemy 'from the north' in his day. For other parallel passages in Hab., comp. Jer. v. 17; li. 58, with Hab. iii. 17; ii. 13.

7. *sworn...no gods*] See verse 2.

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children have forsaken me, and sworn by *them that are* no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. (8) They were *as* fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife. (9) Shall I not visit for these *things?* saith the LORD: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

(10) Goye up upon her walls, and destroy; but make not a full end: take away her battlements; for they *are* not the LORD'S. (11) For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the LORD. (12) They have belied the LORD,

*adultery*] Unfaithfulness to God is often so designated, and Baal-worship was connected with impure rites. We have therefore in these verses both unfaithfulness to God and conjugal infidelity.

10-31.—*The Jewish people, disowning God and practising wickedness, will be punished by God.*

The people have advanced in evil. (a) They began to indulge in idolatry, and, wavering between God and Baal, said that they had not forsaken God. They even talked of returning to Him. Now they show that they cannot worship God and Baal. They deny God. (b) They overpass in deeds of wickedness. They become rich by deceit, they judge not the cause of the fatherless and the needy; and the prophets and priests in opposition to Jeremiah lead them astray. We have reached a further stage also in the announcement of punishment. Not only is there a more calm and settled statement about the nation which is to come from a far country, but it is now declared for the first time that the Jews are to be taken captive to a strange land.

10. *not a full end*] See iv. 27.

*battlements*] Heb. *branches*, perhaps keeping up the figure of a vine, as in ii. 21.

12. *It is not he*] Heb. *Not He*, which may mean, Jehovah will not interfere, or, It is not Jehovah that speaks through Jeremiah, or, There is no Jehovah.

and said, *It is* not he; neither shall evil come upon us; neither shall we see sword nor famine: (13) and the prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them: thus shall it be done unto them. (14) Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. (15) Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the LORD: it *is* a mighty nation, it *is* an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say. (16) Their quiver *is* as an open sepulchre, they *are* all mighty men. (17) And they shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread, *which* thy sons and thy daughters should eat; they shall

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13. *prophets*] i.e., Jeremiah and his fellow-workers. See an instance of a fellow-worker in xxvi. 20.

*thus shall it be done unto them*] Read, *So be it done unto them*, i.e., Let those things which are mere wind as threatened to us Jewish people, be realities to themselves, viz., to Jeremiah and his fellow-prophets. This shows that Jeremiah was not alone. There must have been many believers, or we could not afterwards have got Daniel, Ezekiel, and Habakkuk among the prophets, and Ahikam, Gedaliah, etc., among the princes, not to speak of others mentioned in this book. On the other hand, we now see avowed opposition on the part of the people towards Jeremiah.

15. *a nation*] The Chaldeans, but not yet revealed as such. *Israel*] See iv. 1.

17. This verse appears to have furnished the materials which Habakkuk, about seven years after the reading of this roll, worked up into a more poetical form (Hab. iii. 17). Jeremiah has *harvest, bread...flocks, herds...vines, fig trees*: Habakkuk has *fig tree, vines, olive...fields, meat...flock, herd*. In both cases there is destruction by an invading army. Habakkuk, being the later writer, makes the verse more polished; being known in his time, the Chaldeans are expressly mentioned by him. Jeremiah as yet merely calls them an ancient nation from afar, from the north. On the other hand, Jer. li. 59 is later than Hab. ii. 13.

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eat up thy flocks and thine herds; they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees; they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword. (18) Nevertheless in those days, saith the LORD, I will not make a full end with you. (19) And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, Wherefore doeth the LORD our God all these *things* unto us? then shalt thou answer them, Like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land *that is* not yours. (20) Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying, (21) Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: (22) Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand *for* the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it? (23) But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart, they are revolted and gone. (24) Neither say they in their

See, further, ch. v. 6, with note, and viii. 13, with note. Comp. also 'I will bring a nation from far' (verse 15) with 'Lo, I raise up...nation...from far' (Hab. i. 6-8). The passage in Jeremiah, on the other hand, appears to be suggested by Deut. xxviii. 49-51. *impoverish*] *beat down*. The slabs show battering-rams used for breaking down the walls. *Sword* is used here for any instrument of war.

18. See iv. 27, and verse 10.

19. This is the first announcement of captivity.

20. *Declare...publish*] Comp. iv. 15.

23. They do not recognise God's power, although He controls the greatest and most ungovernable powers of nature.

*revolting, rebellious*] Withdrawing from His rule, and actively opposing it.

heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest. (25) Your iniquities have turned away these *things*, and your sins have withholden good *things* from you. (26) For among my people are found wicked *men*: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. (27) As a cage is full of birds, so *are* their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. (28) They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge. (29) Shall I not visit for these *things*? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? (30) A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; (31) the prophets prophesy falsely,

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24. Indicating God's kindness, as the preceding verse His power.

*former, latter*] In autumn and spring respectively.

*appointed weeks*] The seven weeks between Passover and Pentecost as appointed in the law (Deut. xvi. 9-16). God, who sends the former and the latter rain, has also arranged for the ingathering. The mention of this shows that in Jeremiah's time these ordinances of the law were recognised.

25. The droughts which occurred about that period were regarded by Jeremiah as a Divine judgment (iii. 3; xii. 4; xiv. 1 ff).

29. Repeated from verse 9.

30. *wonderful*] *astonishing* or *appalling*.

31. Priests were instituted for the religious life of the people, and had an official standing; the prophets, who were unofficial, were a corrective to disloyal priests; but now when the prophets by giving a false note, back up the evil influence of the priests, and the people love to have it so, Jeremiah is appalled.

Opposition is now fully declared between Jeremiah on the

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and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love *to have it* so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

CH. VI. (1) O ye children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Beth-haccerem: for evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction. (2) I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate *woman*. (3) The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her; they shall pitch *their* tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place. (4) Prepare ye war against her; arise, and let us go up at noon. Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out. (5) Arise, and let us

one hand and the prophets and priests on the other. The resulting persecution of Jeremiah is shown in the appendix to the roll—the 'many like words' (chs. xi.-xx.). See xi. 18 to xii. 6; xx. 1.

CH. VI. 1-8.—*The coming Siege of Jerusalem on account of the wickedness of the people.*

1. The exhortation formerly was to flee to Jerusalem (iv. 6): now Jerusalem itself is to be taken, and the people must flee south to the fastnesses of the desert, from the enemy who comes from the north. Tekoa and Beth-haccherem were towns to the south of Jerusalem, on the way to the desert. 'Children of Benjamin' seems to indicate that the people of the tribe immediately to the north of Jerusalem had, at the bidding of Jeremiah or at the approach of the invaders, fled to the capital (iv. 5, 6), and now they learn from a further revelation that there is no lasting safety there; even the capital is to be destroyed.

2. *likened...to a...woman*] *cut off*.

3. *shepherds*] i.e., *rulers*, as often in Jeremiah (ii. 8).

4. *Prepare*] Heb. *Sanctify*. The invaders are so eager that they will not rest, either at noon or night.

go by night, and let us destroy her palaces. (6) For thus hath the LORD of hosts said, Hew ye down trees, and cast a mount against Jerusalem: this *is* the city to be visited; she *is* wholly oppression in the midst of her. (7) As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness: violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually *is* grief and wounds. (8) Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited.

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(9) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grape-gatherer into the baskets. (10) To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ear *is* uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it. (11) Therefore I am full of

6. The slabs show earthworks raised to the height of the walls, from which arrows are fired at the defenders. See xxxii. 24; xxxiii. 4.

*cast*] Heb. *pour*. The earth was carried in baskets and *poured* into the heap.

8. *instructed*] Heb. *chastised*. If Jerusalem will not learn from this judgment, God's presence may be wholly taken from it.

9-15.—*The completeness of God's Judgment on account of the continued wickedness of the people.*

The people, being heedless, shall be made to suffer more severely. All classes are alike careless, therefore no class shall escape. The former healing of the nation had no thoroughness.

9. *glean...turn back*] a complete sweep.

10. The prophet cannot get a hearer for his message; his word is reproached.

11. *abroad*] *in the street*. Instead of keeping silent, he is

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the fury of the LORD ; I am weary with holding in : I will pour it out upon the children abroad, and upon the assembly of young men together : for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with *him that is* full of days. (12) And their houses shall be turned unto others, *with their* fields and wives together : for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD. (13) For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one *is* given to covetousness ; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. (14) They have healed also the hurt *of the daughter* of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace ; when *there is* no peace. (15) Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination ? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush : therefore they shall fall among them that fall : at the time *that* I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

(16) Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where *is* the good

filled with the fury of God which he cannot restrain ; he pours it upon all classes.

13. They will not regard him ; they look merely to making gain.

14. Read, *And they have healed*. This, which became a repeated saying (viii. 11), may have originated in the reformations of Josiah's time, but there is no need to refer it to that time here. The people were now making a profession of serving God (verse 20), and the prophets and priests encouraged them in thinking that all was well, notwithstanding the want of thorough change of heart (v. 30, 31). Religious ceremonies, if one does not seek by their help to have the heart right with God, blunt the consciousness of sin.

15. *They are brought to shame because they have committed abomination : shame nevertheless they feel not : to blush nevertheless they know not* (Payne Smith).



way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk *therein*. (17)

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Also I set watchmen over you, *saying*, Harken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken. (18) Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what *is* among them. (19) Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, *even* the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it. (20) To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings *are* not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me. (21) Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will lay stumblingblocks before this people, and the fathers and the sons together shall fall upon them; the neighbour and his friend shall perish.

(22) Thus saith the LORD, Behold, a people cometh from the north country, and a great nation shall be

16-21.—*No way of safety but one.*

They must return to their first relation to God. Until they do that, the most precious temple offerings are of no use. They must return to God's way: they will constantly find stumbling-blocks in their own way.

16. Return to the old relation to God, as in ii. 2.

17. Comp. Ezek. xxxiii. 1-9.

18. *congregation*] mass of mankind.

20. The ordinances of God's worship *were* being observed, and even with trouble and expense. Comp. 1 Sam. xv. 22.

21. They will not take God's way, and they shall find that the way of transgressors is hard.

22-30.—*The coming Invasion.*

The burden of all these chapters is, Behold a people cometh from the north. They are introduced by i. 11-19.

22. *from the north*] The exact country in the north was not

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raised from the sides of the earth. (23) They shall lay hold on bow and spear; they *are* cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roareth like the sea; and they ride upon horses; set in array as men for war, against thee, O daughter of Zion. (24) We have heard the fame thereof: our hands wax feeble: anguish hath taken hold of us, *and* pain, as of a woman in travail. (25) Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the way; for the sword of the enemy *and* fear *is* on every side. (26) O daughter of my people, gird *thee* with sackcloth, and wallow thyself in ashes; make thee mourning, *as for* an only son, most bitter lamentation: for the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us. (27) I have set thee *for* a tower *and* a fortress among my people, that thou mayest know and try their way. (28) They *are* all grievous revolters, walking with slanders: *they are* brass and iron; they *are* all corrupters. (29) The bellows are burnt, the lead is consumed of the fire, the founder melteth in vain; for the wicked are not plucked away. (30) Reprobate silver shall *men* call them, because the LORD hath rejected them.

yet known to the prophet. At the time of the next chapter the invaders were definitely known as Chaldeans. See introd. note on ch. vii.

23. *cruel*] See an instance of the cruelty of Nebuchadnezzar in his killing Zedekiah's sons before the father's eyes, and *then* putting out those eyes.

*horses*] Comp. iv. 13; viii. 16; and Hab. i. 8.

25. *fear on every side*] A frequent expression with Jeremiah. (xx. 3).

28. *brass and iron*] base metals, not gold and silver.

29. Notwithstanding the most vehement effort, they cannot be purified.

30. There is a play upon the word: *refuse-silver...refused them*.

CH. VII. (1) The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, (2) Stand in the gate of the LORD's

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CH. VII.—*Prophecies delivered while the Chaldeans were approaching.*

The danger which followed the delivery of this message is described in ch. xxvi. That ch. xxvi. refers to this is seen by comparing the following passages: vii. 2, 'Stand in the gate of the Lord's house...Hear...all ye of Judah that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord'=xxvi. 2, 'Stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah which come to worship in the Lord's house'; vii. 3, 'Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place'=xxvi. 13, 'Amend your ways and your doings,... and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you'; vii. 12-14, 'Go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh,...and see what I did to it,...because ye have done all these works,...and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not,...therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by my name,...as I have done to Shiloh'=xxvi. 4-6, 'If ye will not hearken to me...to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early and sending, but ye have not hearkened, then will I make this house like Shiloh.'

At ch. xxvi. 1, we are told that this prophecy was 'in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim.' That chapter was probably inserted in the book some time after Jehoiakim was dead—after ch. xxiv.—and by that time the reign of Jehoiakim, viewed from a distance, was in the prophet's mind broken into two parts by the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar in the fourth year, when Jeremiah's threatening was fulfilled, and the suzerainty was transferred from Egypt to Babylon, when the Temple vessels were carried away, when Daniel and others were taken captive, and the seventy years' captivity had begun. He afterwards spoke of anything that occurred before that, as being in the 'beginning' of the reign (see Compilation, sect. 6). Compare his practice with Zedekiah's reign, which was also broken in two by important changes in the fourth year, as shown in xxvii. 1 and xxviii. 1. The prophecy of vii. 1 and xxvi. 1 was really delivered in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when Nebuchadnezzar was on his first western campaign,

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house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all *ye of Judah*, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD. (3) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways

which included the siege of Jerusalem. This we know, not only from the fact that chs. vii.-ix. belong to one prophetic period, which was interrupted by the arrival of the Chaldeans, (see *The Prophecies*, p. 61), but because ch. vii. belongs to the same period as ch. xxxv., as is indicated by the thoughts which were then occupying the prophet's mind. Comp. xxxv. 13=vii. 2; xxxv. 14, 15=vii. 13, 25; xxxv. 15=vii. 3, 5, 7; xxxv. 17.=vii. 13.

It will be observed also that as Jehoia-kim's influence continued, idolatry became more flagrant. Even at the beginning of Jeremiah's activity under Jehoia-kim, idolatry existed in Jerusalem and other towns (ii. 28; xi. 13); but it was now more generally and openly prevalent, and it extended to the debasing worship of the Queen of Heaven, to the cruel fires of Moloch, and to the introduction of idols into the Temple (vii. 17, 18, 30, 31; xix. 4, 5).

*1-15.—It is vain for the wicked and idolatrous to trust in the Temple.*

1. Observe the special heading, which one would not expect in an unbroken series of prophecies, and which does not elsewhere exist in the roll. The prophecy was intrinsically of special importance, announcing the worthlessness of general services, the coming destruction of temple and city; it had special prominence in being delivered at the Temple, not on the streets as others (comp. ii. 2 with xi. 6); and it nearly cost the prophet his life (ch. xxvi.). It is the only prophecy of the roll which has an historical appendix, viz., ch. xxvi. The heading shows also that this is not an abstract of a number of prophecies, but a specific message.

2. *all ye of Judah*] *all Judah*. Jeremiah often uses *all* to mean a general number. (See note on i. 15.)

*that enter...to worship the Lord*] Wicked and idolatrous though they were, they repaired to the Temple when the Chaldeans drew near. An infidel will fall upon his knees on the ship's deck in a storm. (See ii. 27.)

and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. (4) Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, *are* these. (5) For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; (6) *if* ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt; (7) then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever. (8) Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit. (9) Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; (10) and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? (11) Is this

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4. *The temple of the Lord*] This, they thought, was sacred to Jehovah, and He would defend it against all comers. He had showed His power in the most troublous times before, *e.g.*, 2 Kings xix. 20-37.

5. It is not the want of power on God's part that constitutes the danger, but want of godliness on theirs. 'Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father' (Matt. iii. 9). It is in the spiritual life that the charmed connection exists between God and His people. There could be no clearer sign that spirituality had died out of the nation, than their belief that they might lead ungodly lives and yet claim in the time of trouble that they were God's people.

6. *Shed not innocent blood*] Urijah had been killed by this time (xxvi. 20).

7. Observe how repeatedly captivity is referred to in this section, verses 3, 7, 15. It has only been mentioned once in the previous chapters, *viz.*, at v. 19; but it is now fully in view.

10. *We are delivered*] Many still think that their church observances wipe out their debts with God.

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house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen *it*, saith the LORD. (12) But go ye now unto my place which *was* in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel. (13) And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not; (14) therefore will I do unto *this* house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. (15) And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, *even* the whole seed of Ephraim.

(16) Therefore pray not thou for this people,

11. *den of robbers*] Quoted by our Saviour (Matt. xxi. 13) when driving the profane out of the Temple. People of such character have no place there. In Jeremiah's time they made the Temple a den from which they sallied forth for ungodly purposes. They masked their ungodliness by their Temple observances.

12. *Shiloh*] 1 Sam iv. 4. The people in the time of Hophni and Phinehas similarly thought that the ark would be a charm against their foes. But God allowed it to be taken; the glory departed. Shiloh became a common place. This reasoning must have been a shock to Jeremiah's hearers. The last line of defence was destroyed. The one ground on which they could stand secure was taken from beneath their feet. We shall see when we come to ch. xxvi. how severely they felt against the speaker, as if he was guilty of making them defenceless. Doubtless they felt also to some extent that he was guilty of profanity. Comp. Stephen and his hearers.

15. *seed of Ephraim*] The northern kingdom, whose people were already in captivity.

16-28.—*Neither intercession nor sacrifice will avail while wickedness continues.*

16. This profession of seeking after God, while their hearts

neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee. (17) Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? (18) The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead *their* dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. (19) Do they provoke me to anger? saith the LORD: *do they* not *provoke* themselves to the confusion of their own faces? (20) Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched. (21) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your

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are far from Him, will never make them acceptable. If they would return, they must seek Him with the whole heart. They must break up their fallow ground, and not sow among thorns. For the general argument of the chapter, comp. chs. ii. 27—iii. 5; and iv. 1-4. They must return with a real repentance. At present they are healing the hurt lightly. God would not grant outward deliverance while wickedness continued.

17, 18. They have gone deeper into idolatry as the reign of Jehoiakim has proceeded. We have now reached the fourth year. And they worship the false gods openly in the streets of the capital; men, women, and children take their parts; and the worship includes that of the most impure kind, to the Queen of Heaven. Earlier, their idolatry, although severely rebuked, was less flagrant.

21. Comp. Deut. xii. 27. Burnt offerings were consumed by fire, sacrifices (as denoted by the Heb. word used here) were, some of them, burned, others eaten. But whether burnt offerings or sacrifices, Jeremiah orders that they shall alike be treated as mere flesh; they must be eaten as common food. His command is like that of Isaiah, 'Bring no more vain oblations.'

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sacrifices, and eat flesh. (22) For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: (23) but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. (24) But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels *and* in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward. (25) Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending *them*: (26) yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers. (27) Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou

The people are not reverencing God, and He will not accept offerings at their hand. They are to take them away from His courts and eat them.

22, 23. The ultimate object of God's original teaching was not the establishment of a sacrificial system, but of obedience and a right relation to Himself, that they might walk in His ways, and that it might be well with them. But as they turned the means into an end and disregarded the real end, God would not now regard their observance of the means. A foolish argument has been built upon these verses to prove that the law of sacrifice was not given by Moses, but introduced many centuries later. Such an argument would take away all liberty from the prophet in his manner of writing. No literature was ever constructed on such lines. We might as well argue from xxxi. 34 that there is to be no teaching under the Christian dispensation. Jeremiah's views may be further learned from xvii. 26.

24. *imagination*] *stubbornness*.



shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee. (28) But thou shalt say unto them, This *is* a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD their God, nor receiveth correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.

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(29) Cut off thine hair, *O Jerusalem*, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the LORD hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath. (30) For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. (31) And they have built the high places of Tophet, which

28. *a nation] the nation.*

CHS. VII. 29—VIII. 3.—*Heavy Judgment following  
Grievous Idolatry.*

This prophecy has every appearance of being the one referred to in xx. 1, as provoking the hostility of the chief officer of the Temple. The speech in the Temple on that occasion would be in substance the same as had been delivered in the valley of the son of Hinnom. Comp. the references to Tophet in vii. 31, 32 with those in xix. 5, 6; also vii. 33 with xix. 7; the reference to kings in viii. 1 with xix. 3, 4, 13; the worship of the host of heaven in viii. 2 with xix. 13; the unburied dead bodies in viii. 1, 2 with xix. 11. Remember that Jehoia-  
kim's Roll and the 'Many Like Words' run parallel to each other.

29. *hair]* Heb. *crown*, but here applied to the hair which is to be 'cut off.' The cutting off is in token of mourning; and the casting away shows its hopelessness.

*Jerusalem]* or, *Daughter of My people*. See viii. 11, 19, 22; ix. 1, 7. The verb is fem. sing.

*high places]* *bare heights*, as in iii. 21, a natural place to go to for mourning.

30. Idolatry is introduced into the Temple. This is the first notice of their having proceeded so far, up to this time in Jehoia-  
kim's reign. We are now in his fourth year.

31. This valley ran along the south side of Jerusalem.

*high places]* Not the same as the natural bare heights of

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is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded *them* not, neither came it into my heart. (32) Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but, The valley of slaughter: for they shall bury in Tophet till there be no place. (33) And the carcases of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray *them* away. (34) Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, for the land shall be desolate.

CH. VIII. (1) At that time, saith the LORD, they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of his princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves: (2)

verse 29. The high places were 'built,' as here stated, for purposes of worship.

*burn*] This shows that the children who were made to pass through the fire to Moloch were destroyed. It has been supposed, from Ezek. xvi. 20, 21, that they were first put to death.

32. *Tophet*] The meaning of the name is doubtful. The place was afterwards polluted, and fires were kept burning perpetually to consume the filth of the city, which was cast into it; and hence *Gehenna* (the valley of the son of *Hinnom*) became the name for the place of everlasting fire.

34. Comp. Deut. xxviii. 26. Jeremiah has frequent references to that book.

CH. VIII. 1. The classes named did much to corrupt the people, and this denunciation must have given great offence.

2. The lengthy form of verses 1 and 2 intimates, that since

and they shall spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have sought, and whom they have worshipped: they shall not be gathered, nor be buried; they shall be for dung upon the face of the earth. (3) And death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the LORD of hosts.

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(4) Moreover thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith all classes have combined in making much of these objects of worship, they shall yet have enough and more than enough of them.

### 3. Reference again to captivity.

#### 4-17.—*Persistence in sin manifestly bringing punishment.*

A more subdued and mournful tone pervades all that follows up to the end of ch. ix., after which the prophet's voice was stilled by the presence of the Babylonian army. After he attacked the people for their inconsistency in worshipping Baal and the host of heaven and then coming to put everything easily right by worshipping Jehovah at the Temple—after he took the elders of priests and people down to the valley of the son of Hinnom, and returned to the Temple to continue his message about the valley being made a valley of slaughter (xix. 6), which brought on his imprisonment in the stocks (xx. 2), he fell into a period of dejection (xx. 7). He was like Elijah under the juniper tree, after the trial on Mount Carmel. He appears to have gone home to Anathoth (viii. 14), and mourned the ruin which was so soon to fall upon the land. In the early part of these three chapters (vii.-ix.) there is a conditional offer of deliverance (vii. 5); but none as the chapters proceed. He laments the wickedness from which the people refuse to turn, and the ruin which no one can now avert.

4. *turn away...return*] In the Heb. the same word, simply meaning *turn*, is repeated. *Shall one turn* (from God) *and not turn* (again to God)?

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the LORD; Shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away, and not return? (5) Why *then* is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return. (6) I hearkened and heard, *but* they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle. (7) Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the LORD. (8) How do ye say, We *are* wise, and the law of the LORD *is* with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he *it*; the pen of the scribes *is* in vain. (9) The wise *men* are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom *is* in them? (10) Therefore will I give their wives unto others, *and* their fields to them that shall inherit *them*: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. (11) For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when *there is* no peace. (12)

7. The migratory birds know and observe the ordinance appointed to them; the people do not.

8. *How do ye say?*] *How shall ye say?*

*Lo, etc.] Lo, certainly, the scribes' pen of falsehood hath wrought for falsehood.* They can no longer claim wisdom; while occupying themselves with the law of the Lord, which should have given forth wisdom, they have been really leading the people astray, saying Peace, peace; and now what is the result of it all? The Babylonians are at hand; the wise men themselves have no more to say, they are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken. See v. 31.

10-12. Almost the same as vi. 13-15. Jeremiah often repeats

Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. (13) I will surely consume them, saith the LORD: *there shall be* no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree, and the leaf shall fade; and *the things that* I have given

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favourite sayings. The alterations in the present case show that this is not a later interpolation.

13. *there shall be no grapes*] 'There shall be' is not in the Hebrew, and some prefer to supply 'there are,' meaning that there are no good fruits in the *conduct* of the people, and that that is the reason why they are to be 'consumed.' But Jeremiah has already used the same illustration to indicate the devastation which would be caused by the invaders (v. 17). And the two passages appear to have suggested part of the description of the same devastation in Habakkuk. See note on v. 17.

*shall fade*] Heb. *is withered*; it is doubtful whether this refers to coming judgment or present character.

*the things...from them*] Read, as in margin of R.V., *I have appointed them those that shall pass over them*.

14. Commentators have usually put these words into the mouths of the people, who are supposed to address each other, beginning at the commencement of the 14th verse and going on to the end of the 15th, the middle of the 16th, or the end of the 16th. But the idea of the people's rousing each other to action, or owning that the Lord is punishing them on account of their sin, or that they made a mistake in looking for peace, is foreign to the passage. Jeremiah has been impressing upon them that in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down and that the Lord will utterly consume them (xii. 13); at the end of the passage, in like manner, he assures them that God will send adders which will not be charmed. Between these this supposed utterance of the people would be out of place. Besides, verse 15 occurs at xiv. 19 (an earlier prophecy than the present one) as the prophet's own statement. We take the words, therefore, in verses 14-16 as spoken by Jeremiah. He has been urging this from the beginning (see iv. 5); and now

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them shall pass away from them. (14) Why do we sit still? assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced cities, and let us be silent there; for the LORD our God hath put us to silence, and given us water of gall to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD. (15) We looked for peace, but no good *came*; and for a time of health, and behold trouble! (16) The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan: the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land, and all that is in it; the city, and those that dwell therein. (17) For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which *will* not *be* charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the LORD.

(18) *When* I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart *is* faint in me. (19) Behold the voice of

that the Babylonians are at hand, the sound of their horses being already heard from Dan, he urges that it is high time to go, while at the same time he sorrowfully announces in accordance with all his recent teaching about Jerusalem itself, that even there it will be only to perish. Verse 14 shows that he is himself in the country, in an unfortified city; probably at his native Anathoth, a city of the priests.

*be silent*] Meaning, in death. See Jeremiah's use of the word in xxv. 37; xlix. 26; and l. 30.

*water of gall*] This was a poison.

16. *Dan*] The point at which they entered the land from the north.

CHS. VIII. 18—IX. 1.—*A miserable end, and no further hope.*

The prophet is distressed to hear, as he already in imagination does, the appeal made to God by his people in captivity. The Babylonians are at hand, and all hope is over. There are no helpers to the nation.

18. *When*] Delete.

19. *Is not*] The 'voice' of the exiles.

*Why have*] The response of God.

the cry of the daughter of my people because of them that dwell in a far country: *Is not the LORD* in Zion? *is not her king in her?* Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, *and* with strange vanities? (20) The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved. (21) For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. (22) *Is there* no balm in Gilead? *is there* no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?

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CH. IX. (1) Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

(2) Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they *be* all adulterers,

20. *The harvest*] Commentators who put verse 14 into the mouths of the people put this also. But as above, we think it better to regard Jeremiah as the speaker.

*summer*] Read *fruit-gathering*. Even if a failure in the harvest of grain, there may be a good crop of fruit. But the prophet says that in the welfare of the nation grain-harvest and fruit-harvest are alike past, and there is now nothing more. On the one hand the people might have been changed in heart, and on the other, their day of grace might have been lengthened out by the Babylonians not coming west, or by their marching past to Egypt; but neither of these possibilities is now left.

22. Gilead was famous for its balm (see Gen. xxxvii. 25). Physicians would naturally be found where the medicine was.

CH. IX. 1. *slain*] not healed by the plaister, the balm of Gilead.

2-26.—*Wickedness the cause of all the trouble.*

Before the impending trouble befalls, the prophet states the reason of its coming. He labours to convince the people of

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an assembly of treacherous men. (3) And they bend their tongues *like* their bow *for* lies; but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth: for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD. (4) Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders. (5) And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, *and* weary themselves to commit iniquity. (6) Thine habitation *is* in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD. (7) Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will melt them, and try them; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people? (8) Their tongue *is as* an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: *one* speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his

sin, so that when they are cast into the furnace they may be purified. He begins by deploring the calamity, and then expatiates on their wickedness. God is going to melt and try them. There is nothing else left for Him to do.

3. *their bow for lies*] The bow is the tongue, the arrow is the falsehood; the bending is the treading or pressing with the foot while the string is being fastened on: they keep the tongue ready bent to shoot falsehood.

*truth*] or *faithfulness*. Their strength does not lie in that direction. They possess no weapons or powers for that.

4. *will utterly supplant*] The Hebrew appears clearly to refer to the case of Jacob (Gen. xxvii. 36); will act the part of a Jacob. It is a play upon his name, which means *supplanter*.

7. *melt*] to separate the dross.

*try*] to learn whether they are now made pure.

With punishment so nigh, he no longer confines himself to a statement that the Babylonians will come: he goes on to tell why they are brought.

8. *arrow shot out*] *deadly arrow*.



mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait. (9) Shall I not visit them for these *things*? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? (10) For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are burnt up, so that none can pass through *them*; neither can *men* hear the voice of the cattle; both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled; they are gone. (11) And I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant. (12) *Who is the wise man, that may understand this? and who is he to whom the mouth of the LORD hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the land perisheth and is burnt up like a wilderness, that none passeth through?* (13) And the LORD saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set

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9. This verse, which is repeated from v. 9, is not calling attention to the certainty of the calamity, which is already at hand, but to its being a visitation from God.

10-12. After stating the desolation alike of country and city, the prophet challenges the wise man to explain the reason.

10. *habitations*] *pastures*.

*wilderness*] 'an uninhabited plain country, fit for feeding flocks, not desert, a pasture' (Gesenius).

11. *dragons*] *jackals*.

13-16. The question which in verse 12 he proposed to the wise man is taken up and answered by himself. They have disregarded Jehovah and gone after Baalim; and he repeats the consequence in a plainer and more definite form: they shall be scattered among the nations, and followed with the sword until they are destroyed.

13. *set before them*] As stated, *e.g.*, along with the consequences of its violation, in Deut. xxix. 18.

*voice*] Probably referring to the prophets enforcing the law.

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before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein; (14) but have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them: (15) therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, *even* this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. (16) I will scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known; and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them. (17) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Consider ye, and call for the mourning women, that they may come; and send for cunning *women*, that they may come: (18) and let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters. (19) For a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion, How are we spoiled! we are greatly confounded, because we have forsaken the land, because our dwellings have cast *us* out. (20) Yet hear the word of the LORD, O ye women,

*thercin*] In the law, not the voice, as the Hebrew shows.

14. *imagination*] *stubbornness*.

15. *wormwood...gall*] Intimating destruction and bitterness. Repeated in xxiii. 15. Suggested by Deut. xxix. 18, and occurring also in Amos vi. 12; Lam. iii. 19.

16. *scatter...sword*] Threatened in Lev. xxvi. 33 as a consequence of disregarding the law.

*till I have consumed*] Jeremiah is given to using universals. Comp. his use of the word '*all*,' *passim*.

17-22. An expansion of ix. 1, to impress the awful reality of this calamity, for which he has been giving a reason throughout the chapter.

17. *cunning*] *skilled*. Women skilled in mourning are to this day sent for, to wail.

18, 20. Again, exile and death.

20. *Yet*] read *For*.

and let your ear receive the word of his mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbour lamentation. (21) For death is come up into our windows, *and* is entered into our palaces, to cut off the children from without, *and* the young men from the streets. (22) Speak, Thus saith the LORD, Even the carcasses of men shall fall as dung upon the open field, and as the handful after the harvestman, and none shall gather *them*. (23) Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches: (24) but let him that glorieth glory in this, that

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*women*] It was meet that the women should be associated in the sorrow; they had had their share in the sin (vii. 18).

21. *without...streets*] No children to play outside, or youths to stroll about the streets.

22. *none shall gather*] Comp. Ps. lxxix. 3.

23-26. This is already the lesson to be learned in affliction. They are to be 'melted' and 'tried' (verse 7) for this. This lesson is the 'peaceable fruit of righteousness,' which the chastening will yield to those who are exercised thereby. They have been putting God aside, and looking to human wisdom, power, and riches; if they will now put all these aside and look to God alone, they shall attain the end designed by God's visitation. They must have also a higher conception of God Himself. They thought of Him as one who merely favoured their nation; in their calamity they betook themselves to the Temple, and cried, 'The temple of the Lord,' (vii. 4), and they considered themselves infest of His favour, because they were circumcised. They are now to learn that those are regarded with favour who show the qualities in which He delights, and that circumcision, when treated as a mere form, does not separate them from the other nations.

23. *Wisdom, might, riches* being the things in which godless men generally glory.

24. *understandeth*] is a man of true understanding. This word is wholly distinct from the wisdom of the previous verse, which represents mere skill.

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he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD. (25) Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will punish all *them which are* circumcised with the uncircumcised; (26) Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all *that are* in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all *these* nations *are* uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel *are* uncircumcised in the heart.

CH. X. (1) Hear ye the word which the LORD speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: (2) thus

*knoweth me*] This may be taken as an expansion of 'understandeth.' There can be no real understanding without the knowledge of God.

24. *loving-kindness*] to the needy.

*judgment*] to the oppressed.

*righteousness*] to those with whom one has dealings.

These are the qualities with the want of which Jeremiah always upbraided the people. God delights in them. We cannot know God without being in sympathy with Him.

26. Judah is mixed up with the uncircumcised nations, to show that all shall be punished alike. Jeremiah, even in his day, rose to the teaching of John the Baptist. 'Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father.'

*that are in the utmost corners*] *that have the corners* (of the hair) *polled*. See Lev. xix. 27; Jer. xlix. 32.

CH. X. 1-16.—*Address to the Exiles, probably unspoken and imaginary.*

For the circumstances in which this chapter was written, see The Prophecies, p. 67.

1. *house of Israel*] As represented by Daniel, etc., who are its first-fruits in captivity.

2. *signs of heaven*] Eclipses, etc., which struck them with

saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. (3) For the customs of the people *are* vain: for *one* cutteth a tree out of the forest (the work of the hands of the workman) with the axe. (4) They deck it with silver and with gold: they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. (5) They *are* upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also *is it* in them to do good. (6) Forasmuch as *there is* none like unto thee, O LORD; thou *art* great, and thy name *is* great in might. (7) Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise *men* of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, *there is* none like unto thee. (8) But they are altogether brutish and foolish; the stock *is* a doctrine of vanities. (9) Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz, the work of the workman, and of the hands of the founder: blue and purple *is* their clothing: they *are* all the work of cunning *men*. (10) But the LORD *is* the true God, he *is* the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall

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dismay. The inscriptions prove how much they were taken up with observing the heavens.

3. *vain*] *a breath*, a favourite word with Jeremiah for an idol. See viii. 19; xiv. 22.

4. *move not*] *i.e.*, to prevent it from falling. So helpless are they.

8. *the stock is a doctrine of vanities*] *the instruction*, or, *the doctrine, of vanities* (idols); *it is wood*. Whatever one may be taught regarding the reverence to be paid to idols, the truth is that they are mere wood. See verse 3.

9. However costly, they are mere human workmanship.

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tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation. (11) Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, *even* they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. (12) He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. (13) When he uttereth his voice, *there is* a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures. (14) Every man is brutish in *his* knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image *is* falsehood, and *there is* no breath in them. (15) They *are* vanity, *and* the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish. (16) The portion of Jacob *is* not like them:

11. This verse is in Aramaic. Some have therefore thought it to be a late interpolation. But (1) it is found in all the versions; (2) an interpolator would not be likely to use a different language; (3) the new turn which is given to the thought between the 10th and 12th verses, seems to show that there was from the first an intervening verse making an interruption between them: the 12th reverts to the thought of the true God, but the line appears to be broken; the Hebrew participial 'making the earth by His power,' is hardly a continuation of the future, 'At His wrath the earth shall tremble.' Aramaic, too, it must be remembered, spoken by the Babylonians, was known to the Jews, and therefore it would not be unnatural for Jeremiah, when he was putting words into the mouths of the captives regarding the gods of Babylon, to use language such as would be employed in the country of their exile.

15. *vanity*] Again Jeremiah's favourite word for idols. See verse 3.

*visitation*] also a favourite word of Jeremiah's, to indicate coming with punishment.

for he *is* the former of all *things*; and Israel *is* the rod of his inheritance: The LORD of hosts *is* his name.

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(17) Gather up thy wares out of the land, O

16. *rod*] probably, measuring rod. Jehovah is Jacob's portion, and Israel is the rod of God's inheritance. They are each other's possession (Deut. iv. 19, 20; Ps. lxxiv. 2). Daniel and the other captives in Babylon are therefore neither to have portion in idol worship, nor to allow idols to possess them.

17-22.—*Renewed prophecy of Deportation.*

See The Prophecies, p. 68.

Ch. ix. closed the prophecies up to Nebuchadnezzar's coming; x. 1-16 contained the address to the exiles after Daniel and his brethren were carried off; ch. xi. begins the 'many like words' (xxxvi. 32) added to the roll when it was rewritten; the remainder of this chapter may have formed the conclusion of the roll as it stood originally. The severity of tone which marks this section, after the tenderness of x. 1-16, has to be accounted for in some way. It must have been occasioned by an unworthy spirit shown by ruler or people either before or after the reading of the roll, but after the captivity of Daniel. The holding of a fast (xxxvi. 6, 9) shows humiliation, but the fact that Jeremiah had to go into hiding (xxxvi. 5; comp. xxxvi. 19, 26) proves that the king was not humbled. Greater havoc had yet to come upon the land.

The present threat of captivity shows vehemence of resolution on the prophet's part in consequence of their refusal to learn, and announces that the lesson now to be given is one by which they *shall* learn (verse 18); it makes special reference to the 'shepherds,' including the king in particular (verse 21). This section and the next (verses 23-25) are written at different times: this, when they are obstinate, as shown by the evil spirit of the king; the next, when they are humbled and repentant.

17. *Gather up, etc.] Gather from the ground thy bundle, O inhabitress in the siege.* The inhabitress—daughter of Zion—is the community at large. They will be besieged, and each one will have a mere bundle as he goes forth to captivity. Nebuchadnezzar is away, but he will return.

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inhabitant of the fortress. (18) For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will sling out the inhabitants of the land at this once, and will distress them, that they may find *it so*. (19) Woe is me for my hurt! my wound is grievous: but I said, Truly this *is* a grief, and I must bear it. (20) My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me, and they *are* not: *there is* none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains. (21) For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the LORD: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered. (22) Behold, the noise of the bruit is come, and a great commotion out of the north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, *and* a den of dragons.

18. *find*] The verb is not followed in the Hebrew by an object, and many objects have been suggested. The meaning is, probably, that they may come to know. At present they refuse to learn the lesson God teaches: He will make them learn.

21. *pastors*] i.e., *shepherds*, kings. See ii. 8.  
*are become brutish*] Instead of Josiah the people had Jehoahaz, and now Jehoiakim. The king is now the chief in bringing the nation into trouble with God.

22. *dragons*] *jackals*. See ix. 11. This verse shows that the desolation now intimated has not yet actually taken place. A greater trouble is yet in store than that which has just befallen. Nebuchadnezzar's next deportation will be more serious than the first.

23-25.—*The Prophet pleads in name of the People.*

1. The people, who are humbling themselves and observing a fast (xxxvi. 6, 9), confess that it is in the power of God alone to fix their future, and they pray that He would correct them in judgment and not bring them to nothing. 2. They pray that the heathen such as the Chaldeans, who have no knowledge of



(23) O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps. (24) O LORD, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. (25) Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name: for they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate.

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#### CH. XI. (1) The word that came to Jeremiah from

God or regard for Him, and who have been destroying God's people, may experience God's fury rather than the Jews.

23. *I*] the daughter of Zion, who speaks.

*is not in*] *belongs not to*. Man proposeth, but God disposeth.

*direct*] establish. The people in their wilful disregard of God thought they could shape their own way, but now they have been arrested, and their course under God's punitive hand is turned in a different direction. They now in penitence confess that their ways are in God's hand.

24. *with*] *in*—in judgment, not in thine anger.

*bring me to nothing*] Heb. *make me little*. Chastisement, not fury. If a man submit to his chastisement, he will be improved by it.

25. The Chaldeans are more fit objects of God's fury than the Jews. Comp. Hab. i. 13. This verse shows that we have not yet reached New Testament teaching.

#### CHS. XI. 1—XX. 18.—THE 'MANY LIKE WORDS' (xxxvi. 32).

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For the general argument that these chapters contain the 'many like words' of xxxvi. 32, and form an appendix to the roll which was burned by Jehoiakim, and rewritten, see Introd., p. 61. That in ch. xi. we are carried back to the period of ch. ii., when the same circumstances exist and the same thoughts revolve in the prophet's mind, is manifest by comparing the following passages:—ii. 1, 2=xi. 1, 2, 6, a command to go to Jerusalem; ii. 2, 6, 7=xi. 4, 5, deliverance from Egypt and introduction to a plentiful land; ii. 2=xi. 2, 'espousals,' 'covenant'; ii. 11=xi. 10, change to other gods; ii. 28=xi. 13,

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the LORD, saying, (2) Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak unto the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; (3) and say thou

gods in all the cities; ii. 28, 29=xi. 14, God's refusal to hear; ii. 27, 28=xi. 12, the inability of the gods to hear; ii. 21=xi. 16, Israel in its early days compared to a good fruit-tree planted by God; iii. 1=xi. 15, Israel an unfaithful spouse, rejected by God; ii. 8, 23=xi. 13, 17, Baal named twice in each chapter, although only twice mentioned elsewhere in each set of ten chapters; both chapters are of the nature of an opening address to people who have 'turned back' (xi. 10), as in Jehoia-kim's reign in contrast to that of Josiah.

Observe how frequently matters affecting the prophet personally are introduced in the appendix, which would not have been suitable for the roll, meant as it was for public reading. Observe also how frequently the appendix shows incidents and prophecies having a special reference, in contrast to the roll, which is of general application.

1-17.—*Restatement of beginning of ministry under Jehoia-kim.*

1. *word*] Singular, implying a particular prophecy or impulse of God's Spirit.

2. *this covenant*] which is implied all through the Book of the Law. *This*, because *present* to the prophet's mind as having been found in Josiah's reign and brought prominently before all the people, to be honoured and observed; it is now disregarded under Jehoia-kim.

*words*] Plural, indicating many sayings or utterances, such as are connected with the covenant. The Book of the Law was full of blessings and curses, promises and warnings, commands and exhortations: all these are the 'words' which are to be 'heard.'

*men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem*] The same Divine impulse to go to Jerusalem and take public action in the country that is mentioned in the beginning of ch. ii. Jeremiah's prophetic action was not continuous. He was roused now by the evil spirit which was possessing the nation under Jehoia-kim, and summoned to new activity by the double vision mentioned in ch. i. 11-19.

3. *Israel*] Including men of Judah and Jerusalem. For the

unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; Cursed *be* the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant, (4) which I commanded your fathers in the day *that* I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God: (5) that I may perform the oath which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as *it is* this day. Then answered I, and said, So be it, O LORD. (6) Then the LORD said unto me, Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them. (7) For I earnestly

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proper relation between God and the people, Jeremiah goes back to the time when there was no disruption of the kingdom.

*Cursed be the man that obeyeth not*] See Deut. xxvii. 26; xxix. 1, 9, 13. He fixes upon the expressions in the Book of the Law which set forth the right attitude of the people towards God.

4. *land of Egypt...iron furnace*] See Deut. iv. 20.

5. *flowing with milk and honey*] A phrase often occurring in Ex., Num., Deut.

*So be it*] Heb. *Amen* (as in Deut. xxvii. 15-26). Jeremiah pledges himself to the covenant before going forth to enjoin it upon others.

6. *cities of Judah...streets of Jerusalem*] Probably referring to the same command as in ch. ii. 2. The cities of Judah are not mentioned in ii. 2, but the *discourse* of that chapter refers to the cities also (ii. 28 = xi. 13). It would appear that Jeremiah had for some time been living a quiet life at Anathoth, and was now impelled by the Divine Spirit to go forth to the cities and to Jerusalem, to try whether the people might not be turned from the evil ways on which under Jehoiakim they had entered. His natural disposition was to remain quiet, but he was weary with forbearing and he could not contain (xx. 9). We nowhere learn to how many or to what cities he went.

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protested unto your fathers in the day *that* I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, *even* unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice. (8) Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do; but they did *them* not. (9) And the LORD said unto me, A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (10) They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers. (11) Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them. (12) Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their trouble. (13)

8. *imagination*] *stubbornness*.

*all*] a common word with Jeremiah, not implying absolute universality. See ch. i. 15, note.

9. *conspiracy*] They are together gone astray.

10. *They*] Emphatic, referring to present generation. *went*] *are gone*.

12, 13. Comp. ii. 27, 28. A clear evidence that we are in Jehoiakim's reign.

13. *were*] *are* (ii. 28).—*shameful thing*] Heb. *shame* (referring to the infamous worship of Baal).

*Baal*] That the disgrace of turning away to Baal was much in Jeremiah's mind at this time, is shown by his referring to it twice (verses 13 and 17) in this chapter, and twice in the corresponding chapter (ii. 8, 23), while at only other two

For *according to* the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah; and *according to* the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to *that* shameful thing, *even* altars to burn incense unto Baal. (14) Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear *them* in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble. (15) What hath my beloved to do in mine house, *seeing* she hath wrought lewdness with many, and the holy flesh is passed from thee? when thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest. (16) The LORD called thy name, A green olive tree, fair, *and* of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken. (17) For the LORD of hosts, that planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee, for the evil of the house of Israel, and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves, to provoke me to anger, in offering incense unto Baal.

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(18) And the LORD hath given me knowledge *of it*,

places is it named in the whole of the appendix to the roll, viz., at xii. 16 and xix. 5, and similarly in only other two in the whole of the roll itself, viz., at vii. 9 and ix. 14.

14. See vii. 16, note. Many passages in this chapter recall ch. vii.; Jeremiah often repeats himself. The prophecies of ch. xi. were delivered before those of ch. vii.

15. For the first part of the verse, comp. iii. 1. The text is doubtful.

#### 18-23.—*First experience of opposition.*

On his original call to the prophetic office he was warned not to be afraid (i. 8); on his renewed call to the present ministry at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, the warning was repeated (i. 17-19), with the intimation that his hearers would fight against him. And now he has the first taste of severe opposition in his own village. In the roll (chs. ii.-x.) he introduces nothing personal, but in the appendix (chs. xi.-xx.) he gives many

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and I know *it*: then thou showedst me their doings. (19) But I *was* like a lamb or an ox *that* is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, *saying*, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered. (20) But, O LORD of hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them; for unto thee have I revealed my cause. (21) Therefore thus saith the LORD of the men of Anathoth, that seek thy life, saying, Prophecy not in the name of the LORD, that thou die not by our hand: (22) therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will punish them: the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine: (23) and there shall be no remnant of them: for I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, *even* the year of their visitation.

touches of his own experience. His own people of Anathoth, who do not believe in him, are enraged at his taking upon him to itinerate among the cities of Judah and appear in the streets of Jerusalem with the preachings of chs. ii. and xi., and they conceive to kill him. He was unconscious of giving such offence, and when it became known to him, he felt that he had been living in their house like a pet lamb nourished for the slaughter.

18. *hath given...know*] *gave...knew*.

19. *lamb or an ox*] *pet lamb*.

*the tree with the fruit thereof*] By killing him they would be rid of his preaching.

20. He claims the defence which God had promised (i. 18, 19).

21-23. God assures him of defence.

23. *no remnant*] There were men of Anathoth among the people who returned from Babylon, which shows either that this is one of the sweeping statements so common in Jeremiah which are not to be taken literally, or that the prophecy referred only to the persecutors and not to the whole inhabitants of the town.

CH. XII. (1) Righteous *art* thou, O LORD, when I plead with thee; *yet* let me talk with thee of *thy* judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? *wherefore* are all they happy that deal very treacherously? (2) Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root: they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: thou *art* near in their mouth, and far from their reins. (3) But thou, O LORD, knowest me: thou hast seen me, and tried mine heart toward thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter. (4) How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, for the wickedness of them that dwell there-

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CH. XII.—*Reflections on the foregoing persecution, with Divine teaching on the same.*

The prophet cannot understand the providence of God in allowing those wicked people, who have God in their mouth, but not in their heart, to be at peace, while he who has been tried and proved to be true, is persecuted; and he entreats God to punish them. God replies—(1) regarding the prophet, that he shall have to bear harder things than these; (2) regarding the people, that they shall not prosper, but on the contrary be brought to desolation; (3) that the invading nations shall be judged; that Judah shall be brought back, and the nations likewise, if they learn and practise the ways of God.

The first part of the chapter (1-6), like much of the appendix, was for Jeremiah himself, and was probably never spoken to the people; the rest was in substance spoken in their hearing.

2. *near in their mouth*] Anathoth was a city of priests: its people professed to serve God.

*pull them out*] While Jeremiah has made a great advance towards the new dispensation, he has not yet learned the spirit of the Messiah who was to come.

4. *land mourn...herbs wither*] Comp. iii. 3.

*because they said*] Probably meaning, that they go on disregarding the prophet's warnings, and say, that the evil he forebodes shall not come, and that their future is as secure as his.

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in? the beasts are consumed, and the birds; because they said, He shall not see our last end. (5) If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and *if* in the land of peace, *wherein* thou trustedst, *they wearied thee*, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan? (6) For even thy brethren, and the house of thy father, even they have dealt treacherously with thee; yea, they have called a multitude after thee: believe them not though they speak fair words unto thee. (7) I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage; I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies. (8) Mine heritage is unto me as a lion in the forest; it crieth out against me: therefore have I hated it. (9) Mine heritage *is* unto me *as* a speckled bird; the birds round about *are* against her: come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, come to devour. (10) Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness. (11) They have made it desolate, *and being* desolate it mourneth

5. *swelling*] Referring to the rank growth in which lions and beasts of prey lurk. The meaning apparently is not that the opposition of his brethren is a harder trial than that of ordinary townsmen, but that he would have to meet more powerful foes than those of 'poor Anathoth'; and that when even his brethren had played him false, he might expect many disappointments from strangers. He must therefore gird up his loins (i. 17-19). With this charge to himself compare in turn his charge to Baruch (ch. xlv.).

6. *a multitude*] *aloud or fully*.

7. *mine house*] Poetical: God has left His people.

9. It is a law among birds that they combine against one that is not of their own kind, especially if it is ailing.

10. *pastors*] i.e., *shepherds, kings or princes*: a prophecy of invading kings who would make the land desolate.



unto me; the whole land is made desolate, because no man layeth *it* to heart. (12) The spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness: for the sword of the LORD shall devour from the *one* end of the land even to the *other* end of the land: no flesh shall have peace. (13) They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns: they have put themselves to pain, *but* shall not profit: and they shall be ashamed of your revenues because of the fierce anger of the LORD. (14) Thus saith the LORD against all mine evil neighbours, that touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit; Behold, I will pluck them out of their land, and pluck out the house of Judah from among them. (15) And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out, I

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12. *high places*] *bare heights*. This is the aspect presented by a great part of the country to one looking across it. It implies therefore that the invaders spread through all the land.

13. *shall reap*] *have reaped*. God has blasted their labours: they have got the opposite of what they thought they had worked for. Perhaps it is implied that they have not done their work thoroughly: they have 'sown among thorns.' Comp. iv. 3, which belongs to the same period as this; the same thought was running in the prophet's mind in the two passages.

The whole passage (verses 7-13) shows, in answer to the complaint of xii. 1, 2, that the people are *not* to prosper.

14. *neighbours*] Such as Egypt, Edom, Moab, Ammon, which were often making inroads upon Judah. Jeremiah was a prophet to the nations (i. 5), and he often exercised that function. See, e.g., chs. xxv., xxvii., xlvii.-li. The present passage is still in answer to his complaint (xii. 1, 2). The surrounding nations shall be plucked up as well as Judah. He often preached this. See especially the chapters just named. And Judah, which, in spite of all the idolatry under which it had been corrupted, still represented the cause of God, would be plucked from the nations, and brought back when purified. This was taught even so early as Josiah's day (iii. 14-25).

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will return, and have compassion on them, and will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land. (16) And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, The LORD liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be built in the midst of my people. (17) But if they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the LORD.

CH. XIII. (1) Thus saith the LORD unto me, Go and get thee a linen girdle, and put it upon thy loins, and put it not in water. (2) So I got a girdle, according to the word of the LORD, and put *it* on my loins. (3) And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying, (4) Take the girdle that thou hast got, which *is* upon thy loins, and arise, go to Euphrates,

16. Hope for the heathen, by their receiving from the people of God the true light. Comp. xlvi. 26; xlviii. 47; xlix. 6; xlix. 39. The present passage belongs to the early days of Jehoiakim, and its teaching often reappears in Jeremiah's subsequent prophecy.

*swear by my name...Baal*] Comp. the parallel passage of the same period in the roll (iv. 1, 2).

#### CH. XIII. 1-11.—*The Linen Girdle.*

(See Introd., p. 13.)

1. *linen girdle*] Worn by the priests. Israel holy to the Lord. Jeremiah was a priest.

*not in water*] Probably to indicate, as it became soiled, the moral defilement of the people.

3. *second time*] Under Divine direction he is led one step at a time.

4. *Euphrates*] On the way to Babylon, one came first into contact with the Euphrates at Carchemish. That was probably where he hid the girdle in the rock. The Egyptian army, which he so graphically described shortly afterwards (ch. xlvi.

and hide it there in a hole of the rock. (5) So I went, and hid it by Euphrates, as the LORD commanded me. (6) And it came to pass after many days, that the LORD said unto me, Arise, go to Euphrates, and take the girdle from thence, which I commanded thee to hide there. (7) Then I went to Euphrates, and digged, and took the girdle from the place where I had hid it: and, behold, the girdle was marred, it was profitable for nothing. (8) Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, (9) Thus saith the LORD, After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem. (10) This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing. (11) For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith the LORD; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear.

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1), held Carchemish at this time. While Carchemish was not to be the destination of the Jews, the whole region watered by that river, especially from Carchemish downwards, would, at the distance of Judah, appear as one country. They were to be taken to *the Euphrates valley*.

10. *imagination*] *stubbornness*.

12-14.—*Jars filled with wine*.

Another lesson showing a ruinous end.

12. *Therefore*] Heb. *And*—an additional lesson.

*bottle...bottle*] *jar...jar*, not leathern bottles, but jars of earthenware, which will be broken when dashed against each other.

*they shall say*] He leads on to a deeper meaning.

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(12) Therefore thou shalt speak unto them this word, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Every bottle shall be filled with wine: and they shall say unto thee, Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine? (13) Then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with drunkenness. (14) And I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the LORD: I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them.

(15) Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the

13. *fill...with drunkenness*] *Quem vult perdere, prius dementat.* Their proud contempt of Jeremiah, and disregard of his words, which they encourage in each other, will be their mutual undoing; they will be like men unwise in their judgment, and unsteady in their gait. In their case it is not only pride going before a fall, but by 'conspiracy' (xi. 9) in this evil course they contribute to each other's ruin. They are intoxicated with sin.

15-27.—*An appeal to put away pride and be saved from humiliation.*

He entreats the people to give up their pride, and laments the end which shall come on them if they do not; he beseeches in particular the king and his mother; he appeals to the people of Jerusalem in general, warning them of the dishonour and captivity which they will surely bring upon themselves by their infatuated sin.

15. *Hear ye*] Addressing the people at large; 'kings, priests, prophets, inhabitants of Jerusalem,' (verse 13).

*be not proud*] In contrast to 'hearing and giving ear.' The whole chapter deals more or less with their pride.

*the Lord hath spoken*] These words which they despise are not Jeremiah's: they are from Jehovah.

16. *Give glory*] Give up your pride and hear Him.

LORD hath spoken. (16) Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, *and* make *it* gross darkness. (17) But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for *your* pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive. (18) Say unto the king and to the queen, Humble yourselves, sit down: for your principalities shall

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*dark mountains*] The rocky and stony mountains around Jerusalem, among which Jeremiah has been brought up, supply the imagery of dangerous walking.

17. *is taken*] Although the captivity was still future, in his mind's eye it was already taking place.

18. *king*] Jehoiakim. The whole of this appendix belongs to that part of Jehoiakim's reign which precedes the coming of Nebuchadnezzar in Jehoiakim's fourth year. See note prefixed to ch. xi., and *Introd.* referred to in it.

*queen*] *queen-mother*. Zebidah, the mother of Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiii. 36). It was probably on account of Jehoiakim's proud spirit, which distinguished him at least from Zedekiah, that the people of the land desired to have Jehoahaz for their ruler (2 Kings xxiii. 30). His fondness for display (xxii. 13 ff) he may have inherited from his mother. She would appear to have been a woman of character. Many commentators have supposed Jehoiachin and his mother to be the king and queen-mother intended here, on the ground that when he was taken captive, his mother was taken with him (2 Kings xxiv. 15; Jer. xxix. 2). But there is no reason for thinking that the mothers of all the other kings—Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Zedekiah—were not living in their reigns, and if they encouraged their sons in their disregard of Jehovah's words, the message of this verse would be equally applicable to them. We should keep to the order which runs through all these first twenty chapters. Jehoiakim, as ch. xxii. shows, needed a special lesson on humility.

*Say*] Whether these messages to Jehoiakim were really *spoken to him*, or only to the statesmen or others as if to him,

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come down, *even* the crown of your glory. (19) The cities of the south shall be shut up, and none shall open *them*: Judah shall be carried away captive all of it, it shall be wholly carried away captive. (20) Lift up your eyes, and behold them that come from the north: where *is* the flock *that* was given thee, thy beautiful flock? (21) What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee? for thou hast taught them *to be* captains, *and* as chief over thee; shall not sorrows take thee as a woman in travail? (22) And if thou say in thine heart, Wherefore come these things upon me? For the greatness of thine iniquity are thy skirts discovered, *and* thy heels made bare. (23) Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? *then* may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil. (24) Therefore will I scatter them as the stubble that passeth away by the wind of the wilderness. (25) This *is* thy lot, the portion of thy measures from me, saith the LORD; because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood. (26) Therefore will I discover thy skirts upon thy face, that thy shame may appear. (27) I have seen we do not know. Comp. xvii. 19. Jehoiakim could ill bear reproof (xxvi. 21; xxxvi. 5, note; xxxvi. 19-26).

19. The prophet sees the events as if they had already occurred.

20. *Lift up*] fem. sing., referring to Jerusalem (verse 27) or daughter of Jerusalem. *Your* is plural, showing a collective subject.

*from the north*] The prophet has not yet learned which northern nation.

21. (See R.V. margin). For the sentiment, see ch. ii. 17, 18, 36.

22. *made bare*] *treated with violence*. A contrast to their present pride. See verses 9, 15, 17, 18.

25. *falsehood*] The gods whom they worshipped were no gods.

27. Comp. the parallel passage in the roll, ch. iv. 14.

thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, *and* thine abominations on the hills in the fields. Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? when *shall it* once *be*?

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CH. XIV. (1) The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah concerning the dearth. (2) Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish; they are black unto the ground; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up. (3) And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters: they came to the pits, *and* found no water; they returned with their vessels empty; they were ashamed and confounded, and covered their

CHS. XIV. 1—XV. 9.—*The Droughts.*

The droughts which were referred to in other prophecies of this period (iii. 3, and xii. 4), occupy here a whole chapter (see verses 1-6, 22) and the subject is continued in the chapter that follows. The prophet reads in them the Divine judgment, and he naturally ruminates on the general lessons he has received concerning the coming troubles. He first describes the distressful droughts themselves, and then pleads that God would help, not for the merit of the people, but for His name's sake. But his prayer for the lifting off of the judgment will not be heard, and the people's formal offerings will not be accepted. He then pleads that the prophets are prophesying smooth things, and the answer, which would have its confirming voice for himself, as well as its lesson for prophets and people, is to the effect that the prophets shall fall by sword and famine, and that in city and country alike, the people shall suffer terrible destruction. He again earnestly pleads on behalf of the nation, but the refusal of deliverance and the announcement of determined punishment are repeated with greater emphasis.

1. *dearth*] *droughts*. The country must have been suffering from a series of droughts, and a pious Jew would naturally regard them as a judgment. See Deut. xi. 17.

2. *are black unto the ground*] *sit in black upon the ground*.

*Judah...Jerusalem*] country and city.

3. *little ones*] Or, *inferiors*: nobles and inferiors, high and low.

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heads. (4) Because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the plowmen were ashamed, they covered their heads. (5) Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook *it*, because there was no grass. (6) And the wild asses did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind like dragons; their eyes did fail, because *there was* no grass. (7) O LORD, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou *it* for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee. (8) O the Hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man *that* turneth aside to tarry for a night? (9) Why shouldest thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man *that* cannot save? yet thou, O LORD, *art* in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not. (10) Thus saith the LORD unto this people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet; therefore the LORD doth not accept them: he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. (11) Then said the LORD unto me, Pray not for this people for *their* good. (12) When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an

5. *Yea*] Heb. *For*.

*hind also*] man and beast alike suffering.

6. *high places*] *bare heights*.

*dragons*] *jackals*.

7. He acknowledges that it is simply God's own name that he can plead.

11. These evils are sent from God on account of sin. Prayer will not be heard so long as the sin continues. This was repeated afterwards at vii. 16, the present passage being the earlier. See the same at xv. 1.

12. Comp. vi. 20 and vii. 10, both of which were probably spoken after this time. Indeed, the whole of ch. vii. is to teach



oblation, I will not accept them : but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence. (13) Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD ! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine ; but I will give you assured peace in this place. (14) Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name ; I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them : they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart. (15) Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land ; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed. (16) And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem, because of the famine and the sword ; and they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters : for I will pour their wickedness upon them. (17) Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them ; Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease : for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with

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that sacrifice will have no avail, if the person offering leads a wicked life. The same truth is often taught by the prophets. See, e.g., Isa. i. 11-20.

[*sword, famine, pestilence*] Often conjoined after this, *captivity* being sometimes added.

13. Comp. v. 12.

14. [*prophesy lies*] See a whole roll made up of teachings about the prophets, xxiii. 9-40.

[*sent not, neither commanded, neither spake*] Comp. the phraseology of vii. 22 and xxiii. 21.

18. [*both the prophet, etc.*] Literally, *both prophet and priest go about to a land and know not* : perhaps meaning, go about

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a great breach, with a very grievous blow. (18) If I go forth into the field, then behold the slain with the sword! and if I enter into the city, then behold them that are sick with famine! yea, both the prophet and the priest go about into a land that they know not. (19) Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and *there is* no healing for us? we looked for peace, and *there is* no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble! (20) We acknowledge, O LORD, our wickedness, *and* the iniquity of our fathers; for we have sinned against thee. (21) Do not abhor *us*, for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us. (22) Are there *any* among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? *Art* not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee; for thou hast made all these *things*.

CH. XV. (1) Then said the LORD unto me, Though

as they are led by the conqueror to a land of exile, and know not to what land they go. But many renderings have been suggested.

19. *We looked, etc.*] Repeated in a later prophecy at viii. 15. The plea of verses 7-9 is repeated, viz., Our iniquities testify against us, but do it for Thy name's sake. At ch. xv. 1 it receives a stronger refusal, viz., not that Jeremiah will not be heard, but that even Moses and Samuel would not: the people are impenitent.

20. *We acknowledge*] Jeremiah takes it upon him to say *We*, and there were doubtless some who were penitent with himself, but that was not the condition of the people (xv. 1, 6), or, speaking on their behalf, he would have received a different answer.

22. The droughts have been occupying the prophet's mind all through the chapter. A similar contrast between the power of God and the vanity of idols appears in the roll at ii. 28.

CH. XV. 1. *Then*] Heb. *And*.

Moses and Samuel stood before me, *yet* my mind *could* not *be* toward this people: cast *them* out of my sight, and let them go forth. (2) And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; Such as *are* for death, to death; and such as *are* for the sword, to the sword; and such as *are* for the famine, to the famine; and such as *are* for the captivity, to the captivity. (3) And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the LORD; the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy. (4) And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for *that* which he did in Jerusalem. (5) For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside to ask how thou doest? (6) Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting. (7) And I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land: I will bereave

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*Moses and Samuel*] Comp. Ps. xcix. 6; Ezek. xiv. 14. For instances of effectual intercession by Moses, see Ex. xvii. 11; xxxii. 11; Num. xiv. 13; and by Samuel, 1 Sam. vii. 9; xii. 23. Jeremiah was himself referred to afterwards, 2 Macc. xv. 14.

4. *because of Manasseh*] Jeremiah had already reflected (xiv. 20) that the fathers as well as themselves had been wicked. This remembrance of Manasseh's sin does not imply that if the present generation had been faithful, it would have suffered the threatened troubles on Manasseh's account. But it was Ezekiel who chiefly taught afterwards that each would suffer for his own sin (Ezek. xviii.).

7. *gates of the land*] Probably meaning *outlets of the country*, but some understand *gates* to refer to the cities. See the same phrase in Nahum iii. 13.

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*them* of children, I will destroy my people, *since* they return not from their ways. (8) Their widows are increased to me above the sand of the seas: I have brought upon them against the mother of the young men a spoiler at noon-day; I have caused *him* to fall upon it suddenly, and terrors upon the city. (9) She that hath borne seven languisheth: she hath given up the ghost; her sun is gone down while *it was* yet day; she hath been ashamed and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith the LORD.

(10) Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole

8. *mother of the young men*] Heb. *mother of a young man*. Even she who has a valiant son will not find in him a defence: he shall be slain by the spoiler: husbands and sons are alike destroyed.

*at noon-day*] In his might the spoiler marches against them in the full light of day: he can openly defy all opposition. But some understand *unexpectedly*, as armies rested at noon.

*caused, etc.*] *caused anguish and terrors to fall upon her suddenly*.

9. *She that hath borne seven*] Not even seven sons will avail for her.

*sun gone down while yet day*] Her sons who were her glory are suddenly cut off, and the light of her house is quenched. This is simply a poetical expression, and has nothing to do with a supposed eclipse. It has been suggested that reference may be made to the battle of Megiddo, at which Josiah was slain, and to an eclipse on 30th Sept. 608. But (1) the battle took place in 609, and (2) these chapters have to do with the reign of Jehoiakim.

#### 10-21.—*The Prophet's Complaint.*

Jeremiah laments his evil case in being at strife with all. God in compassion reassures him of support. His enemies will yet appeal to him for help, and his predictions shall surely be accomplished. Still, however, he fears his foes, and appeals to

earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; *yet* every one of them doth curse me. (11) The LORD said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily I will cause the enemy to entreat thee *well* in the time of evil and in the time of affliction. (12) Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel? (13) Thy substance and thy treasures will I give to the spoil without price, and *that* for all thy sins, even in all thy borders. (14) And I will make *thee* to pass with thine enemies into a land *which* thou knowest not: for a fire is kindled in mine anger, *which* shall burn upon you. (15) O LORD, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away

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God, whose cause has been the source of his troubles. He receives reply that if he will return to service and be faithful, God will make it impossible for the enemies to prevail.

10. *lent*] Lending and borrowing being a fruitful cause of strife.

11. *the enemy*] Those who were habitually opposing him at home, such as the priests and false prophets. He was disheartened by their unceasing opposition. Comp. xi. 19 and xviii. 18. See also ch. xxvi. The events of ch. xxvi. may have taken place before this outburst of grief, and given occasion to it.

*entreat well*] *supplicate*.

12. No power of the poor Jewish kingdom shall stand against the overwhelming might of the north.

14. Jeremiah's words, though he is hated and derided for them, will surely stand.

*for a fire is kindled in mine anger*] Again from Deut. (xxxii. 22).

15. *revenge me*] We are still in Old Testament times. Comp. xi. 20; xviii. 21-23; xx. 12. The Psalms also frequently show strong desire for the good of the people, followed by prayer for their punishment.

*in thy long-suffering*] Long-suffering to the people gave them opportunity to work him evil.

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in thy long-suffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke. (16) Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts. (17) I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone, because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation. (18) Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, *which* refuseth to be healed? wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, *and as waters that* fail? (19) Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, *and* thou shalt stand before me; and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them. (20) And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I *am* with thee to save thee, and to deliver thee, saith the LORD. (21) And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

CH. XVI. (1) The word of the LORD came also unto

19. *return*] Return to active and true service, and not give himself up to complaint.

*stand before me*] Be my servant. Comp. 1 Kings xvii. 1, etc.  
*take forth the precious from the vile*] Make no compromise in thy teaching.

20, 21. Comp. i. 18, 19.

CH. XVI. 1-13.—*Jeremiah not to Marry.*

The prophet is not to marry or enter into family life, because the inhabitants are doomed to destruction; and he is not to participate in the sorrows or joys of the people, because God's peace is taken from them.

me, saying, (2) Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place. (3) For thus saith the LORD concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land ; (4) they shall die of grievous deaths ; they shall not be lamented, neither shall they be buried ; *but* they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth : and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine ; and their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. (5) For thus saith the LORD, Enter not into the house of mourning, neither go to lament nor bemoan them : for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the LORD, *even* loving-kindness and mercies. (6) Both the great and the small shall die in this land : they shall not be buried, neither shall *men* lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them : (7) neither shall *men* tear *themselves* for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead ; neither shall *men* give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or for their mother. (8) Thou shalt not also go into the house of feasting, to sit with them to eat and to drink. (9) For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel ; Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride. (10) And it shall come to pass, when

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6. *cut...make bald*] This was forbidden by the law (Lev. xix. 28 ; xxi. 5 ; Deut. xiv. 1). But this law appears to have fallen out of sight : see also xli. 5.

7. *tear themselves*] *break (bread)*. Apparently urging the sorrowing to eat bread, as in 2 Sam. iii. 35 ; xii. 17.

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thou shalt show this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what *is* our iniquity? or what *is* our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God? (11) Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law; (12) and ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me: (13) therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, *neither* ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not show you favour.

(14) Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth,

12. *imagination*] *stubbornness*.

13. *a land*] Heb. *the land*. But the definite article does not necessarily imply that they knew what land; only that this was the land he had always been speaking about of late. See ch. xv. 1, 2, 4, and especially xiv. See passages occurring about this period in the roll, v. 19; vii. 15; viii. 3. As showing that the same ideas are running through that part of the roll as through this chapter, comp. ch. viii. 2 with xvi. 4, and ch. vii. 34 with xvi. 9.

*day and night*] Meaning that they would there have an opportunity to serve them to the full.

#### 14-21.—*The Coming Captivity, with its Lessons.*

The coming captivity shall be complete. God's eyes are upon the people's sin, and they shall all be carried away. The punishment shall be more terrible than the bondage of Egypt, so that when it is past, the memories of Egypt shall be lost in it. God's hand and might shall be manifested not only to the children of Israel who at present refuse to regard Him, but



that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; (15) but, the LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. (16) Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. (17) For mine eyes *are* upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes. (18) And first I will recompense their iniquity and

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even the nations shall feel that their gods are vanity, and that Jehovah alone is to be feared.

14, 15. Comp. xxiii. 7, 8, which may belong to the same period. Had Babylon been named instead of 'the north,' we might have thought this with its mention of return more suitable for later parts of the book. But the return is sometimes spoken of even in the roll, whose prophecies are contemporaneous with those of the appendix. In the back of the prophet's mind there is always a return. See iii. 14; iv. 27; v. 10. And it could only be a short time after this that the announcement of the seventy years was made (xxv. 11 ff), in the fourth year of Jehoia- kim, just before Nebuchadnezzar came. It will be noticed also that in the present passage the object is not to administer consolation but to inspire terror, and therefore the leading feature is not return but captivity. In ch. xxiii. 7, 8, the brightness of the return is pointed out as a consolation after this coming darkness; but here it is the darkness before that brightness. So with other passages which appear in the two classes of prophecies of threatening and cheer. The nations shall afterwards put away their idols, and along with the Jews glorify God alone.

16. Two ideas: (1) fishers with their nets taking the people in the mass; (2) hunters pursuing into secret places individuals who have escaped. All shall be taken and punished.

18. *double*] Indicating the exceeding punishment. Isaiah xl. 2.

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their sin double ; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcases of their detestable and abominable things. (19) O LORD, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and *things* wherein *there is* no profit. (20) Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they *are* no gods? (21) Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might ; and they shall know that my name *is* the LORD.

CH. XVII. (1) The sin of Judah *is* written with a pen of iron, *and* with the point of a diamond : *it is* graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars ; (2) whilst their children

19. *my strength, etc.*] In contrast to the people's disregard, Jeremiah resorted to God, and the nations would yet resort to Him also.

CH. XVII. 1-4.—*The deeply written sin of Judah to be punished with captivity.*

Sin is engrained so deep in the Jewish nature that the children remember the idolatrous customs of their fathers, and fall into them at the very sight of the altars at which their fathers worshipped. They can be cleansed only in one way—by their substance and themselves being taken to a foreign land.

2. *whilst their children remember*] The prophet thought of the nation as it was before Josiah destroyed the objects of idolatry. The present generation remembered and restored them. Josiah's reformation ran from the twelfth to the eighteenth year of his reign : we are now in the third or fourth year of Jehoiakim. It was therefore about seventeen or twenty-three years since those objects were destroyed. Jeremiah often sees the sin of the past running into the present. Comp. xv. 4.

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remember their altars and their groves by the green trees upon the high hills. (3) O my mountain in the field, I will give thy substance *and* all thy treasures to the spoil, *and* thy high places for sin, throughout all thy borders. (4) And thou, even thyself, shalt discontinue from thine heritage that I gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the land which thou knowest not: for ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, *which* shall burn for ever.

(5) Thus saith the LORD, Cursed *be* the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD: (6) for he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land and not inhabited. (7) Blessed *is* the man that trusteth in the LORD, and

*groves*] *Asherim*. See Ex. xxxiv. 13.

*by the green trees*] Heb. *upon*. If *upon* is genuine, it may mean that their memory was based upon the trees—that the trees recalled the altars and the *Asherim*; but *upon* may be an error for *by*. Josiah polluted the 'high places,' and restricted the altar worship to Jerusalem.

3, 4. Comp. xv. 13, 14.

*mountain in the field*] Jerusalem: comp. *rock of the plain* (xxi. 13).

4. *even thyself*] Apparently meaning that the *people themselves* as well as their treasures were to go.

*discontinue*] In Hebrew, the same word as is used in Ex. xxiii. 11 and Deut. xv. 2, to designate the land's rest and the debtor's release in the sabbatical year.

*the land*] See xvi. 13.

5-18.—*God the only trust.*

5, 6. *the heath*] Heb. *a destitute man*. A destitute person might as well look for help in the desert as any one look for it in man.

7, 8. Comp. Ps. i. 3.

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whose hope the LORD is: (8) for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and *that* spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. (9) The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (10) I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, *and* according to the fruit of his doings. (11) *As* the partridge sitteth *on eggs*, and hatcheth *them* not; *so* he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool. (12) A glorious high throne from the beginning *is* the place of our sanctuary. (13) O LORD, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, *and* they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters. (14) Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou *art* my praise. (15) Behold, they say unto me, Where *is*

*see*] rather, *fear*.

9. *desperately wicked*] Translated *incurable* in xv. 18. Although experience tells us that trust in man is vain, yet the deceitful heart leads us to trust in him still.

10, 11. *sitteth, etc.*] As margin, *gathereth young which she hath not brought forth*. God awards rightly, and whatever is got unfairly or against His will, will forsake its possessor, like a young brood that has been hatched by a hen of a different species.

13. *in the earth*] and therefore easily erased.

*fountain*] Comp. ii. 13.

15. Jeremiah had been foretelling the coming of the enemy, and they pointed out that he had not yet come.

*let it come now*] Insert a comma after *come*, and read *now* as meaning, *I pray you*.

the word of the LORD? let it come now. (16) As for me, I have not hastened from *being* a pastor to follow thee: neither have I desired the woeful day; thou knowest: that which came out of my lips was *right* before thee. (17) Be not a terror unto me: thou *art* my hope in the day of evil. (18) Let them be confounded that persecute me, but let not me be confounded; let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed: bring upon them the day of evil, and destroy them with double destruction.

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(19) Thus said the LORD unto me; Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people, whereby the kings of Judah come in, and by the which they

16. *pastor*] i.e., *shepherd*. Usually applied in this book to kings or rulers, but here including any who led the people (ii. 8).

*woeful day*] The day of the invader's coming, to prove the prophet's words true.

*right*] omit.

*before thee*] Jeremiah in prophesying the evil day was doing what God required of him.

17. *Be not a terror*] Comp. i. 17.

18. *double*] Meaning *complete* or *utter*.

#### 19-27.—*The Sabbath day to be hallowed.*

There are many things to help us in determining the time of this prophecy. Its place in the appendix, taken along with the fact that the roll (chs. ii.-x.) and the appendix (chs. xi.-xx.) are both arranged chronologically, and run parallel to each other, shows that the time approaches when the Babylonians are to appear in the land (fourth year of Jehoia-kim). At the same time their approach is not presented in this prophecy as a certainty: it may yet be averted by repentance ('if ye diligently hearken...this city shall remain'). We have not come to the late period of ch. viii. 20 ff. Further, we discover parallelisms which suggest that several passages belong to one and the same period, viz., the present passage, chs. vii., xxvi., and the early part of chs. xxii. and end of xxi. Comp. xvii. 19 with

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go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem ; (20) and say unto them, Hear ye the word of the LORD, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these gates : (21) thus saith the LORD, Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring *it* in by the gates of Jerusalem ; (22) neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work ; but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. (23) But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction. (24) And it shall come to pass,

xxii. 2 ; xvii. 25 with xxii. 4 ; xvii. 27 with xxii. 5, 7, and xxi. 12, 14 ; xxii. 2 with vii. 2 ('that enter by these gates' of king's house or Lord's house) ; xxii. 3 with vii. 5, 6 ; xxii. 4 with vii. 5, 7 ('if ye...then shall') ; see also introductory note to ch. vii.

19. *gate of the children of the people*] We cannot tell what gate. Some have thought a gate leading into the public court of the Temple, as distinguished from a side entrance admitting the priests into their court. They have then taken the children of the people to be the laity. And the thought of the Temple may be supported by verse 26. But the children of the people in ch. xxvi. 23, referring to the same period, are the commonalty. And the carrying of burdens in and out suggests rather the gates leading into and out of the city ; so do 'gates of this city,' and 'gates of Jerusalem.' The references to kings suggest a gate leading into the palace. It is the same in ch. xxii. The 'gate of the children of the people,' may be a gate by which the people were admitted to the palace or its court, a gate by which the people in later days would enter when they came to visit Jeremiah in the court of the guard (xxxii. 7). This would account for both kings and people being addressed.

20. *ye kings*] It is not likely that Jeremiah was allowed to speak directly to Jehoia-kim at this period. See *Intro.*, p. 16.

21. This shows both that the Sabbath was recognised as a Divine ordinance, and that it was habitually disregarded. It was the keystone of a godly life.

if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the LORD, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein; (25) then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall remain for ever. (26) And they shall come from the cities of Judah, and from the places about Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the plain, and from the mountains, and from the south, bringing burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and meat offerings, and incense, and bringing sacrifices of praise, unto the house of the LORD. (27) But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.

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### CH. XVIII. (1) The word which came to Jeremiah

26. See practically the same enumeration repeated in xxxii. 44 and xxxiii. 13. They are suggested by Deut. i. 7.

*the plain*] The Shephelah, a well-marked tract running north and south, and lying between the central mountain ridge and the plain on the sea coast.

*burnt offerings, etc.*] Although Jeremiah had so high a conception of the spiritual, the ceremonial had also its place in his mind.

*south*] Heb. *Negeb*, a tract of country in the south of Judah, known by that name.

### CH. XVIII. 1-17.—*The Potter's House.*

As the potter, after beginning to make a vessel, may, if it is marred, change his mind and make it into another, so God may change His purpose with a nation.

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from the LORD, saying, (2) Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. (3) Then I went down to the potter's house; and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. (4) And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make *it*. (5) Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, (6) O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay *is* in the potter's hand, so *are* ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. (7) *At what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy *it*; (8) if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. (9) And *at what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant *it*; (10) if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them. (11) Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good. (12) And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart. (13) Therefore thus saith the LORD, Ask ye now

In this as in the previous section, the destruction of the State has not become a certainty: it has still the offer of life or death. Nebuchadnezzar, therefore, is not yet in the country.

12. *imagination*] *stubbornness*.



among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing.

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(14) Will *a man* leave the snow of Lebanon *which cometh* from the rock of the field? *or* shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken? (15) Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burnt incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways *from* the ancient paths, to walk in paths, *in* a way not cast up; (16) to make their land desolate, *and* a perpetual hissing: every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head. (17) I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy; I will show them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity.

(18) Then said they, Come and let us devise

14. *Will a man, etc.*] Read as in R.V.

*Shall the snow of Lebanon fail from the rock of the field?*

Even cold snow, which can have no affection, does not part from the rocks of the field, which might be supposed to have no attractive power.

*or shall the cold...forsaken?*] Shall strange (alien) cold running waters be cleared away? The word for *forsaken* is the one used in the 7th verse and elsewhere to mean 'pluck up' as opposed to 'plant.' See the same in Ezek. xix. 12. Even waters which are alien, which do not belong to the place, which are cold and unfeeling, which are running and have no attachment, even they do not cease to retain their connection with a place.

15. *Because*] Connecting either with the 13th or the 14th verse. The strong language of the 14th verse is used, *because* on the contrary God's people have forgotten Him.

*vanity*] Jeremiah's usual word for idols.

18-23.—*The People's Opposition and the Prophet's Prayer.*

This would not be in the hearing of Jeremiah, but would be reported to him by Baruch or some other of his friends.

18. *Then said they*] Heb. *And they said.* The whole of the

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devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet: come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words. (19) Give heed to me, O LORD, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me. (20) Shall evil be recompensed for good? for they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, *and* to turn away thy wrath from them. (21) Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and pour

conversation which led to this plot is not reported here, and possibly none of it. We do not know whether this paragraph may not belong to a later period. It is probable that ch. viii. 8 belongs to the present occasion. The roll and its appendix being of the same period should always be laid side by side. In the present passage we see nothing to suggest the remark of the people about the law perishing from the priest, the counsel from the wise, the word from the prophet. But at viii. 7-9, while Jeremiah acknowledges that they have their scribes and wise men, he denies that they derive benefit from them: they know not the judgment of the Lord, and they have rejected His word. As they confided in the Temple (vii. 4), so they confide in the equipment of priest, wise man, and prophet. In Jeremiah's estimation, no outward equipment can take the place of having a mind right with God. The scribes are mentioned in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 13. (See also Prov. xxv. 1.) The law in charge of priests implies a body of law as existing at that time. The same three classes are enumerated in Ezek. vii. 26, where the *wise* are the *elders*.

Jeremiah's hearers on the one hand refused to give heed to his words by amending their ways (verse 11), and on the other they resolved to report them so as to bring about his death (verse 23). The intended reporting may have been to one or all of the three classes mentioned, or to Jehoia-  
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19. This prayer shows as before (xvii. 18, etc.) that we are not yet in New Testament times.

20. *evil recompensed for good...stood before thee to speak good*] e.g., ch. xiv. 19—xv. 1.

out their *blood* by the force of the sword; and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and *be* widows; and let their men be put to death; *let* their young men *be* slain by the sword in battle. (22) Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them: for they have digged a pit to take me, and hid snares for my feet. (23) Yet, LORD, thou knowest all their counsel against me to slay *me*: forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy sight, but let them be overthrown before thee; deal *thus* with them in the time of thine anger.

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CH. XIX. (1) Thus saith the LORD, Go and get a potter's earthen bottle, and *take* of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests; (2) and go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom, which *is* by the entry of the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee, (3) and say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah,

CH. XIX. 1-13.—*The Potter's Earthen Bottle.*

We are now in a later period. This chapter is more severe than the early part of the eighteenth, which also draws its lesson from the work of the potter. Every utterance is now showing the invasion to be nearer. There is no 'if' in the chapter—no offer of escape, if they shall amend. The day of grace is past (viii. 20), and the spirit of the prophecy as well as its language reminds one of the latter part of ch. vii. See introd. note to chs. vii. 29—viii. 3.

1. *ancients*] Comp. 1 Kings viii. 1, 3; 2 Kings xix. 2; chosen for priority in age or rank.

2. *valley*] On the south side of Jerusalem.

*east gate*] Or, *gate of potsherds*, suggesting a place of potters.

3. *kings*] This shows that when the king was addressed he was not necessarily present. Comp. xvii. 20. Jehoiakim was not in a mood to be preached to by Jeremiah. The plural is

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and inhabitants of Jerusalem ; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle. (4) Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burnt incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents ; (5) they have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire *for* burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake *it*, neither came *it* into my mind : (6) therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter. (7) And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place ; and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives ; and their carcases will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. (8) And I will make this city desolate, and an hissing ; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof. (9) And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons, and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend, in the siege and straitness wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their used, because, with the exception of Josiah, all the kings for some time before this had been profane.

4. *innocents*] innocent people, not children ; *e.g.*, the prophets of ch. ii. 30.

5, 6. See notes on ch. vii. 30 ff.

8. *desolate*] *an astonishment*.

*plagues*] *blows or wounds*.

9. Comp. Deut. xxviii. 53 ; and for its fulfilment, Lam. iv. 10.

lives, shall straiten them. (10) Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee, (11) and shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Even so will I break this people, and this city, as *one* breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again: and they shall bury *them* in Tophet, till *there be* no place to bury. (12) Thus will I do unto this place, saith the LORD, and to the inhabitants thereof, and *even* make this city as Tophet: (13) and the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods.

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(14) Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whither the LORD had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in the court of the LORD'S house, and said to all the people, (15) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God

CHS. XIX. 14—XX. 6.—*Jeremiah and Pashhur.*

This is the first time we have come upon the name of a living person except that of Jeremiah himself, and this contains the first mention of the King of Babylon. We might, therefore, have supposed that we had now passed from the appendix. But the latter part of ch. xx. is manifestly of the same nature as many parts of the appendix, such as xi. 18—xii. 6; xv. 10, 11; xvii. 16-18; xviii. 18-23. This passage, too, is not an historical appendix like many of the later chapters. The narrative is inserted to *introduce* the prophetic teaching; and it both follows naturally what precedes, and naturally introduces what follows. It must be remembered also that as we are almost at the end of the appendix, which corresponds to the end of the roll, the King of Babylon is near at hand.

14. Returning from Topheth, he enters the court of the Temple, in which he finds people from town and country. See note on xxvi. 2.

15. He announces in their hearing judgments similar to those

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of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns, all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words.

CH. XX. (1) Now Pashur the son of Immer the priest, who *was* also chief governor in the house of the LORD, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things. (2) Then Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that *were* in the high gate of Benjamin, which *was* by the house of the LORD. (3) And it came to pass on the morrow, that Pashur brought forth Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then said Jeremiah unto him, The LORD hath not called thy name Pashur, but Magor-missabib. (4) For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I

mentioned to the elders at Topheth. But while to the elders he spoke of judgment on Jerusalem alone, to the mixed company he mentions 'this city and all her towns.'

CH. XX. 1. The expressions, 'priest' and 'chief officer,' refer to Pashhur, not Immer. Immer was the ancestor of the 16th order of the priests (1 Chron. xxiv. 14). This is not the same Pashhur that appears in the next chapter. The present incident is in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, just before Nebuchadnezzar comes for the first time; the other is in the latter part of Zedekiah's reign, say, seventeen years later.

2. *smote*] Whether the forty stripes of Deut. xxv. 3 (2 Cor. xi. 24), we cannot tell.

*the prophet*] The designation may have been added to bring into strong relief the indignity of the proceeding.

*the stocks*] Somewhat corresponding to our pillory. The Hebrew implies that the body was thrown into a twisted condition.

*the house*] This distinguishes a temple gate from a city gate.

3. *Magor-missabib*] Meaning *Fear on every side*, a common expression with Jeremiah. See verse 10; vi. 25; xlv. 5, etc. '*The Lord hath called*,' implying, who also will do it.

will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends: and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold it: and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive into Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword. (5) Moreover, I will deliver all the strength of this city, and all the labours thereof, and all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon. (6) And thou, Pashur, and all that dwell in thine house, shall go into captivity: and thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and shalt be buried there, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied lies.

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(7) O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was

5. *strength*] *riches*.  
*labours*] *gains*.

6. No mention of a violent death for Pashhur. The saddest part of his punishment may have been remorse at witnessing the ruin he had helped to bring upon his country and friends. Like so many of his party, he took it upon him to prophesy smooth things. They would trust in great measure to the fact that the Egyptians, with whom they were in alliance and who had set Jehoiakim on the throne, were in strong force at Carchemish, where they had conquered the Assyrians; and now it might be thought that no enemy 'from the north,' such as Jeremiah was always threatening, could come past them. It was doubtless largely on that account that about this time Jeremiah uttered his prophecy of xlv. 1-12. Pashhur took it upon him, as shown in this verse, to be a prophet as well as a priest, being one of the many false prophets whom Jeremiah had to contend with.

#### 7-18.—*Vexation and Complaint.*

7. *deceived*] *enticed*: the same word as in verse 10. God induced him to take up this prophetic work.

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deceived; thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me. (8) For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. (9) Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name: but *his word* was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not *stay*. (10) For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, *say they*, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, *saying*, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him. (11) But the LORD *is* with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: *their* everlasting confusion shall

*prevailed*] *hast had thy way* (ii. 5). The prophet was conscious of being used by God.

8. *cried*] *announced loudly*. Every utterance he made had to be a complaint: he had to proclaim that violence and spoil were going on in the land.

9. *could not stay*] Heb. simply *cannot*: no word for *stay* in the original. In Hebrew the same word as *prevailed* in verse 7. He resolved not to make mention, but he did not succeed.

10. *Report*] One knot of plotters urges another to report him to the authorities, and promises in its turn to do the same.

11-13. Comp. the original promise in i. 7-10; and its renewal on his taking up the work anew in Jehoiakim's reign (i. 17-19).

12. Comp. xi. 20.

14-18. This passage is evidently separated by an interval of time from the preceding; but, like the other, it proceeds from extreme grief at his failure to get the people to repent, and at their dealing with him as an enemy. It would be foolish to measure the meaning of each clause. A passionate outburst does not use measured language.



never be forgotten. (12) But, O LORD of hosts, that triest the righteous, *and* seest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause. (13) Sing unto the LORD, praise ye the LORD: for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evil-doers. (14) Cursed *be* the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed. (15) Cursed *be* the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man-child is born unto thee, making him very glad. (16) And let that man be as the cities which the LORD overthrew, and repented not: and let him hear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noontide; (17) because he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb *to be* always great *with me*. (18) Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?

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CH. XXI. (1) The word which came unto Jeremiah Roll of Kings  
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CHS. XXI.-XXIII.—*The Roll of the Kings and Prophets.*

On the general subject of the rolls contained in the Book of Jeremiah, see *Compilation*, p. 77. The Roll of the Kings and Prophets would appear to have been originally as at present a combined section, the first part having the heading 'Concerning the house of the King of Judah' (xxi. 11), and the second 'Concerning the Prophets' (xxiii. 9). It would seem at first not to have extended beyond the reign of Jehoiakim. The first part, 'Concerning the house of the King (not kings) of Judah,' appears originally to have reached from xxi. 11—xxii. 19, or xxii. 30.

That which stands now as the first section of the roll (xxi. 1-10) might have been expected to be appended to the original part rather than prefixed to it. It may have got its present place for the sake of introducing the two Pashhurs of xx. 1 and xxi. 1 together; but we do not even know the exigencies of the parchment on which the book was originally written; it may

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from the LORD, when king Zedekiah sent unto him Pashur the son of Melchiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest saying, (2) Enquire, I pray thee, of the LORD for us; for Nebuchadrezzar king of

be, seeing that the combined manuscript of kings and prophets was completed before the message of the first section came, there was no way of adding that section except by putting it at the beginning of the parchment. Had it been put at the end, it would have come after the prophets, and thus been separated from the kings.

CH. XXI. 1-7.—*Zedekiah's Inquiry and Jeremiah's Reply.*

For the circumstances of this inquiry, see ch. xxxvii. 3-10. See also Introd., p. 36.

1. *Pashur the son of Melchiah*] Not the Pashhur of xx. 1. We are now about seventeen years further on; a great deportation has meanwhile taken place in the reign of Jehoiachin, and new men have come to the front—a worse set. This Pashhur must also have been a priest, if the Malchiah from whom he was descended was the Malchiah after whom one of the twenty-four courses was named. But it is apparently the same man who appears in ch. xxxviii., and there, at verse 4, the general company are called 'princes.'

*Zephaniah*] This man, after the capture of the city, was with others taken before Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, and put to death: he was 'the second priest' (lii. 24). At ch. xxxvii. 3 Zephaniah's name is given, but not that of Pashhur. On the other hand, Jehucal, who is omitted here, is mentioned there. We do not know how many there were in the deputation.

2. *Enquire*] At xxxvii. 3, it is 'pray,' and at xxxvii. 7 it is 'inquire.' The king wished Jeremiah to do both.

*according to all his wondrous works*] As in the miraculous deliverance, when at Sennacherib's siege Isaiah was similarly consulted by Hezekiah (2 Kings xix.).

*go up from us*] i.e., give up the siege altogether. They had already temporarily left Jerusalem to encounter the Egyptians (xxxvii. 5). But Zedekiah knew too well that that did not imply that the siege was abandoned, or that the Chaldeans had 'departed' (xxxvii. 9). He therefore still says (xxi. 2) that Nebuchadnezzar 'maketh war against us.'

Babylon maketh war against us; if so be that the LORD will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that he may go up from us. (3) Then said Jeremiah unto them, Thus shall ye say to Zedekiah: (4) Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that *are* in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and *against* the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and I will assemble them into the midst of this city. (5) And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand, and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath. (6) And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence. (7) And afterward, saith the LORD, I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life: and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword; he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy.

(8) And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus

4. *without the walls*] Some connect these words with 'fight,' but it seems more natural to connect them with 'besiege.'

*assemble them*] Some refer 'them' to 'weapons,' but 'Chaldeans' seems more natural. That was the terrible end which Jeremiah foretold, and which actually took place.

5. *outstretched hand...strong arm*] Same phrase with transposed adjectives appears several times in Deut. (iv. 34, etc.). The people are leaning upon the Egyptians, and while God is now being resorted to in their straits, they have no thought of repenting. The only hope therefore for the people lies in their renewal in Babylon, and Jeremiah's counsel is to submit. Submitting, it will be easier for them with Nebuchadnezzar.

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saith the LORD, Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death. (9) He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey. (10) For I have set my face against this city for evil, and not for good, saith the LORD: it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.

8-10.—*The People advised to fall away to the Chaldeans.*

This counsel appears to be the one referred to in xxxviii. 1, and was probably given to the people who came about the prophet in the court of the guard. We must suppose an interval therefore between the 7th and 8th verses, during which he was seized by Irijah and sent by the princes to prison in the house of Jonathan, where he was afterwards consulted personally by the king, and released to the extent of having the range of the court of the guard. We should hardly have expected to find the present passage in a section devoted to the kings. Perhaps it gets a place because it was connected (see xxxviii. 1) with the same men who came on the embassy spoken of in the previous passage (xxi. 1). And by way of completing, it gives another view of the truth which was being infused into the prophet's teaching at this time, that the highest good was to be found in the spiritual and eternal, not in the earthly and temporal. The minds of the people were set upon Jerusalem without God: they must be taken away to Babylon to be with God. In the purpose of God—a purpose of grace for them—Jerusalem was doomed.

8. *people*] Not the same occasion as verse 3.

*set before you, etc.*] Comp. Deut. xi. 26; xxx. 15.

9. This counsel seems unpatriotic, and deserving of the punishment mentioned in xxxviii. 1-6. There are times, however, when the believer who seeks the true welfare of his country, has to pray for the overthrow of his country's army, not for its victory. See a similar counsel given afterwards to Zedekiah (xxxviii. 17).

(11) And touching the house of the king of Judah, Roll of Kings and Prophets. say, Hear ye the word of the LORD ; (12) O house of David, thus saith the LORD ; Execute judgment in the morning, and deliver *him that is* spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, lest my fury go out like fire, and burn that none can quench *it*, because of the evil of your doings. (13) Behold, I *am* against thee, O inhabitant of the valley, *and* rock of the plain, saith

11-14.—*Introductory Counsel to King Jehoiakim.*

This would appear to have been originally the beginning of the Roll of Kings and Prophets (see note prefixed to this chapter).

11. *And touching, etc.*] Read, *And concerning the house of the king of Judah.* These words form the heading of the roll. Comp. 'Concerning the Prophets' (xxiii. 9), 'Concerning Moab' (xlviii. 1), 'Concerning the Children of Ammon' (xlix. 1), etc. The present heading covers not only the short section (xxi. 11-14), but the whole Roll of the Kings as it stood when first compiled, probably chs. xxi. 11—xxiii. 8.

12. *O house of David*] The representative of the house for the time was Jehoiakim. This section, verses 12-14, belongs to the early part of the reign of Jehoiakim, the period preceding the first invasion of Nebuchadnezzar in Jehoiakim's fourth year, a period spoken of in ch. xxvi. 1 as the 'beginning of the reign.' How soon in that period we cannot tell with certainty, but probably this and the following section (xxii. 1-9) belong to the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth year (see prefatory note on ch. xvii. 19-27). Probably not spoken in Jehoiakim's hearing (see *Introd.*, p. 17).

*in the morning*] The usual time for a king or magistrate in the East to sit in judgment.

13. *inhabitant, etc.*] Read, *inhabitant of the valley, rock of the plain.* The feminine is collective, as in the expression 'daughter of my people,' and applies here to the royal house, which dwelt in Zion. The valley of Jehoshaphat, which encompassed Zion on the east, and the valley of Hinnom on the west and south of the city, met at the south-east corner. 'Rock of the plain' describes Zion as it would appear to one who looked across to it from the south or west. (See xxii. 1.)

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the LORD; which say, Who shall come down against us? or who shall enter into our habitations? (14) But I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings, saith the LORD; and I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and it shall devour all things round about it.

CH. XXII. (1) Thus saith the LORD; Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, (2) and say Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in

*which say, Who shall, etc.*] Jehoiakim refused to believe the evil forebodings of Jeremiah in announcing that an enemy would come from the north (see iv. 6).

14. *fruit of your doings*] See the same expression at xvii. 10, confirming the parallelism between this passage and the latter part of ch. xvii., the same thoughts and expressions then running in the prophet's mind.

*her forest*] The forest of the 'inhabitrass.' Forest is taken by some to represent the multitude of houses round about, by others the dignity or glory of Zion (comp. xxii. 6). Not improbably it refers to the vast amount of wood brought at present from Lebanon to enlarge the palace. See xxii. 7, 13, 14, 15, 23. Comp. 1 Kings vii. 2, and see there the description of cedar work in the palace. The prophecy was fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah. As the conflagration of the royal palace would endanger the neighbouring buildings, so the ruin to be brought upon Jehoiakim would endanger all connected with him.

#### CH. XXII. 1-9.—*Warning to Jehoiakim.*

This was spoken about the same time as the preceding. See introd. note on xvii. 19-27.

1. *Go down*] Comp. xxxvi. 12. The king's palace was on the lower ground immediately south of the Temple.

2. *thou, and thy servants, and thy people*] Probably not spoken in the hearing of the king (see Introd., p. 17).

by these gates ; (3) Thus saith the LORD, Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor : and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. (4) For if ye do this thing indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people. (5) But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself, saith the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation. (6) For thus saith the LORD unto the king's house of Judah ; Thou *art* Gilead unto me, *and* the head of Lebanon : *yet* surely I will make thee a wilderness. *and* cities *which* are not inhabited. (7) And I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons ; and they shall cut down thy choice cedars, and cast *them* into the fire. (8) And many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this great city ? (9) Then they shall answer, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the

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3. The evil character of the king had already shown itself in opposition to all these counsels.

4. Comp. xvii. 25, and see note on whole passage there.

5. *house*] The palace which the king was now so unreasonably building, or at least enlarging and adorning at the expense of the country in the time of its distress.

6. *Gilead...Lebanon*] They were admired on account of their richly wooded character.

*wilderness...cities*] The thought of the country is transferred to the house of the king who rules over it.

7. *prepare*] Heb. *sanctify*. Similarly at vi. 4, which probably belongs to same period.

*choice cedars*] Not growing trees, but the timbers of the palace.

8, 9. Comp. Deut. xxix. 24-26.

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LORD their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them.

(10) Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him; *but* weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.

(11) For thus saith the LORD touching Shallum the son of Josiah king of Judah, which reigned instead of Josiah his father, which went forth out of this place, He shall not return thither any more: (12) but he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more.

10-12.—*The Exile of Jehoahaz permanent.*

This is another prophecy bearing upon the kings, and gathered up at a late date in this Roll of the Kings and Prophets. When the evil qualities of Jehoiakim were telling upon the country, those who belonged to the party of Jehoahaz appear from this passage to have hoped that he might be brought back. Possibly when they heard from Jeremiah that an enemy was coming from the north, at God's command, to make desolation, they anticipated the defeat of Pharaoh, and with that the dethronement of Jehoiakim, who was Pharaoh's nominee, and the release and deliverance of Jehoahaz, who was his captive. Jeremiah, however, taught that they were to look for help neither to the Nile nor to the Euphrates (ii. 18, 36); Jehoahaz would never return. We are told (2 Kings xxiii. 32) that Jehoahaz 'did evil in the sight of the Lord,' but the hearts of the more godly party, who followed the policy of Josiah, must have drawn to Jehoahaz rather than to Jehoiakim; and their love is indicated in these verses. See *Introd.*, p. 4, and note on ii. 16.

10. *the dead*] *i.e.*, Josiah, who was succeeded by Jehoahaz, who again was succeeded after only three months by Jehoiakim. The grief for Josiah was therefore still fresh in the early years of Jehoiakim.

*that goeth away*] Or, *that went away*: Heb. *going away*, a participle, like *reigning* in next verse. Past time is indicated by the clauses, *went forth* and *led captive*.

11. *Shallum*] Another name for Jehoahaz.

12. *place*] *i.e.*, in Egypt.



(13) Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; *that* useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work; (14) that saith, I will build me a wide house and large chambers, and cutteth him out windows; and *it is* cieled with cedar, and painted with vermilion. (15) Shalt thou reign, because thou closest *thyself* in cedar? Did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, *and then it was* well with him? (16) He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then *it was* well *with him*: *was* not this to know me? saith the LORD. (17) But thine eyes and thine heart *are* not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do *it*. (18) Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; They shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah lord! or, Ah his

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13-19.—*Denunciation of the selfish, grinding, vain-glorious conduct of Jehoiakim.*

The cruel selfishness of Jehoiakim is shown in his extensive rebuilding of the palace at a time when his diminished kingdom could with difficulty pay the tax exacted by Pharaoh (2 Kings xxiii. 33-35; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3), in his withholding the wages of the workmen, in his shedding innocent blood, in his oppression and violence. At his death, therefore, there will be none to lament him. This was probably not spoken in the king's hearing (see Introd., p. 17).

13. *chambers*] *upper chambers*. So verse 14.

15. *shalt thou reign*] Is this making you a king?  
*closest thyself*] *strivest to excel*. Although placed upon the throne by Pharaoh and paying tribute to him, he would fain rival in pomp the grandest monarchs.

*do judgment and justice*] These, and not pompous palaces, are the proper attributes of kings.

17. *innocent blood*] See xxvi. 20.

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glory! (19) He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

(20) Go up to Lebanon, and cry; and lift up thy

19. This prophecy is given in another form in ch. xxxvi. 30. But in the historical narrative we have no information of the event having taken place. Much more serious matters were in hand when the time arrived for a historical record. Jehoiachin and all the best of the people were carried into captivity, and the historian does not stop to tell what was done with Jehoiakim's body. We do not even know how he came by his death. The fact, however, that this book was compiled after Jehoiakim's death, and that no remark was made about this prophecy or the one at xxxvi. 30, shows that there was nothing to change.

20-30.—*The Fate of Jehoiachin.*

In fixing the date of a prophecy from internal evidence alone, it is easy to fall into error, but this has all the appearance of being spoken in Jehoiachin's reign. (1) It comes after verses 18 and 19, which appear to stand as a fitting close to what is to be said of Jehoiakim, and before xxiii. 1-8, which moralises on the kings at large, and foretells the Righteous King. (2) The prophecy itself suits the circumstances. After Jehoiakim was cut off and dishonoured (xxii. 18, 19), his widow, who would now occupy the position of influence, would be proud that she had yet a son upon the throne who with his wives (2 Kings xxiv. 15) and children (xxii. 28) was to continue the royal line. The princes, too, along with the priests and prophets as well as the common people who took the side of Jehoiakim against that advocated by Jeremiah, would hold that, although Jehoiakim was no more, they had yet a head to honour. Jeremiah teaches on the other hand, that he and his mother and his seed are all to be swept away, and that none of his seed are to rule any more in Judah. If this is the right setting of the prophecy, it must have been spoken very soon after the young king succeeded to the throne, because he only reigned three months and ten days (2 Chron. xxxvi. 9); and if the places in verse 20 are those by which the enemy were to come, they had not yet arrived; and the army, as we know (2 Kings xxiv. 10, 11), did arrive, and were engaged in the siege before Nebuchadnezzar

voice in Bashan, and cry from the passages: for all thy lovers are destroyed. (21) I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; *but* thou saidst, I will not hear: this *hath been* thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice. (22) The wind shall eat up all thy pastors, and thy lovers shall go into captivity: surely then shalt thou be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness. (23) O inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars, how gracious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee,

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appeared on the scene. It will be observed that no part of this prophecy is spoken in the hearing of the young king. Sometimes the 2nd person is used, sometimes the 3rd, showing that while he is apostrophised, he is not present. The words are for the people rather than the king. It is the people Jeremiah cares for. His nation has to be saved if possible.

20. *cry*] Used especially of one in distress, calling for help.

*the passages*] *Abarim*, a range of mountains running along the east side of the Jordan, and visible from all parts of the Holy Land. We sometimes read of them in the southern portion opposite to Jericho, but the present reference is apparently to the northern district. Lebanon, Bashan, Abarim, are the high grounds from which successively the wailers see the Chaldean armies marching south upon Judah and the neighbouring countries.

*lovers*] Neighbouring nations to which, instead of to God, they looked for help; Egypt in particular, and those nations which are mentioned in ch. xxvii. 3, as conspiring with them in the fourth year of Zedekiah. But we are not sure of the political relations at this time: see 2 Kings xxiv. 2.

21. *thee*] The Jewish people, frequently addressed by Jeremiah as a female; often as 'the daughter of my people.'

22. *pastors*] i.e., *shepherds*, kings. The verb and noun are related to each other: *shall depasture* all thy *pastors*.

23. *inhabitant*] Heb. *inhabitress*, referring to the royal house. Not only had the cedars of Lebanon been used by Solomon in the building of the palace, but Jehoiakim had been extending and beautifying it lately with the same (verses 6, 7,

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the pain as of a woman in travail! (24) *As* I live, saith the LORD, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence; (25) and I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand *of them* whose face thou fearest, even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans. (26) And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die. (27) But to the land whereunto they desire to return, thither shall they not return. (28) *Is* this man Coniah a despised broken idol? *is* he a vessel wherein *is* no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? (29) O earth! earth! earth! hear the word of the LORD. (30) Thus saith the LORD Write ye this man childless, a man *that* shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

13-15). Sometimes the nation, sometimes the royal house is addressed.

*gracious*] greatly to be pitied.

24. *Coniah*] Jeconiah or Jehoiachin, all meaning *Jehovah* will establish. His father, and the courtiers and others who followed him, would fain hold the name to be descriptive: Jeremiah here teaches how false are their hopes.

*thee*] Not implying that Jehoiachin heard the words.

26. *mother*] Fulfilled: see ch. xxix. 2; 2 Kings xxiv. 12, 15. We know nothing of her character. It is not she, as some think, who is spoken of in ch. xiii. 18. The queen-mother there is Jehoiakim's mother.

28. *idol*] vessel.

30. *childless*] In the sense that no son of his sat upon the throne. See 'seed' in verse 28, and 1 Chron. iii. 17.

CH. XXIII. (1) Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture ! saith the LORD. (2) Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people, Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them : behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD. (3) And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds ; and they shall be fruitful and increase. (4) And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them ; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD. (5) Behold, the days come, saith the LORD,

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CH. XXIII. 1-8.—*The evil kings and the Righteous King.*

Verses 1-4 may not be of the same prophecy as 5-8, but they appear to belong to the same period. Reflection on the evil shepherds naturally calls up the Good Shepherd by way of contrast ; and the vision of the golden future in verses 3, 4 links on verses 5-8. Verses 5-8, again, appear to be of the same period as ch. xxxiii. 14-18, which came to the prophet when he was in prison in the end of Zedekiah's reign.

1, 2. *pastors*] i.e., *shepherds*, kings especially, but including all that were in authority—those that led the people.

*Woe, etc.*] Jeremiah had now for twenty years or more, during the reigns of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah, witnessed the evil influence of kings in leading the nation away from God, and procuring their banishment. The princes who were about Zedekiah, and who had imprisoned the prophet, were misguiding in a special degree. In the quietude of the prison, he had leisure to reflect upon the whole matter of the shepherds and the flock ; and he asked himself what was to be the end of it all. This prophecy, like many others, may never have been spoken : it may merely have been written for future days.

3, 4. This vision of the golden future belongs to the latter years of Zedekiah, and to the time of imprisonment.

5. This is practically the same as ch. xxxiii. 14-18, but the

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that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. (6) In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely : and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. (7) Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt ; (8) but, the LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from

prophecy gets a different turn, as in ch. xxxiii. the prophet is thinking of the bright future for the State, and here of the change of shepherd. In ch. xxxiii. the State is to be called 'The Lord is our Righteousness': here it is the shepherd. The bright background which occupied Jeremiah's mind through all his prophecies becomes much more glorious at this period, and as the brightness grows upon him, a Righteous King forms in the picture ; but we must guard against giving a definiteness to the figures beyond what they possessed in his own vision. This image of a Coming King, being once formed, took clearer shape as the centuries rolled on ; but that Jeremiah was far from yet having the New Testament conception of things, is shown in his picture of the Renewed Kingdom. See, *e.g.*, the material mingled with the spiritual in ch. xxxi. 31-34 and 38-40. Every presentation of a Messiah to the mind of the Old Testament church made the Church's hope a more firm possession.

*Branch*] Rather, *Sprout*; not an offshoot from the trunk, but that which springs from the root. The prophet does not see one of many shoots, but this sprout, as the only continuation of David's line. David's line has wholly run into this.

*justice*] Same Heb. as *righteousness* of ch. xxxiii. 15.

6. *Judah...Israel*] His dealings are with the whole nation. In ch. xxxiii. 16, Jerusalem takes the place of Israel, but still the whole nation : Jerusalem is the capital.

7, 8, Comp. xvi. 14, 15. A good example of the prophet's frequent use of the same language applied to different circum-

all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land. Roll of Kings and Prophets.

(9) Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake: I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness. (10) For the land is full of adulterers; for because of swearing the land mourneth; the

stances. In the earlier chapter, which belonged to the days of Jehoiakim prior to Nebuchadnezzar's invasion in the fourth year, Jeremiah, while keeping in view the future deliverance, under which God was not to be defeated in His gracious purpose towards His people, pointed sternly to the terrible captivity: in the present passage, delivered when the best of the people are already in exile, he points with exultation to the glorious return.

#### 9-40.—*The Roll of the Prophets.*

Under the heading 'Concerning the prophets' (see notes prefixed to ch. xxi. and at xxi. 11), the prophecies which were spoken concerning the false prophets are gathered together. In reading the earlier portion of them we feel that we are on familiar ground, for we constantly come upon thoughts and phrases we met with in the Roll of Jehoiakim and its appendix (chs. ii.-xx.), both of which belong to the 'beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim,' *i.e.*, the period before Nebuchadnezzar invaded the land in the fourth year. Comp. xxiii. 10=xiv. 2-6; xxiii. 11=xiv. 18; xxiii. 13=ii. 8 and xii. 16; xxiii. 16=xiv. 14; xxiii. 17=xiv. 13; xxiii. 21=xiv. 14. See also ii. 8; iii. 3; v. 12, and many other places. The false prophets had great influence in undoing Jeremiah's work. The very men who should have been spokesmen for God strengthened the hands of evil-doers, and it is not surprising that distinct prophecies are directed against them, and afterwards grouped here in a book by themselves.

#### 9-14.—*The Wicked Character of the False Prophets.*

9. *Mine...because of the prophets]* *Concerning the prophets. Mine.*

10. *adulterers]* Literally; referring to the people (vii. 9) who were countenanced by the priests (verse 14; xxix. 23).

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pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and their force *is* not right. (11) For both prophet and priest are profane: yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD. (12) Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery *ways* in the darkness; they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, *even* the year of their visitation, saith the LORD. (13) And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria; they prophesied in Baal, and caused my people Israel to err. (14) I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies; they strengthen also the hands of evil-doers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah.

(15) Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts con-

*swearing*] Rather, *the curse*, *i.e.*, from God on account of sin.

*land mourneth...dried up*] Comp. xiv. 2-6; iii. 3, showing that the passage, like the early parts of the Roll of Jehoiakim and its appendix, probably belongs to the first four years of Jehoiakim.

11. Comp. v. 31; xiv. 18.

13. Comp. ii. 8; xii. 16.

15-29.—*Punishment awaiting the false prophets who were deceiving the people.*

Jeremiah often found his word rendered null, because when he spoke of judgment, the false prophets spoke of peace, and claimed in doing so to be in God's council, and to have a dream. He had therefore to oppose them. He declared their teaching to be vanity, and not from the Lord: their false appearance was to the reality as straw to the wheat. And a terrible future awaited them, for God who fills heaven and earth was aware of their doings. This prophecy would seem to belong to about the same period as the preceding, as we may infer from the



cerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land. (16) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, *and* not out of the mouth of the LORD. (17) They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you. (18) For who hath stood in the counsel of the LORD, and hath perceived and heard his word? who hath marked his word, and heard *it*? (19) Behold, a whirlwind of the LORD is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it

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parallelisms between it and ch. xiv. See preceding general note. But, indeed, Jeremiah at all periods felt his work to be frustrated by false prophets. See, *e.g.*, ch. xxix., which belongs to Zedekiah's reign.

15. *wormwood...gall*] See note on ix. 15.

16, 17. Comp. xiv. 13, 14.

*make you vain*] They fill you with that which has no substance.

*imagination*] *stubbornness*.

*of their own heart*] It originates in themselves, and does not come from God. It is therefore according to their own evil nature.

18. *who hath*] Implying that none hath, and that the prophets who pretend to the claim know no more of God's counsel than those who listen to them.

*counsel*] *council*, a gathering of those who take counsel with each other, although in this case One alone gives counsel.

*his word*] *my word*. The pronoun being changed, and God being now the speaker.

19. *fall grievously*] *burst*. This is a principle of the Divine government, whatever those false prophets may say.

shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. (20) The anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly. (21) I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. (22) But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings. (23) *Am* I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off? (24) Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD: do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD. (25) I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. (26) How long shall *this* be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, *they are* prophets of the deceit of their own heart; (27) which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal. (28) The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What *is* the chaff to the wheat? saith the

20. *in the latter days*] *i.e.*, at the end of the time to which these things refer, and therefore as Jeremiah holds, when God's judgment shall be felt in the captivity and punishment of the people.

21. Comp. verse 32; also xiv. 14.

23, 24. Do those false prophets think that God does not see them?

28. *chaff*] *straw*, a contrast between the false dreamer and the real prophet. Their pretended dreams have no more of God's word in them than empty straw has of winnowed grain.

LORD. (29) *Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?* Roll of Kings and Prophets.

(30) Therefore, behold, I *am* against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from

29. God's word is not soft and smooth like the utterance of the prophets who say, Peace: it comes down with power upon the hard heart, and breaks it; it is effective.

30-40.—*Denunciation of Prophetic Formalists.*

In Paul's day there were those who made much of the letter that killeth, and neglected the spirit which giveth life. In Jeremiah's time there were prophets who had dreams and visions and oracles, which were things by themselves, and stood apart from the spirit. They pretended to be the recipients and possessors of such things; and they, as well as the priests and people, treated Jeremiah as if he also laid claim to receiving such burdens. He teaches, on the contrary, that when God has a communication to make, He deals with a man's spirit. God speaks in the inwardness of the heart, not to an official class, but to common men; so that people need not go to prophets, but every one may ask his neighbour, What hath the Lord spoken? This officialism, whether in the form of prophetism or sacerdotalism, has always stifled true religion. The present is one of many passages in which Jeremiah anticipates the spirituality of the New Testament. Comp. xxxi. 31.

As Jeremiah was always opposed by the false prophets, this passage would have been appropriate at any period; but it is probable that it belongs to the same general period as the preceding sections, *i.e.*, the first four years of Jehoiakim.

30. *Therefore*] Because the formal prophetic oracles or dreams or visions to which they lay claim do not bring men into relation to God; and because they are to the true Divine teaching 'as the straw to the wheat.'

*that steal my words*] The false prophets have no real acquaintance with God. They learn glibly in their schools certain teachings which may have belonged originally to true prophets, having been received by them from God. But the words have now no life, and the men who use them have no kinship with God. They may even have learned them from

his neighbour. (31) Behold, I *am* against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. (32) Behold, I *am* against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD. (33) And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What *is* the burden of the LORD? thou shalt then say unto them, What burden? I will even forsake you, saith the LORD. (34) And *as for* the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of the LORD, I will even punish that man and his house. (35) Thus shall ye say every one to his neighbour, and every one to his brother, What hath the LORD answered? and, What hath the LORD spoken? (36) And the burden of the LORD shall ye mention no more; for every man's word

fellow-prophets like themselves; in any case, they have not got them as a fresh inspiration from God. What was a living prophecy from God in one age may be used to hinder His work in the next. That is a principle which tells in every age.

31. Their prophetic teaching is a mere matter of the tongue. It does not make the hearers godly or spiritual.

32. They boast that they are possessors of these things, but the effect is that they lead the people, not to God, but from God. Comp. verse 21 and xiv. 14.

33. If they will insist upon the prophetic teaching as being a 'burden,' a thing which is laid upon one from without, instead of being the teaching which comes from within by God's dealing with one's spirit, he is to say, Yes, there *is* a burden: God is to throw them off as a burden of which He is weary.

34. Prophet, priest, and people were alike in making religion unspiritual.

35. See introd. to section.

36. *every man's word*] His talking thus of the Divine

shall be his burden; for ye have perverted the words of the living God, of the LORD of hosts our God. (37) Thus shalt thou say to the prophet, What hath the LORD answered thee? and, What hath the LORD spoken? (38) But since ye say, The burden of the LORD; therefore thus saith the LORD; Because ye say this word, The burden of the LORD, and I have sent unto you, saying, Ye shall not say, The burden of the LORD; (39) therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, *and cast you out of my presence*: (40) and I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

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CH. XXIV. (1) The LORD shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs *were* set before the temple of the

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teaching shall return as a burden, from which he shall suffer at God's hand.

#### CH. XXIV.—*The Baskets of Figs.*

For the circumstances, see *Introd.*, p. 28.

The hope of return from captivity had often appeared in former prophecies, although it was never enough to brighten them, for the Captivity itself was always the dark foreground with which Jeremiah had to threaten his disobedient hearers (see *iii.* 14 ff; *xvi.* 14 ff, etc.). But now that the people are actually in captivity, the brightness of the Return comes into the foreground (as indeed it had done with the Israelites in *ch.* *iii.* 14).

*1. shewed me*] Literally, *caused me to see*. We do not know whether the whole thing was an ecstatic vision, or whether there were actual baskets of figs, from which the prophet under the guidance of God's Spirit read this lesson (see *Deut.* *xxvi.* 2).  
*me*] Showing that this chapter was written or dictated by the prophet himself.

*temple of the Lord*] See note on *xxvi.* 2.

Baskets of Figs,  
bet. 597 and 594.

LORD, after that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon. (2) One basket *had* very good figs, *even* like the figs *that are* first ripe; and the other basket *had* very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad. (3) Then said the LORD unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs; the good figs, very good; and the evil, very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil. (4) Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, (5) Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for *their* good. (6) For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull *them* down; and I will plant them, and not pluck *them* up. (7) And I will give them an heart to know me, that I *am* the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart. (8) And as the evil figs, which cannot

5. *for good*] Connect, not with *sent*, but with *acknowledge* or *regard*, and omit *their*.

6. *For...eyes*] Heb. *And...eye*.

*build...plant, etc.*] Comp. i. 10; xviii. 7-9.

7. *heart to know me, etc.*] This thought grows with the prophet, preparing for the higher spiritual teaching of the New Testament. See xxix. 12, 13; xxxi. 31-34.

8. The character of those who remained had had time to show itself before the vision was given. The princes under Zedekiah were greatly inferior to those under Jehoiakim, bad as many of these were. Comp. chs. xxvi. and xxxvi. on one side with chs. xxxvii. and xxxviii. on the other.

*dwell in...Egypt*] Some appear to have fled to Egypt to

be eaten, they are so evil; surely thus saith the LORD, Baskets of Figs, bet. 597 and 594.  
 So will I give Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this land, and them that dwell in the land of Egypt; (9) and I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for *their* hurt, *to be* a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them. (10) And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers.

CH. XXV. (1) The word that came to Jeremiah Advent of Nebuchadnezzar, fourth year of Jehoiakim, 605.

escape Nebuchadnezzar. The unprincipled party leaned to Egypt all through Jeremiah's time. Jehoahaz, on the other hand, who was set upon the throne to carry out the policy of Josiah, was made prisoner by Pharaoh Necho. See the prophet's later work in Egypt, ch. xlv.

9. Comp. Deut. xxviii. 25, 37.

CH. XXV. 1-38.—*Nebuchadnezzar and his Mission.*

This is the first announcement of Nebuchadnezzar by name, and as the prophecy marks a distinct era, the date is set down with great formality. He is now as good as at the walls, and the captivity is as good as begun; the seventy years' exile is therefore counted from this time—the fourth year of Jehoiakim. The date put at the head of the prophecy is confirmed by internal evidence: Assyria is not mentioned among the nations to be destroyed, showing that it has already fallen; Gaza (verse 20) is still standing, and it was probably destroyed by Pharaoh on his way from the battle of Carchemish (see note on ch. xlvii. 1); the general language of the part of the prophecy relating to Judah reminds us of chs. vii. and xxvi. (comp. xxv. 3, 4 with vii. 13, 25; and xxvi. 5; xxv. 10 with vii. 34); although the time referred to in the present chapter is probably rather later than that of ch. xxvi. The prophecy was not *written* till after Nebuchadnezzar was gone (verses 1 and 9, 'King of Babylon'). See Compilation, sect. 6.

Advent of Nebuchadnezzar, fourth year of Jehoiakim, 605.

concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that *was* the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; (2) the which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, (3) From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day, that *is* the three and twentieth year, the word of the LORD hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened. (4) And the LORD hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending *them*; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear. (5) They said, Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever: (6) and go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; and I

1. *The word that came to Jeremiah*] Apparently either indicating that the prophecy was already in writing before being put into its place here, or marking its notable character.

*all the people*] The people at large.

*first year*] Nebuchadnezzar was acting as general for his father during this first western campaign, and was interrupted in it by hearing of his father's death, when he had to hasten home to secure the throne.

3. *thirteenth*] Comp. i. 2.

*three and twentieth*] *i.e.*, nineteen under Josiah, from thirteenth to thirty-first (both inclusive), and four under Jehoiakim, from first to fourth (both inclusive). For this calculation the time of year is immaterial, because a part of a year is with the Jews counted as a year. We learn from this passage that Jehoiakim's reign began in a different year from that in which Josiah's closed. Otherwise this would have been twenty-second, not twenty-third.



will do you no hurt. (7) Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the LORD; that ye might provoke me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt. (8) Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words, (9) behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. (10) Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. (11) And this whole land shall be a desolation, *and* an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. (12) And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, *that* I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their

Advent of Nebuchadrezzar, fourth year of Jehoiakim, 605.

9. The hope of being left in the land is gone: the day of grace has passed. Similarly, viii. 15, 16, 20, in the latter part of Jehoiakim's Roll, of the same period.

*my servant*] Comp. Isa. xlv. 1.

11. *seventy years*] Probably intended as a round number—a period during which the whole generation shall die off. The time from the deportation of the first band of captives (including Daniel) in the fourth year of Jehoiakim until the Return, was sixty-nine years, according to Jewish mode of reckoning, *i.e.*, from 605 till 537.

12-14. Possibly not in the original prophecy, but both written and inserted late, and when there was no further need to use the cypher 'Sheshach' of xxv. 26 and li. 41. On the other hand, there was no need to hide the real name at xxv. 9 (although, as above, the title 'King of Babylon' was inappropriate when prophecy first given).

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iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. (13) And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, *even* all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. (14) For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands. (15) For thus saith the LORD God of Israel unto me; Take the wine-cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. (16) And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. (17) Then took I the cup at the LORD'S hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the LORD had sent me: (18) *to wit*, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof,

13. *this book*] Not the Book of Jeremiah at large as we now have it, but the Roll of the Nations, including, besides this chapter, the chapters now placed at the end of his writings (chs. xlv.-li.). That roll, however, was enlarged by the addition of later prophecies. And yet that the Roll of the Nations was not part of the present prophecy (although LXX places it after this verse), seems clear from the fact that the mention of all the nations of the present chapter would not have been made in addition to the enlarged statement regarding a number of them, in chs. xlv.-li. The statement about the nations which is contained in the present chapter alone belongs to the present prophecy.

15. It is interesting to observe that Jeremiah foresaw that Nebuchadnezzar, a new man, at the head of a power which had recently been itself subject, was to rule over all the nations.

17. He was given to symbolical teaching. Comp. xxvii. 2 and xxxv. 5. Whether in the present case he took up a cup and made as if presenting it, we do not know.

18. Judah naturally comes first,

to make them a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and a curse; as *it is* this day; (19) Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people; (20) and all the mingled people, and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Azzah, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod, (21) Edom and Moab, and the children of Ammon, (22) and all the kings of Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the isles which *are* beyond the sea, (23) Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all *that are* in the utmost corners, (24) and all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the mingled people that dwell in the desert, (25) and all the kings of Zimri, and all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes, (26) and all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which *are* upon the face of the earth: and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them. (27) Therefore

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*as it is this day*] Either added later, or indicating the late insertion of the whole prophecy. The phrase could not be used of the stroke brought upon the land by Nebuchadnezzar in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. See Compilation, sect. 6.

20. *mingled people*] We might have supposed the Greek mercenaries, who, we know, were employed by the Pharaohs of this time (xlvi. 21), and whose relics are found to this day at Daphnæ (Tahpanhes); but the same phrase in verse 24 seems to point to regular residents of a mixed race.

*Philistines, Ashkelon, Azzah (Gaza)*] See ch. xlvii.

22. *isles*] Coastland in general, in the east of the Mediterranean, whether island or mainland.

23. *are in the utmost corners*] *have the corners* (of their hair) *polled* (ix. 26).

26. *Sheshach*] *Babel*. A disguised name got by inverting the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, making the first last, the second next last, the third the last but two, etc. It would seem that Jeremiah did not think it wise to name Babylon right out

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thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you. (28) And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Ye shall certainly drink. (29) For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts. (30) Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The LORD shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation: he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread *the grapes*, against all the inhabitants of the earth. (31) A noise shall come *even* to the ends of the earth: for the LORD hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them *that are* wicked to the sword, saith the LORD. (32) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. (33) And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from *one* end of the earth even unto the *other* end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground. (34) Howl, ye shepherds, and cry;

at present as marked for doom. Many prophecies were afterwards added regarding Babylon (l.-li.).

30. *upon his habitation*] *against his pasture.*

34, 35, 36. *shepherds*] Kings and those who exercise authority. In the case of the Jewish kings, it may be observed that Jehoiakim had a miserable end, of which, however, we do

and wallow yourselves *in the ashes*, ye principal of the flock: for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel. (35) And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape. (36) A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and an howling of the principal of the flock, *shall be heard*: for the LORD hath spoiled their pasture. (37) And the peaceable habitations are cut down because of the fierce anger of the LORD. (38) He hath forsaken his covert, as the lion: for their land is desolate because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of his fierce anger.

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CH. XXVI. (1) In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this

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not know the details (xxii. 18; xxxvi. 30); Jehoiachin was taken to Babylon, Zedekiah also, after his eyes were put out.

37. *habitations*] *pastures*.  
*cut down*] *put to silence*.

#### CH. XXVI.—*Jeremiah's Narrow Escape from Death.*

For the time and circumstances of this chapter, see introd. note on ch. vii. This is the first piece of simple narrative since the opening chapter. There are other narratives before this, but they are inserted to introduce or explain the prophecies which constitute the chief part of their chapters. This is an historical appendix to ch. vii., and should be read in connection with it. 'This city' and 'this land' (verse 20) seem to point to Jerusalem as the place of writing. The name Nebuchadnezzar does not occur in the chapter, probably because he was not yet named in the prophecy, but it does occur in the next three chapters, and is spelt Nebuchadnezzar, not -rezzar, as in all the rest of the book except xxxiv. 1; xxxix. 5 (?). See Compilation, sect. 6.

1. *In the beginning*] *i.e.*, in the period before the Chaldean invasion of the fourth year, which made a new era in the reign. This would show that the chapter was inserted or the heading

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word from the LORD, saying, (2) Thus saith the LORD ; Stand in the court of the LORD'S house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD'S house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them ; diminish not a word : (3) if so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings. (4) And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD ; If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you, (5) to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending *them*, but ye have not hearkened ; (6) then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth. (7) So

written either very late in the reign or after the reign was over. Everything before the invasion would then appear to be in the 'beginning of the reign.' As a matter of fact, the event occurred not long before the invasion, say, in the fourth year itself, or at the latest in the third.

*this word*] Not that we have the whole 'word' here. This is only the gist of it. For a fuller account, see ch. vii.

2. *court of the Lord's house*] Comp. vii. 2. This is probably the most public appearance Jeremiah has yet made in Jehoiakim's reign. In the opening of the prophetic campaign in Jehoiakim's time (ii. 2 ; xi. 6) he was simply to speak to the people in the 'cities of Judah' and 'streets of Jerusalem' ; and this more public appearance in the Temple, as well as the matter of the prophecy, may have stirred up the deeper opposition. After he has once begun to appear in the Temple, we find him often there. See after this, xxxv. 2 ; xix. 14 ; xxxvi. 10 (not personally) ; xxiv. 1 ; probably xxvii. 16 ; xxviii. 1 ; xxxviii. 14.

3. There is still space for repentance, showing that this was before ch. xxv.

6. See note on vii. 12.

7. The priests and prophets who have neglected religion now pose as its defenders when the really religious man shows the

the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD. (8) Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded *him* to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets, and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. (9) Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the LORD. (10) When the princes of Judah heard these things, then they came up from the king's house unto the house of the LORD, and sat down in the entry of the new gate of the LORD'S *house*. (11) Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man *is* worthy to die; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears. (12) Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. (13) Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced

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vanity of their forms, and himself promotes godliness in a true spirit. Our Saviour Himself, Stephen, and the apostles were all opposed similarly, and so the godly men of all times.

8. *Thou shalt surely die*] Comp. Deut. xviii. 20. The false prophets had often enough prophesied what God had not commanded, and had not had this judgment of Deuteronomy brought against them. But it was dug up when needed against a true prophet, and the people of the time had seen it applied in the case of Urijah (verse 20). Jeremiah's danger was a very real one. Hence the necessity of the injunction: 'Keep not back a word' (verse 2).

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against you. (14) As for me, behold, I *am* in your hand: do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you. (15) But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the LORD hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears. (16) Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets; This man *is* not worthy to die: for he hath spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God. (17) Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spake to all the assembly of the people, saying, (18) Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Zion shall be plowed *like* a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest. (19) Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? did he not fear the LORD, and besought the LORD, and the LORD repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus might we procure great evil against our souls. (20) And there

16. While the majority of the princes of Jehoiakim's time may have been bad men, there were noble exceptions, *e.g.*, those of the house of Shaphan. And we must not forget that the godly party were so numerous three or four years before this that they could put Jehoiakim upon the throne, thinking him more likely than Jehoiakim to continue Josiah's policy.

*all the people*] In verse 8 they were moved by the prophets and priests, now by the princes.

17. The elders were probably better acquainted with the prophecies than the princes.

18. *Micah*] See Micah iii. 12.

20. It is not at first clear whether Urijah's persecution and death were before or after this attack upon Jeremiah. But the



was also a man that prophesied in the name of the LORD, Urijah the son of Shemaiah of Kirjath-jearim, <sup>Jeremiah's Narrow Escape, (?) 605.</sup> who prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah: (21) and when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men, and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death: but when Urijah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and went into Egypt; (22) and Jehoiakim the king sent men into Egypt, *namely*, Elnathan the son of Achbor, and *certain* men with him into Egypt. (23) And they fetched forth Urijah out of Egypt, and brought him unto Jehoiakim the king; who slew him with the sword, and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people. (24) Nevertheless the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

fact that shortly after this prophecy of Jeremiah, Nebuchadnezzar came and transferred the sovereignty to Babylon, making it impossible for Jehoiakim to send to Egypt, points to the earlier date. Nor could it well be after Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, because if the narrative went on to so late a date, the writer would hardly return from it to Jeremiah's case to tell this about Ahikam. We gather, then, that as in a later age, lesser men were persecuted while no one dared lay hand on apostles (Acts viii. 1), so now Urijah was killed, while Jeremiah escaped. This fact made Jeremiah's conduct all the more bold, and we should not forget it when we find that afterwards, in consequence of the king's fury, he went into hiding (xxxvi. 5, 26).

*this city...this land*] See note at beginning of chapter.

22. *Elnathan*] See note on xxxvi. 25.

24. *Ahikam*] See 2 Kings xxii. 12. For another son of Shaphan, see xxxvi. 10; for a third, xxix. 3; and for a son of Ahikam, xl. 6; all of them befriending Jeremiah.

CH. XXVII. (1) In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this

CH. XXVII.—*Rebellious Conspiracy among the Nations.*

Between chs. xxvi. and xxvii. there is an interval of eleven years, from the third or fourth of Jehoiakim to the fourth of Zedekiah (see xxviii. 1). The name Jehoiakim in xxvii. 1 is evidently an error for Zedekiah. This is clear, not only from xxviii. 1, but from xxvii. 20, and the whole position presented in the chapter. The smaller nations around Judah (*i.e.*, not including the great power of Egypt) have conspired to rebel, making Jerusalem the headquarters of the plot. Jeremiah, true to the instructions he received eleven years before, as told in ch. xxv., presents himself before the ambassadors to show the futility of their purpose. He speaks also in the name of 'the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel,' in opposition to the soothsayers and other representatives of their false worship. These had apparently been urging the ambassadors who were sent to Judah. Then he went to Zedekiah, who was being influenced by the foreigners as well as by their sympathisers at Jerusalem. Safety consisted in submitting to God, who had set Nebuchadnezzar over these nations meanwhile.

This chapter and the following appear to have been inserted (not originally written) at the same time as ch. xxvi. Chs. xxvii. and xxviii. at least were written by Jeremiah himself, or at his dictation (see 'me' in xxvii. 2, xii. 16, and xxviii. 1). And they were either written after Zedekiah's reign was over, or so late in the reign that the fourth year appeared from the writer's standpoint to be in 'the beginning' of the reign (xxvii. 1 and xxviii. 1). The 20th verse looks not like part of the words of the original prophecy, but an historical and explanatory expansion put in at the time of writing; and if so, it also points to a late date of writing, say, toward the end of Zedekiah's reign, or even after it closed. The present occasion, indeed, seems to have formed a crisis in the reign, breaking it into two parts. (We do not know whether it was to avoid the appearance of disloyalty that Zedekiah went to Babylon to pay homage this year. See ch. li. 59.) Or, possibly, the crisis was in the prophet's own position. He does not appear to have succeeded. Whether by provoking the king and prophets he had to hide as in the time of Jehoiakim (xxxvi. 5, 26), we cannot tell; but he

word unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, (2) Thus saith the LORD to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck, (3) and send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah; (4) and command them to say unto their masters, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say unto your masters; (5) I have made the earth, the man and the beast that *are* upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. (6) And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the

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disappears from our sight from this fourth until the ninth year of Zedekiah, and by the latter year Nebuchadnezzar has had to bring an army to subdue and punish the rebels. Apparently at the end of the period at least, Jeremiah was moving about freely among the people (xxxvii. 3, 4). See Compilation, sect. 7. See Sept. Version, p. 87, where the Hebrew and Greek versions of this chapter are compared, especially of verse 7.

1. *beginning...Jehoiakim*] See foregoing note.

2. *bonds and yokes*] Like cattle controlled by the will of another, they are to be subject to Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah is accustomed to symbolical teaching. See i. 11, 13; xiii. 1; xviii. 1; xix. 1; xxiv. 1, etc. He seems to have actually gone to the ambassadors with these symbols.

3. *Tyrus*] Much space is devoted in the Book of Ezekiel to Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Tyre.

5. Jehovah is not a mere local divinity. He is Maker and Ruler of all.

6. Jeremiah had received the instruction in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, before Nebuchadnezzar made conquest of Judah (ch. xxv.), and long before the time of the present chapter.

Observe the spelling, Nebuchadnezzar. See introd. note to ch. xxvi.

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king of Babylon, my servant ; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. (7) And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come ; and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. (8) And it shall come to pass, *that* the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. (9) Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon : (10) for they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land ; and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish. (11) But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the LORD ; and they shall till it, and dwell therein. (12) I spake also to Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying,

*my servant*] Within the universal dominion of the God of Israel (xxv. 9).

7. Another way of stating the seventy years of chs. xxv. 11 and xxix. 10, both of which chapters precede this chronologically.

8. *sword, famine, pestilence*] He is now used to the conjunction of these. See xxiv. 10 ; xxix. 17.

9. Heathen guides.

10. *that I should drive you out*] Those nations as well as Judah are subject to God.

12. Observe the access he has to King Zedekiah. It is doubtful whether he ever personally addressed Jehoikim (see Introd., p. 17). On the other hand, he had many interviews

Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live. Conspiracy among the Nations, 594.

(13) Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the LORD hath spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? (14) Therefore hearken not unto the words of the prophets that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you. (15) For I have not sent them, saith the LORD, yet they prophesy a lie in my name; that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you. (16) Also I spake to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Harken not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you, saying, Behold, the vessels of the LORD'S house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you. (17) Harken not unto them; serve the king of Babylon, and live: wherefore should this city be laid waste? (18) But if they *be* prophets, and if the word of the LORD be with them, let them now make intercession to the LORD of hosts, that the vessels which are left in the house of the LORD, and *in* the house of the king of Judah, and at Jerusalem, go not to Babylon. (19) For thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the

with Zedekiah. Jehoahaz and Zedekiah were the sons of Hamutal: Jehoiakim was the son of Zebidah, whose proud spirit is shown in ch. xiii. 18.

16. *priests*] Probably spoken in the Temple. See xxviii. 1, and note on xxvi. 2.

19. These were probably left because they were heavy and inconvenient to carry; and it was expedient to leave something of the Temple apparatus when the nation was still continued at Jerusalem. At the destruction of Jerusalem they were broken up and taken to Babylon (lii. 17).

Conspiracy  
among the  
Nations, 594.

pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning the bases, and concerning the residue of the vessels that remain in this city, (20) which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took not, when he carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem; (21) yea, thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain *in* the house of the LORD, and *in* the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem; (22) they shall be carried to Babylon, and there shall they be until the day that I visit them, saith the LORD; then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.

Hananiah, 504.

CH. XXVIII. (1) And it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king

20. See introd. note at beginning of chapter.

22. *Bring them up, and restore them*] This can apply only to 'the residue of the vessels,' not to the pillars, etc. It is common with Jeremiah to use words in the general which can apply only to the particular.

CH. XXVIII. 1-17.—*Encounter with the Prophet Hananiah.*

This was in the same year as ch. xxvii. It was probably immediately after, for Jeremiah was still wearing the yoke which he had taken to at this time for his teaching (xxvii. 2, 11, 12; xxviii. 10). He had spoken to the king, urging him not to follow the counsel of the prophets (xxvii. 14); he had addressed the priests similarly (xxvii. 16). And now one of the prophets who has been exasperated, breaks the hateful yoke on Jeremiah's neck. Those false prophets were naturally Jeremiah's worst foes. The priests bore rule by their means (v. 31). See note introd. to ch. xxvii.

1. *Gibeon*] A city of the priests in Benjamin (Josh. xxi. 17). It is therefore probable that Hananiah like Jeremiah was a priest as well as a prophet.

*me*] See introd. note to ch. xxvii.

*house of the Lord*] See note on xxvi. 2.

of Judah, in the fourth year, *and* in the fifth month, *Hananiah*, 594. *that* Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet, which *was* of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the LORD, in the presence of the priests, and of all the people, saying, (2) Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. (3) Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the LORD'S house that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon: (4) and I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the LORD: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. (5) Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the LORD, (6) even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD'S house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place. (7) Nevertheless hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people; (8) the prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. (9) The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word

3. Comp. xxvii. 16.

4. This was not said in the presence of Zedekiah: comp. xxvii. 14, 15. It is probable that Jeconiah being the son of Jehoiakim, was more popular with the present influential people than Zedekiah: see note on xxvii. 12.

6. Comp. xxv. 11; xxvii. 12.

9. Comp. Deut. xviii. 21, 22.

Hananiah, 594.

of the prophet shall come to pass, *then* shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him. (10) Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it. (11) And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way. (12) Then the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah *the prophet*, (after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah,) saying, (13) Go and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron. (14) For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and I have given him the beasts of the field also. (15) Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. (16) Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the LORD. (17) So Hananiah the prophet died the same year, in the seventh month.

11. *went his way*] He had nothing from God, and he did not answer from himself.

12. *Then*] Heb. *And*. It is not stated whether this was immediately after, nor do we know where.

16. *die*] Comp. Deut. xviii. 20.

17. *seventh month*] Two months after: see verse 1.



CH. XXIX. (1) Now these *are* the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon, (2) (after that Jeconiah the king, and the queen, and the eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the carpenters, and the smiths, were departed from Jerusalem;) (3) by the hand of Elasa

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the *same year*] Showing that the chapter was not written immediately after the encounter with Hananiah. The language would imply long afterwards. See Compilation.

CH. XXIX. 1-32.—*Correspondence with the Captives in Babylon.*

For the circumstances, see *Introd.*, p. 31.

1. *words*] i.e., prophecies, *word* being used in the same sense as in xxv. 1; xxvi. 1; xxvii. 1; xxx. 1, etc.

*letter*] The word so translated is used in many senses, and has usually been rendered *letter* here. It may rather mean *writing* in this place. Jeremiah sent a considerable amount of *writing* to Babylon, and three portions of the correspondence appear to be recalled in this chapter. See at verses 21 and 24.

*Nebuchadnezzar*] Same spelling as throughout chs. xxvii. and xxviii., and at xxix. 3, but not as at verse 21, suggesting that the introduction which was written at the time of the insertion of these letters was composed at the same time as chs. xxvii. and xxviii., but that the letters themselves had already been in existence, being composed at another time.

2. *after that*] But not immediately after. See *Introd.*, p. 29.

*Jeconiah*] *Jehoiachin*.

*queen*] *queen-mother*, Nehushta, the wife of Jehoiakim; not, as generally supposed, the queen-mother of ch. xiii. 18.

Observe the different enumeration of this verse from that given at ch. xxiv. 1, showing that the two passages were composed at different times. The book was not originally a running composition.

3. *Elasa the son of Shaphan*] Probably the same Shaphan

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son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, (whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent unto Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,) saying, (4) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon; (5) build ye houses, and dwell *in them*; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; (6) take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished. (7) And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. (8) For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that *be* in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. (9) For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the

as at xxvi. 24, where see note. If so, we can see how appropriately a message like this should be sent by this man.

*Gemariah the son of Hilkiah*] Probably the same Hilkiah as at 2 Kings xxii. 4, and if so, we can see a like appropriateness here. Their principles accorded with those of Josiah rather than those of his sons.

*Nebuchadnezzar*] See note at verse 1.

5. The exhortation is in a different strain from what they had heard from Jeremiah in Jerusalem, as shown in the first twenty chapters. They are the good figs (xxiv. 5), and are of the proper spirit to hear a gracious and, at the same time, grave exhortation. They need also to be strengthened and warned against the false prophets who are among them.

8. *prophets...diviners*] These troublers continued long among them, as we see not only from this chapter, but throughout the Book of Ezekiel. (Ezekiel was of this captivity.)

LORD. (10) For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place. (11) For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. (12) Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. (13) And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. (14) And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive. (15) Because ye have said, The LORD hath raised us up prophets in Babylon; (16) *know* that thus saith the LORD of the king that sitteth upon the throne of David, and of all the people that dwelleth in this city, *and* of your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity; (17) thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will send upon them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil. (18) And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and

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10. *seventy years*] See xxv. 11; xxvii. 6, 12; xxviii. 14. The seventy years counted from the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when Daniel and the other first-fruits of the captivity were taken away, *i.e.*, in 605 B.C. The exact time according to Jewish counting was sixty-nine years, 605-537.

11. *an expected end*] Heb. *a future* (*i.e.*, different from the present time) *and hope*.

12. Comp. Deut. iv. 29, 30; xxx. 1 ff. This spiritual reformation had become possible in captivity alone.

16 ff. Comp. xxiv. 8 ff.

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with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them; (19) because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending *them*; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD. (20) Hear ye therefore the word of the LORD, all ye of the captivity, whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon: (21) thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, of Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and of Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you in my name; Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he shall slay them before your eyes; (22) and of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Judah which *are* in Babylon, saying, The LORD make thee like Zedekiah, and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire; (23) because

20. *Hear ye, etc.*] In opposition to those of preceding verse, who do not hear.

21. We have not the means of deciding whether this is a continuation of the same letter or the beginning of a new one. Probably the latter. Its opening words are partly the same as verse 4 and partly as verse 24. Verse 24 evidently introduces a later matter, which prepares us for a new matter here also; and the expression 'words' of verse 1 points to more communications than one; the nature of the communication in verses 21-24 is at least as much akin to 24-32 as to 4-20.

*Ahab...Kolaiah*] These are unknown to us.

*Nebuchadrezzar*] The spelling suggests that this prophecy was already in writing before it was inserted here. See note on verse 1.

22. *curse...roasted*] A play upon the words, such as is common with Jeremiah: *Kolaiah*, *Kelalah* (curse), *Kalah* (roasted). For the punishment, comp. Dan. iii. 11.

they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded them; even I know, and *am* a witness, saith the LORD. (24) *Thus* shalt thou also speak to Shemaiah the Nehelamite, saying, (25) Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, Because thou hast sent letters in thy name unto all the people that *are* at Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the priests, saying, (26) The LORD hath made thee priest in the stead of Jehoiada the priest, that ye should be officers in the house of the LORD, for every man *that is* mad, and maketh himself a prophet that thou shouldest put him in prison, and in the stocks. (27) Now therefore why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a prophet to you? (28) For therefore he sent unto us *in* Babylon, saying, This *captivity is* long: build ye houses, and dwell *in them*; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them. (29) And Zephaniah the

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24. This passage, down to the end of chapter, is one of the 'words' referred to in verse 1. In it we have not the very letter itself, but the gist of it, mixed up with explanatory narrative composed at the time of its insertion here.

*Shemaiah*] We do not know him further, and we do not know the meaning of Nehelamite.

25. *Zephaniah*] See note on xxi. 1.

26. *Jehoiada*] We do not know any Jehoiada of this time, and therefore cannot tell whether this may be a temple officer who came between Pashhur of xx. 1 and Zephaniah, or whether it was the well-known Jehoiada of 2 Kings xi. If the latter, it would mean that Zephaniah occupied a place in which it was incumbent upon him to exercise the same authority in these matters as Jehoiada did in his day.

*prison*] *stocks*. See note on xx. 2.

*stocks*] *shackles*. Perhaps *neck-iron*.

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bet. 597 and 594.

priest read this letter in the ears of Jeremiah the prophet. (30) Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, (31) Send to all them of the captivity, saying, Thus saith the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite; Because that Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, and he caused you to trust in a lie; (32) therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: he shall not have a man to dwell among this people; neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith the LORD; because he hath taught rebellion against the LORD.

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#### CH. XXX. (1) The word that came to Jeremiah

32. His punishment was that he would have no children remaining to enjoy the coming prosperity, and he would not himself see it. He and his class, when in power at Jerusalem, could not bear Jeremiah; he is unrepentant in exile, and his hatred is all the keener because he is now powerless to check the true prophet.

#### CHS. XXX.-XXXI.—*The Roll of Hope—Vision of the Restored Kingdom.*

These chapters contain the highest of Jeremiah's teaching. The last siege was in progress, and the end of all things was at hand. The prophet clearly saw that the State was going to be broken up, and that the people would be slain or dispersed, or carried to Babylon. He must often in those days have looked wistfully into the future. Was that the final goal to which the nation had been tending? Were the hopes which the best of the fathers had cherished to go out in the miserable lives of the men who now bore sway as princes in Jerusalem? Was the cause of God to be extinguished? He must often have asked such questions, and more especially when he was shut up in the court of the guard. The exiles who were already serving the seventy years of captivity would soon represent all that was left of the nation which had been so wonderfully tended. He knew that God could not leave them. He was sure they would be

from the LORD, saying, (2) Thus speaketh the LORD Roll of Hope, 589-597.  
 God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that

brought back ; faithful men were already springing up among them ; the chastisement they were undergoing would have its salutary effect, and a brighter day would yet arise upon the nation than any it had known. He had endeavoured all his life to bring thoughts of God into his people's minds, but a time would come when they would need none to admonish them. Rich visions came thick and fast upon the prophet in those days, and the present chapters contain them in the collected form in which they were to be preserved for the future. They would help to keep faith alive in the captives, and sustain the spiritual life of their descendants after the Return.

There is no intimation of the time to which these chapters belong, but it is not difficult to locate them. The city had not yet fallen, for the first two (or three) 'words' (xxx. 5-11 and 12-24) look forward to that catastrophe, and give character to the collected roll. There is a dark ground in the front of the picture. The form of xxxi. 37 also suggests that the deportation has not yet taken place : the seed of Israel have not yet been carried away, not to speak of their being 'cast off.' On the other hand, the prophecies came after the Vision of Figs (xxiv.), in which the prophet learned the bright future which was to come out of Babylon.

The only other chapters which belong to Zedekiah's reign are those of the first four years (xxiv. 27-29), and those of the last three years (xxxii.-xxxiv., xxxvii.-xxxix., and xxi. 1-10)—always keeping out of view the prophecies of the nations (xlv. li.). We have therefore to find a place for the present collection during the prophetic activity of the first four years, of the last three, or in the space between. But it was probably not in the space between ; because if he was active then, there could hardly fail to be some historical appendix, giving as in all the other prophetic periods an account of his work. As he was silent between the fifth and eleventh years of Jehoiakim, so would he appear to have been between the fourth and ninth of Zedekiah. And of the two active periods in the reign, these chapters harmonise in spirit more with the second than the first. The historical chapters belonging to the second period show that the prophet was receiving much illumination at the time, and of a kind

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I have spoken unto thee in a book. (3) For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the

which closely resembled that of the present chapters. Comp. chs. xxxii.-xxxiv. A dark time, too, which had not yet fully come, was settling upon the people (xxx. 5-7). We should remember also, that it is the habit of the whole Book of Jeremiah to put the historical narrative as an appendix, not a preface, to the prophetic parts which it explains; and none of the history relating to the early years of Zedekiah comes after this collection, while the whole of the history of the later years follows it.

It is interesting to think of the prophet's sending these cheering words from a prison. He was incarcerated on the ground that his influence went against the well-being of the State. So Bunyan sent his *Pilgrim's Progress* from a prison, into which he was thrown because he was a troubler of the Church.

CH. xxx. 1. *word*] i.e. prophecy or announcement. Comp. 'words' in next verse. The 'word' extends from verse 2 to 3.

*Jeremiah*] The compilation was not an afterthought of Baruch or other editor. It was Jeremiah's own work, although Baruch may have been the amanuensis, as in ch. xxxvi.

2. *words*] i.e. *prophecies*, contained in these two chapters. Comp. *word* in verse 1 with *words* in verse 2.

*all*] simply implying a number, as usual with Jeremiah. See note on i. 15.

*book*] a pamphlet, which in this case includes two chapters. See the above introd. note.

3. *Israel and Judah*] Some of these prophecies specially concern Israel, some Judah, some refer to both. Jeremiah frequently ignores the fact that only a fragment of the covenant nation was left in his day, and he speaks of Judah by the name Israel, as if Judah was the whole nation. But in parts of these chapters the name 'Israel' is used to designate the northern people who are in captivity. The 'words' of ch. 30 (verses 4-11; 12-22; and 23-24) refer to Judah; those of the first half of ch. xxxi. (verses 1-9; 10-14; 15-22) refer to Israel; the next (verses 23-26), in referring specially to Judah, prepares the way for the others (verses 27-30; 31-40), which refer to the reunited Kingdom of Israel and Judah.



LORD; and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. (4) And these *are* the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel, and concerning Judah. (5) For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. (6) Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? (7) Alas! for that day *is* great, so that none *is* like it: it *is* even the time of Jacob's trouble. But he shall be saved out of it. (8) For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of

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4. This verse forms a paragraph by itself, being an introduction to the 'words' which follow throughout the two chapters. *words*] See note on verse 2.

5-8. The people are in dismay because of imminent trouble. This is seen in the faces of those among whom Jeremiah is living. He is not speaking of people at a distance in Babylon, but of those 'seen' in Jerusalem. 'That day' must not be defined too strictly. It is a vague expression, the prophet himself not knowing yet all that it implies. We see it now to include the terrible ending of the present siege, the deportation, the long captivity, and the bright times following. The people had a presentiment of the gloom: the prophet assures them that it will even be worse than they suppose, but he foretells that there is to be a succeeding brightness. They realise only the 'travail,' he tells of the birth that follows. Comp. John xvi. 21, 22.

*Jacob's*] Observe the frequency of this name in these two chapters. He is at present entering upon his testing time; after he has prevailed in the wrestling, he will become Israel (Gen. xxxii. 28). In Jeremiah's mind the discipline of the Captivity is needed to purify the people. The world in which they trust must fail before they can realise that God remains. He is their strength and their portion.

*break his yoke*] This expression had been sometimes used by Jeremiah before, but probably he as well as his hearers

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hosts, *that* I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: (9) but they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them. (10) Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make *him* afraid. (11) For I *am* with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished. (12) For thus saith the LORD, Thy bruise *is* incurable, *and* thy wound *is* grievous. (13) *There is* none to plead thy cause,

would realise it better after his encounter with Hananiah (xxviii. 10, 11).

9. *David their king, whom I will raise up*] Comp. an earlier prophecy at xxiii. 5, and others of this period at xxx. 21 and xxxiii. 15. These announcements had their complete fulfilment in Christ, but we must guard against attaching too definite a meaning to them in Jeremiah's own mind. The Messianic prophecy was of gradual development, each succeeding prophet groping under a light which shone more and more unto the perfect day. Comp. Hos. iii. 5, which has suggested the present ideas to Jeremiah.

10, 11. These verses are also found at xlv. 27, 28; the prophet often quotes from himself. The present passage appears to be the original, both from its general connection with the context and from the name Jacob.

12-22. In this passage the prophet has sometimes in his mind the people of Jerusalem in their present hopeless condition, sometimes the nation as he sees it in Babylon.

12. *For thus saith the Lord*] Introducing new prophecy as at verse 5.

that thou mayest be bound up: thou hast no healing medicines. (14) All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity; *because* thy sins were increased. (15) Why criest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow *is* incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity: *because* thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee. (16) Therefore all they that devour thee shall be devoured; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey. (17) For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, *saying*, This *is* Zion, whom no man seeketh after. (18) Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof.

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14. *lovers*] Such as the nations who were conspiring with them six years ago (xxvii. 3), or Egypt, to which they often looked instead of depending on God. He was their Husband: this figure was largely employed in the first prophecies under Jehoiakim (chs. ii. and iii.). Egypt did make an effort to help them during the siege (xxxvii. 5), but it went for nothing.

*I have wounded*] God was bringing their present troubles upon them, and their wounds would be incurable until His purpose was accomplished, but he *had* a blessed purpose, and therefore they would be saved.

18. *the city shall be builded, etc.*] This might indicate that the city was in ruins at the time of the prophecy, but all the contextual prophecies bear that the siege was not yet completed; Jeremiah, however, is accustomed to speak as if what he has

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(19) And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry : and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few ; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small. (20) Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them. (21) And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them ; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me : for who *is* this that engaged his heart to approach unto me ? saith the LORD. (22) And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. (23) Behold, the whirlwind of the LORD goeth forth with fury, a continuing whirlwind : it shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked. (24) The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have done *it*, and until he have

announced from God as inevitable had already occurred. And he had often foretold the destruction of the city. See chs. vii., xix., xxvi., as well as his declarations of the present period, such as xxi. 10 ; xxxiv. 2 ; xxxvii. 10.

19. And yet this man seemed to the men of his time to be simply a prophet of evil !

21. *nobles*] *prince*. See note on verse 9. Their present king was set upon the throne by Nebuchadnezzar, and ruled as his satrap. Even that show of native kingship would soon disappear. Those of the nation who were in Babylon were already subject to foreign rulers, and the whole of them would soon be so. But a glorious time was coming when a ruler would be from among themselves.

*I will cause him, etc.*] He will enjoy the confidence and favour of God. Each succeeding statement of the prophets regarding the good time coming, adds its stone to the cairn ; it helps to form a Messianic hope in the mind of the nation.

23, 24. A quotation from ch. xxiii. 19, 20, appropriate to the present collection, telling of the 'travailing' ; the time of joy is after the birth has taken place.

performed the intents of his heart : in the latter days Roll of Hope,  
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ye shall consider it.

CH. XXXI. (1) At the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. (2) Thus saith the LORD, The people *which were* left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; *even* Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. (3) The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, *saying*, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. (4) Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry. (5) Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall eat *them* as common things. (6) For there shall be a

CH. XXXI. 1. *At the same time*] *i.e.*, in 'the days' when the Lord 'will turn again the captivity of his people Israel and Judah' (xxx. 3).

*all the families of Israel*] Not the Southern Kingdom alone, which has been chiefly occupying the mind in ch. xxx., but the Northern also. See the names 'Ephraim' and 'Samaria' in the earlier part of the chapter, verses 1-22. See note on xxx. 3.

2, 3. These verses are an evidence of the truth of verse 1. God took them to be His people long ago, and although He caused many of them to be destroyed by the sword (Ex. xxxii. 28), yet they 'found grace' (Ex. xxxiii. 13-17) with Him in the wilderness, when they were being led into Canaan, where He was to 'give them rest.'

*drawn thee*] Probably meaning from Egypt.

4, 5. *Again...again...yet*] Not only when brought from Egypt, but when brought from Babylon.

*build*] In giving offspring, and so rearing a house.

*as common things*] See Lev. xix. 23-25; Deut. xx. 6; xxviii. 30.

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day, *that* the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God. (7) For thus saith the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. (8) Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, *and* with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together; a great company shall return thither. (9) They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim *is* my first-born. (10) Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare *it* in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd *doth* his flock. (11) For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of *him that was* stronger than he. (12) Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of

6. *watchmen*] Posted on the mountains to give notice of the new moon, and so call to the feast at Jerusalem.

*Zion*] The people of the north as well as those in Judah will come to the true worship.

7. *chief of the nations*] Amos vi. 1.

8. Jeremiah here and elsewhere, like the other prophets, expected the captives of Israel as well as Judah to be brought back.

*north country*] Although Assyria was more east than north, yet they went north from Palestine to skirt the desert.

9. *by the rivers of waters*] *i.e.*, not to be parched with thirst in the wilderness on the way back. Assyria and Babylon were both beyond the wilderness.

the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd; and their soul shall be as a watered garden: and they shall not sorrow any more at all. (13) Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. (14) And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD. (15) Thus saith the LORD, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, *and* bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children,

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14. *priests*] Showing how abundant will be the sacrifices of which the priests will have their share (Lev. vii. 31 ff).

15. *Ramah*] We might suppose that this had some connection with the assembling of the captives at Ramah after Jerusalem was taken, and before they set out on their journey to Babylon (xl. 1). But the present prophecies relate to Israel, not to Judah (verses 5, 6, 9, 18, 20); and the prophet is not foretelling a lamentation which is to come; but, stating one which is known, he is calling to 'refrain from weeping,' and announcing that the children shall 'come again.' This must therefore refer to the previous deportation of the Israelites to Assyria. Ramah, as a border town between Israel and Judah, would be one of those which suffered in that deportation, and the people of Jerusalem and Judah would be more familiar with its lamentation than with that of any other Israelitish town. The people of Judah would look through Ramah upon the clearance of the whole land of Israel, and they would for years hear the remnant in Ramah lamenting. Why Rachel weeping? Because she was the mother of Joseph (*i.e.*, of Ephraim) and Benjamin. And, as much of the tribe of Benjamin had cast in its lot with Israel, Rachel had the unhappiness to see her descendants of both tribes swept away. Her grief would be all the keener on account of her desire to have children (Gen. xxx. 1). There is no special connection known between Rachel personally and Ramah. Her death occurred, not at Ramah,

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because they *were* not. (16) Thus saith the LORD, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. (17) And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border. (18) I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself *thus*; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou *art* the LORD my God. (19) Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon *my* thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. (20) *Is* Ephraim my dear son? *is he* a pleasant child? for since I spake against

but near Bethlehem, say ten miles distant. In her last journey from Bethel to Bethlehem, she might halt at Ramah. But, on the one hand, Ramah is mentioned here as representing the Israelitish people who were taken away; and on the other, Rachel is mentioned as the ancestress of the people of Ephraim and Benjamin. It is therefore not in connection with any incident in her personal history that her name is introduced here.

*refused to be comforted*] They seemed to be gone for ever; their departure was hopeless.

16. This is now the great announcement of the passage, they shall come again.

18. In these verses we hear an echo of those prophecies of Josiah's time which are quoted in ch. iii.—*repentance, return, endearment* between the Divine Father and His erring but returning children (iii. 19-25). Jeremiah's earliest ideas reproduce themselves here. Ephraim, *i.e.*, the Northern Kingdom, now in exile, accepts his chastisement, and turns accordingly.

19. He not only does not resent the chastisement, but is ashamed of himself, as he remembers the sin of his early days.

20. The Father on His part too is troubled, His bowels sound. Comp. the Parable of the Prodigal Son.



him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD. (21) Set thee up way-marks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, *even* the way *which* thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities. (22) How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man. (23) Thus saith the LORD of

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21. *Those*] Implying that the prophet is in Judah.

22. *A woman, etc.*] The meaning is doubtful. Payne Smith classifies interpretations as follows:—The female shall protect the strong man—the woman shall be changed into a man—the woman shall court the man—the woman shall turn the man (*i.e.*, shall prove the stronger of the two)—the woman shall keep close to the man (so that he may protect her);—and he quotes the following from Keil with approval:—‘The new thing that God creates consists in this, that the woman, the weaker nature that needs help, will with loving and fostering care surround the man, the stronger. Herein lies expressed a new relation of Israel to the Lord, a reference to a new covenant which the Lord, verses 31 *sqq.*, will make with His people, and in which He so brings Himself down to the level of His church, and so yields Himself to it, that it can lovingly embrace Him. This is the Messianic substance and kernel of these words.’ A favourite interpretation used to refer the passage to the virgin conception of the Messiah. But the ‘new thing’ simply specifies a woman, not a virgin. Recalling the line of thought in ch. ii. 20, 22, in which the prophet represents the daughter of Israel as departing from Jehovah, and then returning under a change of heart to crave His favour—a line which is again in his mind in the present chapter (verses 18-20), we incline to read this verse as meaning that the daughter of Israel, who departed from God, does now with change of heart turn to Him and seek His regard. A woman goes about, *i.e.*, seeks the favour of a man. Israel becomes the suitor; Jehovah is sought after.

23. The prophet here returns to Judah, but by way of preparing for prophecies relating to both Israel and Judah

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hosts, the God of Israel, As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah, and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity; the LORD bless thee, O habitation of justice, *and* mountain of holiness. (24) And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all the cities thereof together, husbandmen, and they *that* go forth with flocks. (25) For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul. (26) Upon this I awaked, and beheld; and my sleep was sweet unto me. (27) Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. (28) And it shall come to pass, *that* like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the LORD. (29) In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. (30) But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that

(verses 27 and 31). Judah and its cities had been in Jeremiah's day full of ungodliness, but they would yet be worthy to be called 'habitation of justice' and 'mountain of holiness.'

26. The communication in this case was made in sleep. It is doubtful how far back this reference goes, whether to verse 23, 21, 15, 10, or 1.

27-30. This 'word' refers to the reunited Kingdom. Observe that Israel is always named first. Jeremiah is fond of using the name 'Israel' to designate the whole people. Judah was never the name of the whole people.

29-30. In the happy days coming, the iniquities of the fathers will be remembered no more. Comp. xv. 4.

31-40. This passage contains the highest of Jeremiah's teaching. It shows the spiritual nature of religion as it shall exist in the latter days. It was thought worthy of transcription into the Epistle to the Hebrews (viii. 8-12 and x. 16-17), and

cateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge. Roll of Hope, 589-587.  
 (31) Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: (32) not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day *that* I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD; (33) but this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. (34) And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (35) Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, *and* the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts *is* his name: (36) If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, *then* the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. (37) Thus saith the LORD, If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the

it needs to be applied even in our own time, to show the spiritual nature of true worship. The letter killeth; the spirit giveth life. The whole of the earlier Scriptures taught that the heart is required in true worship, but this passage rises to a height which had not been reached before. Ezekiel after this has much teaching of a similar kind. See especially his xxxvi. 26.

37. See note at beginning of ch. xxx. The Jews, who now represent the seed of Israel, although meanwhile taken away

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earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD. (38) Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD, from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. (39) And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. (40) And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, *shall be* holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down, any more for ever.

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#### CH. xxxii. (1) The word that came to Jeremiah

cannot be finally 'cast off.' This was after the captivity of 598 B.C.

38, 39. These places are not known with certainty, but the verses intimate an extension of the city.

40. The valley of Hinnom, on the west and south of the city, had dead bodies and refuse cast into it (New Test. *Gehenna*, where 'the worm died not, and the fire was not quenched'), and was polluted; but in the good days it is to be 'holy unto the Lord.' The latter part of the passage shows that Jeremiah was not able wholly to rise into the spiritual. The image in his mind was partly of gold, and partly of clay.

#### CH. xxxii.—*Purchase of the Field.*

The introduction of this chapter (verses 1-5) corresponds to chs. xxxiv. 1-7 and xxxvii. 17-21. For a chronological arrangement of the passages bearing on this period, see notes on ch. xxxvii. See also a consecutive narrative in the *Introd.*, p. 37. After withdrawing, to go and meet the Egyptians, the Chaldean army had returned and reinvaded the city. Jeremiah had been shut up in the dungeon in the house of Jonathan, but Zedekiah who wanted to learn his views sent for him to the palace, and after getting his unwelcome prophecy, committed him again to prison. Instead of sending him back to Jonathan's house,

from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which *was* the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar. (2) For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which *was* in the king of Judah's house. (3) For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it; (4) and Zedekiah king

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however, he ordered him to be detained in the court of the guard belonging to the palace. Here his friends and others had free access to him.

1. *tenth year of Zedekiah, which was the eighteenth of Nebuchadrezzar*] See Table of Synchronisms, p. 50. The siege began in the ninth year (xxxix. 1), and we do not know what month of the tenth we have now reached. There have meanwhile been the enfranchisement of the slaves; the raising of the siege; Zedekiah's consultation of Jeremiah by deputies; the re-enslavement; Jeremiah's denunciation of the same; his imprisonment in Jonathan's house; the renewal of the siege; private conference of Zedekiah with Jeremiah; the committal to the court of the guard.

2. *besieged*] The siege was renewed by this time. Hence Zedekiah's repeated inquiry of Jeremiah.

*the king's army*] The king himself came at first (xxxix. 1); but he had other matters on hand, particularly the long and difficult siege of Tyre, and he appears to have kept his base of operations at Riblah in the land of Hamath, away to the north of the Lebanon valley (xxxix. 5).

*court of the prison*] This seems to have been an open space within the gate at the entrance of the palace. While Jeremiah was 'shut up,' others had free access to him (verses 7, 12, and ch. xxxviii. 1). Here he bought the field, was attended by Baruch, and counselled the people.

3. *had shut him up*] He had already been a prisoner in the house of Jonathan (xxxvii. 15), from which Zedekiah summoned him to a secret conference in the palace. Had the prophet given a pleasing reply, the king would apparently have released

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of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold his eyes; (5) and he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be until I visit him, saith the LORD: though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper. (6) And Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying, (7) Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle, shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that *is* in Anathoth: for the right of redemption *is* thine to buy *it*. (8) So Hanameel, mine uncle's son, came to me in the court of the prison, according to the word of the LORD, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that *is* in Anathoth, which *is* in the country of Benjamin: for the right of inheritance *is* thine, and the redemption *is* thine; buy *it* for thyself. Then I knew that this

him altogether; but as it was not agreeable, he committed him to the court of the guard.

*I will give]* He had already said the same in very emphatic terms, when he was consulted during the withdrawal of the Chaldeans from the siege (xxxvii. 8).

4. *shall speak]* See xxxix. 5.

*his eyes]* which were: at the first interview put out (xxxix. 7). Comp. Ezek. xii. 13.

6. *Jeremiah said]* This seems to imply that the present narrative was not written by Jeremiah, or composed afterwards by another, but dictated now to Baruch.

7. *Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle]* This might mean either that Hanamel or that Shallum was the uncle, but the next verse shows that Hanamel was the cousin.

*right of redemption is thine]* See Lev. xxv. 25; Ruth iv. 6. According to Num. xxxv. 5, the field would be within 2000 cubits of the outside of Anathoth.

8. *Then I knew]* Agreeing with the inspired communication he had just received.

*was* the word of the LORD. (9) And I bought the field of Hanameel, my uncle's son, that *was* in Anathoth, and weighed him the money, *even* seventeen shekels of silver. (10) And I subscribed the evidence, and sealed *it*, and took witnesses, and weighed *him* the money in the balances. (11) So I took the evidence of the purchase, *both* that which was sealed *according* to the law and custom, and that which was open: (12) and I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison. (13) And I charged Baruch before them, saying, (14) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. (15) For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Houses and fields and vineyards

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9. *seventeen shekels of silver*] About £2 sterling.

10. *subscribed...sealed, etc.*] Not, as we say, 'signed, sealed, and delivered.' The sealing in this case, as we see from the next verse, was closing up the deed for preservation, a copy being kept 'open.'

14. *many days*] From the fourth of Jehoiakim, when the seventy years were regarded as beginning (xxv. 11), till the tenth of Zedekiah, were seventeen years, or, as Jeremiah would call it, eighteen years; fifty-two years according to our mode of counting had yet to run, before the seventy years would be over.

15. And this was the man who was imprisoned because he was destroying hope in the minds of the people! This was the best evidence of his assurance that the land would again come into the hands of the Jews. The purchase has often been compared to the Roman patriot's purchase, at full price, of the

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shall be possessed again in this land. (16) Now when I had delivered the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed unto the LORD, saying, (17) Ah, Lord GOD! behold thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched-out arm, *and* there is nothing too hard for thee; (18) thou showest loving-kindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the Great, the Mighty God, the LORD of hosts, *is* his name; (19) great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes *are* open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: (20) which hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, *even* unto this day, and in Israel, and among *other* men; and hast made thee a name, as at this day; (21) and hast brought forth thy people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with a stretched-out arm, and with great terror; (22) and hast given them this land, which thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey; (23) and they came in, and possessed it; but they obeyed not thy voice, neither walked in thy law: they have done nothing of all that thou commandedst them to do: therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon

field in which Hannibal had his camp, when he threatened Rome: *Livy*, xvi. 11.

17. See note on verse 25.

21, 22. Comp. Deut. xxvi. 8, 9. Even the language, but much more the thought, of the prophet shows how after the finding of the Book of the Law it was natural to turn to the early days, especially when he was trying to make the people bethink themselves of the general question of religion.



them. (24) Behold the mounts, they are come unto the city to take it; and the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans that fight against it, because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence: and what thou hast spoken is come to pass; and, behold, thou seest *it*. (25) And thou hast said unto me, O Lord GOD, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses; for the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. (26) Then came the word of the

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24. *mounts*] Earthen erections raised by the enemy to overtop the walls. See vi. 6; xxxiii. 4.

25. *the city is given, etc.*] Jeremiah had often foretold that the city would fall into the hands of the Chaldeans, and that there would be a return from Babylon. But he was human, and it was hard to maintain this faith when not only avowed opponents, like the princes who threw him into prison, disregarded his announcements, but even those who sympathised with him were doubtful. This overt act of purchasing the field was a decisive declaration of his faith which required all the energy of his spiritual nature. It tested his own faith in what he had so often announced; and after the very act by which he declared his confidence, he asked himself in God's presence whether the Return was true. He reminds us of Elijah, after the great day at Carmel, casting himself down under the juniper tree. Remember that he was in prison.

26. As he meditated on the subject, he was persuaded that it was all true, and he became conscious that this was God's teaching to him. This was evidently a great day of decision for him, and hence it is recorded in full. The act of purchase became in consequence an occasion for taking a step forward in his own spiritual training, as distinctly as the first visions of the almond tree and the boiling pot (ch. i.), or the subsequent ones of the soiled girdle (ch. xiii.) and the figs (ch. xxiv.). Much of the 'words' in the Roll of Consolation contained in chs. xxx. and xxxi. must have been the outcome of this internal struggle. God was carrying away the people as the only way of cleansing them from idolatry and wickedness, and after His purpose was served, He would assuredly bring them back and rejoice over them.

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LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, (27) Behold, I *am* the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me? (28) Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he shall take it. (29) And the Chaldeans, that fight against this city, shall come and set fire on this city, and burn it with the houses upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal, and poured out drink offerings unto other gods, to provoke me to anger. (30) For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth: for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands, saith the LORD. (31) For this city hath been to me *as* a provocation of mine anger and of my fury from the day that they built it even unto this day; that I should remove it from before my face. (32) Because of all the evil of the children of Israel, and of the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke me to anger, they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets, and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (33) And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching *them*, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction. (34) But they set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to defile it. (35) And they built the high places of Baal, which *are* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through *the fire* unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin. (36) And now therefore thus

34, 35. Comp. vii. 30, 31.

saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; (37) behold, I will gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: (38) and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: (39) and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: (40) and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. (41) Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul. (42) For thus saith the LORD, Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. (43) And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, *It is* desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. (44) Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences,

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39, 40. Comp. Deut. v. 29, and many other passages of Deut.

43, 44. In the face of the tremendous power of the Chaldeans and the helplessness and wickedness of the Jews, it required strong faith to believe this, as it requires strong faith on the part of Christians now to believe that Christ's Kingdom is yet to prevail in the world.

44. Comp. xxxiii. 13. Both are suggested by Deut. i. 7.

*land of Benjamin*] The field at Anathoth, which had just been bought, was in Benjamin.

*valley*] *lowland*. The Shephelah, a name given to the lower

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and seal *them*, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD.

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CH. xxxiii. (1) Moreover the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the second time, while he was

ridge which ran north and south, parallel to the high ridge forming the backbone of Judah. The Shephelah ran between the high ridge and the maritime plain.

CH. xxxiii.—*Further Revelation in Prison.*

This, like the preceding revelation (xxxii. 16-44), is for the enlightenment of the prophet himself: he must be instructed himself, if he is to instruct others. Things have advanced since the 'word' of ch. xxxii. came to him. Then the 'mounts' of the besieging party had made progress (xxxii. 24): now the besieged have thrown down important buildings within the city in consequence (xxxiii. 4). Jeremiah has from his prison-yard seen or at least heard of this step taken by his countrymen, which leads him into further reflection and waiting upon God (xxxiii. 3). And now he learns that the unbelieving action of the people must lead to further sufferings on their part (xxxiii. 5), but that God will bring deliverance—that He will put sin away, restore social joys, coupled with the people's recognition of His grace, and establish pastoral prosperity throughout the country. In particular, he learns anew that a king of David's line shall reign righteously among a righteous people, and that the true worship shall be observed.

1. *the second time*] This and the revelation of ch. xxxii. 16-44 stand out prominently as bringing enlightenment to himself; and from these two much of his teaching of the period (chs. xxx. and xxxi.) springs, just as ch. xxix. springs from ch. xxiv.

*yet shut up*] *i.e.*, while he was a prisoner, but enjoying the run of the court, to which the people, including his friends, had access: This is still in the period between chs. xxxvii. and xxxviii.

yet shut up in the court of the prison, saying, (2) Revelation in Prison, 588 or 587 Thus saith the LORD, the maker thereof, the LORD that formed it, to establish it ; the LORD *is* his name ; (3) Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not. (4) For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah, which are thrown down by the mounts, and by the sword ; (5) they come to fight with the Chaldeans, but *it is* to fill them with the dead bodies of men, whom I have slain in mine anger, and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from this city. (6) Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth. (7) And I will cause the captivity of Judah, and the captivity of Israel, to return, and will build them, as at the first. (8) And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me ; and I will pardon all their iniquities,

3. *Call, etc.*] In view of the desperate measures which the Jews are taking for the defence of the city, he wishes to inquire of God, and God welcomes the inquiry, and assures him of guidance.

4. *thrown down by*] *broken down against* or *over against*, or to meet attack from. Not only were some of the common buildings thrown down, but even some portions of the palace of the kings. Erections were put up in defence against the mounts. It must be remembered, both as bearing upon Jeremiah's spirit in hearing of these things, and as showing the persistent refusal of Zedekiah and the princes to be guided by him, that he had been counselling submission as a duty laid down by God. He might naturally ask himself, Will God yet continue to be gracious? And we must read the chapter in view of that question.

8. The cleansing and pardon of sin lies at the foundation of all good.

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whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. (9) And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness, and for all the prosperity, that I procure unto it. (10) Thus saith the LORD, Again there shall be heard in this place, which ye say *shall be* desolate without man and without beast, *even* in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man, and without inhabitant, and without beast, (11) the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness; the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride; the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD *is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever: *and* of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD. (12) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Again in this place, which is desolate without man and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, shall be an habitation of shepherds causing *their* flocks to lie down. (13) In the cities of

10. *which...shall be*] *whercof ye say It is.* Jeremiah himself had been saying this. See ch. iv. and many passages, in which he had to foretell coming woe, and even so late a passage as xxxiv. 22, which was spoken while the Chaldeans had temporarily left to meet the Egyptians. But now he is assured that beyond the desolation comes prosperity. We must not forget that all this chapter is addressed to himself.

11. Comp. vii. 34; xvi. 9; xxv. 10.

*Praise*] or *Give thanks.* A common refrain. See Ps. cvi. 1; 2 Chron. v. 13; vii. 3, 6; Ezra iii. 11.

12. *which is*] Omit: not in Hebrew. It is simply a repetition of verse 10. It had formerly been the burden of all Jeremiah's prophecies, 'Waste,' 'Without inhabitant.'

13. *vale*] See xxxii. 44 and Deut. i. 7.

the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks pass again under the hands of him that telleth *them*, saith the LORD. (14) Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel, and to the house of Judah. (15) In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. (16) In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our Righteousness. (17) For thus saith the LORD, David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel;

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14. *that good thing*] or *word*. If we were certain that ch. xxiii. 5 was of an earlier period than this, we might conclude that *it* was the 'word' which is here mentioned as having been spoken. But it is probable that the two passages belong to the one period, and are practically the same. In which case the good word must refer to the general good promise which has been spoken through all the years, and which now in the present passage and in ch. xxiii. takes a new development. For the whole passage, see notes on ch. xxiii.

16. *The Lord our Righteousness*] The term applied in ch. xxiii. to the king is here applied to the city, which bears the same character.

17, 18. The rule and the worship are to be according to the mind of God. David was chosen and set apart by God to rule over God's people; and in the good time the people, instead of being governed by the Chaldean or any other power from without, would be ruled by a representative of David, reigning from within. Instead of refusing the true worship and setting up that of Baal or other false God, or having heathen priests to conduct their service, they would have the Levites to conduct it according to the Divine appointment. Jeremiah does not point here to one ruler, who is to continue for ever; on the

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(18) neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually. (19) And the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, saying, (20) Thus saith the LORD, if ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; (21) *then* may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. (22) As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me. (23) Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, (24) Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the LORD hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? Thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. (25) Thus saith the LORD; If my covenant *be* not with day and night, *and if* I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; (26) then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, *so* that I will not take *any* of his seed *to be* rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.

contrary, he expressly speaks of the 'seed of David' being 'multiplied.' He looks not to one person, but to a dynasty. The kings and the priests were parallel, and they are to be respectively of the line of David and of the line of the Levites. At the same time there is special prominence given to the Branch (*Sprout*, see note on xxiii. 5); and we can see how, in the course of the ages, the prophecy would on the part of seers and people develop into a prophecy of a personal Messiah.



CH. XXXIV. (1) The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, (when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the earth of his dominion, and all the people, fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities thereof,) saying, (2) Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah, and tell him; Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire: (3) and thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon. (4) Yet hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah; Thus saith the LORD of thee, Thou shalt not die by the sword; (5) *but* thou

Issue of Siege  
Foretold, 588.

CH. XXXIV. 1-7.—*Issue of the Siege foretold to the King.*

This passage is parallel to xxxii. 1-5; but while that is merely a parenthetical introduction to xxxii. 6-44, explaining how the prophet happened to be in prison, the present passage is a substantive historical narrative. The fact that the same thing is told over again so fully, suggests that the two passages were not written at the same time, nor probably by the same person. While the first has Nebuchadnezzar, the second has *-nezzar*. The fact that the writer thought it necessary to give the information of the 1st verse so fully and of the 7th verse shows that the period was passed from, before the writing took place. Observe also that the present passage has the frequently repeated *all*, which is characteristic of some parts of the book (*e.g.*, ch. xxxvi.), while xxxii. 1-5 has not that peculiarity. For notes on the whole passage, see xxxii. 1-5.

1. *Nebuchadnezzar*] Not that the king was personally present.

2. *Go and speak*] In answer to the royal summons (xxxvii. 17).

5. Comp. xxii. 19; xxxvi. 30.

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shalt die in peace: and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, so shall they burn *odours* for thee; and they will lament thee, *saying*, Ah lord! for I have pronounced the word, saith the LORD. (6) Then Jeremiah the prophet spake all these words unto Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem, (7) when the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish, and against Azekah: for these defenced cities remained of the cities of Judah.

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(8) *This is* the word that came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which *were* at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty unto them; (9) that every man should let his man-servant, and every man his maid-servant, *being* an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; that none should serve himself of them, *to wit*, of a Jew his brother. (10) Now when all the princes, and all the people, which had entered into the covenant, heard that every one should let his man-servant, and every one his maid-servant, go free, that none should serve themselves of them any more; then they

7. *Lachish and Azekah*] South-west of Jerusalem, and both in the Shephelah.

8-22.—*Manumission and Re-enslavement of the Bondmen.*

This was earlier than verses 1-7. The manumission took place during the first part of the siege, and the re-enslavement while the besiegers were withdrawn on account of the Egyptians (xxxiv. 21). For the order of events, see on ch. xxxvii.

8. *proclaim liberty unto them*] Possibly, proclaim 'unto them' (*i.e.* to the people at large) that they were to give 'liberty' to their Hebrew slaves (comp. Lev. xxv. 10); but more probably, proclaim to the enslaved (see verses 15 and 17).

9. Comp. Deut. 15. 12.

obeyed, and let *them* go. (11) But afterward they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids. (12) Therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, (13) Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondmen, saying, (14) At the end of seven years let ye go every man his brother an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee; and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear. (15) And ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name: (16) but ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids. (17) Therefore thus saith the LORD, Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the LORD, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. (18) And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had

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14. *At the end of seven years*] *i.e.*, when the seventh year has arrived; or, as we say, after six years.

18. Comp. Gen. xv. 9.

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589 or 588.

made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof, (19) the princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf; (20) I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth (21) And Zedekiah king of Judah, and his princes, will I give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which are gone up from you. (22) Behold, I will command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire; and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant.

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CH. XXXV. (1) The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying, (2) Go unto the

19. In these latter days the prophets, who had formerly been so prominent, have disappeared (xxxvii. 19).

#### CH. XXXV.—*The Rechabites.*

For the period to which this chapter belongs, see introd. to ch. vii. See also Compilation, sect. 10.

1. *in the days of Jehoiakim*] Immediately before Nebuchadnezzar's advance on Jerusalem in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. This expression shows that the heading was written after the days of Jehoiakim were passed from. Not improbably the chapter was inserted at the same time, having been written earlier.

2. *house of the Rechabites*] { The people, not the dwelling.  
See verse 6.

house of the Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink. (3) Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habaziah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites; (4) and I brought them into the house of the Lord, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, a man of God, which *was* by the chamber of the princes, which *was* above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the door: (5) and I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine. (6) But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, *neither*

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4. *a man of God*] Hanan was apparently a prophet, and his 'sons' were his disciples. See 1 Kings xii. 22; 2 Kings ii. 3; iv. 38, 40, 42, etc.

*Maaseiah*] He was one of three keepers of the door (2 Kings xxv. 18), who took high rank next to the chief priest and the second priest. After the capture of Jerusalem there was a Zephaniah who, as second priest, was associated with the chief priest and the keepers of the door, in being brought before Nebuchadnezzar to be slain. As Zephaniah, the son of Maaseiah, the priest, occupies a conspicuous place in the time of Zedekiah (xxix. 25; xxi. 1; xxxvii. 3), it is probable that he was the son of this Maaseiah. Altogether, therefore, it seems that Jeremiah was now giving his lesson in a prominent place.

6. *Jonadab*] The Rechabites were a branch of the Kenites, to whom Moses was related by marriage (Judg. i. 16), and who came along with the Israelites into Canaan. They were a nomadic people, and continued to dwell among the Israelites. Jonadab appears to have held a high place among them, and he was associated with Jehu (2 Kings x. 15, 23). He evidently wished to preserve the simplicity and hardihood of his people. This was now nearly three centuries after Jonadab's time.

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ye, nor your sons for ever: (7) neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have *any*: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye *be* strangers. (8) Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters; (9) nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed: (10) but we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. (11) But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians: so we dwell at Jerusalem. (12) Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, (13) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Go and tell the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith the LORD. (14) The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me. (15) I have sent also unto you all my

11. *the Syrians*] It would seem that Nebuchadnezzar had associated with him Syrians, whose country he had already overrun. This is the only place in which they are mentioned in connection with the Chaldeans at this time. They are referred to at a date a few years later in 2 Kings xxiv. 2.

13. *Go and tell*] Still in the Temple (ch. vii. 2; xxvi. 2): he was now making the Temple a place of his teaching.

servants the prophets, rising up early and sending <sup>The Rechabites, 605.</sup> *them*, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me. (16) Because the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them; but this people hath not hearkened unto me: (17) therefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered. (18) And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you; (19) therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.

CH. XXXVI. (1) And it came to pass, in the fourth <sup>The Roll, 605 and 604.</sup> year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah,

19. *to stand before me*] Usually taken to mean as a servant (comp. 1 Kings xvii. 1, etc.), but this is doubtful.

#### CH. XXXVI.—*The Roll.*

See Introd., pp. 22 and 61; also Compilation, sect. 11.

1. *in the fourth year*] After Nebuchadnezzar had left with his band of young captives (Daniel, etc.), and the city had now become still and sobered.]

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*that* this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, (2) Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. (3) It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin. (4) Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book. (5) And Jeremiah commanded Baruch

2. *all*] Not literally every one, which it would be impossible to read in one day. *All* is here used as so often in this book to mean *in general*. See note on i. 15.

*words*] Plural: comp. *word* (singular) of verse 1. He now received a communication to write the previous communications.

*from the days of Josiah*] See notes on i. 1-3, and Introd., p. 55.

3. After this visitation by Nebuchadnezzar, they may be more prepared to listen to God's prophet, especially as his 'words' have already been so far fulfilled.

4. *Baruch*] Chronologically, this is the first mention of Baruch. See other references in xxxii. 12; xliii. 3, 6; xlv. 1-5. As we see by comparison of xxxii. 12 with li. 59, he was brother to Seraiah, who was an officer of rank in the days of Zedekiah. Both were in sympathy with Jeremiah, and he made them useful to him. It has been thought that Baruch not only acted as scribe during Jeremiah's active days, but had some part in the compilation of the present Book of Jeremiah. Colour is given to this by the fact that while the personal prophecy to Ebed-melech is placed at xxxix. 15, the compiler modestly places that to Baruch at ch. xlv.

5. *commanded*] This shows the relation between prophet and scribe, although Baruch probably was a man of position.



saying, I *am* shut up; I cannot go into the house of the LORD: (6) therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD, in the ears of the people, in the LORD'S house upon the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities. (7) It may be they will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way: for great *is* the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this people. (8) And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD'S house. (9) And it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, in the ninth month, *that* they proclaimed a fast before the LORD to all the people in Jeru-

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*shut up*] He was in hiding on account of the anger of the king. See *Intro.*, p. 23.

*house of the Lord*] Jeremiah had by this time taken to the Temple with his teaching. See vii. 2 (=xxvi. 2); xix. 14; xxxv. 2.

6. *the fasting day*] Rather, *a fast-day*. It would seem that at first the instruction to Baruch was a general one for any suitable fast-day which might occur. And in this case, the narrative of verses 1-8 is complete in itself, although verse 8 was written apparently in view of the expansion and explanation (9-32) which immediately follow. The instruction, however, of verse 6 was apparently given in the fourth year, immediately after the writing, and by-and-by the specific instruction with reference to the specific fast of the ninth month of next year followed. When the roll was written, it would appear that the prophet did not know that there was to be a great fast in the ninth month of the following year.

9. *ninth month*] About December. There was no regular fast at this time. But the city may have been taken by Nebuchadnezzar in the ninth month of the previous year, and the people may naturally have inclined to remember it with

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saalem, and to all the people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem. (10) Then read Baruch in the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the higher court, at the entry of the new gate of the LORD'S house, in the ears of all the people. (11) When Michaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book all the words of the LORD, (12) then he went down into the king's house, into the scribe's chamber: and, lo, all the princes sat there, *even* Elishama the scribe, and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan the son of Achbor, and Gemariah the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the princes. (13) Then Michaiah declared unto them all the words that he had heard, when Baruch read the book in the ears of the people. (14) Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, unto Baruch, saying, Take in thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read in the ears of the people, and come. So Baruch the son of Neriah took the roll in his hand,

fasting. The occasion would be suitable for Jeremiah's present purpose.

*they proclaimed to, etc.] all the people proclaimed.* For the use of *all*, see i. 15. The fact that the people are said to proclaim the fast, seems to indicate that it was not appointed by the king to make the people restive under the rule of Nebuchadnezzar, but was intended by them for genuine humiliation.

10. *Gemariah*] Belonging to a family of which several members befriended Jeremiah. See xxvi. 24.

*the scribe*] Referring apparently not to Gemariah, but to Shaphan, who was scribe in Josiah's days. See 2 Kings xxii. 3, 8, 9, 10, 12. At the present time the scribe or secretary, unless there were more than one, was Elishama. See verses 12, 20, 21.

and came unto them. (15) And they said unto him, <sup>The Roll, 605 and 604.</sup> Sit down now, and read it in our ears. So Baruch read *it* in their ears. (16) Now it came to pass, when they had heard all the words, they were afraid, both one and other, and said unto Baruch, We will surely tell the king of all these words. (17) And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth? (18) Then Baruch answered them, He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote *them* with ink in the book. (19) Then said the princes unto Baruch, Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah; and let no man know where ye be. (20) And they went in to the king into the court, but they laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king. (21) So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll: and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber: and Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king. (22) Now the king sat in the winter house, in the ninth month: and *there was a fire* on the hearth burning before him. (23) And it came to pass, *that* when Jehudi

16. *We will surely tell*] Their fear shows that their object in telling the king was to induce him to repent.

18. This verse shows that, in the roll at least, Baruch was a mere amanuensis, not an editor or compiler. Chs. ii.-ix., therefore, are Jeremiah's composition, verse 32 showing that in their second edition they were composed in the same way as in the first. The same may probably be said of the 'many like words' (verse 32), viz., chs. xi.-xx.

19. Showing the friendly attitude of the princes. See, similarly, their attitude in the fourth year (ch. xxvi.).

21. *stood*] in the king's presence. Compare their attitude among themselves (verses 12, 15, 22).

22, 23. *hearth*] *brasier*.

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had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast *it* into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that *was* on the hearth. (24) Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, *neither* the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words. (25) Nevertheless Elnathan, and Delaiah, and Gemariah, had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll; but he would not hear them. (26) But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe, and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them. (27) Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, (after that the king had burnt the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah,) saying, (28) Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burnt. (29) And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim

23. *three or four leaves*] or *columns*. The roll would be written as usual, in detachments or columns, and when three or four of these were read, the king in his rage seems to have taken the whole roll and cut it in pieces, throwing piece after piece into the fire, until it was all destroyed.

24. *they were not afraid*] The servants about the court were less open to devout influence than the princes. See verses 16, 25.

*nor rent, etc.*] The writer, whether Jeremiah or Baruch, evidently regarded the roll as of more than human authorship.

25. This shows that although Elnathan was employed by the king (xxvi. 22) to bring Uriah out of Egypt, and was possibly the king's father-in-law (2 Kings xxiv. 8), he was not a hardened man.

26. *the son of Hammelech*] *Hammelech* means '*the king*,' and we cannot tell whether it stands for a proper name here or for the king. So at xxxviii. 6.

king of Judah, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast burnt this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? (30) Therefore thus saith the LORD of Jehoiakim king of Judah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat and in the night to the frost. (31) And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them: but they hearkened not. (32) Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein, from the mouth of Jeremiah, all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burnt in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words.

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CH. XXXVII. (1) And king Zedekiah the son of The Siege,  
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29. *thou shalt say*] Not directly to Jehoiakim himself, whom he durst not approach. It may never have been said in public. We find the saying in xxii. 18, 19, 30.

32. *many like words*] One might suppose that these were additional words scattered through the prophecies. But the inquiry in the Introd., p. 62, shows that they are, so to speak, a second volume. The first volume extends from ch. ii. to ch. ix. or ch. x.: the second from ch. xi. to ch. xx. The Hebrew may mean 'words as many as they'; and the second volume, as we see, is equal in size to the first.

#### CH. XXXVII.—*The Final Siege.*

The 1st and 2nd verses introduce a new and independent section, which narrates affairs in Jerusalem connected with Jeremiah during the siege and the destruction of the city, and especially the treatment of Jeremiah himself. The section

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Josiah reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made king in

extends to the end of ch. xxxix., including an appendix about Ebed-melech (xxxix. 15-18). The following appears to be the chronological order of the period, the passages being arranged in columns according to the sections to which they belong :—

I. <i>The Siege begun in the ninth year.</i>			
xxxix. 1	xxxiv. 10		Siege begun. Manumission of slaves.
II. <i>The Siege raised temporarily in the ninth or tenth year.</i>			
xxxvii. 3-10 =		= xxi. 1-7	Jeremiah consulted by deputies from king.
	xxxiv. 8-22		Re-enthralment of slaves.
xxxvii. 11-16			Jeremiah seized, and im- prisoned in Jonathan's house.
III. <i>The Siege renewed in the ninth or tenth year.</i>			
xxxvii. 17-21	= xxxii. 1-5 } = xxxiv. 1-7 }		Jeremiah brought in tenth year to be secretly con- sulted by the king : put afterwards in court of guard.
	xxxii. 6-44 xxxiii. 1-26		Field bought by Jeremiah. Further prophecy in court of guard.
xxxviii. 1-3 =		= xxi. 8-10	Jeremiah advises people to desert to Chaldeans.
xxxviii. 4-6			Jeremiah put in miry dungeon.
xxxviii. 7-13			Jeremiah restored by Ebed-melech to court of guard.
xxxviii. 14-28			Jeremiah consulted by king in third entry of Temple : remanded to court of guard.
IV. <i>The Siege ended in the eleventh year.</i>			
xxxix. 1-14			City taken and destroyed.

1. *Coniah*] Jehoiachin. Comp. xxii., 24, 28.  
whom] i.e., Zedekiah.

the land of Judah. (2) But neither he, nor his servants, nor the people of the land, did hearken unto the words of the LORD, which he spake by the prophet Jeremiah. (3) And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Pray now unto the LORD our God for us. (4) Now Jeremiah came in and went out among the people; for they had not put him into prison. (5) Then Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt: and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they departed from Jerusalem. (6) Then came the word of the LORD unto the prophet Jeremiah, saying, (7) Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, that sent you unto me to enquire of me; Behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land. (8) And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire. (9) Thus saith the LORD, Deceive not yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart. (10) For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained *but* wounded men among

2. *words*] i.e., *prophecies*. See note on i. 1.

3-10. Comp. xxi. 1-7, which refers to the same.

3. *Pray*] They resort to Jeremiah, and through him to God, in time of trouble.

4. Jeremiah must have been thrown into prison before this was written.

5. *Pharaoh*] Hophra (xliv. 30).

7. There is no reason to conclude that a battle took place between the Chaldeans and the Egyptians at this time. It is most likely that the Egyptians retired on the approach of their foes.

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them, *yet* should they rise up every man in his tent and burn this city with fire. (11) And it came to pass, that when the army of the Chaldeans was broken up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army, (12) then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin, to separate himself thence in the midst of the people. (13) And when he was in the gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward *was* there, whose name *was* Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans. (14) Then said Jeremiah, *It is false*; I fall not away to the Chaldeans. But he hearkened not to him: so Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes. (15) Wherefore the princes were wroth with Jeremiah,

*First Stage of Imprisonment, — Dungeon in Jonathan's House.*

12. *to separate himself*] *to receive his portion.* Jeremiah was a priest of the town of Anathoth in Benjamin, three miles or so N.E. of Jerusalem. Along with the other priests of the town, he drew his living from it. He intended to go now to get his share, but we do not know further particulars.

*in the midst of the people*] The people would be glad to pass out at an open gate, behind which they had been pent while the Chaldeans were there.

13. *Hananiah*] We do not know whether this is the Hananiah, the false prophet of ch. xxviii., who opposed Jeremiah in the fourth year of this reign.

*Thou fallest away*] Jeremiah had strongly urged submission to Nebuchadnezzar in the previous prophecies of this reign (chs. xxvii.-xxix.). And shortly after the present time, during the siege, we find him counselling surrender or desertion (xxi. 8-10; xxxviii. 1-3; xxxviii. 14-28). He may have been giving the same advice at this time, and, if not, they must all have known his general sentiments, *i.e.*, his teaching from God, to yield to the Chaldeans. But the charge of his own purpose to desert was false.

15. He could not fail to be unpopular with an unbelieving army.



and smote him, and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe; for they had made that the prison. (16) When Jeremiah was entered into the dungeon, and into the cabins, and Jeremiah had remained there many days; (17) then Zedekiah the king sent, and took him out; and the king asked him secretly in his house, and said, Is there *any* word from the LORD? And Jeremiah said, There is: for, said he, thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon. (18) Moreover Jeremiah said unto king Zedekiah, What have I offended against thee, or against thy servants, or against this people, that ye have put me in prison? (19) Where *are* now your prophets which prophesied unto you, saying, The king of Babylon shall not come against you, nor against this land? (20) Therefore hear now, I pray thee, O my lord the king: let my supplication, I pray thee, be accepted before thee; that thou cause me not

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16. *When Jeremiah was entered*] Read, *For Jeremiah came. cabins*] *cells*. There seems to have been an underground dungeon, containing different apartments for prisoners.

*and Jeremiah had remained*] Read, *and Jeremiah dwelt*. Observe the refrain, 'and Jeremiah dwelt'—identical in the original—marking the close of each passage (xxxvii. 16, 21; xxxviii. 13, 28).

*Second Stage of Imprisonment,—Court of the Guard.*

17. *then*] Heb. *and*; it begins a new passage. See chronological note at beginning of chapter.

18. *ye have put me*] Zedekiah had nothing to do with his imprisonment in the dungeon in the house of Jonathan, from which he was now summoned; but he could not fail soon to hear of it, and he had not released him. Jeremiah identified Zedekiah with the princes as rulers.

19. *your prophets, etc.*] From the beginning they had prophesied peace (vi. 14), and in the early years of Zedekiah, they said the Temple vessels would be restored (xxvii. 16; xxviii. 2).

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to return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there. (21) Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread out of the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city were spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

CH. xxxviii. (1) Then Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashur, and Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashur the son of Malchiah, heard the words that Jeremiah had spoken unto all the people, saying, (2) Thus saith the LORD, He that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live: for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live. (3) Thus saith the LORD, This city shall surely be given into the hand of

21. *prison*] rather *guard*. See note on xxxii. 2.

*bread...spent*] See lii. 6.

*Thus*] Heb. *And*. See note on verse 16.

CH. xxxviii.—*Third Stage of Imprisonment,—Miry Dungeon.*

1-3. Comp. the parallel passage, xxi. 8-10.

1. Others besides those mentioned may have heard. Pashhur is named at xxi. 1, and Jehucal or Jucal at xxxvii. 3, among those who heard similar counsel at other times. Gedaliah, perhaps the son of the Pashhur of xx. 1. The four named here are probably mentioned on account of their taking a prominent part in urging his execution or severer imprisonment.

2. Jeremiah and the princes occupied different standpoints. He believed in God, and learned under the teaching of His Spirit that the nation must be removed to be cured of its ungodliness: its time for resistance was passed; resistance now would only bring sorer punishment. They disbelieved, and would not submit to the Divine chastisement. Jeremiah rebelled against the king when the king rebelled against God.

the king of Babylon's army, which shall take it. (4) Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death; for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt. (5) Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he *is* in your hand: for the king *is* not *he that* can do *any* thing against you. (6) Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that *was* in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon *there was* no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire. (7) Now, when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon, (the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin,) (8) Ebed-melech went forth out of the king's

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4. They were right, from their position of disobedience to God, although their own judgment might have told them that they could not succeed against Nebuchadnezzar, and that he would be the more enraged the longer they detained him. Zedekiah had been set on the throne by him, and had taken the oath of allegiance to him.

5. Like Pilate, Zedekiah would have taken a milder course, but was mastered by those under him.

6. *the son of Hammelech*] See note on xxxvi. 26.

*prison*] guard.

*dungeon*] Apparently a bottle dungeon, as shown by the difficulty of getting in and out; whether once used as a cistern, we cannot tell. The princes evidently meant him to die here, without their having the odium of killing him.

7. On two critical occasions Jeremiah, when near death at the hands of his own people, was released by foreigners, Ebed-melech and Nebuchadnezzar (xxxviii. 7 and xxxix. 11). Comp. the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

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house, and spake to the king, saying, (9) My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for *there is* no more bread in the city. (10) Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die. (11) So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah. (12) And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now *these* old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine arm holes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. (13) So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison. (14) Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took Jeremiah the prophet unto him into the third entry that *is* in the house of the LORD: and the king said unto Jeremiah, I will ask thee a thing; hide nothing from me. (15) Then Jeremiah

9. *he is like to die*] Heb. *he is dead*. Similarly *no more* bread. Ebed-melech in the strength of his feeling uses strong language.

10. *thirty men*] As protection against the princes and others. This shows the desperate condition of the people in the siege. That he was aware of the danger to himself, is shown in xxxix. 17.

13. *and Jeremiah remained*] See note on xxxvii. 16.

#### *Fourth Stage of Imprisonment,—Court of the Guard.*

14. Compare the parallel passages bearing on this interview, viz., xxxii. 1-5 and xxxiv. 1-7. This is the second time the king has sent for Jeremiah to consult him privately. See xxxvii. 17.

said unto Zedekiah, If I declare *it* unto thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death? and if I give thee counsel, wilt thou not hearken unto me? (16) So Zedekiah the king sware secretly unto Jeremiah, saying, *As* the LORD liveth, that made us this soul, I will not put thee to death, neither will I give thee into the hand of these men that seek thy life. (17) Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house: (18) but if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand. (19) And Zedekiah the king said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they mock me. (20) But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver *thee*. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the LORD, which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live. (21) But if thou refuse to go forth, this *is* the word that the LORD hath showed me: (22) and, behold, all the women that are left in the king of Judah's house *shall be* brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes, and

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17. *king of Babylon's princes*] Nebuchadnezzar was not there in person. So 'the Chaldeans,' not 'Nebuchadnezzar,' throughout these chapters. That he was absent at the capture of the city, is shown in ch. xxxix. Tyre was being besieged at the same time. Nebuchadnezzar had many wars on hand, but he was at Jerusalem at the beginning of the siege (xxxix. 1; lii. 4; 2 Kings xxv. 1; Ezek. xxi. 21).

22. Comp. Obad. 7, where the language is almost identical. See note at a much longer parallel passage at xlix. 7-22.

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those *women* shall say, Thy friends have set thee on, and have prevailed against thee: thy feet are sunk in the mire, *and* they are turned away back. (23) So they shall bring out all thy wives and thy children to the Chaldeans: and thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon: and thou shalt cause this city to be burnt with fire. (24) Then said Zedekiah unto Jeremiah, Let no man know of these words, and thou shalt not die. (25) But if the princes hear that I have talked with thee, and they come unto thee, and say unto thee, Declare unto us now what thou hast said unto the king, hide it not from us, and we will not put thee to death; also what the king said unto thee: (26) then thou shalt say unto them, I presented my supplication before the king, that he would not cause me to return to Jonathan's house, to die there. (27) Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, and asked him: and he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded. So they left off speaking with him; for the matter was not perceived. (28) So Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken: and he was *there* when Jerusalem was taken.

CH. xxxix. (1) In the ninth year of Zedekiah

23. *cause to be burned*] Heb. *burn*.

24. Again showing Zedekiah's weakness, which appears in so many ways. Very different from Jehoiakim.

27. *all...all*] See note on i. 15. On Jeremiah's action in this matter, see *Intro.*, p. 39.

28. *So Jeremiah abode*] Or, *and Jeremiah dwelt*. (See note on xxxvii. 16.)

*and he was there, etc.*] Attach this to next chapter, and read, *And it came to pass when Jerusalem was taken (in the ninth... broken up) that all the princes.*

king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchad-<sup>The Siege, 589-587.</sup>rezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and they besieged it. (2) *And* in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth *day* of the month, the city was broken up. (3) And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, *even* Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, Rab-saris, Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, with all the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon. (4) And it came to pass, *that* when Zedekiah the king of Judah saw them, and all the men of war, then they fled, and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls: and he went out the way of the plain. (5) But the Chaldeans' army pursued

## CH. XXXIX.

1. For repetition in ch. lii. and 2 Kings xxv., see introd. note on ch. lii.

*tenth month*] Ch. lii. 4 adds 'in the tenth day of the month.' *came Nebuchadrezzar*] See note on xxxviii. 17.

2. *city broken up*] Ch. lii. 6 explains that provisions had failed before a breach was made.

3. Rab-saris means prince of the eunuchs, and Rab-mag prince of the magi. This shows that the names of the last two officers are followed by their descriptive titles. It is thought probable that the name of the first is also followed by a descriptive title, leaving only three proper names in the verse. Nebo in proper names elsewhere comes at the beginning of the word, as in Nabo-polassar, Nebu-chadnezzar, Nebu-zaradan. The three names with their titles may be Nergal-sharezer, samgar; Nebu-sarsechim, rab-saris; Nergal-sharezer, rab-mag. Three officers are named at verse 13 as having been prominent at a later stage, and each of them has a descriptive title.

4. The king and others escaped by the south side of the city, but we have not sufficient knowledge of the ancient topography to follow the description with certainty.

*plain*] *Arabah*. The lower Jordan valley.

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after them, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, to Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he gave judgment upon him. (6) Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. (7) Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon. (8) And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem. (9) Then Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive into Babylon the remnant of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to him,

5. *Riblah*] About the north end of Lebanon, between the two Lebanon ranges, in the Orontes valley. Nebuchadnezzar seems to have made this his base, from which he carried on various military operations. Some twenty-two years earlier, another Jewish king, Jehoahaz, was put in bonds by Pharaoh-necho at this place, to be led captive to Egypt (2 Kings xxiii. 33).

6. See the cruelty of those Eastern kings. Zedekiah's eyes are not put out until his sons are killed in his presence. It would appear as if the nobles were also killed before he was blinded.

7. *to carry*] We learn from lii. 11, 2 Kings xxv. 7, that this purpose of carrying him to Babylon was executed. It was not so with Jehoiakim in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6.

8, 9. This was apparently at a later stage, after they returned from Riblah with instructions from Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuzar-adan would appear not to have been at Jerusalem at its capture. But this and the following verses would indicate that he was the chief officer dispatched by the king to take charge of the destruction of the city, the marshalling of the captives, the deliverance of Jeremiah, etc. His arrival was a month and a day after the capture. Comp. verses 6 and 12 of ch. lii., also ch. i. 3.



with the rest of the people that remained. (10) But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard left of the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time. (11) Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard, saying, (12) Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee. (13) So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard sent, and Nebushasban, Rab-saris, and Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, and all the king of Babylon's princes; (14) even they sent, and took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and committed him unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people. (15) Now the word of the LORD came unto

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11, 12. Doubtless Nebuchadnezzar heard from prisoners and deserters that Jeremiah long urged submission to the Chaldeans, and suffered for doing so.

13. Only one of the three chief officers now the same as a month before. See note on verse 3.

14. During the intervening month Jeremiah was kept a prisoner as the Chaldeans found him, a fact which shows wonderful discipline among the military powers of Babylon. This verse states his subsequent treatment in brief. In the next chapter we learn that he was taken north to Ramah with the other captives, and that from that place he was set free and went to Gedaliah to Mizpah. See xl. 6.

*so he dwelt*] Heb. *and he dwelt*. Observe the refrain mentioned in note on xxxvii. 16. He dwelt in various places of imprisonment: now he dwelt among the people.

15. Not to interrupt the history, this special prophecy to Ebed-melech has been reserved till the end of the section to which it belongs. See a similar prophecy to Baruch reserved to the end of the whole book, with the sole exception of the prophecies to the nations.

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Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying, (16) Go and speak to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and they shall be *accomplished* in that day before thee. (17) But I will deliver thee in that day, saith the LORD; and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou *art* afraid. (18) For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee; because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD.

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CH. XL. (1) The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after that Nebuzar-adan the captain

16. See xxxviii. 7.

CH. XL. 1-6.—*Jeremiah's Deliverance from Prison.*

What was stated in brief in xxxix. 14 is here given in detail.

1. *The word*] It is remarkable that there is no 'word' of prophecy in this passage. The 'word,' therefore, may mean the *action* which Jeremiah was guided by God to take, or it may mean the *history* which follows, or the teaching in this and the following chapters. This is the beginning of a new section, which from its freshness and fulness of detail appears to have been written immediately after the events. It closes at the end of ch. xliii. or the end of ch. xlv.

*taken him, being bound in chains*] We do not know whether the Jews kept him bound. He seems to have had a certain amount of freedom in the court of the guard (xxxii. 6 ff). This binding may have been by the Chaldeans when they were binding all the captives to take them to Babylon (xl. 4). Prior to the burning of Jerusalem, they took them all to Ramah as their rallying-point, from which, after the burning, the departure was to be made. Comparing this with xxxix. 14, we gather that a month after the capture of the city (see note on xxxix. 8, 9) the Chaldeans found Jeremiah still in prison, took him with the other captives to Ramah, and probably after the demolition

of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him, being bound in chains among all that were carried away captive of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon. (2) And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said unto him, The LORD thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place. (3) Now the LORD hath brought *it*, and done according as he hath said : because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you. (4) And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which *were* upon thine hand. If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come, and I will look well unto thee ; but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear : behold, all the land *is* before thee : whither it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go. (5) Now, while he was not yet gone back, *he said*, Go back also to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people ; or go wheresoever it seemeth convenient unto thee to go. So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go. (6) Then

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(xl. 2, 3) gave him his choice of going to Babylon or staying behind.

2. *captain of the guard...said*] Nebuzar-adan makes no mention of the instructions of his master (xxxix. 11). He takes credit to himself for this act of grace.

*The Lord thy God*] A curious representation, by a heathen, of Jeremiah's own teaching.

5. *Gedaliah*] See notes on xxvi. 24 and xl. 7.

6. Mizpah and Ramah were both five or six miles from Jerusalem ; Mizpah north-west, and Ramah straight north.

*and dwell*] Although this is a different section, it closes with a reminder of the old refrain. See note on xxxvii. 16.

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went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah, and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

(7) Now, when all the captains of the forces which *were* in the fields, *even* they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, and of the poor of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to Babylon: (8) then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men. (9) And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, sware unto them, and to their men, saying, Fear not to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. (10) As for

CHS. XL. 7—XLI. 18.—*The Satrapy of Gedaliah.*

7. *Gedaliah*] On the one hand, Nebuchadnezzar would not be inclined to make another of the royal house ruler, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah having proved so false to their oaths; and on the other, he must have heard that Gedaliah belonged to a house which believed with Jeremiah, and would therefore submit.

*captains, etc.*] Evidently lawless men, who were more or less bandits or soldiers of fortune.

8. We know nothing of these men beyond what is stated in this section. The most prominent are Ishmael, with all the bold, bad qualities of a soldier of fortune, and Johanan, who has a generous as well as an adventurous spirit, but is fickle. Netophah was near Beth-lehem (Neh. vii. 26).

10. *summer fruits*] The people were carried captive in the fifth month (i. 3; lii. 12), and the seventh month (xli. 1) was after the present visit. We may now, therefore, be in July or August.

*cities that ye have taken*] From which the Chaldeans carried off the inhabitants.

me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, to serve the Chaldeans, which will come unto us; but ye, gather ye wine, and summer fruits, and oil, and put *them* in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that ye have taken. (11) Likewise when all the Jews that *were* in Moab, and among the Ammonites, and in Edom, and that *were* in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan; (12) even all the Jews returned out of all places whither they were driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits very much. (13) Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* in the fields, came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, (14) and said unto him, Dost thou certainly know that Baalis the king of the Ammonites hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to slay thee? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not. (15) Then Johanan the son of Kareah spake to Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly, saying, Let me go, I pray thee, and I will slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know *it*: wherefore should he slay thee, that all the Jews which are gathered unto thee should be scattered, and the remnant in Judah perish? (16) But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said unto Johanan the son of Kareah, Thou shalt not do this thing; for thou speakest falsely of Ishmael.

CH. XLI. (1) Now it came to pass in the seventh

11. *Jews*] Apparently fugitives during the disturbed period of the siege.

14. *believed them not*] The absence of suspicion is in keeping with the high character of his family.

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month, *that* Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, and the princes of the king, even ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and there they did eat bread together in Mizpah. (2) Then arose Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, with the sword, and slew him, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land. (3) Ishmael also slew all the Jews that were with him, *even* with Gedaliah, at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that were found there, *and* the men of war. (4) And it came to pass, the second day after he had slain Gedaliah, and no man knew *it*, (5) that there came certain from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, *even* fourscore men, having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to

CH. xli. 1. *seed royal*] The fact that Gedaliah was of higher character and of lower rank than himself, and that he was set now above him in position, may have moved him to enmity. His being of Jeremiah's party would also anger him. This last consideration may have had weight with Baalis (xl. 14). See xxvii. 3.

*and the princes*] The R.V. reads, with probability, *and one of the chief officers*. 'One of' being supplied, because the ten men seem to be the only ones who are with him. See verse 2.

*the king*] We do not know what king, Jewish or Ammonite. *even*] *and*.

*did eat bread together*] According to Eastern sentiment, this greatly aggravated the crime.

3. *with him*] *i.e.*, in the house, for Jeremiah and many others were left in Mizpah (verse 10).

*there, and*] Omit *and*.

5. *Shechem, etc.*] Many Israelites continued to recognise Jerusalem as the place of worship. See 2 Kings xxiii. 19; Chron. xxxiv. 9, etc.

bring *them* to the house of the LORD. (6) And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, weeping all along as he went: and it came to pass, as he met them, he said unto them, Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. (7) And it was *so*, when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them, *and cast them* into the midst of the pit, he, and the men that *were* with him. (8) But ten men were found among them that said unto Ishmael, Slay us not; for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey. So he forbore, and slew them not among their brethren. (9) Now the pit wherein Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies of the men, whom he had slain because of Gedaliah, *was* it which Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel: *and* Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with *them that were* slain. (10) Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that *were* in Mizpah, *even* the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and departed to go over to the Ammonites. (11) But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, heard

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8. *in the field*] A common practice to hide treasures thus: hence the Parable of the Hidden Treasure.

9. *because*] *by the side*.

*Asa...made*] Not mentioned elsewhere; but see 1 Kings xv. 22; 2 Chron. xvi. 6.

12. *Gideon*] Only a mile or two north of Mizpah. They would move slowly, having so large a band of captives. See verse 16.

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of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done, (12) then they took all the men, and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by the great waters that *are* in Gibeon. (13) Now it came to pass, *that* when all the people which *were* with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, then they were glad. (14) So all the people that Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah cast about and returned, and went unto Johanan the son of Kareah. (15) But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites. (16) Then took Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, all the remnant of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, from Mizpah, after *that* he had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, *even* mighty men of war, and the women, and the children, and the eunuchs, whom he had brought again from Gibeon: (17) and they departed and dwelt in the habitation of Chimham, which is by Beth-lehem, to go to enter into Egypt, (18) because of the Chaldeans: for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam,

15. *eight*] Two men lost in the fight. See verses 1 and 2.

17. *the habitation of Chimham*] Heb. *Geruth Chimham*. They would have to halt at many places on the way. This one is specially mentioned, because it was the first, because they remained at it ten days (xlii. 7), and because at it the resolution was taken to go on.

*Geruth*, a word which only occurs here, appears to mean a lodging-place or Khan. This must have been near where Joseph and Mary could find no room in the inn. It is supposed that the Khan of the present verse was erected by the son of Barzillai (2 Kings xix. 38 ff).



whom the king of Babylon made governor in the land. After the Siege,  
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CH. XLII. (1) Then all the captains of the forces, Rush to Egypt,  
587. and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people, from the least even unto the greatest, came near, (2) and said unto Jeremiah the prophet, Let, we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee, and pray for us unto the Lord thy God, *even* for all this remnant; (for we are left *but* a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us;) (3) that the Lord thy God may show us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do. (4) Then Jeremiah the prophet said unto them, I have heard *you*; behold, I will pray unto the LORD your God, according to your words; and it shall come to pass, *that* whatsoever thing the LORD shall answer you, I will declare *it* unto you; I will keep nothing back from you. (5) Then they said to Jeremiah, The LORD be a true and faithful

## CH. XLII.

In these chapters which differ so much from the rest of the book, especially in so much prominence and detail being given to matters which appear to be of little consequence, it is interesting to observe many phrases which prove that they are from the same hand as the book generally, such as, 'from the least even unto the greatest'; 'by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence'; 'an execration and an astonishment, and a curse and a reproach'; 'build and not pull down, plant and not pluck up.' See also xliii. 11; and 'all' in xliii. 1, 2, 4, 5.

1. *Jezaniah*] In xliii. 2 called Azariah. LXX. has Azariah in the present verse.

2. Men without religion will seek God in trouble. Here they say to Jeremiah, 'the Lord *thy* God,' but he refuses to acknowledge God otherwise than as the God of Israel, and therefore in verse 4 he says, 'the Lord *your* God.' Accordingly they come in verse 6 to say '*our* God.'

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witness between us, if we do not even according to all things for the which the LORD thy God shall send thee to us. (6) Whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we send thee; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the LORD our God. (7) And it came to pass after ten days, that the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah. (8) Then called he Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces which *were* with him, and all the people, from the least even to the greatest, (9) and said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to present your supplication before him; (10) If ye still abide in this land, then will I build you, and not pull *you* down, and I will plant you, and not pluck *you* up; for I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you. (11) Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the LORD: for I *am* with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand. (12) And I will show mercies unto you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land. (13) But if ye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of the LORD your God, (14) saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound

7. *after ten days*] Jeremiah could not tell at once. The circumstances were altered, now that the governor set up by Nebuchadnezzar, and the Chaldeans left with him, were killed. He had to wait for Divine guidance, and that guidance was not given until sufficient time elapsed for the panic to subside.

12. God, not Nebuchadnezzar, rules.

14. *hunger of bread*] Many of the company had experienced famine during the siege. All might think that in the country now desolate there was danger of starvation.

of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread ; and there will we dwell : (15) and now therefore hear the word of the LORD, ye remnant of Judah ; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel ; If ye wholly set your faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there ; (16) then it shall come to pass, *that* the sword, which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, shall follow close after you there in Egypt ; and there ye shall die. (17) So shall it be with all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there ; they shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence : and none of them shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them. (18) For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel ; As mine anger and my fury hath been poured forth upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem ; so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt : and ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach ; and ye shall see this place no more. (19) The LORD hath said concerning you, O ye remnant of Judah ; Go ye not into Egypt : know certainly that I have admonished you this day. (20) For ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto the LORD your God, saying, Pray for us unto the LORD our God ; and according unto all that the LORD our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do *it*. (21) And *now* I have this day declared *it* to you ; but ye have not obeyed the voice of the LORD your God, nor any *thing* for the which he hath sent me unto you. (22) Now therefore know certainly that

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20. This enlarging upon the going into Egypt points to the likelihood that the chapters were written very shortly after the arrival there.

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ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire to go *and* to sojourn.

CH. XLIII. (1) And it came to pass, *that* when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the LORD their God, for which the LORD their God had sent him to them, *even* all these words, (2) then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there: (3) but Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put us to death, and carry us away captives into Babylon. (4) So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah. (5) But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah; (6) *even* men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan,

#### CH. XLIII.

1, 2, 4, 5. *all*] See note on i. 15.

3. *Baruch...setteth thee on*] Baruch belonged to the upper classes, and may have been suspected of sympathy with the powers that be. Comp. xxxii. 12 with li. 59.

6. Women and children would not be transported to Babylon in so large numbers as men, and therefore they would be in large proportion in the present company.

and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah. (7) So they came into the land of Egypt: <sup>Rush to Egypt, 587.</sup> for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD. Thus came they *even* to Tahpanhes. (8) Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying, (9) Take great stones in thine hand, and hide them in the clay in the brick-kiln, which *is* at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah; (10) and say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them. (11) And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, *and deliver such as are* for death to death; and *such as are* for captivity to captivity; and *such as are* for the sword to the sword. (12) And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment; and he shall go forth from thence in peace. (13) He shall break also the images of Beth-shemesh, that *is* in the land of Egypt; and

7. *Tahpanhes*] See note on ii. 16.

8. *Then*] Heb. *And*. This is not an adverb of time. A new paragraph begins here.

9. *Pharaoh's house*] Tahpanhes was a depôt of Ionian mercenaries maintained by Pharaoh.

*brick-kiln*] Probably *quadrangular pavement*.

13. *images*] *pillars*.

*Beth-shemesh*] Literally, *House of the Sun*; called also *Heliopolis* or *On*, a city with a famous temple of the Sun, about ten miles N.E. of Cairo. The pillars were obelisks, like Cleopatra's Needle. Tahpanhes and Beth-shemesh, the strongest and most sacred places in this Egypt in which the fugitive Jews

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the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire.

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CH. XLIV. (1) The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, which dwell at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Noph, and in the country of Pathros, saying, (2) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they *are* a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein, (3) because of their wickedness

thought themselves secure from Nebuchadnezzar, would alike yield to him.

#### CH. XLIV.

This is the latest of Jeremiah's prophecies bearing on the Jews. It is a miserable episode, and a fitting close to his labours among his people. It shows the depth to which the unbelieving nation fell before that era in its history was concluded. Although he had long before learned clearly from the Vision of the Baskets of Figs, that the true hope of Israel lay with the exiles in Babylon, and that they were to perpetuate the promises, yet he stayed in Judah himself. He refused to accept the offer of Nebuzar-adan. Those who were left in the country were still in a manner the old stock, and he remained with them. When this remnant, therefore, disappears, Israel in its old form passes out of sight with it.

1. *Migdol*] Near the Bitter Lakes. See Exod. xiv. 2.

*Tahpanhes...Noph*] See notes on ii. 16.

*Pathros*] Upper Egypt: south of Memphis.

An interval has evidently elapsed since Jeremiah and the Jews passed Tahpanhes. Some appear to have remained there: others have taken up their quarters in the other places named; and Jeremiah is with those in Pathros (verse 15). Besides those who came with him, there would be some who had come at other times. The people who leaned to Egypt had always been the unbelieving party.

which they have committed to provoke me to anger, <sup>In Egypt.</sup> in that they went to burn incense, *and* to serve other gods, whom they knew not, *neither* they, ye, nor your fathers. (4) Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending *them*, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. (5) But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods. (6) Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted *and* desolate, as at this day. (7) Therefore now thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; Wherefore commit ye *this* great evil against your souls, to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling, out of Judah, to leave you none to remain; (8) in that ye provoke me unto wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye be gone to dwell, that ye might cut yourselves off, and that ye might be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth? (9) Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? (10) They are not humbled *even* unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers. (11) Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will set my face against

8. *gone*] Heb. *coming*. The word 'come' is used throughout.

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you for evil, and to cut off all Judah. (12) And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed, *and* fall in the land of Egypt; they shall *even* be consumed by the sword *and* by the famine: they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine; and they shall be an execration, *and* an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach. (13) For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: (14) so that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return but such as shall escape. (15) Then all the men which knew that their wives had burnt incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, (16) *As for* the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee: (17) but we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for *then* had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and

12. *all*] Here, as usual, meaning *the company at large*, or *generally*. See verse 14.

15. The women occupy a prominent place, as being addicted to the worship of the Queen of Heaven—probably the Moon Goddess.



saw no evil. (18) But since we left off to burn incense <sup>in Egypt.</sup> to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all *things*, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. (19) And when we burnt incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men? (20) Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him *that* answer, saying, (21) The incense that ye burnt in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye, and your fathers, your kings, and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them, and came it *not* into his mind? (22) So that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, *and* because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day. (23) Because ye have burnt incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day. (24) Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, Hear the word of

18. As a matter of fact, special troubles had fallen upon the nation after Josiah's reformation, and the speakers traced them to that.

19. *worship*] Or, *fashion* or *make in the likeness of*,—probably to imitate the appearance of the moon, either by a round cake or a crescent. Similar offerings are presented in China to-day.

*without our men*] We had their consent. See Num. xxx. 6, 7.

In Egypt.

the LORD, all Judah that *are* in the land of Egypt : (25) Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying ; Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her : ye will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows. (26) Therefore hear ye the word of the LORD, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt ; Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord GOD liveth. (27) Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good : and all the men of Judah that *are* in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. (28) Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or theirs. (29) And this *shall be* a sign unto you, saith the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall surely stand against you for evil : (30) Thus saith the LORD ; Behold, I will give Pharaoh-hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life ; as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life.

27. *all*] Qualified in next verse.

28. *gone*] See note on verse 8.

30. This does not imply that Hophra was put to death by Nebuchadrezzar. Zedekiah when taken was not.

CH. XLV. (1) The word that Jeremiah the prophet Baruch, 605. spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah, when he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, (2) Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch; (3) Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I

## CH. XLV.

The place of this chapter, at the very end of the prophecies which relate to the Jewish people, would point to Baruch as the compiler of the book. He modestly placed his own last. The chapter must have been originally put as a postscript to the first twenty chapters. See verse 1; also *Compilation*, sect. 13.

1. *when he had written*] Heb. *in his writing*.

*these words...in the fourth year*] i.e., *these prophecies*. The prophecies written in the fourth year were those which Jehoiakim burned (ch. xxxvi.). Writings, however, which could be at once spoken of as *these*, and as written in Jehoiakim's fourth year, must have been the rescript made after the destruction of the roll in the fifth year; the roll was then enlarged, chs. xi.-xx. being added to it (xxxvi. 32). This chapter must have been at first appended to these twenty chapters, or they could not have been spoken of as *these*.

3. Baruch, who was well connected socially (xxxii. 12 and li. 59), appears to have shrunk from being committed to association with Jeremiah. The connection would involve him in trouble, and even danger to life. Jeremiah was in hiding at the time, and from the beginning the proposal was not only to write but to read the prophecies in public. This prophecy to Baruch may not have been committed to writing when the roll was originally composed. And by the time when the roll came to be rewritten and enlarged, both Jeremiah and Baruch had to hide. The trouble in its aggravated form would naturally suggest the appending of this 'word,' to tell both of them of the trouble itself and the security, as stated in the last verse.

*I fainted in my sighing*] These words (the same in Heb.) occur in Ps. vi. 6.

Baruch, 605.

find no rest. (4) Thus shalt thou say unto him, The LORD saith thus, Behold, *that* which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land. (5) And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek *them* not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD; but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

The Nations.

The Nations—  
Egypt.

CH. XLVI. (1) The word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Gentiles; (2) against Egypt, against the army of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of

*I find no rest*] If he once entangle himself with Jeremiah, farewell peace.

4. Comp. i. 10. The phrases are often repeated in Jeremiah.

5. *seekest, etc.*] Comp. 2 Kings v. 26.

*thy life, etc.*] He would always escape with life, but he must look for no more.

#### CHS. XLVI.—LI.—*Roll of the Nations.*

##### CH. XLVI.—I. *Egypt.*

##### CH. XLVI. 1-12.—*Defeat at Carchemish.*

1. The verse is a heading to the Roll of Nations generally, and not to this chapter in particular. This suggests that similar headings throughout the Book of Jeremiah were added by the compiler, and did not belong to the original writing of each prophecy. See Compilation, sect. 14.

*word*] We should have expected 'words,' for there are many 'words' (*i.e.*, prophecies). 'Word' may be used here to mean not 'a prophecy,' but 'prophecy'; or to mean the 'passage' in the Book of Jeremiah which bears upon the Nations (see xl. 1).

2. *against...against*] of...of, or concerning...concerning.

*against Egypt*] This refers, not only to the first prophecy,

Josiah king of Judah. (3) Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle. (4) Harness the horses; and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with *your* helmets; furbish the spears, *and* put on the brigandines. (5) Wherefore have I seen them dismayed *and* turned away back? and their mighty ones are beaten down, and are fled apace, and look not back: *for* fear *was* round about, saith the LORD. (6) Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; they shall stumble, and fall toward the north by the river Euphrates. (7) Who *is* this *that* cometh

The Nations—  
Egypt.

described in the rest of the verse, and extending from verse 3 to verse 12; but also to the second, described in verse 13, and extending from verse 14 to verse 28.

The discourse on Egypt comes first, because that nation was the most important in its relation to Judah, as well as the greatest in itself (*i.e.*, excluding Babylon, whose power was now extending). Judah was at this time subject to Egypt, and the Egyptian party was dominant. It held that Egypt was the great power on which, in opposition to Jeremiah's teaching, Judah should lean. It was important for him, therefore, to teach that Egypt would fall. These foreign prophecies were intended to tell in the main upon the Jews. As the battle of Carchemish took place in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (605 B.C.), this prophecy must belong to the third or fourth year of that king. It would be after Jeremiah's visits to the Euphrates, described in ch. xiii., when probably he saw the army which he here describes, and before his prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar's universal conquest in ch. xxv. Indeed ch. xxv. was probably not only after the prophecy of the battle of Carchemish, but after the battle itself. In contrast to ch. xxv., it will be observed that no mention is here made either of Nebuchadnezzar or of Babylon. Jeremiah may still not have known who the conqueror was to be.

3. *Order ye*] *i.e.*, *prepare ye*, or *put in order*.

5. *fear was round about*] A common phrase with Jeremiah. See vi. 25; xx. 3.

7. *a flood*] Heb. *the river*, used specially of the Nile. The

The Nations—  
Egypt.

up as a flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers? (8) Egypt riseth up like a flood, and *his* waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I will go up, *and* will cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof. (9) Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots; and let the mighty men come forth; the Ethiopians and the Libyans, that handle the shield; and the Lydians, that handle *and* bend the bow. (10) For this *is* the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood; for the Lord GOD of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates. (11) Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; *for* thou shalt not be cured. (12) The nations have heard of thy shame, and thy cry hath filled the land: for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, *and* they are fallen both together. (13) The word that the LORD spake to Jeremiah

overflowing of the Egyptian army into Western Asia is compared to the rise and overflow of their river, and of its branches and canals.

9. *The Ethiopians, the Libyans, the Lydians* are also mentioned in Ezek. xxx. 5, as being in the Egyptian army. These peoples are all Hamitic, and belong to Africa. See Gen. x. 6, 13. The Lydians of this verse are not to be confused with the Lydians of Western Asia (Gen. x. 22). For the Libyans, see Acts ii. 10.

12. *mighty...mighty*] Both belonging to the Egyptian army.

#### 13-28.—*Babylonian Invasion of Egypt.*

This prophecy is of much later date than the preceding, probably more than eighteen years after. If it was needful for those living in Judah in the early years of Jehoiakim to be told

the prophet, how Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon should come *and* smite the land of Egypt. (14) The Nations—Egypt. Declare ye in Egypt, and publish in Migdol, and publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes: say ye, Stand fast, and prepare thee; for the sword shall devour round about thee. (15) Why are thy valiant *men* swept away? they stood not, because the LORD did drive them. (16) He made many to fall, yea, one fell upon another; and they said, Arise, and let us go again to our own people, and to the land of our nativity, from the oppressing sword. (17) They did cry there, Pharaoh king of Egypt *is but* a noise; he hath passed the time appointed. (18) *As* I live, saith the King, whose name *is* The LORD of hosts, Surely

that the splendid Egyptian army at Carchemish would be overthrown, it was equally important for the Jews who fled to Egypt to learn that they would not find safety there. The prophecy seems to have been spoken after Jeremiah himself was carried to Egypt.

14. The same towns as are named in xlv. 1 point to the probability that this prophecy is after Jeremiah has come to those places. See language similar in other respects at l. 2, which probably also belongs to Jeremiah's days in Egypt. See v. 20; xlv. 1.

*the sword, etc.*] The nations round about, such as Judah and Philistia, which lay on the side towards Babylon. They are represented as destroyed when Nebuchadnezzar comes to Egypt. But this does not necessarily imply that they were destroyed when the prophecy was given.

16. *our own people...our nativity*] This may refer both to allies (such as in xlv. 9) and mercenaries (such as at Tahpanhes, xlv. 21).

17. *Pharaoh*] *i.e.*, Hophra (xlv. 30), not Necho (xlv. 2), who had now been dead for some years,

18. Tabor was only 1800 feet high, but it occupied a very prominent position in the plain. Carmel, too, is only 500 feet high, but it is a bold promontory overlooking the sea. So would Nebuchadnezzar appear in his majesty.

The Nations—  
Egypt.

as Tabor *is* among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea, *so* shall he come. (19) O thou daughter dwelling in Egypt, furnish thyself to go into captivity: for Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant. (20) Egypt *is like* a very fair heifer, *but* destruction cometh; it cometh out of the north. (21) Also her hired men *are* in the midst of her like fatted bullocks; for they also are turned back, *and* are fled away together: they did not stand, because the day of their calamity was come upon them, *and* the time of their visitation. (22) The voice thereof shall go like a serpent; for they shall march with an army, and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood. (23) They shall cut down her forest, saith the LORD, though it cannot be searched; because they are more than the grasshoppers, and *are* innumerable. (24) The daughter of Egypt shall be confounded; she shall be delivered into the hand of the people of the north. (25) The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saith; Behold, I will punish the multitude of No, and

19. *daughter dwelling in*] Heb. *inhabitant daughter of*. It is doubtful whether this refers to the people of Egypt, or to the Jews who had gone to dwell there. A similar phrase in Zech. ii. 7, 'Zion inhabitant daughter of Babylon,' would point to the Jews. See also xlviii. 18.

*Noph*] i.e., *Memphis*, the capital. When the capital is thus destroyed, the country at large is ruined.

20. *destruction*] The Hebrew word occurs here only; it should probably be translated 'gadfly.'

21. *hired men*] The soldiers at Tahpanhes were mercenaries from Ionia.

22. Axes were carried by the Babylonian soldiers.

23. In using their axes to cut down the opposing army, they would be, says the prophet, like men cutting down a forest.

*though*] Rather *because*. Soldiers cut a forest because it is impenetrable.

*they are*] i.e., the Chaldeans.



Pharaoh, and Egypt, with their gods, and their kings; <sup>The Nations—</sup>even Pharaoh, and *all* them that trust in him: (26) <sup>Egypt.</sup> and I will deliver them into the hand of those that seek their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants; and afterward it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old, saith the LORD. (27) But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel: for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be in rest and at ease, and none shall make *him* afraid. (28) Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I *am* with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure: yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.

CH. XLVII. (1) The word of the LORD that came to <sup>The Nations—</sup>  
<sup>Philistines.</sup>

25. *the multitude*] *Amon*, the chief god of the Egyptians, who had his temple at No, or Thebes, in Upper Egypt.

26. *his servants*] Jeremiah is now familiar with the fact that Nebuchadnezzar carries on his battles by officials in his own absence. See ch. 39.

27, 28. These verses, which are taken almost exactly from xxx. 10, 11, are not a mistaken interpolation. The remnant Jews who have fled to Egypt shall find no security there: Egypt itself shall be destroyed by the command of God; but the true Israel who are in Babylon shall have God for their guardian and saviour. See the ideas of this passage taken up and expanded in Isa. xli. 8 ff.

CH. XLVII.—2. *The Philistines.*

When Nebuchadnezzar was about to enter Palestine in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, Gaza was still standing (xxv. 20). The smiting of Gaza therefore must have been after that time. But as the battle of Carchemish had just taken place, after

The Nations—  
Philistines.

Jeremiah the prophet against the Philistines, before that Pharaoh smote Gaza. (2) Thus saith the LORD; Behold, waters rise up out of the north, and shall be an overflowing flood, and shall overflow the land, and all that is therein; the city, and them that dwell therein: then the men shall cry, and all the inhabitants of the land shall howl. (3) At the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his strong *horses*, at the rushing of his chariots, *and at* the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers shall not look back to *their* children for feebleness of hands, (4) because of the day that cometh to spoil all the Philistines, *and* to cut off from Tyrus and Zidon every helper that remaineth; for the LORD will spoil the Philistines, the remnant of

which 'the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land' (2 Kings xxiv. 7), and as the power that attacked Philistia came 'out of the north' (xlvii. 2), the attack would appear to have been made by the Egyptians when they were retreating from Carchemish. Although defeated, they were a powerful army, and they probably (verse 3) made the attack unexpectedly. We do not know the purpose of the onslaught, possibly to cover the disgrace of their own flight. Several expressions in the short chapter, as will be seen, resemble others which were used by Jeremiah at that period. The prophet does not indicate that he knew what power from the north would overwhelm the Philistines. There were troubles in the north, and they would bring woe to those neighbours.

While the prophecy was uttered before Pharaoh smote Gaza, it was inserted here after that event—probably at a very late period. The Roll of the Nations would appear to have been at first made up with its 'of Egypt,' 'of Moab,' etc., and then to have been opened up again to receive additions like this, with its separate kind of heading. And this, being upon Egypt, would naturally come next to ch. xlv.

1. *against*] *concerning*.

2. Comp. xlv. 7, 8.

3. *strong horses*] Comp. viii. 16.

4. *the day that cometh*] Comp. xlv. 10.

the country of Caphtor. (5) Baldness is come upon Gaza; Ashkelon is cut off *with* the remnant of their valley: how long wilt thou cut thyself? (6) O thou sword of the LORD, how long *will it be* ere thou be quiet? Put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still. (7) How can it be quiet, seeing the LORD hath given it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the sea-shore? there hath he appointed it.

The Nations--  
Philistines.

CH. XLVIII. (1) Against Moab thus saith the LORD

The Nations--  
Moab.

*Tyrus and Zidon*] In this Roll of the Nations, there is no prophecy 'concerning' Tyre and Zidon, but the Philistines were their allies.

*country*] *seacoast*. Caphtor, from which the Philistines came, was probably on the coast of the Delta. See Deut. ii. 23; Amos ix. 7.

5. *Baldness*] A sign of mourning. Comp. xvi. 6.

*cut thyself*] In grief or mourning.

*their valley*] *i.e.*, of Gaza and Ashkelon, the chief cities.

6. *sword of the LORD*] Jehovah is no mere God of the Jews. He rules over all.

CH. XLVIII.—3. *Moab*.

The Moabites and the children of Israel were neighbours, and all through their history they were rivals. They were of kindred race, and as illustrated in the story of Ruth they had their occasions of fraternal intercourse. Probably on account of their kinship and intercourse, the prophets blamed their disregard of God more severely than the people, say, of Tyre or Egypt, who had not the same opportunity of knowing the true God. The Moabites were in a manner related to Judah, as Israel was, although not so nearly. See xlviii. 13. Jeremiah in his denunciation was far from standing alone. There were, also, Amos (ii. 1-3), Isaiah (chs. xv. and xvi.), and Zephaniah (ii. 8-11); and in this prophecy he not only followed their sentiments, but to a considerable extent repeated their words. Moab had been showing no consciousness of wrong, and proudly held up its head as if with its worship of Chemosh it had been delivered to disregard Jehovah. Jeremiah showed that when judgments

The Nations—  
Moab.

of hosts, the God of Israel; Woe unto Nebo! for it is spoiled; Kiriathaim is confounded *and* taken; Misgab is confounded and dismayed. (2) *There shall be* no more praise of Moab: in Heshbon they have devised evil against it; come, and let us cut it off from *being* a nation: also thou shalt be cut down, O Madmen; the sword shall pursue thee. (3) A voice of crying *shall be* from Horonaim, spoiling and great destruction. (4) Moab is destroyed; her little ones have caused a cry to be heard. (5) For in the going up of Luhith continual weeping shall go up; for in the going down of Horonaim the enemies have heard a cry of destruction. (6) Flee, save your lives, and be like the heath in the wilderness. (7) For because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou shalt also be taken; and Chemosh shall go forth

were abroad, it would not escape. We do not know sufficiently the circumstances of Moab to understand all the allusions in the chapter. But it would seem that it belongs to the period preceding the first invasion of Nebuchadnezzar in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Nebuchadnezzar is not mentioned, being probably unknown to the prophet as yet. There is no reference to the troubles brought by Moab and other nations upon Judah in the later years of Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiv. 2).

1. *Against*] *Concerning*.

*Nebo...Kiriathaim*] Formerly with the tribe of Reuben (Num. xxxii. 37-38), but now belonging to Moab.

*Misgab*] meaning *the high fort*. It is not known whether this was the name of a town.

2. *Heshbon*] also formerly in Reuben (Num. xxxii. 37), but now belonging to Ammon (xlix. 3). The enemy 'from the north,' when they reach Heshbon, will arrange for the attack upon the Moabitish towns.

5. See Isa. xv. 5. This verse seems to show that Luhith is on a height, and Horonaim on lower ground.

*heath*] Or, *destitute*. See xvii. 6.

7. *Chemosh*] The god worshipped by the Moabites.

into captivity *with* his priests and his princes together. (8) And the spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape: the valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as the LORD hath spoken. (9) Give wings unto Moab, that it may flee and get away: for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein. (10) Cursed *be* he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully, and cursed *be* he that keepeth back his sword from blood. (11) Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed. (12) Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will send unto him wanderers, that shall cause him to wander, and shall empty his vessels, and break their bottles. (13) And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of Beth-el their confidence. (14) How say

The Nations—  
Moab.

10. *deceitfully*] *negligently*.

11-13. As an historical fact, the Moabites, from the time they conquered the Emims and took their land, continued to retain their possession (Deut. ii. 9, 10).

The present passage recalls Isa. xxv. 6 and Zeph. i. 12; the latter, which belonged to Jeremiah's early days, was probably chiefly in his mind. The Moabites, who had never been driven out, retained their strength, but it was strength of a gross kind: they were insolent and defiant. Like the wine in its lees, they drew their strength from themselves. It was not in God. They are now to be weakened. In verses 12 and 13 it is Divine judgment rather than purification that occupies the mind.

*wanderers, that shall cause him to wander*] Heb. *tilters, and they shall tilt him*. They shall not do their work gently, so as to retain him in good condition. They shall act roughly, and his homes shall be destroyed.

*Beth-el*] Jeremiah cannot forget the unfaithfulness of the Israelites (1 Kings xii. 29-33).

The Nations—  
Moab.

ye, We *are* mighty and strong men for the war? (15) Moab is spoiled, and gone up *out of* her cities, and his chosen young men are gone down to the slaughter, saith the King, whose name *is* The LORD of hosts. (16) The calamity of Moab *is* near to come, and his affliction hasteth fast. (17) All ye that are about him, bemoan him; and all ye that know his name, say, How is the strong staff broken, *and* the beautiful rod! (18) Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon, come down from *thy* glory, and sit in thirst; for the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, *and* he shall destroy thy strong holds. (19) O inhabitant of Aroer, stand by the way, and espy; ask him that fleeth, and her that escapeth, *and* say, What is done? (20) Moab is confounded; for it is broken down: howl and cry; tell ye it in Arnon, that Moab is spoiled, (21) and judgment is come upon the plain country; upon Holon, and upon Jahazah, and upon Mephaath, (22) and upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim, (23) and upon Kiriathaim, and upon Beth-gamul, and upon Beth-meon, (24) and upon Kerioth, and upon Bozrah, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far or near. (25) The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, saith the LORD. (26) Make ye him drunken; for he magnified *himself* against the LORD: Moab also shall

15. *gone up out of her cities*] Rather, *her cities are gone up* (in burning).

16. Comp. Deut. xxxii. 35.

18. *daughter that dost inhabit Dibon*] Heb. *inhabitant daughter of Dibon*; the same expression as in xlv. 19; of doubtful meaning, but possibly implying that although the Moabites were in possession, Dibon was not theirs. Like the other places mentioned, it was of the territory of Reuben. Both Moab and Ammon were robbers of Israel's territory (xlix. 1).

wallow in his vomit, and he also shall be in derision. The Nations—  
Moab.  
 (27) For was not Israel a derision unto thee? was he found among thieves? for since thou spakest of him, thou skippedst for joy. (28) O ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities, and dwell in the rock, and be like the dove *that* maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth. (29) We have heard the pride of Moab, (he is exceeding proud), his loftiness, and his arrogancy, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart. (30) I know his wrath, saith the LORD; but *it shall* not *be* so; his lies shall not so effect *it*. (31) Therefore will I howl for Moab, and I will cry out for all Moab; *mine heart* shall mourn for the men of Kir-heres. (32) O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer: thy plants are gone over the sea, they reach *even* to the sea of Jazer: the spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage. (33) And joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to fail from the wine-presses: none shall tread with shouting; *their* shouting *shall be* no shouting. (34) From the cry of Heshbon *even* unto Elealeh, *and even* unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice, from Zoar *even* unto Horonaim, *as* an heifer of three years old: for the waters also of Nimrim shall be desolate. (35) Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, saith the LORD, him that offereth in the high places, and him that burneth incense to his gods. (36) Therefore mine

29. Much of what follows is in Isa., chs. xv. and xvi. See Isa. xvi. 6.

32. *over the sea*] To the west side of the Dead Sea. See Isa. xvi. 8.

*sea of Jazer*] Probably an inland lake or artificial pond.

34. *as an heifer of three years old*] Or, *to Eglath-Shelehiyah*.

The Nations—  
Moab.

heart shall sound for Moab like pipes, and mine heart shall sound like pipes for the men of Kir-heres: because the riches *that* he hath gotten are perished. (37) For every head *shall be* bald, and every beard clipped: upon all the hands *shall be* cuttings, and upon the loins sackcloth. (38) *There shall be* lamentation generally upon all the house-tops of Moab, and in the streets thereof: for I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein *is* no pleasure, saith the LORD. (39) They shall howl, *saying*, How is it broken down! how hath Moab turned the back with shame! so shall Moab be a derision and a dismaying to all them about him. (40) For thus saith the LORD; Behold, he shall fly as an eagle, and shall spread his wings over Moab. (41) Kerioth is taken, and the strong holds are surprised, and the mighty men's hearts in Moab at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs. (42) And Moab shall be destroyed from *being* a people, because he hath magnified *himself* against the LORD. (43) Fear, and the pit, and the snare, *shall be* upon thee, O inhabitant of Moab, saith the LORD. (44) He that fleeth from the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that getteth up out of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for I will bring upon it, *even* upon Moab, the year of their visitation, saith the LORD. (45) They that fled stood under the shadow of Heshbon, because of the force: but a fire shall come forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon, and shall devour the corner of Moab, and the crown of the

36. *like pipes*] Used in mourning. See Matt. ix. 23.

40. *he shall fly*] The enemy from the north. This prophecy was before the first invasion of Nebuchadnezzar in Jehoiakim's fourth year, and Jeremiah probably did not know who the enemy was to be.



head of the tumultuous ones. (46) Woe be unto thee, O Moab! the people of Chemosh perisheth: for thy sons are taken captives, and thy daughters captives. (47) Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the LORD. Thus far *is* the judgment of Moab.

The Nations—  
Moab.

CH. XLIX. (1) Concerning the Ammonites, thus saith the LORD; Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why *then* doth their king inherit Gad, and his people dwell in his cities? (2) Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in Rabbah of the Ammonites; and it shall be a desolate heap, and

The Nations—  
Ammon.

47. *captivity*] God's care for the heathen begins to appear in the prophetic teaching. See xlix. 11.

*Thus far, etc.*] Probably added when the prophecies were collected. It will be observed that the prophecy against Moab is much longer than the rest, except Babylon, which stands by itself.

#### CH. XLIX. 1-6.—4. *Children of Ammon.*

1. *Ammonites*] Heb. *Children of Ammon*. These people are generally known, not as Ammonites or Ammon, but as children of Ammon: probably being so designated on account of their unsettled, wandering habits. They were northern neighbours of the Moabites. Comp. the mention of their one city Rabbah with that of the numerous towns of Moab in the previous chapter. The Ammonites lived to a large extent in tents.

*Hath Israel no sons?*] Israel was taken away captive, and the Ammonites obtained easy possession of the territory of Gad; but in Jeremiah's view the land should have been held in reserve for those who should return.

*their king*] Heb. *Malcom*. The god worshipped by the Ammonites.

2. *heap*] Or *tel*, the eminence on which a city was built. See xxx. 18.

*daughters*] The villages round about.

The Nations—  
Ammon.

her daughters shall be burnt with fire: then shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, saith the LORD. (3) Howl, O Heshbon, for Ai is spoiled: cry, ye daughters of Rabbah, gird you with sackcloth; lament, and run to and fro by the hedges: for their king shall go into captivity, *and* his priests and his princes together. (4) Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys, thy flowing valley, O backsliding daughter? that trusted in her treasures, *saying*, Who shall come unto me? (5) Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts, from all those that be about thee; and ye shall be driven out every man right forth; and none shall gather up him that wandereth. (6) And afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the LORD.

The Nations—  
Edom.

(7) Concerning Edom, thus saith the LORD of hosts; *Is* wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? is their wisdom vanished?

3. *their king*] Malcom.

6. Comp. xlviii. 47; xlix. 39; and with the whole section comp. Amos i. 13-15. See note on xlviii. 47.

#### 7-22.—5. *Edom.*

There is an evident connection between this passage and Obadiah. Comp. ch. xlix. 7 with Obad. 8; 9 with 5; 10 with 6, 7; 14 with 1; 15 with 2; 16 with 3, 4.

It is a question whether Jeremiah has drawn upon Obadiah or Obadiah upon Jeremiah. If the former, the present passage might be supposed to be the work of a later writer, because Obadiah probably prophesied after the downfall, and Jeremiah is not likely to have occupied himself with this subject at so late a date. Obadiah's priority is maintained by some on the ground that with him the arrangement and diction are more effective, and the language so far as it is common to both has nothing to remind us of Jeremiah. But (1), is it not more likely that a later prophet would improve upon Jeremiah than

(8) Flee ye, turn back, dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan; for I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him, the time *that* I will visit him. (9) If grape-gatherers come to thee, would they not leave *some* gleanings? if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough. (10) But I have made Esau

The Nations—  
Edom.

that Jeremiah would take away point and force from an earlier one? See similarly how Hab. iii. 17 improves upon Jer. v. 17. (2) While Obadiah appears to prophesy after the destruction of Jerusalem, with Jeremiah that event is still in the future. See not only the future tense of ver. 12, but also the preceding prophecies on nations, which apparently all belong to Jehoiakim's days, except the supplementary part on Egypt. (3) Jeremiah makes no allusion to Edom's conduct towards Judah at the destruction of the city, which is so prominent in Obadiah, and which could hardly have been passed over by Jeremiah if he had drawn upon Obadiah. See also Ps. cxxxvii. 7, which shows how in later times this conduct rankled in the breasts of Jews. (4) While it cannot be proved that the language which is common to both books is Jeremianic, neither can it be shown that it is alien to Jeremiah's style. On the whole, we take Jeremiah to be the original writer. In all probability, the prophecy belongs like the preceding ones to the period of ch. xxv., or at least to the early years of Jehoiakim.

7. Teman in Edom would appear to have been noted for men of wisdom. (Eliphaz in Job was a Temanite.) But human wisdom will not safeguard against God when He comes to judgment. Comp. ix. 25.

8. Dedan, beyond Edom. The Dedanites who passed through with their caravans were to guard against being involved in Edom's ruin.

*dwell deep*] In out-of-the-way places, in which the invader would not come upon them.

9. Read: *If grape-gatherers come to thee, they will not leave gleanings: if thieves by night, they will destroy their sufficiency.* The prophet does not mean to cast doubt upon their coming: they will assuredly come.

10. *But*] Read *For*. *I* is emphatic. God does it, therefore they His servants will invade the land.

The Nations—  
Edom.

bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself: his seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his neighbours, and he *is* not. (11) Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve *them* alive; and let thy widows trust in me. (12) For thus saith the LORD; Behold, they whose judgment *was* not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken; and *art* thou he *that* shall altogether go unpunished? thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink *of it*. (13) For I have sworn by myself, saith the LORD, that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes. (14) I have heard a rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent unto the heathen, *saying*, Gather ye together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle. (15) For, lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, *and* despised among men. (16) Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, *and* the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that

*secret places*] Mountain fastnesses to which they could retreat.

11. It is implied that the fathers and husbands will be slain. The verse otherwise appears to correspond to the bringing back of the captivity in xlviii. 47; xlix. 6. See note on xlviii. 47.

12. *whose judgment was not*] God might have been expected to show mercy rather than judgment to the Jews, and yet they had to drink (xxv. 18); how much more the Edomites. Comp. Rom. xi. 21, 24.

13. *Bozrah*] In Edom: not the Bozrah of xlviii. 24.

14. *ambassador*] Read *messenger*. Those who receive his message are not to consult about it, but to execute it. God alone rules and decides. They are His servants.

16. *clefts*] Lit. *places of refuge*.

*the rock*] This is either the town of Sela (which means *a rock*), now known to us by its Greek name *Petra*, or it must have been suggested by the name of that town. Many of its

holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the LORD. (17) Also Edom shall be a desolation: every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. (18) As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbour *cities* thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it. (19) Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan against the habitation of the strong: but I will suddenly make him run away from her: and who *is* a chosen *man*, *that* I may appoint over her? for who *is* like me? and who will appoint me the time? and who *is* that shepherd that will stand before me? (20) Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD that he hath taken against Edom,

The Nations--  
Edom.

houses were hewn out of the rock. The Edomites had great confidence in their mountain fastnesses.

18. *neighbour cities*] See Deut. xxix. 23.

19. *a lion*] A favourite comparison with Jeremiah. See iv. 7; v. 6.

*swelling of Jordan*] See note on xii. v.

*against the habitation of the strong*] Or, *to the permanent pasture* (where lions would expect to find their prey).

*but*] Rather *for*. It is God who brings the invader.

*make him*] *i.e.*, Edom.

*from her*] *i.e.*, from the pasture.

*over her*] *i.e.*, over the pasturage. God will appoint over the pasturage, from which Edom has run away, him whom He himself shall choose.

*who will appoint me the time?*] The complainer in a suit names the time when the defender must appear. But God gives an account of Himself to no one: He chooses and appoints whomsoever He will to rule.

*shepherd*] *i.e.*, ruler, as constantly in Jeremiah.

20. *counsel...purposes*] In contrast to the wisdom or counsel or prudence (verse 7), for which the Temanites were noted, and in which they appeared to be strong.

The Nations—  
Edom.

and his purposes that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; surely he shall make their habitations desolate with them. (21) The earth is moved at the noise of their fall; at the cry the noise thereof was heard in the Red sea. (22) Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah: and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

The Nations—  
Damascus.

(23) Concerning Damascus. Hamath is confounded, and Arpad; for they have heard evil tidings: they are faint-hearted; *there is* sorrow on

*draw them out*] As dogs tear, or as a dead body is dragged. See xv. 3; xxii. 19. So the Temanites are to be dragged by this lion whom God brings.

*the least of the flock*] The comparison of a flock is continued, and the people of Edom, who (verse 16) thought themselves so strong, are spoken of contemptuously as mere lambs or small sheep.

*habitations desolate*] Or, *pasture astonished*. Even their land will be astonished at what has befallen them.

21. *Red sea*] The land of Edom extends to it.

22. *as the eagle*] See xlviii. 40.

#### 23-27.—6. Damascus.

Like the preceding prophecies, this is apparently of the early years of Jehoiakim, before the invasion.

23. *Hamath*] On the Orontes, north of Damascus. The prophet expects the enemy to come from the north.

*Arpad*] Probably near Hamath, as it is always named with it.

*sorrow*] *terror*.

*sea*] The plain of Damascus, which was approached from hilly country on every side, naturally suggested the sea. 'As the plain of Damascus burst upon me through the Eth-thuniyeh Pass, the rising sun was pouring its first rays into a surging sea of verdure and beauty.'—Wright's *Palmyra and Zenobia*, p.

the sea ; it cannot be quiet. (24) Damascus is waxed feeble, *and* turneth herself to flee, and fear hath seized on *her* ; anguish and sorrows have taken her, as a woman in travail. (25) How is the city of praise not left, the city of my joy ! (26) Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD of hosts. (27) And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall consume the palaces of Ben-hadad.

(28) Concerning Kedar, and concerning the kingdoms of Habor, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon shall smite, thus saith the LORD ; Arise ye, go up to Kedar, and spoil the men of the east. (29) Their tents and their flocks shall they take away : they shall take to themselves their curtains, and all their

The Nations—  
Damascus.

The Nations—  
Kedar and  
Habor.

192. 'The sweet and beautiful plain of Damascus was in view ...And the great pearly domes and graceful minarets rose from out the ocean of emerald green that surged around and over the city.'—*Ibid.*, p. 220. The panic-stricken movements of the inhabitants suggest a troubled sea.

25. The meaning is doubtful ; probably he laments that the people have not fled, to save both themselves and the city. The prophet seems to have had a genuine admiration for Damascus.

27. Taken from Amos i. 4, 14.

CH. XLIX. 28-33.—7. *Kedar and the Kingdoms of Habor.*

Probably belonging to the same period.

28. *shall smite*] *smote*. The heading of this passage would appear to have been written after the event ; the prophecy itself before.

The Kedarenes were the Bedouin living in tents (ii. 10), the Hazorites lived in villages, both to the east of Palestine. *Kingdoms* applies more properly to the latter. Being alike outlandish, they are taken up in connection with each other, and mentioned under one heading, but they are referred to separately in the body of the prophecy.

The Nations—  
Kedar and  
Hazor.

vessels, and their camels; and they shall cry unto them, Fear *is* on every side. (30) Flee, get you far off, dwell deep, O ye inhabitants of Hazor, saith the LORD; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath taken counsel against you, and hath conceived a purpose against you. (31) Arise, get you up unto the wealthy nation, that dwelleth without care, saith the LORD, which have neither gates nor bars, *which* dwell alone. (32) And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of their cattle a spoil: and I will scatter into all winds them *that are* in the utmost corners; and I will bring their calamity from all sides thereof, saith the LORD. (33) And Hazor shall be a dwelling for dragons, *and* a desolation for ever: there shall no man abide there, nor *any* son of man dwell in it.

The Nations—  
Elam.

(34) The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against Elam in the beginning of the

29. *Fear on every side*] An expression often used by Jeremiah at this early period. See vi. 25; xx. 3, 10; xlv. 5.

30. *dwell deep*] See xlix. 8.

31. *the wealthy nation*] *a nation that is at ease*. Their towns or villages were unwallled.

32. *are in the utmost corners*] *have the corners* (of their hair) *polled*. See ix. 26, which belongs to the same period and probably denotes the same persons.

33. *dragons*] *jackals*.

### 34-39.—8. *Elam*.

There seems to be no good ground for thinking, as some do, that the date put upon this prophecy is a mistake, and that it should be assigned to the same time as the others we have been considering. It is true that Elam is named along with those other places in ch. xxv. But so are many other places which have no prophecies of their own here. And it will be observed that all the places hitherto considered are near Judah, being such as might be overrun in the first campaign of Nebuchadnezzar,—a campaign on the occasion of which these prophecies were given, whether they were actually overrun



reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying, (35) Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will break the bow of Elam, the chief of their might. (36) And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come. (37) For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies, and before them that seek their life; and I will bring evil upon them, *even* my fierce anger, saith the LORD; and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them: (38) and I will set my throne in Elam, and will destroy from thence the king and the princes, saith the LORD. (39) But it shall come to pass in the latter days, *that* I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.

The Nations—  
Elam.

during it or not. But Elam lay to the east of Babylon, and could not be swept over by the conqueror then. The purpose of this prophecy therefore appears to be different, and the fact that a date is put upon it shows it to be exceptional. In the early reign of Zedekiah (xxvii. 1) a conspiracy was hatching at Jerusalem to cast off the Babylonian yoke, and it may well be that the hope of success lay in difficulties Nebuchadnezzar might have at Elam and in the far east. The 'beginning' of the reign of Zedekiah named here need not mean the first year. In xxvii. 1 and xxviii. 1, the fourth year of the reign is called the 'beginning,' and in xxvi. 1 the same is said of the reign of Jehoiakim. In each case a crisis occurred during the fourth year which distinctly separated the earlier from the later part of the reign. In each case also Jeremiah was not after that year going about as a prophet, his preaching not being resumed at all in Jehoiakim's days, and, in those of Zedekiah, not till the ninth year. We take this prophecy therefore to be of Zedekiah's fourth year.

34. *against*] concerning.

35. *bow*] Its most important weapon. See Isa. xxii. 6. This is shown on many of the Assyrian monuments.

39. See note on xlvi. 47.

The Nations—  
Babylon.

CH. L. (I) The word that the LORD spake against Babylon *and* against the land of the Chaldeans by

CHS. L. 1-46—LI. 1-58.—9. *Babylon.*

Objection has been taken to the genuineness of these prophecies on the ground that at the time when they are here supposed to have been written or compiled, Jeremiah was using very different language towards Babylon. In li. 60 it is said that in the fourth year of Zedekiah, he 'wrote in a book [or, *in one book*] all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words that are written concerning Babylon.' Now, at that time he was contending with the false prophets, who predicted a speedy deliverance and return, and he insisted that the Babylonians were to rule over all the nations (chs. xxvii. and xxviii.). About the same time, he wrote to the exiles, counselling them to settle down, to seek the good of their new country and not listen to the false prophets in their midst who might stir them to revolt (ch. xxix.). At a later period in the same reign, when the Babylonians were investing the city, his unvarying word was, Submit. He had taught again and again that the Jews must be in exile for seventy years (xxv. 11; xxix. 10; xxvii. 7, 22). It is objected that in opposition to all this the language of chs. l. and li. would have had a most unsettling effect. Objection has also been taken to the language as being in some respects unlike that of Jeremiah, and to the fact that while he frequently quotes from himself and others, the quotations are more numerous here than usual. These two last objections seem to be sought for rather than found, for it is even suggested that the late supposed author has imitated Jeremiah's style. But the objection which is taken to the use of such language in the fourth year of Zedekiah is more serious, and appears to be well grounded. Still, we do not feel at liberty to reject the prophecies as spurious, and belonging to an author living in Babylon, as is supposed, near the end of the exile. Their style and spirit are far too like those of Jeremiah to be rejected in a book which consists of his prophecies and of narrative bearing upon them. In Zedekiah's days, it is true, Jeremiah had been careful not to use disquieting language, either among his countrymen left in Jerusalem or among the exiles. He had often drawn terrifying pictures of the Chaldeans before they came, but after the first captivity and the Vision of

Jeremiah the prophet. (2) Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard ; publish,

The Nations—  
Babylon.

the Two Baskets of Figs, his bearing changed. On that account we feel compelled when dealing with the prophecy of Habakkuk—which is after Jehoiachin's captivity—to put it before the Vision of the Figs. The repulsive features of the Chaldeans which that prophet draws would, after the vision, have had a disturbing effect on the work of Jeremiah. Jeremiah's policy changed after the vision. Instead of frightening his people either in Babylon or in Jerusalem with descriptions of Chaldean barbarity, he did his utmost to get them quietly to submit. But so far from the present chapters' teaching new doctrine, it will be observed that at an earlier period Jeremiah predicted in emphatic terms the Chaldeans' ultimate fall (xxv. 12-14, 26), and that he repeated it, though in a different spirit, later (xxvii. 7, 22 ; xxix. 10 ; etc.). As to the authorship of the two chapters, we must not forget how strange it would have been, if in this Book of the Nations there had been no paragraph on the Chaldeans, the most important of all nations in Jeremiah's mind. Chs. l. and li., then, we think, were written by him in Egypt. Like chs. xxx. and xxxi., which were not intended chiefly for present use, and some portions of which may never have been spoken at all, they were 'written in a book,' to keep alive afterwards in the hearts of the exiles high spiritual aspirations, and prevent them from being merged and lost in the Babylonian people. They were *written*, to assure the exiles in due time that although the Babylonian power by which they were held was so terrible, it would be shattered by God in fulfilment of His promise. It will be observed that the persons addressed throughout are not Jews in Palestine, but exiles in Babylon. That points to the date being later than the destruction of Jerusalem. See also l. 15, 17, 28, 29, 33 ; li. 11, 24, 34, 35, 49, 51, 56. And yet it is not so late as to be immediately before the Return, as is often supposed, for Nebuchadnezzar is still living (l. 17). Further, if not composed in Jerusalem, the prophecies belong to the hither side of it, as the word 'hitherward' indicates (l. 6). The language of li. 60 might seem to oppose this view ; but see note there.

1. *word*] Or *prophecy*, singular ; this might be thought to favour the conjecture that the whole of l. 1—li. 58, is one

The Nations—  
Babylon.

*and conceal not*: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces. (3) For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast. (4) In those days prophecy, and not a compilation of prophecies spoken at separate times; but 'word' is also used to designate a 'passage' or 'section,' as in xl. 1.

*against] concerning.*

*by] Literally by the hand of.*

*that the Lord spake] This whole phrase is not used elsewhere in the book except at xxxvii. 2. And in the present place it would appear that the prophecy was never spoken by Jeremiah. Similarly with a considerable part of chs. xxx. and xxxi.*

*2. publish, and conceal not] Not now using a cypher, as in xxv. 26. Comp. iv. 5, 6; xlvii. 14. As Jerusalem is destroyed, and the Jews are in Babylon and Jeremiah is in Egypt, there is now no fear of inciting the Jews against submitting to Nebuchadnezzar, or danger of rousing Nebuchadnezzar against the prophet.*

*Bel...Merodach] Two of the chief divinities of the Chaldeans.*

*3. out of the north] All those nations to the far east were in Jeremiah's view 'from the north,' because in coming to Palestine they had to come by Carchemish, and cross the Euphrates by the ford there, so as to escape the desert. Cyrus, who was of Elam, added Media to his dominions before his capture of Babylon. In Jeremiah's mind, the places beyond Babylon would be farther north.*

*land desolate, etc.] Babylon was not strictly made desolate, for the conquerors afterwards lived in it as well as in Shushan and Ecbatana; this desolation would naturally occur to Jeremiah as the result of conquest. But the idea of desolation shows that this was not written after the capture of Babylon. See note on verse 21.*

*4. Comp. ch. iii. 18, 21. The prophet's ideas of earlier times are often recalled.*

and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God. (5) They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, *saying*, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant *that* shall not be forgotten. (6) My people hath been lost sheep; their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away *on* the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting-place. (7) All that found them have devoured them; and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers. (8) Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he-goats before the flocks. (9) For, lo, I will raise, and

The Nations—  
Babylon.

5 *thitherward*] Heb. *hitherward*. Jeremiah is in Egypt, and coming from Babylon to Zion is *hitherward*. Had the writer been in Babylon, *thitherward* would have been used.

*covenant*] Comp. chs. xxxi. 31; iii. 18—iv. 2; xi. 1-6.

6. *shepherds*] i.e., rulers.

7. *habitation of justice*] Applied here to God, in xxxi. 23 to Jerusalem. Similarly, 'the Lord our Righteousness' applied to the coming King in xxiii. 6, but in xxxiii. 16 to Jerusalem.

8. *Remove*] *Flee*. Jeremiah only knows as yet that the Jews shall be delivered; he does not know that under Cyrus their king they will be allowed to return and build their temple. This applies to a great part of these prophecies. Jeremiah can only think of conquests which are followed by destruction. Babylon was entered by Cyrus without battle. Again showing that the passage was written before the capture of Babylon.

9. *assembly of great nations*] It would naturally seem to the prophet that only by such an alliance could a nation like Babylon be overcome. There was such a combination in the empire of Cyrus (verse 3, *note*).

The Nations—  
Babylon.

cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows *shall be* as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain. (10) And Chaldea shall be a spoil: all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the LORD. (11) Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage, because ye are grown fat as the heifer at grass, and bellow as bulls; (12) your mother shall be sore confounded; she that bare you shall be ashamed: behold, the hindermost of the nations *shall be* a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. (13) Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues. (14) Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows; for she hath sinned against the LORD. (15) Shout against her round about: she hath given her hand: her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down; for it *is* the vengeance of the LORD: take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her. (16) Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land. (17) Israel *is* a scattered sheep; the lions

14, 15. The slabs from Assyria show how cities were taken by archers shooting while battering-rams broke down the walls.

15. *given her hand*] *submitted herself*. Comp. Lam. v. 6; 1 Chron. xxix. 26; 2 Chron. xxx. 8.

16. *every one to his own land*] Both the exiles detained in Babylon and the mercenaries.

have driven *him* away : first the king of Assyria hath devoured him, and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones. (18) Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel ; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria. (19) And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Ephraim and Gilead. (20) In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be* none ; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found : for I will pardon them whom I reserve. (21) Go up against the land of Merathaim, *even* against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod : waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the LORD, and do according to all that I have commanded thee. (22) A sound of battle *is* in the land, and of great destruction. (23) How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken ! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations ! (24) I

The Nations—  
Babylon.

17, 18. In Jeremiah's mind the people are one, whether Israel taken by Assyria, or Judah by Babylon. This verse was evidently written during the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and apparently after Jerusalem was demolished. Another indication that it was by Jeremiah in Egypt. Nineveh has been destroyed, but Babylon is not yet taken.

21. *Merathaim*] Heb. *two rebellions* (i.e., Babylon), alluding to the deportations in Jehoiachin's time and that of Zedekiah. *waste, etc.*] *slay, etc.* The essential thought is that Babylon is certainly to be taken. In Jeremiah's mind that would be necessarily connected with slaughter and havoc. Cyrus says in the inscription, that he entered 'without fighting.' While a prophet might use the general language of Jeremiah to describe a conquest, a historian could not, which shows that this whole passage was written before Cyrus came.

*Pekod*] Heb. *visitation*.

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have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD. (25) The LORD hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this *is* the work of the Lord GOD of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans. (26) Come against her from the utmost border, open her storehouses; cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left. (27) Slay all her bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation. (28) The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance of his temple. (29) Call together the archers against Babylon: all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape: recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: for she hath been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel. (30) Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the

24. *striven against the Lord*] Although employed by God to punish Judah, and in that respect formerly (xxv. 9) described as God's *servant*, Babylon is here, in Jeremiah's different mood and from his changed point of view, spoken of as striving against God. Jeremiah was formerly reproving Judah for her sins, here he is speaking of her as God's nation which is being restored.

28. *them that flee*] The returning captives did not need to flee. They were not only permitted by Cyrus to return with Zerubbabel, but even exhorted to do so. Those who returned in subsequent reigns with Ezra and Nehemiah had likewise perfect liberty. All this shows that the revelation of the future had not yet in Jeremiah's time shone unto the perfect day. See li. 10, 11.



LORD. (31) Behold, I *am* against thee, *O thou* most proud, saith the Lord GOD of hosts : for thy day is come, the time *that* I will visit thee. (32) And the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up : and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him. (33) Thus saith the LORD of hosts ; The children of Israel and the children of Judah *were* oppressed together ; and all that took them captives held them fast : they refused to let them go. (34) Their Redeemer *is* strong ; The LORD of hosts *is* his name : he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon. (35) A sword *is* upon the Chaldeans, saith the LORD, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise *men*. (36) A sword *is* upon the liars ; and they shall dote : a sword *is* upon her mighty men ; and they shall be dismayed. (37) A sword *is* upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that *are* in the midst of her ; and they shall become as women : a sword *is* upon her treasures ; and they shall be robbed. (38) A drought *is* upon her waters ; and they shall be dried up : for it *is* the land of graven images, and they are mad upon *their* idols. (39) Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell *there*, and the owls shall dwell therein : and it shall be no more inhabited

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30. A quotation from a previous prophecy against Damascus (xlix. 26).

32. Part of this verse quoted from xxi. 14.

34. *Redeemer*] It was the duty of the next kinsman to avenge the injured. Jehovah is in that relation to Israel and Judah. Comp. Prov. xxii. 23 ; xxiii. 11 ; Isa. xlvii. 4 ; xlviii. 20.

37. *mingled people*] See note on xxv. 20.

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for ever ; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. (40) As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour *cities* thereof, saith the LORD ; *so* shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein. (41) Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. (42) They shall hold the bow and the lance : they *are* cruel, and will not show mercy : their voice shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride upon horses, *every one* put in array, like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon. (43) The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble : anguish took hold of him, *and* pangs as of a woman in travail. (44) Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation of the strong : but I will make them suddenly run away from her : and who *is* a chosen *man*, *that* I may appoint over her ? for who *is* like me ? and who will appoint me the time ? and who *is* that shepherd that will stand before me ? (45) Therefore hear ye the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Babylon ; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans : Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out ; surely he shall make *their* habitation desolate with them. (46) At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.

CII. LI. (1) Thus saith the LORD ; Behold, I will

41. *from the north*] See note on verse 3.

41-43. Comp. vi. 22-24.

44-46. Comp. xlix. 19-21.

raise up against Babylon, and against them that dwell in the midst of them that rise up against me, a destroying wind; (2) and will send unto Babylon fanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land: for in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about. (3) Against *him that* bendeth let the archer bend his bow, and against *him that* lifteth himself up in his brigandine: and spare ye not her young men; destroy ye utterly all her host. (4) Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and *they that are* thrust through in her streets. (5) For Israel *hath not been* forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the LORD of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel. (6) Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this *is* the time of the LORD'S vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence. (7) Babylon *hath been* a golden cup in the LORD'S hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. (8) Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. (9) We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country; for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted

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## CH. LI. 1-58.

1. *the midst of them that rise up against Me*] Heb. *Leb-kamai*. The compounded word may also read, according to the figure of *Athbash*, 'Casdim,' i.e., Chaldeans. See note on xxv. 26. There is no need of concealment now, and indeed the name 'Babylon' is used in the verse, but Jeremiah is fond of playing upon letters.

6. See l. 28.

7. See xxv. 15, 26.

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up *even* to the skies. (10) The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God. (11) Make bright the arrows; gather the shields: the LORD hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for his device *is* against Babylon, to destroy it; because it *is* the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of his temple. (12) Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon, make the watch strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the ambushes: for the LORD hath both devised and done that which he spake against the inhabitants of Babylon. (13) O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, *and* the measure of thy covetousness. (14) The LORD of hosts hath sworn by himself, *saying*, Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillars; and they shall lift up a shout against thee. (15) He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding. (16) When he uttereth *his* voice, *there is* a multitude of waters in the heavens; and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures. (17) Every man is brutish by *his* knowledge; every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image *is* falsehood, and *there is* no breath in them. (18) They *are* vanity, the work of errors: in the time of their

10, 11. See I. 28.

11. The Median power in the person of Cyrus, who made himself King of Elam, Media, and Persia, became the captor of Babylon. There was apparently no united empire of Media. The Medes were a people with many chieftains or 'city lords.' Hence, here, 'the kings of the Medes.'

visitation they shall perish. (19) The Portion of Jacob *is* not like them; for he *is* the former of all things; and *Israel is* the rod of his inheritance: The LORD of hosts *is* his name. (20) Thou *art* my battle-axe *and* weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms; (21) and with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider; and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider; (22) with thee also will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces old and young; and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid; (23) I will also break in pieces with thee the shepherd and his flock; and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke of oxen; and with thee will I break in pieces captains and rulers. (24) And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the LORD. (25) Behold, I *am* against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the LORD, which destroyest all the earth; and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain. (26) And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the LORD. (27) Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars. (28) Prepare against her the nations with the kings of the

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15-19. Comp. x. 12-16.

20. Babylon is at the height of her power when this is written.

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Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion. (29) And the land shall tremble and sorrow: for every purpose of the LORD shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. (30) The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight, they have remained in *their* holds: their might hath failed; they became as women: they have burned her dwelling-places; her bars are broken. (31) One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at *one* end, (32) and that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted. (33) For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; The daughter of Babylon *is* like a threshing-floor, *it is* time to thresh her: yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come. (34) Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath cast me out. (35) The violence done to me and to my flesh *be* upon Babylon, shall the inhabitant of Zion say; and, My blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. (36) Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry. (37) And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant. (38) They shall roar together like lions; they shall yell as lions' whelps. (39) In their heat I will make their feasts,

37. *dragons*] *jackals*.

and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the LORD. (40) I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with he-goats. (41) How is Sheshach taken! and how is the praise of the whole earth surprised! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations! (42) The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. (43) Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth *any* son of man pass thereby. (44) And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him; yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall. (45) My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the LORD. (46) And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumour that shall be heard in the land; a rumour that shall both come *one* year, and after that in *another* year *shall come* a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler. (47) Therefore, behold, the days come, that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon; and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her. (48) Then the heaven and the earth, and all that *is* therein, shall sing for Babylon: for the spoilers shall come unto her from the north, saith the LORD. (49) As Babylon *hath caused* the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth. (50) Ye that have escaped the sword, go away, stand not still: remember the LORD afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind. (51)

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We are confounded, because we have heard reproach : shame hath covered our faces ; for strangers are come into the sanctuaries of the LORD'S house. (52) Wherefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will do judgment upon her graven images ; and through all her land the wounded shall groan. (53) Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, *yet* from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the LORD. (54) A sound of a cry *cometh* from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans : (55) because the LORD hath spoiled Babylon, and destroyed out of her the great voice ; when her waves do roar like great waters, a noise of their voice is uttered : (56) because the spoiler is come upon her, *even* upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken ; every one of their bows is broken : for the LORD God of recompences shall surely requite. (57) And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise *men*, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men : and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name *is* The LORD of hosts. (58) Thus saith the LORD of hosts ; The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burnt with fire ; and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.

(59) The word which Jeremiah the prophet com-

58. *and the people, etc.*] Quoted from Hab. ii. 13, which was probably written at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign, before Jeremiah had his vision of the baskets of figs (ch. xxiv.). See introd. note on ch. i.

59-64.—*Prophecies against Babylon thrown into the Euphrates.*

What prophecies were these ? Verses 60 and 61 *seem* to state



manded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of <sup>The Nations—</sup>Maaseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of <sup>Babylon.</sup>

that they were prophecies of which chs. l. and li. are a rescript. But we must not be misled by the expression, 'all these words.' 'Words' with Jeremiah designates the substance of the prophecies, not their wording. 'These,' if the passage were originally written immediately after chs. l. and li., would refer to them; but if originally written in another connection and placed here in its original form when the book under its final compilation was rearranged, the word would have no such reference. The book bears signs of having been frequently rearranged, while its individual parts were left unchanged. 'These words,' *e.g.*, of xlv. 1, do not refer to the prophecies immediately preceding. That chapter must have had a different connection originally. So probably with the present passage. The introd. verse (li. 59) does not indicate a continuation of what went before. It is probable, however, that some of the 'words' that were sunk in the Euphrates were reproduced in the present collection. We must also bear in mind that 'all' in this book is not an ordinary universal, but is constantly used to express merely a number, a collection (see note on i. 15).

There is no mention here that the prophecies cast into the river were rewritten and preserved, as was done with the roll which Jehoiakim destroyed. And we must not overlook the fact that if the incident of throwing into the river was to be recorded at all, this was its most natural place. True, it occurred before the most of the 'words' of chs. l. and li. came to the prophet, but it could not be placed before them in this book without breaking up the series of prophecies on the nations; and besides, throughout the book, prophecy always takes precedence of narrative.

We conclude therefore that the expression, 'all these words,' does not indicate the prophecies of the two preceding chapters. It is probable that the collection it refers to does not now exist, but that some of the 'words,' possibly all, were placed in the new collection of l. and li. If the author had any thought of glancing at the new collection by leaving the expression, 'all these words,' to stand, it is probable that he meant to intimate no more than that the 'words' which were sunk in the river

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Judah into Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And *this* Seraiah was a quiet prince. (60) So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, *even* all these words that are written against Babylon. (61) And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words, (62) then shalt thou say, O LORD, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever. (63) And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, *that* thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: (64) and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink,

contained in effect the same doom as is threatened in the chapters which now stand. Comp. 'all the words that I have spoken unto thee...from the days of Josiah' (xxxvi. 2, and see note there).

59. *The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded*] This has all the appearance of being an introduction to an independent prophecy, and not an appendix to what goes before.

*the son of Neriah*] And therefore a brother of Baruch. See xlv. 1.

*went with Zedekiah...fourth year*] See xxvii. 1; xxviii. 1. Those chapters show a spirit of unrest and possibly of readiness to rebel, to avoid suspicion of which may have induced Zedekiah to do homage.

*quiet prince*] Probably rather, *quartermaster*.

60. *a book*] Heb. *one book*, i.e., he compiled them all into a single roll (which apparently does not now exist).

61. *read*] While it would have been imprudent at that time to announce the doom of Babylon in the hearing of the multitude, it was desirable that believers, like Seraiah, should have their faith confirmed by this, which was practically a repetition of what had been said eleven years before, prior to the first appearance of Nebuchadnezzar (ch. xxv.).

64. *and they shall be weary*] Apparently inserted from verse 58 by clerical error.

and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: and they shall be weary. Thus far *are* the words of Jeremiah. The Nations—  
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CH. LII. (1) Zedekiah *was* one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven The End.

*words*] i.e., *sayings* or *prophecies*. See note on i. 1. This statement does not imply that he was not the writer of ch. lii., for ch. lii. does not contain 'words' or prophecies. The statement indicates nothing about ch. lii. But, as we shall find, a portion at least of that chapter cannot have been written by Jeremiah.

CH. LII.—*The Capture of Jerusalem and the Deportation to Babylon.*

We have four accounts, of varying completeness, which, unless all derived from a common source, must have been borrowed from one another, viz., Jer. xxxix. 1-14; lii. 1-34; 2 Kings xxiv. 18-xxv. 30; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 11-21. That is apparently the order of their composition. Ch. xxxix. was probably written before Jeremiah and Baruch were taken to Egypt.

Comparing this chapter with ch. xxxix., we have the mention of 'sore famine' and 'no bread' (verse 6), which is not stated in ch. xxxix., showing that here we have a complete and independent narrative written a considerable time afterwards, while in ch. xxxix. it did not need to be stated, because it had just been mentioned fully in chs. xxxvii. and xxxviii. In xxxix. 7, it is merely said that Zedekiah was bound *to be* taken to Babylon, while here in verse 11 he is declared to have been taken thither and imprisoned till the day of his death. Both of these indicate that ch. xxxix. is no late interpolation, but a narrative written at the time of the occurrence. In the same way we have in lii. 12, the 'nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar,' which would have been out of place in ch. xxxix., which naturally dated by the years of a Jewish king (xxxix. 1, 2), but is appropriate when written later, after the Jewish State has ceased to exist. Curiously, the Temple is omitted in xxxix. 8 from the houses which are destroyed, while in lii. 13 it is mentioned first, and its plundering is given at length in lii.

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years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. (2)

17-23. May it be that the captives were taken away and the general destruction of the city effected without delay, but that the looting and demolition were left to be done at greater leisure, and had not taken place when ch. xxxix. was written? The 'encamping' and 'building of forts' in lii. 4 may have been inserted to complete an independent narrative here while they were not needed in ch. xxxix., the 'mounts' having been already mentioned in xxxii. 24; xxxiii. 4.

Observe, further, that while ch. xxxix. has considerable reference to Jeremiah himself, that being required for chs. xxxvii.-xliv., there is no reference to him here. A late writer might have been expected to complete the story by telling us of Jeremiah's subsequent history and death. This would suggest that Jeremiah himself is the author. The whole style is similar to that of the rest of the book. Mark, *e.g.*, the 'all' of lii. 14, 17, which, by the way, is omitted in 2 Kings. Authorship by Jeremiah does not, as is generally supposed, conflict with li. 64. See note there.

There is evidently a later addition in verses 28-30, which must have been written by one who used the Babylonian method of counting time. See Table of Synchronisms, pp. 50, 51.

The concluding paragraph, verses 31-34, may have been written by the same or by another writer, but we should say, not by Jeremiah, considering the late date, 562 B.C.—twenty-five years after the destruction of the city. It was probably written in Babylon, and not after the exile. Prof. König (*Expositor*, Jan. 1897) has pointed out that the form of the Hebrew word for 'captivity' in verse 31 is common in pre-exilic and exilic books, but is never found in post-exilic.

Changes are made in 2 Kings, apparently by a subsequent writer, for the sake of brevity.

It is difficult to settle the question of priority between this chapter and the passage in Kings. The opening of this chapter would lead us to conclude with considerable confidence that it is derived from Kings, because a similar opening to the account of a king's reign occurs nowhere else in Jeremiah, whereas it is the regular opening in Kings. But, on the other hand, many words and clauses which appear to belong to the original

And he did *that which was* evil in the eyes of the The End. LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. (3) For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. (4) And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it round about. (5) So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. (6) And in the fourth month, in the ninth *day* of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land. (7) Then the city was broken up, and all the

narrative are found in Jeremiah and not in Kings, and it is easy to account for their abridgment in Kings, but not for their extension in Jeremiah. The following words or phrases in Jeremiah are omitted in Kings:—v. 7, 'fled and went forth out of the city'; v. 9, 'in the land of Hamath'; v. 11, 'and put him in prison till the day of his death'; v. 14, 'all'; v. 16, 'Nebuzar-adan'; v. 17, 'all'; v. 18, 'and the basons'; v. 25, 'the midst of'; verses 19-23 (greatly abridged in Kings). There are other minor variations. The most important are the 'all' of verses 14 and 17, so characteristic of the Book of Jeremiah, and the variations at verses 11 and 19-23, all of which favour the priority of this chapter. (Verses 28-30 being a late addition—see note below,—we cannot reason from them; verses 31-34 are also a late addition, which is found in both books.) Verses 1-3 remain, which we cannot account for except on the priority of Kings. If we could suppose Jeremiah to be the author of Kings, the present chapter would appear to be the earlier.

3. *rebelled*] We do not know when. It may have been soon after the unrest or conspiracy of the fourth year disclosed in ch. xxvii., and Nebuchadnezzar may not have been at leisure to punish it until the ninth year.

4. *Nebuchadrezzar*] In 2 Kings xxv. 1, *Nebuchadnezzar*.

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men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the gate between the two walls, which *was* by the king's garden ; (now the Chaldeans *were* by the city round about :) and they went by the way of the plain. (8) But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho ; and all his army were scattered from him. (9) Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath ; where he gave judgment upon him. (10) And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes : he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah. (11) Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah ; and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death. (12) Now in the fifth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, which *was* the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, *which* served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem,

7. *fled, and went forth out of the city*] Omitted in 2 Kings xxv. 4.

*they went*] In 2 Kings, *the king went*.

8. *Zedekiah*] In 2 Kings, *him*.

9. *in the land of Hamath*] Omitted in 2 Kings.

*he gave*] In 2 Kings, *they gave*.

10. *the king of Babylon slew*] In 2 Kings, *they slew*.

11. *he put out*] In 2 Kings, *they put out*.

*the king of Babylon bound*] In 2 Kings, *they bound*.

*and put him in prison till the day of his death*] Omitted in 2 Kings.

12. *tenth day*] In 2 Kings, *seventh day*.

*nineteenth year*] *i.e.*, 587 B.C. See Table of Synchronisms, pp. 50, 51.

*Nebuchadrezzar*] In 2 Kings, *Nebuchadnezzar*, as in verse 4.

*which served*] In 2 Kings, *a servant of*.

*into Jerusalem*] In 2 Kings, *to Jerusalem*.

(13) and burned the house of the LORD, and the king's house ; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great *men* burned he with fire. (14) And all the army of the Chaldeans, that *were* with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about. (15) Then Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive *certain* of the poor of the people, and the residue of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the multitude. (16) But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard left *certain* of the poor of the land for vine-dressers, and for husbandmen. (17) Also the pillars of brass that *were* in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brasen sea that *was* in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans brake, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon. (18) The caldrons also, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the bowls, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. (19) And the basons, and the fire-pans, and the bowls, and the caldrons, and the candlesticks, and the spoons, and the cups ; *that* which *was* of gold *in* gold, and *that* which *was* of silver *in* silver, took the captain of the guard away. (20) The two pillars, one sea, and twelve brasen bulls that *were* under the bases, which king Solomon had made in the house of the LORD :

13. *all the houses of the great men*] *every great house.* Heb. 'the great.' In 2 Kings, Heb. 'a great.'

14. *all the walls*] In 2 Kings, *the walls* (omit *all*).

15. Different in 2 Kings.

16. *Nebuzar-adan*] Omitted in 2 Kings.

17. *all*] Omitted in 2 Kings.

18. *and the bowls*] Omitted in 2 Kings.

19-23. Greatly abridged in 2 Kings.

The End.

the brass of all these vessels was without weight. (21) And *concerning* the pillars, the height of one pillar *was* eighteen cubits; and a fillet of twelve cubits did compass it; and the thickness thereof *was* four fingers: *it was* hollow. (22) And a chapter of brass *was* upon it; and the height of one chapter *was* five cubits, with net-work and pomegranates upon the chapters round about, all *of* brass: the second pillar also and the pomegranates *were* like unto these. (23) And there were ninety and six pomegranates on a side; *and* all the pomegranates upon the net-work *were* an hundred round about. (24) And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the door: (25) he took also out of the city an eunuch, which had the charge of the men of war; and seven men of them that were near the king's person, which were found in the city; and the principal scribe of the host, who mustered the people of the land; and threescore men of the people of the land, that were found in the midst of the city. (26) So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah. (27) And the king of Babylon smote them, and put

25. *seven men*] In 2 Kings, *five men*.

*the principal scribe*] *a scribe of the captain*. In 2 Kings, *the scribe*.

*the midst of*] Omitted in 2 Kings.

28-30. Not found in 2 Kings. A late addition. The 'seventh' and 'eighteenth' years are according to the Babylonian system of chronology, and correspond to 'eighth' and 'nineteenth' in Jewish reckoning. See note to Table of Synchronisms, p. 47. In verse 12, this 'eighteenth' becomes 'nineteenth,' according to Jewish reckoning. It is 587 B.C. The different methods of counting show that we have different writers, and that the writer of the present passage is the later one.



them to death in Riblah in the land of Hamath. *The End.*  
 Thus Judah was carried away captive out of his own land. (28) This *is* the people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year three thousand Jews, and three and twenty: (29) in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two persons: (30) in the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadrezzar, Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons: all the persons *were* four thousand and six hundred. (31) And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth *day* of the month, *that* Evil-merodach king of Babylon in the *first* year of his reign lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah,

We cannot account for the discrepancy between the numbers of captives in this chapter and 2 Kings. This contains much smaller numbers. It may be that many had died or escaped between Jerusalem and Babylon. The writer in Kings reports the number taken from Jerusalem, the writer in this passage *may* give the number arriving at Babylon.

31-34. This occurs in 2 Kings, but it is also a late addition, although probably not by the same hand as 28-30. We know it to be late, because, unlike verses 1, 4, 5, 12, it (like 28-30) uses the Babylonian method of counting, viz., 'in the year of his reign,' not 'in the *first* year of his reign,' which in the Babylonian method would not mean the same thing. See note at head of this chapter, and Table of Synchronisms, p. 50. Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 B.C. That became the accession year of Evil-merodach, or 'the year of his reign,' in which Jehoiachin was released. What the Babylonians would have called 'the first year of his reign' was 561, which was not the year referred to here.

31. *Jehoiachin*] Elsewhere in this book, called 'Jeconiah' (xxiv. 1; xxix. 2) or 'Coniah' (xxii. 24, 28).

The End.

and brought him forth out of prison, (32) and spake kindly unto him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that *were* with him in Babylon, (33) and changed his prison garments: and he did continually eat bread before him all the days of his life. (34) And *for* his diet, there was a continual diet given him of the king of Babylon, every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

*five and twentieth]* In 2 Kings, *seven and twentieth. in the first year of his reign]* *in the year of his reign.* In 2 Kings, *in the year of his (being) king.* These last two expressions mean the same thing.

*and brought him forth]* Omitted in 2 Kings.

*34. of Babylon]* Omitted in 2 Kings.

*until the day of his death]* Omitted in 2 Kings.